

A SWEET INFLUENCE: ST. BONAVENTURE'S  
FRANCISCAN RECEPTION OF  
DIONYSIAN HIERARCHY

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## ABSTRACT

### A SWEET INFLUENCE: ST. BONAVENTURE'S FRANCISCAN RECEPTION OF DIONYSIAN HIERARCHY

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This dissertation examines the intersection of St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio's use of the doctrine of hierarchy (transmitted in the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite) with his interpretation of St. Francis of Assisi as the model for the imitation of Jesus Christ. In particular, it argues that Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy became increasingly informed by his devotion to Francis' virtues and to Christ's Crucified, so that, by the time he wrote the *Legenda maior sancti Francisci* (by 1263) hierarchy was Franciscanized by an explicit integration with the Cross, the spiritual senses of scripture, and the primacy of love in union to God. Simultaneously, this dissertation argues that Bonaventure's interpretation of St. Francis' spiritual significance employed the structures of Dionysian hierarchy: the active and passive use of the hierarchical powers and the understanding of holiness as the assimilation to the angels and the imitation of God's saving work. Finally, this dissertation argues that the Franciscanization of hierarchy entailed, paradoxically, both divergences from and convergence with the Dionysius' original articulation of hierarchy. They diverge, in as much as Bonaventure's interpretation of St. Francis' through the lens of hierarchy sundered Dionysius' yoking of spiritual maturity and ecclesiastical rank and appropriated aspects of Dionysius' clergy, especially the hierarch or bishop, to Francis. On the other hand, in its Franciscanization, Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy became increasingly Christocentric and attentive to the centrality of worship in the mediation of God's presence, or *influentia*, to humans and angels and in this way enshrined and more closely resembled the original core of Dionysian hierarchy that the deifying descent of Jesus Christ, the light of God the Father, and the imitation thereof is the source of all ascent through hierarchy. In order to demonstrate these developments in Bonaventure's thought, this dissertation explains the original sense of hierarchy in Dionysius' thought and presents multiple medieval receptions of Dionysian hierarchy found in the 13<sup>th</sup> century *Corpus Dionysiacum Parisiense* in order to contrast and contextualize Bonaventure's own doctrine of hierarchy and its development into the *Legenda maior*.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Corpus Dionysiacum</i>	<i>CD</i>
<i>Corpus Dionysiacum</i>	<i>CDP</i>
<i>De coelesti hierarchia</i>	<i>CH</i>
<i>De ecclesiastica hierarchia</i>	<i>EH</i>
<i>De divinis nominibus</i>	<i>DN</i>
<i>De mystica theologia</i>	<i>MT</i>
<i>Epistulae I-X</i>	<i>Ep. I-X</i>
<i>Expositiones in ierarchiam celestem</i>	<i>Exp in Hier</i>
<i>Super hierarchiam Dionisii</i>	<i>Super Hier</i>
<i>Apologia pauperum</i>	<i>Apol paup</i>
<i>S. Bonaventurae Opera Omnia</i>	<i>Bon Op</i>
<i>Breviloquium</i>	<i>Brev</i>
<i>Commentarius in primum librum sententiarum</i>	<i>I Sent</i>
<i>Commentarius in secundum librum sententiarum</i>	<i>II Sent</i>
<i>Commentarius in tertium librum sententiarum</i>	<i>III Sent</i>
<i>Commentarius in quatum librum sententiarum</i>	<i>IV Sent</i>
<i>Commentarius in evangelium S. Lucae</i>	<i>Comm Luke</i>
<i>De reductione artium ad theologiam</i>	<i>De red</i>
<i>De triplice via</i>	<i>Trip via</i>
<i>Itinerarium mentis in Deum</i>	<i>Itin</i>
<i>Legenda maior Sancti Francisci</i>	<i>LMj</i>
<i>Legenda minor Sancti Francisci</i>	<i>LMn</i>
<i>Questiones disputatae de mysterio Trinitatis</i>	<i>DMT</i>
<i>Questiones disputatae de perfectione evangelica</i>	<i>DEP</i>
<i>Vita prima sancti Francisci</i>	<i>1C</i>
<i>Vita secunda sancti Francisci</i>	<i>2C</i>
<i>Tractarius de miraculis sancti Francisci</i>	<i>3C</i>
<i>Vita sancti Francisci (by Julian of Speyer)</i>	<i>LSJ</i>
<i>Francis of Assisi: Early Documents I—The Saint</i>	<i>FA:ED I</i>
<i>Francis of Assisi: Early Documents II—The Founder</i>	<i>FA:ED II</i>



## INTRODUCTION

“It would require a complete monograph to give a detailed presentation of the influence of the Areopagite on Bonaventure.”<sup>1</sup>

Nearly sixty years later, a monograph such as described by Joseph Ratzinger has not yet appeared. For although almost every book on Bonaventure notes the Areopagite’s importance for the Seraphic Doctor and some even consider it at length, no single work has focused on the role of the four books and ten letters of the *Corpus Dionysiacum* (CD), nor upon its medieval reception in *Bonaventure’s* corpus. Given the sheer extent of Dionysius’ impact on Bonaventure’s thought, especially by the end of his career, a single monograph would certainly be insufficient or even impossible, at least until several specific studies on Dionysius’ impact Bonaventure’s on thought have been completed. And indeed, that project is long overdue.

An effort to rigorously describe the role of Dionysius’ works in Bonaventure’s thought must not be limited to evaluating the Areopagite’s mark in Bonaventure’s individual doctrines or even his overall doctrinal synthesis. It is of equal importance to investigate and establish, so far as possible, his access to and use of Dionysian sources, including translations of, commentaries upon, and other works employing the CD. For by understanding how Bonaventure read and judged Dionysius’ doctrines along with and through the medieval reception of the CD, scholars will be enabled to more fully assess

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *The Theology of History in St. Bonaventure*, trans. Zachary Hayes (Chicago, Ill.: Franciscan Herald Press, 1971), 89. Originally published as *Die Geschichtstheologie des heiligen Bonaventuras* (Munich: Schnell and Steiner, 1959). That work represents half of Bonaventure’s doctoral and habilitation work on Bonaventure, which also included Ratzinger’s account of Bonaventure’s doctrine of revelation, which half was not published until recently as Joseph Ratzinger, *Offenbarungsverständnis und Geschichtstheologie Bonaventuras*, Joseph Ratzinger Gesammelte Schriften Band 2 (Freiburg: Herder, 2009).

the effect of Dionysius' thought and legacy upon the architecture of Bonaventure's thought both in its explicit formulations and in its fundamental and often implicit assumptions. In other words, scholars will be equipped to study Bonaventure *the Dionysian*.

Calling Bonaventure "the Dionysian" may be a novel name, but it is no original claim. In the wake of the disputes over Bonaventure's intellectual identity in the mid-twentieth century, certain theologians recognized that in his thought "Denys' influence would appear as strong [as Augustine's]"<sup>2</sup> and more boldly that he seems to be "one of the most Dionysian among the great masters of the thirteenth century".<sup>3</sup> Even earlier, Romano Guardini had devoted much of his *Die Systembildende Elemente des Heiligen Bonaventuras* to Dionysius' effect on Bonaventure's thought.<sup>4</sup> The debates over Bonaventure's intellectual identity subjected his use and understanding of Dionysius to the status of a facet of his thought governed and subordinate to one or another controlling "worldview", be he understood as either a consummate Augustinian, "eclectic", or anti-Aristotelian schoolman.<sup>5</sup>

Without re-animating the polemics over Bonaventure's intellectual identity, studying Bonaventure the Dionysian will bring further to light how and the extent to which the Dionysian tradition shapes Bonaventure's controlling concepts, insights, and convictions so far as they exist in his thought. Since the impetus to place Bonaventure in one category or another has largely given way to efforts to hear him speak in his own

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<sup>2</sup> Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, ed. John Riches, trans. Andrew Louth and Brian McNeil, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clarke, 1984), 61.

<sup>3</sup> Jacques Guy Bougerol, "Saint Bonaventure et Le Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite," *Études Franciscaines* 18, no. Suppl. (1968): 34, 113.

<sup>4</sup> Romano Guardini, *Systembildende Elemente in Der Theologie Bonaventuras*, Studia et Documenta Franciscana, III (Leiden: Brill, 1964).

<sup>5</sup> Ratzinger, *The Theology of History in St. Bonaventure*, 119–128.

voice, the time is ripe to press the study of his Dionysianism. Indeed, studies on topics in his thought including on the role of order, of Christ as center, of the saving cross, and of the Trinity have continually sharpened to the Dionysian inflection in his theological voice. What remains now is for scholars of Bonaventure (and Dionysius) to listen for that voice across his corpus and analyze it with undivided attention.

Following the threads of Bonaventure's Dionysianism through his corpus would be too large a project for any single work and therefore this dissertation will follow only one: the concept of hierarchy, *hierarchia*, and only as far as its role in the *Legenda Maior Sancti Francisci* (LMj). The concept of hierarchy, coined by Dionysius and popularized swiftly thereafter, is a fitting place to begin a larger evaluation of Bonaventure's Dionysianism for several reasons. First, hierarchy is Bonaventure's most readily recognized borrowing from the Areopagite and is one of the most prominent Dionysian concepts present from the beginning (in the *Commentary on the Second Book of the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, to the end of Bonaventure's career (*Collationes in Hexaemeron*).<sup>6</sup> He references hierarchy in most of his major works, including the *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Comm Luke), the *Disputed Questions of Evangelical Perfection* (DPE), *Breviloquium* (Brev), *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* (Itin), the *Legenda Maior* (LMj), *De triplice via* (Trip via), *Collationes in septem donis Spiritus Sancti* (De donis), and the *Apologia Pauperis* (Apol paup) and also mentions of hierarchy in many of his sermons. The abundant discussion of and references to hierarchy provide a wealth of material for analyzing its diachronic use and development across Bonaventure's career.

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<sup>6</sup> Ratzinger, 89.

Second, although the prominence of hierarchy is well recognized in Bonaventure's writings, it is often misunderstood or discussed with imprecision and is, therefore, in need of clarification. Terminological imprecision enters when authors use the term 'hierarchy' to mean any vertically-valuated organization whatsoever, be it of persons, things, acts, or anything else that can be ranked by order or eminence. On the contrary, among Bonaventure, his contemporaries, and their predecessors, hierarchy refers to the ordered performance of sacred or divinizing actions among persons, human, angelic, or (even) divine, as *hierarchia*'s common Latin translation, *sacer principatus*, indicates. In contravention of this specific meaning, Bonaventure's world view or his organization of persons, operations, acts, states of ascent, etc. are frequently labeled as "hierarchized" or "hierarchical" not because they pertain to the specific deifying activity or relationships on earth or among the angels—that is, the authentic meaning—but simply because they are ordered. Awash in its loose application, the significance of hierarchy is often obscured from Bonaventure's readers.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, even when hierarchy in Bonaventure's writings is understood as referring to sacred action among persons, the cultic character of hierarchy as originally articulated by Dionysius and understood by at least some of his medieval followers is not acknowledged. Nonetheless, not only does Bonaventure recognize, in an entirely traditional manner, the rites of the earthly Church as particular instances of hierarchy, but as his thought develops, he also teaches that hierarchy itself is an act of worship, internal to the Trinity and also extended

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<sup>7</sup> A telling example of the imprecise use of the term hierarchy is found in the English translation of the *Itinerarium* in the Works of St. Bonaventure series, in which, in the fourth chapter, "*hierarchia potentiae*", the hierarchical powers, is translated as "hierarchically ordered powers".

to the intelligent creatures who by participating God become a living worship—living sacrifices—in the manner exemplified by St. Francis of Assisi.

Third, Bonaventure's use of hierarchy to explain how St. Francis was conformed to Christ and embodied an angelic life worthy of imitation by all offers an opportunity to examine how Dionysius' thought is fundamental to Bonaventure's. Enshrining Francis and Franciscan spirituality in the Dionysian framework of hierarchy testifies to the latter's importance. For by shining a Dionysian light on Francis, Bonaventure does not only articulate Francis' singular holiness through the language and concepts of the Areopagite, he also casts an implicit but hearty approval of Dionysius' thought insofar as it is worthy to describe the Seraphic Father and the exemplary life he represents.<sup>8</sup>

Fourth, Bonaventure's application of hierarchy to Francis' life, both biography and his form of life, is an example of how Dionysian concepts can be transformed in their reception. For Bonaventure does not only take Dionysian hierarchy as the system fit to express Francis' spiritual ascent in the *Itin*, *LMj*, and other works; Bonaventure expands the received notion of hierarchy and its related concepts. Bonaventure borrows from his predecessors, such as Thomas Gallus, to analyze and describe the hierarchized soul. Moreover, he shifts the focus of hierarchy from clerical activity to the Christian ideal of imitating Christ embodied by mendicancy. For Bonaventure, that mendicant life depends upon the sacraments and ecclesiastical order administered by the clergy, but nonetheless comes to its fullest fruition in lives conformed to Christ rather than elevated to clerical status. It is in this way that many of Francis's virtues perceived by Bonaventure, including, humility, poverty and the like pour new meanings into Dionysian wineskins.

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<sup>8</sup> Ratzinger, *The Theology of History in St. Bonaventure*, 92–93.

For all these reasons, although many other aspects deserve attention, studying hierarchy is a practical choice for beginning a comprehensive doctrinal study of Bonaventure's Dionysianism. Furthermore, hierarchy is also the topic where Bonaventure's writings come to their abrupt conclusion in *Hex* XX-XIII. For that fourth of the *Hex*'s seven planned "visions" that detailed hierarchy, which would have stood at the *Hex*'s center had Bonaventure completed it. To examine the emergence of hierarchy's prominence in Bonaventure's works is to peer, even if in a narrow and limited way, into the heart of his thought. To do so thoroughly, I will turn, very briefly, to the *status questions* of Bonaventure's use of Dionysian hierarchy.

### **Status Questionum: Prior Research**

Given that Bonaventure's use of hierarchy is widely acknowledged in monographs on Bonaventure's theology, it is, perhaps, surprising that there are so few direct studies on the sources, role, and meaning of hierarchy in Bonaventure's thought. The majority of the studies that offer extensive consideration of hierarchy's role in his thought were written in the early to mid-twentieth century, against the backdrop of debates over the character of Bonaventure's Augustinianism. In the same era, two works significant for Dionysian studies appeared. First, H. F. Dondaine's *Le Corpus Dionysien de l'Université de Paris au XIII Siècle*,<sup>9</sup> appeared in 1953, and explained the contents of the *Corpus Dionysiacum Parisiense* (CDP). The CDP was a medieval compilation of translations and commentaries on the CD reproduced in various combinations between

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<sup>9</sup> H. F. Dondaine, *Le Corpus Dionysien de l'Université de Paris Au XIII. Siècle* (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e letteratura, 1953).

the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, offering a rich interpretative resource on the *CD* Dionysian to the schoolmen and students at Paris. Second, a year later, René Roques' magisterial account of hierarchy in Dionysius' thought, *L'Universe dionysien: structure hiérarchique du monde selon le Pseudo-Denys*, was published. However, while Dondaine's and Roque's studies impacted the mid-twentieth century writings on hierarchy, Bonaventurean studies have almost entirely parted ways from ongoing work on the Areopagite and his legacy. Admittedly, later-twentieth century studies on Bonaventure continued to address Dionysius' role for the Seraphic Doctor's thought, but the contemporary turn to re-examine the Christological and latreutic focus of the *CD* has never found its way into those studies on Bonaventure. Even Regis Armstrong's 1978 dissertation on the *LMj* as a work of spiritual theology and writings that followed it, while examining Bonaventure's Dionysianism scarcely engaged the details of Dionysian hierarchy.<sup>10</sup> It and other writings vindicating the *LMj* as a work of theology appeared either shortly before or shortly after Paul Rorem's dissertation that renewed interest in the liturgical and biblical elements of the *CD* was published and thus by reasons of time and focus did not interact with it or the conversations it produced.

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<sup>10</sup> Regis J Armstrong, "The Spiritual Theology of the 'Legenda Major' of Saint Bonaventure." (Ph.D., Fordham University, 1978); Noel Muscat, *The Life of Saint Francis in the Light of Saint Bonaventure's Theology on the "Verbum Crucifixum"* (Roma: Ed. Antonianum, 1989); Albert T. Haase, "Bonaventure's 'Legenda Maior': A Redaction Critical Approach" (Ph.D., Fordham University, 1990); J. Wayne Hellmann, "The Seraph in the Legends of Thomas of Celano and St. Bonaventure: The Victorine Transition," in *Bonaventuriana. Miscellanea in Onore Di Jacques Guy Bougerol OFM.*, ed. Francisco de Asís Chavero Blanco, vol. 2, Bibliotheca Pontificii Athenaei Antoniani 27 (Roma: Edizioni Antonianum, 1988), 346–56; Ewert H. Cousins, "The Image of St. Francis in Bonaventure's Legenda Maior.," in *Bonaventuriana. Miscellanea in Onore Di Jacques Guy Bougerol OFM.*, ed. Francisco de Asís Chavero Blanco, vol. 1, Bibliotheca Pontificii Athenaei Antoniani, 27–28 (Roma: Edizioni Antonianum, 1988), 311–21.

### Status Questionis: Dionysius' Role in Bonaventure's Theology

Twentieth century scholarship on Bonaventure's writings, almost universally, treated hierarchy as an element of a larger explanation rather than central subject of a theological or historical investigation. Of the only two extended writings that have been dedicated to hierarchy in Bonaventure *per se*, Romano Guardini's long chapter on it in *Systembildende Elemente* and Jacques-Guy Bougerol's study "Saint Bonaventure et la Hiérarchie dionysienne", only the later tugged at the question of how Bonaventure's concept of hierarchy differs from Dionysius. Thus, assessing Guardini's and the other scholars' understanding of hierarchy in Bonaventure's thought must be, by necessity, not a review of arguments but of interpretations of what hierarchy means, both hierarchy in general and as specifically articulated in Bonaventure's writings.

Decades before Guardini's treatment of hierarchy in Bonaventure's thought, the editors of the Quaracchi edition of Bonaventure's *Opera Omnia* (*Bon Op*) made only a few comments on Bonaventure's use of hierarchy. Their comments offer no systematic account of hierarchy but simply equate hierarchy with the medieval translation introduced by Eriugena, *sacer principatus*, with the emphasis on *principatus*—to rule and recognize that hierarchy is an act of illumination between hierarchies and persons within the hierarchies.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> The Quaracchi editors point out that Bonaventure's identification of the Trinity as the supercelestial hierarchy is not followed by St. Thomas Aquinas, while others are careful to note that a supercelestial hierarchy cannot pertain to an *ordo principandi* (the order of rule) but rather to an *ordo principiandi*, an order of origin (II, 243A). A few other comments are made throughout *Bon Op*. At II, 270A, angelic locution is distinguished from illumination, insofar as the latter refers to the communication of that which is *per se* beyond cognition. At II, 127A, the editors have a note identifying the four hierarchies, and understand Dionysius to have taught that the serial ordering of illumination obtains between the orders in the hierarchies, and between the persons in the orders. At V, 452B, a slippage in precision occurs when the editors mention the "hierarchies of the hierarchized soul" along with the



Etienne Gilson's *The Philosophy of St. Bonaventure*, discusses hierarchy in Bonaventure in the context of the organization and role of angels and of human beatitude, approaching Bonaventure's understanding of hierarchy synchronically by drawing upon Bonaventure's statements about hierarchy from opposite ends his corpus without any concern for the doctrine of hierarchy's development.<sup>12</sup> Gilson himself employs the terms "hierarchy" and "hierarchically ordered" in various ways to describe Bonaventure's thought, encompassing both the colloquial meaning applicable to any vertically-valuated series and the authentic sense in which it pertains *per se* to the deification of intelligent creatures.<sup>13</sup> Gilson presents hierarchy, in both the proper and colloquial senses,

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hierarchies of the angels, the blessed, and the Church militant. At V, 591, the editors describe the Church as one hierarchy conformed to the supernal hierarchy. At V, 586, brief definition of the hierarchized soul is given: "a soul conformed to the heavenly Jerusalem". At VIII, 319A, in *Apol paup*, the editors point back to II *Sent* d. 9 *preanota* and *Brev Prol.* 3 for an account of the division of the hierarchies. They also reference the *versio*, or translation, of Thomas Gallus—perhaps the *Extractio*. Gallus seems to be, besides the references to Eriugena's *versio*, the only other commentator on Dionysius that the editors pay much attention to in terms of Bonaventure's reading of Dionysius.

<sup>12</sup> Étienne Gilson, *La Philosophie de Saint Bonaventure*, Études de Philosophie Médiévale 4 (Paris: J. Vrin, 1924) is the first French edition while the first English edition is Étienne Gilson, *The Philosophy of St. Bonaventure*, ed. F. J. Sheed, trans. Iltyd Trethowan (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1938). The sources for Gilson's discussion are primarily the explanation of hierarchy in II *Sent*, the description of the hierarchized soul's ascent from the *Itin*, and the hierarchical taxonomies of *Hex XX-XXIII*—all relating to the angels, to the Church, to the reformation of the human soul, and the relationships between all three. However, despite drawing on works spanning the breadth of Bonaventure's career, several aspects of Bonaventure's teaching on hierarchy are left unmentioned, not least the fact that hierarchy, for Bonaventure, is an intra-Trinitarian act which is subsequently shared to creatures proceeding from and returning to God.

<sup>13</sup> Gilson, *The Philosophy of St. Bonaventure*, 241, 266–67; cf. Gilson, *La Philosophie de Saint Bonaventure*, 229. In the eighth chapter, on the angels, Gilson speaks of the "universal hierarchical order" (*l'ordre hiérarchique universel*), a natural order wherein pure angelic forms might be ranked above embodied souls, in regards to the question of whether the angels are souls or not and whether on account of their nature they stand between God and humanity, while elsewhere he speaks of the universe as a hierarchic order (*ordonnance hiérarchique*) to be climbed by the human intellect (eng. 239, 441, 448; fr. 229, 425). Moreover, Gilson's use of the verb *hiérarchiser* simply means to place in order (fr. 231, 254), especially with the sense of a vertical order which Dom Iltyd Trethowan translated as to "grade hierarchically" and "to be hierarchically ordered" (eng. 241, 266). The use of the verb in such a way risks obscuring the sacred connotation of hierarchization in both the Latin and Greek sources. Besides these, Gilson also speaks of the "hierarchy of things" (*"hiérarchie des choses"*) (eng. 554, n. 18; fr. 426, note 2 from p. 425) while the English translation speaks of the soul reaching a new level in its own hierarchy, that is, the stages of the soul's ascent, although the French original states merely "[l'ame] se hiérachisant d'un nouveau degré" (eng. 455; fr. 439). Gilson also speaks of the hierarchy and the hierarchization of the soul. He treats the former as a vertical series of influence and a "power ordered, sacred in nature" whereby a

principally as an organization—of persons and of the soul—prerequisite to deification without noting that it is also the expression of deification.<sup>14</sup> Hierarchy is, in this understanding, the operation of divine influence through a series of angelic and human persons that reorganizes the soul so that the soul (or angelic spirit) can ascend, by intellect (and will), through the “hierarchy” of the world to its creator. In this account, Francis stands as the one who has most perfectly accomplished that ascent in holiness but Gilson proposes no other sense in which Francis is recognized as hierarchical.<sup>15</sup>

Georges Tavard’s study of Bonaventure’s understanding of development of doctrine, *Transiency and Permanence*, says little about the Areopagite or hierarchy, but what he does is connected to the topic of ecstasy.<sup>16</sup> In his discussion of beatitude, i.e. the fruition of wisdom and the *transitus* belonging to mystical experience, Tavard discusses Bonaventure’s “three ways” of purgation, illumination, and union (he does not call this last way perfection) and by appealing to Bonaventure’s *De triplice via* (*Trip via*), notes that these three ways are parallel “paths to perfection” rather than successive steps of ascent.<sup>17</sup> He distinguishes illumination and union as intellectual/cataphatic and affective/apophatic enjoyment (fruition) of God, respectively, which precede the ecstasy

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rational being has domination over subject beings, a definition employed by Bonaventure (II *Sent*, d. 9, praenota, [II.232B]) but borrowed from Prepositinus of Cremona. By hierarchization, however, Gilson primarily means the soul’s reorganization (eng. 443–4).

<sup>14</sup> Gilson, nonetheless, acknowledges that hierarchy is not simply a taxonomy but an action. However, by solely quoting the magisterial definition of hierarchy “*principatus*” over “*recti subditi*” from Prepositinus of Cremona, quoted by Bonaventure in II *Sent* d.9, praenota, Gilson shows how the notion of benevolent rule of one over another dominates his understanding of hierarchy, see Gilson, *The Philosophy of St. Bonaventure*, 443–44.

<sup>15</sup> Gilson, *The Philosophy of St. Bonaventure*, 233, 444–57.

<sup>16</sup> Georges H. Tavard, *Transiency and Permanence: The Nature of Theology According to St. Bonaventure*, Franciscan Institute Publications, no. 4 (St. Bonaventure, N.Y: Franciscan Institute, 1954), 243–45. He also briefly describes *Hex XX-XIII* as a consideration of the constituents of the spiritual world, God and the angelic “hierarchy”, the Church, and souls that imitate the Trinity (Tavard, 221–22, 235).

<sup>17</sup> Tavard, *Transiency and Permanence*, 230–31.

given by grace.<sup>18</sup> Keenly, Tavad recognizes that, for Bonaventure, illumination is ordered towards receiving the ray of truth through the imitation of Christ since Christ is the truth.<sup>19</sup>

Joseph Ratzinger's doctoral work, the "Theology of History in St. Bonaventure", produced between 1953 and 1959 differs from Tavad and Gilson by its insistence on Dionysius' paramount importance for Bonaventure's thought and his impact on Bonaventure's mature, apocalyptically oriented, doctrine centered on St. Francis. Ratzinger situates Bonaventure's distinctive appropriation of Dionysian thought within the broader Dionysian renaissance of the twelfth century that sparked theological innovation in the thirteenth.<sup>20</sup> Ratzinger addresses hierarchy as an integral part of Bonaventure's theology of spiritual ascent but only describes its operation very briefly under the image of creatures opening the window to God's light.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, he claims that Bonaventure's use of Dionysius deepened and developed through a closer reading of the *CD* after I-IV *Sent*. Ratzinger sees the result as Bonaventure's adoption of the Dionysian understanding that theology means sacred scripture and a focus on the supra-intellectual character of divine union in addition to the Dionysian doctrine of

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<sup>18</sup> Tavad, 232–35. Tavad uses the term "hierarchy" to describe the "twelve stars of mystical experience" that Bonaventure ascribes to the soul in *Hex XXIII* but Bonaventure does not call them a hierarchy there or elsewhere.

<sup>19</sup> Tavad, 230–31.

<sup>20</sup> Ratzinger, *The Theology of History in St. Bonaventure*, 87–88.

<sup>21</sup> Ratzinger, 47–50, 93–92, esp. 75: "The only source of revelation is the divine ray of light. The light which illumines us immediately is the divine light. In the process of revelation, the angels act only *occasionaliter* like a man who opens the window and lets in the light though he himself is neither the source nor cause of the light. In this way revelation remains, on the one hand, entirely the work of God; on the other hand, it is withdrawn from the from all individualistic isolation and is placed in the context of the divine activity which embraces the world. In this context, every creature, as a part of the "hierarchy," is engaged in a holy work which takes its origin from God and leads back to God by way of fellow creatures." (cf. *Hex III.32* [V.348B]) Ratzinger is borrowing an image from *Hex III.32*, however he extends "hierarchy" outside of the proper meaning to include all creatures, although he correctly understands hierarchy to involve "holy work".

hierarchy and the cycle of *exitus-reditus*, which are found in I-IV *Sent.*<sup>22</sup> Moreover, Ratzinger points out how these Dionysian traditions are employed at the service of and as the framework for a Franciscan apocalypticism such that Dionysius' anagogy becomes inseparable for eschatological hope for Bonaventure, to which convergence the prominence of the Seraph attests to in his mature thought.<sup>23</sup>

Hans Urs von Balthasar's discussion of Bonaventure in *Glory of the Lord* II is extensive in its framing of Francis' centrality in his theology of *expressio*, the revelation of God through the Son and his incarnation, but quite brief in its remarks of Dionysius. Balthasar has little to say about hierarchy directly, however, his recognition of Dionysius' profound importance to Bonaventure joined with his argument that Francis' plays theological role in Bonaventure's thought invites further study on the interrelation of Franciscan and Dionysian themes in his corpus.<sup>24</sup>

Romano Guardini, in his *Systembildende elemente in der Theologie Bonaventuras*, an exposition of the doctrinal themes and methods in Bonaventure's corpus, was the first to lay out a dedicated account of Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy *in se*.<sup>25</sup> Guardini's approach is largely synchronic, giving a general account of what hierarchy means and does in Bonaventure's theology. He sets his consideration of hierarchy within the wider exposition of two doctrines, the *gradatio entium* and the *influentia sensus et motus* as the implication of those two doctrines being brought

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<sup>22</sup> Ratzinger, 89–90; 208–9, n. 18. Ratzinger does not attribute supra-intellectual union to God as a development in Bonaventure's thought after I–IV *Sent* but sees the Areopagite's writings as lending a new cohesiveness and emphasis to such a union in his later works: "We point out that there is not a change in content; but there is a change of emphasis within the whole. It is this new emphasis which gives a new meaning to the structure of Bonaventurian theology." (Ratzinger, 90).

<sup>23</sup> Ratzinger, 70, 93–94, 157–8.

<sup>24</sup> Balthasar, *Glory of the Lord*, vol. 2, 261, 270–276.

<sup>25</sup> Guardini, *Systembildende Elemente in Der Theologie Bonaventuras*, 146–83.

together.<sup>26</sup> In seeking to understand the shape of Bonaventure's thought in general, Guardini posits that hierarchy is the result of applying three philosophical doctrines, the *gradatio entium*, *egressus*, and *reductio* that describe the whole cosmos' order and activity, to a *theological* topic, namely, the church.<sup>27</sup> The hierarchies represent these cosmic movements translated to the sphere of grace—a point on which Guardini sees Bonaventure correcting Gallus by affirming that hierarchization is *not* at all accomplished by nature but by grace alone.<sup>28</sup> Guardini's summarization of Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy largely depends upon *Hex XX-XXIII*, and so comprises Bonaventure's elaborate taxonomy of the angelic and ecclesiastical hierarchies receiving their order from the divine hierarchy of the Trinity, which order is both the vehicle and fruit of intelligent creatures' corporate and individual reception and transmission of the divine *influentia*.<sup>29</sup> Guardini, a keen observer of the tensions held together in the hierarchical system, points out that, for Bonaventure, the mediatory structure of this *influentia* exercised through the angels' prelacy is also the mode of God's immediacy, like blood shared through the veins of a body, so that glory *shared* is not glory *diminished* but glory *increased*.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, in attending to hierarchy as a system of mediation rather than, even unintentionally, rendering it as a scheme of ascent, Guardini correctly treats purification, illumination, and perfection as first and foremost powers exercised, in Bonaventure's treatment, by the angels upon human knowing and loving, although

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<sup>26</sup> Guardini, 93–145.

<sup>27</sup> Guardini, 146.

<sup>28</sup> Guardini, 170.

<sup>29</sup> Guardini, 147–48, 150–159.

<sup>30</sup> Guardini, 156, 160–1, 165.

Guardini makes no mention of the sacraments' similar role.<sup>31</sup> Finally, Guardini point out that Bonaventure affords Mary the Mother God a status above the ranks of the angelic hierarchies.<sup>32</sup> Unlike Ratzinger and Balthasar, Bonaventure's Franciscan spirituality and the (apocalyptic) figure of Francis receive little consideration in Guardini's account of Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy.

In the 1960s, Jacques Guy Bougerol authored several studies on Bonaventure that engaged his use of hierarchy and with greater focus than his predecessors, attending closely to Bonaventure access to and use of the *CD* in its various versions. Three works address Bonaventure's use of Dionysius and hierarchy: *Introduction à Saint Bonaventure*, "Saint Bonaventure et le Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite", and "Saint Bonaventure et la Hiérarchie dionysienne". In *Introduction*, Bougerol states that "Dionysius' influence was threefold: he gave Bonaventure a viewpoint, a method, and a few fundamental themes", which themes include the hierarchical order intelligent beings (Bougerol uses the colloquial sense), symbolism, participation, although he would not flesh these themes out until his later two studies on Dionysius and Bonaventure.<sup>33</sup> Bougerol also notes that Bonaventure "followed the general spirit of the Areopagite but deeply modified the theme of hierarchical action" to wit, "Bonaventure may borrow the Dionysian terminology but he modifies its substance. Whereas the Pseudo-Areopagite understands

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<sup>31</sup> Guardini, 156–59.

<sup>32</sup> Guardini, 153; Bonaventure, *Sermo I de S. Angelis* (IX, 612B).

<sup>33</sup> Jacques Guy Bougerol, *Introduction to the Works of Bonaventure*, 1st American ed. (Paterson, N.J., Paris; New York: St. Anthony Guild Press; Distributor: Desclee, 1964) first published as Jacques Guy Bougerol, *Introduction à l'étude de Saint Bonaventure*, Bibliothèque de Théologie, v. 2 (Tournai: Desclée, 1961); Bougerol, "Saint Bonaventure et Le Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite."; Jacques-Guy Bougerol, "Saint Bonaventure et La Hiérarchie Dionysienne.," *Archives d'histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire Du Moyen Âge* 36 for 1969 (1970): 131–67. Jacques Guy Bougerol, ed., *Lexique Saint Bonaventure* (Paris: Éditions franciscaines, 1969) also includes entries on hierarchy but the three works cited above suffice to present Bougerol's reading Bonaventure's Dionysianism.

the neoplatonic hierarchy of Plotinus in a sense that is generally static, Bonaventure's is essentially dynamic."<sup>34</sup> He goes on to quote J.-F. Bonnefoy,<sup>35</sup> who says that the powers of purgation, illumination, and perfection are not in a hierarchical order (in the colloquial sense) but *hierarchize*. Indeed, they do hierarchize, but Bougerol shows his misunderstanding of the nuances of Dionysius by characterizing hierarchy, or rather the hierarchical powers, as a cosmic organization derived from Plotinus while failing to recognize that they are also simultaneous for Dionysius and yet also of a progressive order for Bonaventure (while still simultaneous).<sup>36</sup> Regarding Bonaventure's version of the *CD*, following Dondaine's own study of the medieval Latin version of Dionysius, he attributes to Bonaventure a unique Franciscan version which differed from the versions of Eriugena, the Saracen, and Grosseteste, especially of the *DN*, however at other times he uses texts which are very close to either Eriugena's or the Saracen's version.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, Bougerol suggests that Bonaventure acquired a new version of the *CH* "during his doctoral period", i.e. after writing I-IV *Sent*.<sup>38</sup>

Nearly a decade later, Bougerol produced the most detailed review of Bonaventure's citations of the *CD* in the *Bon Op*, drawing conclusions about Bonaventure's texts of the *CD* and his intellectual continuity with and debt to the Areopagite. In it, Bougerol reaffirms that Dondaine was correct to attribute a unique Franciscan version of the *CD* to Bonaventure and Alexander of Hales (and his sphere of

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<sup>34</sup> Bougerol, *Introduction to the Works of Bonaventure*, 40–41, 156–57. Originally published as Bougerol, *Introduction à l'étude de Saint Bonaventure*. Cf. Bougerol, "Saint Bonaventure et Le Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite," 113–23.

<sup>35</sup> Jean Francois Bonnefoy, *Une somme bonaventurienne de theologie mystique, le De triplici via* (Paris: Librairie Saint-François, 1934), 12.

<sup>36</sup> Bougerol, *Introduction to the Works of Bonaventure*, 156–57.

<sup>37</sup> Bougerol, *Introduction to the Works of Bonaventure*, 40–41, 47–48.

<sup>38</sup> Bougerol, 47–48.

influence).<sup>39</sup> Based on the frequency of the citations he identified, Bougerol also asserts an order of importance of the individual works of the *CD* for Bonaventure's thought, from most to least important: *DN*, *MT*, *CH*, *EH*, *Ep.* I-X.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, Bougerol judges Bonaventure to be an accurate reader of Dionysius, however, he never draws the Areopagite's Greek text into his discussion.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, without naming names, Bougerol contests the idea that Bonaventure is more dependent upon Dionysius' after writing I-IV *Sent*, arguing instead that since Bonaventure cites (explicitly and by paraphrase) the *CD* approximately three times as frequently before than after 1257, (when his university career ends) the *CD* diminishes in importance in his writings.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, the bulk of the total citations (248 in all), explicit and paraphrased, belong to the I-IV *Sent* (148) while Bougerol counts hardly any in *Comm Luke*, *Brev*, and *Itin* (4, 2, and 5, respectively)—the works which I will treat in Chapter III—and of course, none in the *LMj*.<sup>43</sup> Thus, although Bougerol does not argue that Bonaventure underwent a doctrinal departure from the Dionysius after 1257, the waning of citations from the *CD* demands a thoughtful response from anyone who would claim that Dionysius' thought, hierarchy included, has a greater role in Bonaventure's later works written as the Franciscan minister general.

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<sup>39</sup> Bougerol, "Saint Bonaventure et Le Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite.", 112. Unlike his earlier assessment of Bonaventure's texts of the *CD*, Bougerol does not mention distinct versions of the *DN* and *CH*, but comes to a general conclusion that Bonaventure had a text based on Eriugena's *versio* corrected with the Saracen's *Nova translatio* while noting that, unlike his master, Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure occasionally followed Robert Grosseteste's translation of the *CD*.

<sup>40</sup> Bougerol, 105.

<sup>41</sup> Bougerol, 80.

<sup>42</sup> Bougerol, 105–6. He takes the *Hex*, with only seventeen citations, as representative of the *CD*'s diminished importance in Bonaventure's writings.

<sup>43</sup> Bougerol, 36–38.



In that same study, Bougerol himself, provides, at least, the beginning of a response in admitting that even in *Hex*, which possessed no great number of citations from the *CD*, “one can find in the presence of Dionysius without Bonaventure citing it explicitly”, and not only in the *Hex* but in the *DEP*, *Apol paup*, and other works.<sup>44</sup> What Bougerol recognizes is that Dionysius has seeped into the breadth of Bonaventure’s doctrinal system, touching his doctrine of the trinity with notion of the self-diffusive good, Christology with the notion the *reductio*, angelology with the whole taxonomy and definition of Dionysian hierarchy, his ecclesiology with the notion that the lower hierarchies image those above, and his spiritual theology by the hierarchization of the soul through the hierarchical powers.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, the shape of Bonaventure’s approach to theology overall is, for Bougerol, marked by Dionysius in its spirit, which looks to union with God, and method, which appreciates the place of positive and negative theology.<sup>46</sup>

However, Bougerol does not concede that these doctrines, or rather, the Dionysian contribution to these doctrines, including his account of hierarchy in the *CH* and *EH*, evolved over Bonaventure’s career. He only concedes that if Bonaventure *did* reread and deepen his understanding of the *CD* while he was minister general of the order the sole development to be found is this, that as Bonaventure once received Dionysius as the theologian in the first half his career, he later read Dionysius as a spiritual master in the second half, attentive to the doctrine of “*henosis* and *theosis*, to union with God and deification”.<sup>47</sup> Bougerol, however, does not take it as certain that he did since he esteems Bonaventure’s early knowledge of the *CD* as already profound. On the other hand,

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<sup>44</sup> Bougerol, 113.

<sup>45</sup> Bougerol, 117–22.

<sup>46</sup> Bougerol, 114–16.

<sup>47</sup> Bougerol, 113.

Bougerol does regard Bonaventure as making important developments drawing upon but beyond the *CD*'s doctrines. He regards Bonaventure's as having synthesized the cataphatic and apophatic approaches in Dionysius by more clearly explaining the relationship of symbolic (as in the *Itin*) and speculative (as in the *Brev*) theology to the mystical theology (as in *Itin* VII, *Trip via*, and *Hex XXIII*) into which they pass.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, Bougerol claims that Bonaventure transformed the Dionysian concept of hierarchy by inserting Christ as the hierarch within it "to the point of transforming [hierarchy] entirely" so that, in his estimation, Bonaventure steps beyond the "neoplatonic universe of Proclus and Iamblichus".<sup>49</sup> Following Olegario Gonzales, Bougerol characterizes Bonaventure's Christology as set within a larger project of joining Dionysius to Francis, in order to give the Seraphic Doctor a metaphysical voice and to give the Areopagite a "solid, historic Christianity" so that the Areopagite might enter Christian universe of personal salvation, as safeguarded by Augustine's doctrine of grace.<sup>50</sup> Not least in this solidity is Bonaventure's disjuncture between holiness and status in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, which development Bougerol locates in *Apol paup*.<sup>51</sup> Beyond these developments, Bougerol does not trace any particular assimilation between the Franciscan and Dionysian elements in Bonaventure's thought.

Nor does Bougerol identify any further assimilations between Francis and Dionysius in his final treatment of Bonaventure's Dionysianism, his study of hierarchy in

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<sup>48</sup> Bougerol, 116.

<sup>49</sup> Bougerol, 114, 122.

<sup>50</sup> Bougerol, 118, 122. Cf. Olegario González de Cardedal and Xavier Zubiri, *Misterio trinitario y existencia humana: estudio histórico teológico en torno a San Buenaventura* (Madrid: Rialp, 1966), 217–19.

<sup>51</sup> Bougerol, "Saint Bonaventure et Le Pseudo-Denys l'Aréopagite.," 120. See *Apol paup* III (VIII.244B–252B).

Bonaventure's thought from only a year later 1969. That study carefully presents Bonaventure's use of Dionysius' definitions of hierarchy, taxonomy of hierarchy, which, together, express the purpose or nature of hierarchy as *egressus* from God and *reductio* to God according to the pattern of the divine hierarchy's interior life.<sup>52</sup> Bougerol's approach is to explain in detail the role and conceptual structure of the hierarchies in Bonaventure's thought and so focuses on II *Sent* and *Hex* XX-XXIII, Bonaventure's two most systematic accounts of the hierarchies, reading those accounts together as more or less constitutive of a single account of hierarchy despite being separated by two decades. Thus, much of his study is, in effect, a close reading of the hierarchical structures elaborated of *Hex* XX-XXIII. He details the operations of the divine, angelic, and ecclesiastical hierarchies as they transmit the divine *influentia* in the course of their *egressus* and *reductio* in balance with the subjective side of hierarchical ascent articulated especially in *Trip via* and *Hex* XXII-III.<sup>53</sup> Bougerol's approach, however, largely leaves to the side the way in which hierarchy and related concepts are deployed differently throughout Bonaventure's corpus. Nonetheless, he comes away with general remarks about Bonaventure's reading of Dionysian hierarchy in his conclusion: 1) Dionysius' thought in which "Neoplatonic hierarchies" strain to be reconciled with Christian faith, presents difficult material for Bonaventure to work with; 2) despite the great distance between Dionysius and Bonaventure in time and context, Bonaventure, reads Dionysius well; 3) Bonaventure adds to the Dionysian definition of hierarchy as order, knowledge,

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<sup>52</sup> Bougerol, "Saint Bonaventure et La Hiérarchie Dionysienne.," 131–37.

<sup>53</sup> Bougerol, 138–65.

and activity by making hierarchies agents of *influentia*, the presence of God;<sup>54</sup> 4)

Bonaventure follows the principles of his exemplarist metaphysics and regards the whole of reality as shaped by hierarchy inasmuch as the divine hierarchy, the Trinity, affords a structure to the angelic hierarchy, and, through the angels, to the ecclesiastical hierarchy.<sup>55</sup>

In sum, Bougerol had a very high regard for Bonaventure's knowledge of Dionysius and the importance of the *CD* for Bonaventure's theology. He recognized that the concerns of Bonaventure's Franciscanism were in tension with aspects of the *CD*'s doctrinal content, including elements of hierarchy. Nonetheless, he does not pursue the question of this tension with the detail by which dealt with other aspects of Bonaventure's Dionysianism, as seen above. Bougerol also drank from the cup of suspicion about the Areopagite's compatibility with "solid historical Christianity", and that bias shaped his reading of Bonaventure's Dionysianism and hierarchy in particular, treating it as a system to be saved from a mechanical Neoplatonism, even when transformed by Bonaventure's "dynamic" trinitarian reading of hierarchy and the soul's return to God through those graced structures on earth and heaven. In the final regard, Bougerol's work and especially his two studies on Bonaventure and Dionysius have been, in the half-century since their publication, the most precise and reliable engagements on the topic but they do not represent the final word on Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy.

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<sup>54</sup> This is an odd claim, which reflects a weakness in Bougerol's knowledge of Dionysius, and even on Roques' part, whom he follows, because the angelic hierarchies, as Chapter I will show clearly, transmit Jesus the light of the Father rather than conceptual information.

<sup>55</sup> Bougerol, "Saint Bonaventure et La Hiérarchie Dionysienne.," 166–67.

Several other works published since Bougerol's last study on Bonaventure's Dionysianism recognize the importance of hierarchy for Bonaventure yet without a dedicated study on the topic. Wayne Hellmann's *Divine and Created Order in Bonaventure's Theology* principally defines hierarchy, divine and created as "an order of persons".<sup>56</sup> Zachary Hayes, in his penetrating study on the role of Christ in Bonaventure's thought, understands hierarchy in his thought both in the colloquial sense of an organized universe and narrower sense of hierarchy as the communal and interior participation in divine life through grace, a sense which is naturally connected to Bonaventure's soteriology.<sup>57</sup> Hayes underscores the Trinitarian and Christological context Bonaventure gives to hierarchy, especially that the intratrinitarian relationships stand at the root of Christ the hierarch's mediatorial relationship to the created hierarchies.<sup>58</sup> Ultimately, Hayes characterizes Bonaventure's mature thought, especially in *Hex*, as the application of "Augustinian interiority" and the "Dionysian approach to God" to Francis' "experience of nature and of Christ".<sup>59</sup> Colt Anderson's *A Call to Piety* is the exception, articulating in a chapter-length exposition how Bonaventure creatively recasts hierarchy in *Hex* XX-XXIII to include the development of the mendicant orders in response to the anti-mendicant polemicists who themselves argued on the basis hierarchical taxonomy of the *CD*.<sup>60</sup> David Keck, in *Angels & Angelology in the Middle Ages*, reviews the role of

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<sup>56</sup> J. A. Wayne Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order in Bonaventure's Theology*, trans. Jay Hammond, Theology Series (St. Bonaventure, New York: The Franciscan Institute, 2001), 53, 122–26, 154–56. This study was first published as J. A. Wayne Hellmann, *Ordo; Untersuchung eines Grundgedankens in der Theologie Bonaventuras* (München: F. Schöningh, 1974).

<sup>57</sup> Zachary Hayes, *The Hidden Center: Spiritually and Speculative Christology in St. Bonaventure*, Theological Inquiries (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 15–17, 157–161.

<sup>58</sup> Hayes, 160–61, 182–187, 221.

<sup>59</sup> Hayes, 218.

<sup>60</sup> C. Colt Anderson, *A Call to Piety: St. Bonaventure's Collations on the Six days*, 1st ed, Studies in Franciscanism (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 2002), 155–88. Since I will only trace hierarchy as far the

angelologies, including the *CH*, in framing religious life and, in Bonaventure's case, the Franciscan order, taking into account, like Anderson, the Joachimite controversy.<sup>61</sup> In sum, the prevalence of hierarchy and its application to Franciscan concerns in Bonaventure's thought continues to be well-recognized, however, hierarchy is often principally taken as a principle of organization, even in its deifying capacity, while the original sense of Dionysian hierarchy as priestly activity, with its Christocentric and latreutic character, is rarely even in the background of the above discussions.

### **Status Questionis: Reading the *LMj* According to Hierarchy**

Scholarly discussion of Bonaventure's application of Dionysian hierarchy to Francis in the *LMj* only arose in the latter half of the twentieth century after it escaped being dismissed as bereft of theological value thanks to Sophronius Clasen's studies in the three part "S. Bonventura S. Francisci *Legendae maioris* compiler".<sup>62</sup> Previously, the *LMj* had only escaped irrelevance through Paul Sabatier's critical judgment that it dampened Francis' radicalness, thus launching the quest for the historical Francis, and the "Franciscan Question", with A. G. Little and John Moorman following with similar

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*LMj*, Anderson's argument largely falls outside the scope of this dissertation, however, his investigation shows just how novel Bonaventure's intersection of hierarchy and Franciscanism was through his careful recasting of the taxonomy of hierarchy, see especially 165–176.

<sup>61</sup> David Keck, *Angels & Angelology in the Middle Ages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 115–54.

<sup>62</sup> Sophronius Clasen, "S. Bonventura S. Francisci *Legendae Maioris* Compiler (Part 1)," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 54 (1961): 241–72; Sophronius Clasen, "S. Bonventura S. Francisci *Legendae Maioris* Compiler (Part 2)," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 55 (1962): 16–58; Sophronius Clasen, "S. Bonventura S. Francisci *Legendae Maioris* Compiler (Part 3)," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 55 (1962): 289–319, see especially his conclusion that Bonaventure used the theologically oriented methods of medieval historiography on pp. 318–319.

aspersions.<sup>63</sup> Such derision towards the *LMj* was neither new nor has it yet completely abated. Negative evaluations of the Order of Friars Minor's official hagiography of Francis can be traced from the early fourteenth century "Spiritual Franciscans" as far as contemporary scholarship, most notably in the writings of Jacques Dalurun.<sup>64</sup>

The *LMj*'s apologists have defended Bonaventure's presentation of Francis by appealing to the text's (that is, *LMj* apart from the attached accounts of the miracles) theological character and complexity. They contend that it was written for the sake of the Friars Minor in the midst of crises within (conventuals vs. proto-spirituals) and without (anti-mendicant polemics). By and large, these defenders demonstrate the *LMj*'s theological character and content through two perspectives: 1) Bonaventure's organization and division of the text and 2) his curation of his sources, namely, Thomas of Celano's first lives of Francis and his *Treatise on Miracles* (1C, 2C, and 3C) and Julian of Speyer's *Life of St. Francis* (*LJS*). In their view, Bonaventure's selection, modification, and arrangement of his source materials combined with his addition of new episodes and interpolations result in a sophisticated and purposeful framing of Francis as simultaneously an apocalyptic or eschatological figure and an obedient son of the Church.

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<sup>63</sup> Armstrong and Kevin L. Hughes relate these histories in Armstrong, "Spiritual Theology," 1–4 and Kevin L. Hughes, "Bonaventure's Defense of Mendicancy," in *A Companion to Bonaventure*, ed. Jared Goff, J.A. Wayne Hellmann, and Jay M. Hammond, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Boston: Brill, 2013), 510–13. Cf. Paul Sabatier and Francis, *Examen de Quelques Travaux Récents Sur Les Opuscules de Saint François*. (Paris, 1904), 161, n. 1; A. G. Little, "A Guide to Franciscan Studies," *Études Franciscaines* 40 (1928): 530; John R. H. Moormann, *A History of the Franciscan Order from Its Origins to the Year 1517*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 141.

<sup>64</sup> Hughes, "Bonaventure's Defence of Mendicancy," 510–12. Cf. Jacques Dalarun, *The Misadventure of Francis of Assisi*, ed. Edward Hagman, First edition (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Inst Pubs, 2002), 241, 250.

Damien Vorreux's identification of a pattern of spiritual ascent based on Dionysian hierarchy in the *LMj* stands at the root of contemporary arguments for the *LMj*'s theological sophistication. A footnote in his French translation of the *LMj* observes that *LMj* I-IV and XIV-XV concerned Francis' history (his conversion and death, respectively) and bracketed V-XIII, nine chapters that lay out a "schema of the spiritual journey."<sup>65</sup> Vorreux recognized in these middle chapters an ascent through the three hierarchical powers of purification, enlightenment/illumination, and perfection, i.e. the "triple way", in three chapters each, a triad of triads.<sup>66</sup> This initial explanation of Bonaventure's use of the *LMj*'s structure to distinguish between Francis' historical and interior progress and to account for the latter through concepts related to hierarchy laid the groundwork for future studies of the *LMj*'s theological purpose.

A decade later, Regis Armstrong elaborated upon the structure observed by Vorreux in his 1978 dissertation, "The Spiritual Theology of the '*Legenda Major*' of Saint Bonaventure". Armstrong agreed with Vorreux's reading of the middle chapters (V-XIII) as a triad of triads, each aligned to one hierarchical power.<sup>67</sup> Armstrong also proposed that these triads of *LMj* V-XIII could be read along two lines of spiritual development: the vertical ascent to God according to experience of being transformed by the hierarchical powers and the horizontal vision of God as the exemplar seen in all things as a shadow, vestige, and image.<sup>68</sup> Whereas Vorreux had read the chapters surrounding V-XIII as two historical brackets, Armstrong instead treated the historical

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<sup>65</sup> Damien Vorreux, *François d'Assise Documents, Écrits et Premières Biographies*. (Paris: Éditions Franciscaines, 1968), 585, n. 13.

<sup>66</sup> Vorreux, *François d'Assise Documents, Écrits et Premières Biographies* 585, n. 13.

<sup>67</sup> Armstrong, "Spiritual Theology," 147–210.

<sup>68</sup> Armstrong, "Spiritual Theology", 148–152, 157–204.



chapters as a triad describing the progress of Francis' historical life.<sup>69</sup> In this way, the historical triad of events surrounding the Friars Minor's founding mirrored the triad describing of interior life of its founder, the *forma minorum*—the model of Franciscan life.<sup>70</sup> Thus, Armstrong concluded that the *LMj* contained a theology of the spiritual life for the Order based upon imitating Francis in his own spiritual development.

Armstrong's distinction of the chapters according their thematic associations was adopted and adapted by later defenses and descriptions of the *LMj*'s theological content. Ewert Cousins accepted Armstrong's proposed division of *LMj* V–XIII into triads associated with the hierarchical powers but remarked that *LMj* XIII belonged to both the middle and historical chapters.<sup>71</sup> Armstrong's reading of the *LMj* as a work of spiritual theology was also carried forward in two dissertation written under his supervision towards the end of the 1980s. Albert Haase's dissertation, "Bonaventure's *Legenda Maior*: A Redaction Critical Approach" argued that Bonaventure arranged and curated his sources for the *LMj* to teach a Franciscan spirituality adapted to an institutionalized

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<sup>69</sup> Armstrong, 53–54; see also Regis J. Armstrong, "Towards an Unfolding of the Structure of Bonaventure's 'Legenda Major,'" *Laurentianum* 29 (1988): 336.

<sup>70</sup> Armstrong, "Spiritual Theology", 52–53, 146–47. The mirrored triads are Francis' conversion and early mendicancy (*LMj* I–II) and the interior purification (V–VII); conformity to Christ and establishing (*LMj* III–IV) and illumination (VIII–X); departing or going ahead of the Order in ultimate yearning for God (XIV–XV) and perfection (XI–XIII). The title, *forma minorum*, is traced to antiphon *Slave sancte pater*, see Francisco Chavero Blanco, "'Vir Hierarchicus' (Legenda Maior, Prologus). Una Interpretación de San Francisco en Clave Dionisiana?," *Il Santo: Rivista Francescana Di Storia Dottrina Arte* 40, no. 1 (2000): 11, n. 26.

<sup>71</sup> See Ewert Cousins, "The Image of St. Francis in Bonaventure's *Legenda Maior*" in *Bonaventuriana: Miscellanea in onore di Jacques Guy Bougerol ofm*, vol 1, ed. Francisco de Asis Chavero Blanco OFM (Rome: Edizioni Antonianum): 316–321. He also explained that the middle chapters present an instance of the coincidence of opposites (e.g. poverty and fulfillment). His point was not only directed at the content of the middle chapters, but their overall framing of the imitation of Christ. Furthermore, for Cousins, the imitation of Christ is itself an act of kenosis as cruciform while God fills the emptied soul with joy and every blessing as the complement to the imitation of Christ.

Order.<sup>72</sup> Haase largely follows Armstrong's divisions but sees *LMj* III-IV as not only describing Francis' historical life but also the founding and development of the Friars Minor and places XIII solely among the historical chapters, which he treats as bookends.<sup>73</sup> Noel Muscat's dissertation published as "The Life of Saint Francis in the Light of Saint Bonaventure's Theology on the "*Verbum Crucifixum*"", which argues that, for Bonaventure, Francis' reception of grace through the *verbum crucifixum* purifies, illumines, and perfect Francis himself and makes him a source of grace, treats *LMj* XIII as both part of the virtues and historical chapters and emphasizes the latter, contending that those historical chapters are not literary bookends but the climactic *transitus* that results from his virtues.<sup>74</sup> It must also be noted that as these dissertations were being completed, Armstrong himself became critical of the sufficiency of triadic a division based upon the hierarchical powers and proposed another complementary division of *LMj*'s chapters according to the process deepening spiritual vision.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Haase judges that Bonaventure's redaction of the Celanese material suits the purpose of the *LMj* envisioned by Bonaventure as Minister General and the Chapter of Norbonne that commissioned it: to both defend the Minors' way of life and reanimate the order that had undergone an institutional transformation through a faithful but timely reconceptualization of how Francis offers "a validation and interpretation of the Franciscan Ideal for the 1260's and beyond." (Haase, *Bonaventure's Legenda Maior*, 240.)

<sup>73</sup> Haase demonstrates that Bonaventure's curation and recontextualization of both Celanese *Vitae* (*IC* and *2C*) in the *LMj* nonetheless follows the basic structure of *IC*, Chronology/Approach to the Stigmata/Death, while integrating *2C*'s distinction between Francis' chronology and virtues. (Haase, 91–3, 128–133.) In terms of the *LMj*'s structure, Haase knows Vorreux and Armstrong's (earlier and later) triadic divisions of *LMj* and accepts the application of the triple way to Francis. (Haase, 183–186, 371–2.) Nonetheless, he proposes a minor correction to their divisions by attending to the narrative shape of *2C*: Like Vorreux and Armstrong, he reads the *LMj* I–II and III–IV as chronological but identifies their concerns as Francis' conversion and the founding of the order, respectively. (Ibid, 186–189; 236–240) Unlike Vorreux and Armstrong's earlier position, Haase excludes *LMj* XIII from the virtues, leaving V–XII as the virtue based or a "literary womb" for Franciscan life, with XIII and the stigmata as the chronological climax. (Haase, 139, 238) Haase treats *LMj* XIV–XV as a necessary conclusion to the chronological text, just as in *IC* and so affords it limited conceptual importance. (Haase, 236–234.)

<sup>74</sup> Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 29, 206.

<sup>75</sup> Armstrong, "Towards an Unfolding," 338–45.

Francisco Chavero Blanco's "Vir Hierarchicus (Legenda Maior Prologus) Una interpretación de San Francisco en clave dionisiana?" addresses the role of hierarchy in the *LMj*, especially the meaning of the term *vir hierarchicus*.<sup>76</sup> Chavero Blanco identifies the importance of conformity to Christ through imitation, especially of Christ's *kenosis*, which is the context for a triad of themes which he sees laid out in the *LMj* prologue, 1-2: 1) Francis' conversion through grace; 2) his being filled with merit through virtue; 2) so filled he is given an angelic, evangelical mission. For Chavero Blanco, the inseparability of the grace of conversion and the evangelical mission constitute the essence of Francis being the *vir hierarchicus*.<sup>77</sup> Regarding the structure of the *LMj*, he is persuaded by Armstrong's later position that the middle chapters (*LMj* V-XIII) cannot be a generic reflection of purification, illumination, and perfection, nonetheless he treats the triadic structures as applicable to the virtue chapters which have the greater purpose of describing the transformation of Francis, of any Christian, into Christ—a theme he claims is absent from Dionysius' thought and which Bonaventure adopts from Augustine to reorient the schema of the three hierarchical powers or the triple way.<sup>78</sup> He is very critical of Dionysius' Neoplatonism in general and sees the "Platonic" and "Plotinian" ascesis as bereft of the Christian virtues into which Bonaventure, he supposes, had to inject this structure of ascent.<sup>79</sup> Outside of these observation on Armstrong's structuring of the

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<sup>76</sup> Chavero Blanco, "“Vir Hierarchicus (Legenda Maior, Prologus).” Una interpretación de San Francisco en clave dionisiana?"

<sup>77</sup> Chavero Blanco, 18–23.

<sup>78</sup> Chavero Blanco, 36–37.

<sup>79</sup> Chavero Blanco, 42.

middle chapters, Chavero Blanco has no further argument about the structure besides seeing in it a progressive ascent similar to the *Itin*.<sup>80</sup>

More recently, Jay Hammond has reviewed the application of triadic structures and the hierarchical powers, endorsed their legitimacy,<sup>81</sup> and proposed that the triadic progress through the three hierarchical powers is present at every level of the *LMj*, which he terms the macro-, intermediate-, and micro-structures.<sup>82</sup> Hammond combines Vorreux's and Armstrong's divisions of the *LMj* while also extending the triadic structures into each chapter:<sup>83</sup>

Macro-Structure	(I-IV)/(V-XIII)/(XIV-XV)	Vorreux
Intermediate Structures	<i>Historical Chapters</i> (I-II)/(III-IV)/(XIV-XV)  <i>Virtue Chapters</i> (V-VII)/(VIII-X)/(XI-XIII)	Armstrong
Micro-Structure	Each chapter has a triad	Hammond

Tab. I Contributions to the Triadic Reading of the *LMj*

Thus, Hammond's principal contribution to the analysis of the *LMj* is the schematization of its multileveled-triads, that is, of triads nested in triads, each of which follow the

<sup>80</sup> Chavero Blanco, 41.

<sup>81</sup> Jay Hammond generously sent me his detailed notes and charts on the *LMj*'s structure.

<sup>82</sup> Jay Hammond, "Bonaventure's *Legenda Maior*," in *A Companion to Bonaventure*, by Jared Goff, J.A. Wayne Hellmann, and Jay M. Hammond, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Boston: Brill, 2013), 483–86.

<sup>83</sup> Hammond, 483–87. His breakdown of each chapter's internal division is given on p. 486. Hammond retains Vorreux's distinction of the of *LMj* I–IV and XIV–XV as historical bookends around a course of spiritual development in *LMj* V–XIII but, like Muscat, interprets them together as a triad that described the course of Francis' purification from worldly life (*LMj* I–IV), illumination in spiritual conformity to Christ (*LMj* V–XIII), and perfection in union to God (XIV–XV). This is the first-level triad. However, Hammond also accepts Armstrong's juxtaposition of the historical and interior chapters as two complementary triads. He sets Armstrong's two triads as an intermediate level under his own first level triad based upon Vorreux's division.

hierarchical powers. Indeed, unlike Armstrong, he does not reserve the hierarchical powers to *LMj* V-XIII but accepted them as the leitmotif recurrent in every possible division of the text. On the other hand, Hammond does not exclude the simultaneous applicability of other conceptual triads to one and the same divisions of the text. For example, he treats the *LMj*'s macro-structure as reflecting the beginning/purgation, illumination/progress, and the end/perfection.<sup>84</sup>

Hammond also presents two numerological insights into the *LMj*'s structure. First, he observes that the triads of the intermediate-virtue structure form a 3x3 square in which the conceptual triad of the hierarchical powers can be read in two ways, horizontally or vertically:

	Purification Ch.	Illumination Ch.	Perfection Ch.
Purification Triad	V	VI	VII
Illumination Triad	VIII	IX	X
Perfection Triad	XI	XII	XIII

Tab. II The Middle Chapters in Hammond's Reading of the *LMj*

This pattern allows for a double coordination in which, for example, both the first triad (V-VII) and the first three members of each triad (V, VIII, XI) explain purification's affect on and effect by Francis. Hammond treats the horizontal reading as the major division corresponding to one power (purification, illumination or perfection), and the vertical reading as the subdivision of the major division through all the three powers, so that, for

<sup>84</sup> Hammond, "Bonaventure's *Legenda Maior*," 486: "The transition from the beginning section (chs. 1–4) to the progress section (chs. 5–13) presents the "exposition of the virtues" as leading the reader/hearer to the final confirmation of the Rule in the stigmata (ch. 13). In effect, the virtues are the means to that end, namely, to "a seraphic activity that purifies, illumines, and inflames." The end explicitly manifests the means of imitation that link the brothers, Francis, and Christ."

example, VII, X, and XIII represent the purification, illumination, and perfection of perfection, respectively.<sup>85</sup> Despite the observed concurrence of 3 and 9 at in the middle chapters, Hammond does not comment upon any Trinitarian implications that these structures might suggest, however he does point to a second 3x3 pattern at the end of *LMj* XIII, wherein Bonaventure address nine aspects of the stigmata, which Hammond calls their seraphic power.<sup>86</sup>

The second significantly numerological pattern observed by Hammond in the *LMj* consists of Francis' seven visions of the cross.<sup>87</sup> Hammond shows how these seven visions, which conclude and are reviewed in XIII reflect the stages of Francis' historical development and map on to the triad of beginning/progress/end, among other possible associations.<sup>88</sup> He treats these visions as a guide for imitating Francis, who has gone ahead of the brothers through his *transitus*. Hammond judges the septenary structure to

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<sup>85</sup> Hammond, 485.

<sup>86</sup> Hammond, 502–3: “Not surprisingly, Bonaventure again structures this most important section of the *Legenda maior* according to a 3×3 framework. First, the stigmata confirm Francis' virtues and therefore can lead others to faith, hope and charity (purgation). Second, the stigmata confirm the beginning, process and end of Francis' conversion and therefore correctly identify him as an eschatological figure who reveals the truth (illumination). Third, the stigmata confirm that Francis reached “the summit of Gospel perfection” and therefore his “demonstration of Christian wisdom” should be” accepted with devotion, faith and humility by everyone (perfection). In effect, these 3x3 triads represent the stigmata's “seraphic activity” that purifies, illumines, and inflames those who desire to follow Francis as Francis desired to follow Christ.”

<sup>87</sup> Hammond, 485–86.

<sup>88</sup> Hammond, “Bonaventure's *Legenda Maior*,” 502: “Note that the seven visions describe the process of Francis' conversion: *principio, progressus, finem*. Francis' ongoing conversion, unto complete conformity with the crucified, identifies Francis as the angel of the sixth seal who bears the sign of the living God. Yet, the exclusivity of the stigmata distinguishes Francis from the brothers. He has reached the final *transitus* of his conversion, the brothers are still *in via*.”; 487, n. 166, Hammond points out the identification of seven stages in *LMj* XV.1.1: “Note that Bonaventure highlights seven aspects of the ordered progression: (1) the servant and friend of the Most High, (2) the founder and leader of the order of the Lesser Brothers, (3) the practitioner of poverty, (4) the model of penance, (5) the herald of truth, (6) the mirror of holiness, and (7) the exemplar of all Gospel perfection. It seems that the progression follows Bonaventure's general understanding of Order, II *Sent* d. 11, a. 1, q. 1, resp. (2, 227)”

be a deliberate echo of the *Itin*, which begins on Mt. Laverna and concludes in *Itin* VII in the soul's *transitus* with Christ.<sup>89</sup>

### **Lacunae Complendae**

Four lacunae stand out from these *status questionum*. First, hierarchy is clearly a pervasive doctrine in Bonaventure's thought, which has been, overall, judged as profoundly shaped by Dionysius and his legacy. Nonetheless, while the structure of the hierarchies—divine, human, and angelic—and the prominence of the hierarchical powers are well recognized, they have yet to receive a close comparison to Dionysius' original articulation of the doctrine of hierarchy. Second, opinions are divided over whether Bonaventure's Dionysianism, including hierarchy, undergo development across his career. Third Bonaventure's readers recognize that Dionysian concepts, including hierarchy, are applied to Francis by Bonaventure to explain his spiritual life and significance but there has been scarcely any detailed discussion over how hierarchy as a system and concept apply to Francis. Fourth and finally, a reading of the *LMj* (among other texts) structured according to the hierarchical powers has been elaborated from Vorreux to Hammond, but the precise form of the doctrine of hierarchy which that application in the *LMj* presupposes or even produces has not been analyzed. This dissertation will attempt to fill these lacunae with by a clear account of Dionysian hierarchy and its legacy as was available to Bonaventure and by defining the meaning

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<sup>89</sup> Hammond, 502: "Like the *Itinerarium*, Francis' ongoing conversion was marked by six steps that climaxed in the *transitus* of the stigmata."

and charting the shifting role of hierarchy in Bonaventure's own corpus in order to offer a detailed presentation of the doctrine of hierarchy in the *LMj*.

### **Thesis and Method**

Against the backdrop of both the longstanding scholarly reading of Bonaventure's understanding of hierarchy as principle of organization and measure and method of ascent and the more recent awareness of the original cultic character of hierarchy in the *CD*, this dissertation will make two demonstrations. First, I will demonstrate that hierarchy, for Bonaventure, is no general organizational principle nor a political scheme nor yet simply a vehicle and measure of subjective ascent but rather, but the divine life and, in accordance with Dionysius, the imitation of and cooperation sharing out of divine life—grace and glory—in worship and union to God through Jesus Christ. Second, I will demonstrate that Bonaventure's understanding of hierarchy develops across his corpus in tandem with his Franciscanism, resulting, even paradoxically, in both its divergence from and much greater likeness to Dionysius' original articulation of hierarchy the closer it is tied to the person of St. Francis. Indeed, Bonaventure's integration of hierarchy and Franciscanism results in very different articulation of hierarchy compared to Dionysius', notably the relativized importance of clerical status, especially insofar as St. Francis' becomes the emblematic hierarchic man. Nevertheless, at the same time, when compared to his earlier accounts and use of hierarchy in II-IV *Sent*, the Franciscanized articulation of hierarchy recovers the ancient focus on Christ's centrality to the whole system as an act of deifying worship.



The objective of this dissertation, therefore, is to analyze Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy and its development and to demonstrate that it developed through and together with his Franciscanism in order to respond to the lacunae I have listed above. Accordingly, I will not provide a complete overview and total synthetic articulation of the concept of hierarchy in Bonaventure's thought, rather, I will only chart its development in so far as it is useful to show the mutual development of his doctrine of hierarchy and Franciscanism. Thus, the works in which I analyze Bonaventure's use and understanding of the concept hierarchy will begin with the *II-IV Sent* (completed in the early 1250s), which does not link hierarchy to Francis or Franciscanism in any explicit way, as far as the publication of the *LMj* (1263), in which Francis is presented as the *vir hierarchicus*. I will chart the developing understanding and use of hierarchy through major works that intervene: *Comm Luke* (1248-7), the *Brev* (1257), and the *Itin* (1259). This limitation sets aside several works that would be necessary to show the final developments in Bonaventure's Franciscan reception of hierarchy, most notably the *Trip via*, *De donis*, *Apol paup*, *Hex* and the many sermons that mention hierarchy.<sup>90</sup> I have chosen not to attend to these works directly both for the sake of concision and because they are unnecessary to demonstrate that development of Bonaventure's Franciscanized hierarchy or hierarchical Franciscanism, however much they corroborate it. The *LMj*, suffices to

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<sup>90</sup> I have also chosen to leave the *Trip via* out of direct consideration, for although it provides a rich testimony to the integration of Franciscanism and hierarchy in Bonaventure's spiritual program, its dating has been placed throughout both before and after the *LMj*, between 1260–9, see Marianne Schlosser, "Bonaventure: Life and Works," in *A Companion to Bonaventure*, by Jared Goff, J.A. Wayne Hellmann, and Jay M. Hammond, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Boston: Brill, 2013), 35. On the other hand, the dating of the *Brev* has a disputed dating, being set either before the *LMj* (1256–7) or after 1260 or even later than the *LMj*, see Jay M. Hammond, "The Textual Context," in *Bonaventure Revisited: Companion to the Breviloquium*, ed. Dominic Monti and Katherine Wrisley Shelby, 2017, 30–41. However, *Brev* has one ms., *Troyes* 1891, that dates it explicitly to 1257, the commonly accepted date, which I follow. See Dominic Monti, "Introduction," in Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, Works of St. Bonaventure 9 (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2005), xiv and *Bon Op* V, p. xviii.

show the integration of hierarchy and Franciscanism. Nonetheless, I will refer to those texts when they offer any significant corroboration or contrast to the texts under direct study.

In order to demonstrate that Bonaventure's concept of hierarchy both becomes nearer to and departs from Dionysius' original articulation of hierarchy through its Franciscanization, I will proceed in two two-step parts. In the first part, I will provide the background against which such a demonstration can be made convincingly, first, through a thorough explanation of Dionysian hierarchy *in se* and, second, by a review of the various accounts of hierarchy available in thirteenth century Paris in the *CDP* studied by Dondaine. In its first step, I will present a close reading of the *CH* and *EH*, referencing recent scholarship that brings forward both their Christological and cultic concern and their roots in the theurgical Neoplatonism represented by Iamblichus and Proclus Diadochus. This description will proceed in an organized manner by distinguishing hierarchy's taxonomy, purpose, and means of accomplishment. These categories will not only provide a guiding structure to an, admittedly, long analysis but will also facilitate a comparison between Dionysius' original articulation of hierarchy and its medieval receptions.

The second step of the first part will apply these three categories to the various contents of the *CDP*: John Scotus Eriugena's translation (or *versio*) of the whole *CD* and commentary on the *CH*, Hugh of St. Victor's commentary on the same, and Thomas Gallus' *Extractio* or paraphrasing summary of the *CD* based upon John the Saracen's translation (*Nova translatio*) of the *CH*. Although Dondaine (and Bougerol following him) suspected that a distinct Franciscan text of the *CD* was produced and used by

Bonaventure, no such representative text has been discovered and, on the other hand, the *CDP* was certainly available in mid-thirteenth century Paris and thus, at least, represents the variety of materials and interpretations that Bonaventure could have read or been familiar with.<sup>91</sup> In sum, the *CDP* represents in miniature the Dionysian milieu in which Seraphic Doctor read the Areopagite and so shows how and to what extent the concept of hierarchy had retained its original Dionysian sense and how much and in how many ways it had diverged. Tempting and potentially illuminating though it may be, I will not consider Thomas Aquinas, Albert the Great, and Robert Grosseteste or other medieval theologians' interactions with the *CD*.

Ultimately, the purpose of the first part of this dissertation is not to trace a probable genealogy of direct influence of commentators on the *CD* upon Bonaventure. Rather it is to establish the Dionysius' original and the medieval understandings of hierarchy available to Bonaventure as measures for judging the distinctiveness of his own concept and deployment of hierarchy and the extent of its similarity to and divergence from Dionysius' original articulation hierarchy in its Christocentric and latreutic formulation.

The second part of this dissertation will attend to the development of the concept of hierarchy in Bonaventure's own works. Having established a conceptual background from which to approach the Bonaventure's concept of hierarchy, I will set aside the categorical analysis of hierarchy according to its taxonomy, purpose, and means of accomplishment and turn, instead, to a series of close textual analyses of Bonaventure's

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<sup>91</sup> Dondaine, *Le Corpus Dionysien de l'Université de Paris Au XIII. Siècle*, 143–44. Furthermore, in *III Sent* d. 14, a. 1, q. 3, resp., Bonaventure refers to Hugh's commentary, his corpus shows a familiarity with Eriugena's and the Saracen's translations, and in the *Hex* he mentions the Gallus work, explicitly whose interpretive structures of hierarchy had appeared earlier in the *Itin*.

works in chronological. In the first step of this second part, I will trace Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy through its conceptual definitions and textual applications, starting with II-IV *Sent* (1250-52), then *Comm Luke* (1248-57), the *Brev* (1257), and the *Itin* (1259). The analysis of each text will not be limited to definitions of hierarchy and related concepts found therein but also to the role hierarchy plays in the structure and theological purpose of each work. In this way, I will demonstrate that hierarchy acquires an architectural role in Bonaventure's later works. Tracing the thread of hierarchy's meaning and purpose through these four works will also demonstrate the emergence of the Christocentric turn in his thinking about hierarchy in the figure of Christ the hierarch, hierarchy's application to the subjective structures of ascent to God, and hierarchy's increasing association with Francis as a model of such ascent.

The second step of the second part, the final main chapter of this dissertation, will focus entirely on the role of hierarchy in the *LMj* and will draw assess how Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy is reshaped in its application to Francis, the poor, stigmatized, mendicant preacher. Since the term hierarchy appears only once in the whole of the *LMj*, in the adscription "*vir hierarchicus*", fleshing out this singular but significant description must stand on the narrative structures and the conceptual content of the *LMj*, or especially, how its conceptual content interfaces with its structures.<sup>92</sup> That structural-conceptual approach, as worked out by Vorreux and Armstrong has become the accepted approach, which I too will follow. However, I will broaden the scope of the concepts which are related to hierarchy in comparison with the earlier analyses which largely interpreted hierarchy as a process of personal ascent rather than the priestly system

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<sup>92</sup> *LMj* Prol. 2.

articulated by Dionysius and more or less understood by both John Scotus Eriugena and Hugh of St. Victor, which will be detailed in Chapters I and II, and combine it with Jay Hammond's recent argument that the structural divisions related to the hierarchical powers are operative on multiple levels of the text simultaneously.

Although I will accept and use the triadic structure which Vorreux, Armstrong, and, mostly recently, Hammond have outlined and elaborated, these triadic structures have never received strenuous criticism and, thus, they are, in a sense, untested in scholarly combat. Nonetheless, given Haase's demonstration of Bonaventure's careful reorganization of his source materials from Thomas of Celano's and Julian of Speyer's *vitae* and also for reasons internal to the text, I contend that the elaborate, multi-level, triadic divisions proposed by Hammond are a plausible, even *probable*, key for reading the *LMj* theologically. Indeed, triadic structures appear routinely in Bonaventure's writings, and it would not be surprising that they would appear in the *LMj*, too. Nevertheless, the *LMj* shows no explicit literary markers to demark its conceptual divisions except for the transition between, to use Vorreux's original distinction, the historical and virtue-based chapters, which transition is easily demonstrated from *LMj*'s "signposts" in IV and XIII.<sup>93</sup> Armstrong's and Hammond's structures, however, are more speculative enterprises, a cautionary reminder about which is found in Armstrong's partial disavowal of the triadic-hierarchical structure in 1988. Spurred by the inaptness he perceived in *LMj* XI-XII's focus on scripture to map on to the unitive power Dionysian

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<sup>93</sup> *LMj* IV.11 concludes by referencing the impending stigmata, which Bonaventure explains will be described after the exposition of Francis' virtues in the following chapters (V–XII). In turn, the virtues are established as a lens for understanding the stigmata. *LMj* XIII resumes history where IV said it would.

perfection,<sup>94</sup> Armstrong proposed that the *LMj*'s structure consisted of a section on Francis' conversion (*LMj* I-IV), a section on his virtues (V-VII) and then, once converted and virtuous, a section on his capacity to see God through reading book of nature (VIII-X), scripture (XI-XIII), and life (XIV-XV).<sup>95</sup> Nevertheless, he did not dismantle his earlier position and conceded it a measure of enduring validity, effectively granting two structurally incompatible conceptual architectures to co-exist in the *LMj*, yet one more important the other.<sup>96</sup> While Bonaventure wrote several works organized through numerological symbolism, none were assigned two competing structures at once. Furthermore, even those who accept the triadic structure, such as Muscat and Cousins,<sup>97</sup> are uneasy with it. For Muscat, the inclusion of prophecy, scriptural interpretation, and healing under perfection appears strange.<sup>98</sup> Like Cousins, he also sees in *LMj* XIII a resumption of the history paused at *LMj* IV so that the climactic triad of *LMj* V-XIII

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<sup>94</sup> Armstrong, "Towards an Unfolding," 337-8. Armstrong also finds the presence of miracles in the chapters on purification (V-VII) puzzling (*ibid.*, 342). Cf. Armstrong, "Spiritual Theology," 185.

<sup>95</sup> Armstrong, "Towards an Unfolding," 340-45.

<sup>96</sup> Armstrong, 341. He conceded that the hierarchical reading maintained some validity while endorsing the superiority of his new reading. He contested that the placement of Francis prophetic utterances and insight to scripture do not fit with the hierarchical power of perfection, and theretofore determined that what he had considered a triad (*LMj* XI-XIII) devoted to perfection or union with God is better understood as textual structure organized around a "horizontal understanding" of spiritual vision through creation. In other words, Armstrong's hierarchical approach that juxtaposed two triads of the triple way, one historical (I-II; III-IV; XIV-XV) and one virtue-based (V-VII; VIII-X; XI-XIII), could just as easily be replaced with another model with little or no objection from the text itself so long as that hypothetical newer model would correspond to the perceived content of the text. In this approach, the coexistence of multiple structural readings risks rendering all of them superficial and lacking roots in the details of the text.

<sup>97</sup> Muscat dissertation was defended by June 14, 1988, when Armstrong had just published his new position in the text's structure.

<sup>98</sup> Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 226. The last set of virtues is associated with the Word of God. Bonaventure regards Francis' understanding of Scripture, coupled with his spirit of prophecy, as well as the efficacy of his preaching of the Word, coupled with the grace of healing, as typical virtues of a life of union with God in contemplation. It might seem strange that these elements of the active apostolate of Francis are regarded as unitive virtues. However, when one considers that he inserts them after the consideration of Francis' prayer life, and before the ecstatic experience of the crucified Seraph, one may conclude that his aim is precisely that of underlining their contemplative dimension. Moreover, these virtues are founded upon Francis' intimacy with God, which *LMj* X, on prayer, sets as the context for XI-XIII.

seems marred, even if XIII is shared by two sections.<sup>99</sup> Can it be that claims of a systematic organization in the *LMj* may seem to claim too much for this hagiography support?

Hammond's does not temper his elaboration of the triadic structures of the *LMj* in light of the above concerns but, to contrary, plots simultaneous triads at multiple levels of the text, not, however, on the basis of convenient precedent but, rather, from his own analysis of each chapter's contents. Hammond shares Haase's text-critical determination that Bonaventure curated (even cannibalized) and rearranged the *vitae* of Celano and Speyer according to their aptitude to express a particular set of ideas and not merely to update old hagiographies. Moreover, Hammond argues that the rearranged selections from the *vitae* combined with interpretive segues newly composed by Bonaventure illuminate another point: no matter how many words originate from Celano Speyer, the structure and, therefore, the narrative and the logic, too, are Bonaventure's own composition.<sup>100</sup>

Chapter IV of this dissertation will detail the thematic concerns and content of *LMj*, addressing both the events and ideas brought forth in the various episodes and interpretive segues composed by Bonaventure and the larger structures to which his arrangement of the older material bears witness. In plotting the elaborate structure of the

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<sup>99</sup> Ewert H. Cousins and Bonaventure, *Bonaventure, The Classics of Western Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 45; Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 206.

<sup>100</sup> Hammond, "Bonaventure's *Legenda Maior*," 485: "Taken together, the macro, intermediate, and micro structures help explain how Bonaventure organizes, interprets and redacts his sources as he constructs his hagiography of Francis according to a theology of grace that manifests itself through the repetitive activities of purgation, illumination, and perfection." See also Haase, *Bonaventure's Legenda Maior*, 179, 183–4: "We believe Bonaventure's conscious decision to redact the structure of the former official hagiographical tradition betrays his desire to make the structure of the *Legenda maior* an important key for its interpretation." Hammond's charts show that Bonaventure's redaction and organization of the *vitae* of Celano and Speyer express purification, illumination, and perfection in each chapter, but this study remains unpublished.

*LMj*, I will remark upon the precedents in Bonaventure's treatment of hierarchy in his earlier writings that set the *LMj*'s doctrinal content in relief, especially in terms of Bonaventure's use of the three hierarchical powers and his implicit use of the organization of the triads of the angelic hierarchies. Furthermore, I will clarify the spiritual role attributed to St. Francis' by Bonaventure through these textual structures by noting how many of the features of other hierarchical figures (the angels and the clergy in the *CD*'s medieval reception) are transferred or at least extended to the Povorello.

Finally, despite the particular Franciscan focus of this dissertation, I will refrain from engaging the "Franciscan Question" head-on. The controversies around the Order surely shaped Bonaventure's purpose in the *LMj* and preaching on Francis in general, but the question of the authenticity of Bonaventure's understanding of Francis is beyond this investigation of his application of hierarchy to understand Francis. While the Franciscan Question illuminates Bonaventure's motivations and his conceptualization of Francis as the *forma minorum*, nonetheless, there is not space enough in this dissertation evaluate it directly. The validity of Bonaventure's interpretation of Francis and the spiritual life is not unimportant, but it exceeds the historical-conceptual parameters of the present investigation.

## **Chapter Outline**

Following the above methodology, I will divide this dissertation into two parts. In the first part I will lay out the interpretative background of hierarchy in Chapters I and II. In the second part I will address the development of the doctrine of hierarchy in Bonaventure's thought in Chapters III and IV. In Chapter I, I will expound the Dionysian



concept of hierarchy as it is found in the Greek text of the *CD*. This exposition will proceed through an account of the 1) taxonomy, 2) purpose, and 3) means by which hierarchy is accomplished. I have chosen to employ this pattern for the sake of ease of comparison between it and later accounts of hierarchy. Chapter II is a review and analysis of the doctrines of hierarchy available in the *CPD*, those of Eriugena, Hugh of St. Victor, and Thomas Gallus, according to his *Extractio* of the *CD*. I will analyze and distinguish these three interpreters' accounts of hierarchy through the same scheme of taxonomy, purpose, and means. Thus, having presented four accounts of hierarchy (Dionysius' original articulation and those three found in the Paris Handbook) as interpretive standards, in Chapter III, I will turn to chart the development of Bonaventure's understanding and deployment of hierarchy from the *Sentences Commentary* until the *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*. In that chapter, I will point out hierarchy's increasing integration with Franciscan themes and with the figure of Francis himself and, moreover, how these Franciscan elements bring Bonaventure's later understanding of hierarchy, or at least his articulation thereof, closer to Dionysius' when compared to this original articulation in the *Sentences Commentary*. Finally, in Chapter IV, I will argue that Bonaventure's conception of hierarchy, already shaped by Franciscanism, provides the conceptual substructure for the life St. Francis in the *Legenda Maior*. I will show how this hagiography, which only mentions hierarchy twice, is profoundly shaped by Bonaventure's more mature concept of hierarchy and displays his continuity and ingenuity with regard to Dionysius' original sense of hierarchy in three ways: 1) his divergence from the received notions of Dionysian hierarchy, especially regarding the spiritual superiority of clerics over the laity; 2) his deepened faithfulness to or accuracy in

reproducing the fundamental purpose of Dionysian hierarchy, understood as passive and active anagogy, union, assimilation, and θεομίμησις; and 3) his innovations in hierarchy, especially, but not only, the elaboration of a numerologically-based Trinitarian understanding of hierarchy's form and purpose. Finally, in the brief conclusion to this dissertation, I will summarize the doctrine of hierarchy to be found by that point in Bonaventure's career (1263) according to the scheme of its taxonomy, purpose, and means and then identify the developments in hierarchy following the *LMj* that remain to be studied. Thus, through analyzing Bonaventure's texts against the background of Dionysius' own writings on hierarchy and a select set medieval commentators, I will show how Bonaventure's distinctive Franciscan reception of hierarchy developed, remained in continuity with its sources, and pushed the boundaries of understanding hierarchy in the thirteenth century.

## I. DIONYSIAN HIERARCHY

### I.1 Introduction

Assessing St. Bonaventure's reception of Dionysian ἱεραρχία depends upon a thorough grasp of its elements, conceptual context, and the history of its transmission in the Latin middle ages. Identifying the elements and their attendant conceptualities establishes a standard against which ἱεραρχία's various receptions and transmission throughout the Latin west can be checked. The history of the transmission of Dionysian ἱεραρχία, which includes the choices in translation, explicit commentaries on the *Corpus Dionysiacum* (*CD*), and the use of the concepts and taxonomies of hierarchy by various medieval theologians, provides a second measure in addition to the *CD* itself for assessing Bonaventure's own developments and modifications of hierarchical concepts. The present chapter will lay out the elements of Dionysian ἱεραρχία, or, "hierarchy", and the next chapter will assess the transmission of hierarchy prior to St. Bonaventure.

#### I.1.1 Approaching Dionysian ἱεραρχία

Establishing a standard for tracing and analyzing the concepts of Dionysian hierarchy necessitates, at least, a preliminary judgment of what Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite actually intended to teach in his much-debated corpus. Dionysius' theological and philosophical commitments have been questioned since the renaissance, but the engine of the last century-and-a-quarter of scholarship has turned on his proven reliance

on late Neoplatonism, and in particular, his demonstrable use of the writings of Proclus.<sup>1</sup> The identification of the Neoplatonic heritage coursing through the *CD* has given rise to a complementary question: in what way can the mysterious Dionysius and his corpus be called Christian? The answers have ranged from denying his Christianity as little more than a front for pagan thought, to assessing the co-existence and synthesis of Neoplatonic and Christian teaching in his works as an honest-but-faltering effort, to defending his writings as an authentic and even traditional Christian vision largely articulated through Neoplatonic language and conceptual tropes.<sup>2</sup> Those parts of the *CD* dealing with hierarchy, *On the Celestial Hierarchy* (*EH*), *On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* (*EH*), and passages in the others writings, often find themselves at the center of the question of his true commitments in light of what he did and did not teach.

Withholding judgment on Dionysius' religious commitments is untenable for this project. To do so would evacuate Dionysian hierarchy of determinate meaning and

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<sup>1</sup> Hugo Koch, "Proklos als Quelle des Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita in der Lehre vom Bösen," *Philologus* 54 (1895): 438–454; Josef Stiglmayer, "Der neoplatoniker Proklos als Vorlage des sogenannten Dionysius Aerogapita in der Lehre von Übel," *Historisches Jahrbuch*, 16 (1895): 253–273, 721–748; René Roques, *L'Universe dionysien: structure hiérarchique du monde selon le Pseudo-Denys* (Aubier: Editions Montaignes, 1954); Ronald F. Hathaway, *Hierarchy and the Definition of Order in the Letters of Pseudo-Dionysius. A Study in the Form and Meaning of the Pseudo-Dionysian Writings* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1969). For contemporary assessments of Dionysius' Neoplatonism see Werner Beierwaltes, "Dionysius Aeropagites: Ein Christlicher Proklos?," in *Platon in Der Abendländischen Geistesgeschichte: Neue Forschungen Zum Platonismus*, ed. Theo Kobusch and Burkhard Mojsisch (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1997), 71–100; Stephen Gersh, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena: An Investigation of the Prehistory and Evolution of the Pseudo-Dionysian Tradition*, *Studien Zur Problemgeschichte Der Antiken Und Mittelalterlichen Philosophie* 8 (Leiden: Brill, 1978); O'Meara, *New Objective Links*; Ysabel de Andia, *Henois: L'union À Dieu Chez Denys L'Aréopagite*, *Philosophia Antiqua*, v. 71 (New York: E.J. Brill, 1996); Christian Schäfer, *The Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite: An Introduction to the Structure and the Content of the Treatise On the Divine Names*, *Philosophia Antiqua*, v. 99 (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> For a thorough review of twentieth-century scholarship regarding Dionysius, see Alexander Golitzin, *Et Introibo Ad Altare Dei: The Mystagogy of Dionysius Areopagita: With Special Reference to Its Predecessors In the Eastern Christian Tradition*, *Analekta Blatadōn* 59 (Thessalonikē: Patriarchikon Idruma Paterikōn Meletōn ; George Dedousis, 1994), 21–42; Paul Edward Rorem, *Biblical and Liturgical Symbols within the Pseudo-Dionysian Synthesis*, *Studies and Texts* 71 (Toronto, Ont., Canada: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1984), 1–10.

reduce one aspect of the study of Bonaventure's reception hierarchy to the philological history of its associated terminology. Since the medievals read Dionysius as a Christian, one ought to endeavor to see what they read in him as such. Hence, I will approach the Areopagite from a similar perspective. I do not, thereby, exonerate him from having taught anything problematic to Christianity, on the other hand, however, I will not treat his Neoplatonic heritage as antithetical to his Christianity.

Situating Dionysius' writings on hierarchy in their proper context is only one part of a larger project, one which would easily balloon into a separate dissertation with its own set of questions. Thus, for the sake of restraining an equally fascinating line of investigation within an allotted space, I will limit my discussion of the concept of *ἱεραρχία* and the constellation of terms around by an analysis of the most pertinent of his writings and upon them without straying into the questions of the rest his doctrines, sources, and the textual history of the *CD*.

### **I.1.2 The Definitions of Hierarchy and Methodology**

As noted in the introduction, the term "hierarchy" is in need of recovery from its common use to describe a mere logically or causally ordered series from first to last members, sometimes maligned as a rigid, oppressive system when applied to human realities. The colloquial sense of hierarchy as a vertically-valuated series is not incompatible with what Dionysius means by the term, but it lacks the ecclesiastical, latreutic, and divinizing character that is central to Dionysius' concept.

Thankfully, since Paul Rorem's careful treatment of the Dionysian liturgical vision, *Biblical and Liturgical Symbols within the Pseudo-Dionysian Synthesis*, numerous

responses have evaluated the nature of his thought and Christianity in light of that liturgical vision, and also its relationship to the *theurgical* milieu of Iamblichean Neoplatonism from which he drew.<sup>3</sup> The resulting scholarly discussion has shifted its center from evaluating the authenticity of his Christianity in light of his Neoplatonism, to weighing its consistency, especially, but not exclusively, in light of interpretations of his liturgical and soteriological thought.<sup>4</sup>

The true and complete sense of *ἱεραρχία* in the *CD* must be drawn from the entirety of the pertinent texts, especially the rich introduction to the *CH* and *CD* overall, nonetheless a fair beginning can be made with Dionysius' compact descriptions of hierarchy in the well-known (though frequently partially-quoted) definitions of *ἱεραρχία* in *CH* III.<sup>5</sup> These definitions are descriptive of every hierarchy: angelic, ecclesiastical, or

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<sup>3</sup> Rorem, *Biblical and Liturgical Symbols*; Andrew Louth, "Pagan Theurgy and Christian Sacramentalism in Denys the Areopagite," *The Journal of Theological Studies*, NEW SERIES, 37, no. 2 (October 1, 1986): 432–38; Eric David Perl, "Symbol, Sacrament, and Hierarchy in Saint Dionysios the Areopagite," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 39, no. 3 (September 1994): 311–56; Gregory Shaw, "Neoplatonic Theurgy and Dionysius the Areopagite," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 7, no. 4 (1999): 573–99; Peter Struck, "Pagan and Christian Theurgies: Iamblichus, Pseudo-Dionysius, Religion and Magic in Late Antiquity," *Ancient World* 32, no. 2 (2001): 25–38; John M. Rist, "Pseudo-Dionysius, Neoplatonism, and the Weakness of the Soul," in *From Athens to Chartres: Neoplatonism and Medieval Thought: Studies in Honour of Edouard Jeuneau*, ed. Edouard Jeuneau and Haijo Jan Westra, Studien Und Texte Zur Geistesgeschichte Des Mittelalters, Bd. 35 (Leiden ; New York: E.J. Brill, 1992), 135–59; John M. Rist, "Love, Knowing and Incarnation in Pseudo-Dionysius," in *Traditions of Platonism* (Ashgate, 1999), 375–88; D. Burns, "Proclus and the Theurgic Liturgy of Pseudo-Dionysius," *Dionysius* 22 (2004): 111–132; Wiebke-Marie Stock, *Theurgisches Denken: zur "Kirchlichen Hierarchie" des Dionysius Areopagita* (Berlin, Allemagne, Etats-Unis d'Amérique, 2008); Timothy Riggs, "Eros as a Hierarchical Principle: A Re-Evaluation of Dionysius' Neoplatonism," *Dionysius* XXVII (December 2009): 70–76.

<sup>4</sup> Golitzin, *Et Introibo Ad Altare Dei; Mystagogy: A Monastic Reading of Dionysius Areopagita.*, Cistercian Studies Series, number 250 (Collegeville, Minnesota: Cistercian Publications, 2013); William K Riordan, *Divine Light: The Theology of Denys the Areopagite* (San Francisco Calif.: Ignatius Press, 2008).; Timothy D. Knepper, *Negating Negation: Against the Apophatic Abandonment of the Dionysian Corpus* (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, xxxvi–xxxvii, 15–40, 50–57. Golitzin argues that the traditional order of the *CD* as it was transmitted in a single volume was *CH*, *EH*, *DN*, *MT*, *Ep* I–X and that this has a theological order, in which, by moving through the text, the liturgy is explained in *CH* and *EH* and then, in a sense, entered into in *DN* and *MT*.

legal. The first, and best known, defines *ἱεραρχία* as a “holy *τάξις*, science, and activity”

but not that alone:

Hierarchy is, in my judgment, a sacred (*τάξις*) and science and operation, assimilated, as far as attainable, to the likeness of God, and conducted to the illuminations granted to it from God, according to capacity, with a view to the Divine imitation [but] the God-becoming Beauty [i.e. God], as simple, as good, as source of initiation[-rites] (*τελεταρχικός*), is altogether free from any dissimilarity, and imparts its own proper light to each according to their fitness, and perfects in [a] most Divine initiation[-rite] [*τελέτη*], as becomes the undeviating molding of those who are being initiated harmoniously to itself.<sup>6</sup>

The second builds upon the first by articulating the *σκόπος*, the goal, of hierarchy:

The purpose, then, of Hierarchy is the assimilation and union, as far as attainable, with God, having Him [as] Leader of all religious science and operation, by looking unflinchingly to His most Divine comeliness, and copying, as far as possible, and by perfecting its own followers as Divine images, mirrors most luminous and without flaw, receptive of the primal light and the supremely Divine ray, and devoutly filled with the entrusted radiance, and again, spreading this radiance ungrudgingly to those after it, in accordance with the supremely Divine regulations.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> CH III.1 164D (17.3–9): “Ἔστι μὲν ἱεραρχία κατ’ ἐμὲ τάξις ἱερὰ καὶ ἐπιστήμη καὶ ἐνέργεια πρὸς τὸ θεοειδὲς ὡς ἐφικτὸν ἀφομοιούμενη καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἐνδιδόμενας αὐτῇ θεόθεν ἐλλάμψεις ἀναλόγως ἐπὶ τὸ θεομίμητον ἀναγομένη, τὸ δὲ θεοπρεπὲς κάλλος ὡς ἀπλοῦν ὡς ἀγαθὸν ὡς τελεταρχικὸν ἀμιγὲς μὲν ἐστὶ καθόλου πάσης ἀνομοιότητος, μεταδοτικὸν δὲ κατ’ ἀξίαν ἐκάστῳ τοῦ οἰκείου φωτὸς καὶ τελειωτικὸν ἐν τελετῇ θειοτάτῃ κατὰ τὴν πρὸς ἑαυτῶν τελουμένων ἐναρμονίως ἀπαράλλακτον μόρφωσιν.” All translations of the *CD* are taken directly or adapted from Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, *Dionysius the Areopagite, Works* (1897), trans. John Parker (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, n.d.). I have preferred this translation to Colm Lubheid’s translation for its more literal translation of the Greek original. I have pointed out the Greek word *τελέτη* because it points to the liturgical-sacramental character of all hierarchy. *Τελέτη* has the sense of cultic or ritual initiation into (a) divinity or another mystery in both Juedo-Christian and Pagan contexts. See n. 183 in I.4 below.

<sup>7</sup> CH III.2 165A (17.10–18.6): “Σκοπὸς οὖν ἱεραρχίας ἐστὶν ἡ πρὸς θεὸν ὡς ἐφικτὸν ἀφομοίωσις τε καὶ ἔνωσις αὐτὸν ἔχουσα πάσης ἱερᾶς ἐπιστήμης τε καὶ ἐνεργείας καθηγεμόνα καὶ πρὸς τὴν αὐτοῦ θειοτάτην εὐπρέπειαν ἀκλινῶς μὲν ὄρων ὡς δυνατόν δὲ ἀποτυπούμενος καὶ τοὺς ἑαυτοῦ θιασώτας ἀγάλματα θεῖα τελῶν ἔσοπτρα διειδέστατα καὶ ἀκηλίδωτα, δεκτικὰ τῆς ἀρχιφώτου καὶ θεαρχικῆς ἀκτίνος καὶ τῆς μὲν ἐνδιδόμενης αἴγλης ἱερῶς ἀποπληρούμενα, ταύτην δὲ αὐθις ἀφθόνως εἰς τὰ ἐξῆς ἀναλάμποντα κατὰ τοὺς θεαρχικοὺς θεσμούς.”

The third restates a definition of what a hierarchy is in different terminology and develops the concept of the hierarchies' role in the sharing of the divine light a little further by attending to its activities:

He, then, who mentions Hierarchy, denotes in general a certain [διακόσμησις], an [icon] of the supremely Divine freshness, ministering [ἱερουργοῦσα] the mysteries of its own illumination in hierarchical ranks, and sciences, and assimilated to its own proper Head as far as lawful[; f]or each of those who have been called into the Hierarchy, find their perfection in being carried to the Divine imitation in their own proper degree; and, what is more Divine than all, in becoming a fellow-worker with God [θεοῦ συνεργόν], as the Oracles say, and in shewing the Divine energy in himself manifested as far as possible.<sup>8</sup>

These three definitions are rich in content and express the cultic context and deifying purpose of hierarchy. Together with *CH* I and *EH* I, the introductory chapters of each work, these definitions call to mind the outpouring of the divine light upon angels and humans through the “divine Jesus”, the angelic realities hidden in liturgical signs, our attainment to them through the priesthood, and also exemplify the cultic tenor of Dionysius' language for speaking of the hierarchies within a Neoplatonic conceptual cycle of procession, return, and remaining. Nevertheless, a cursory summary of Dionysius' definitions of ἱεραρχία cannot furnish sufficient nuance necessary to evaluate its terminological and conceptual reception in St. Bonaventure. The rich relationships between taxonomy and θέωσις, assimilation to and imitation of God, humans and angels,

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<sup>8</sup>*CH* III.2 165B (18.10–17): Οὐκοῦν ἱεραρχίαν ὁ λέγων ἱεράν τινα καθόλου δηλοῖ διακόσμησιν, εἰκόνα τῆς θεαρχικῆς ὠραιότητος, ἐν τάξεσι καὶ ἐπιστήμαις ἱεραρχικαῖς τὰ τῆς οἰκείας ἐλλάμπσεως ἱερουργοῦσαν μυστήρια καὶ πρὸς τὴν οἰκείαν ἀρχὴν ὡς θεμιτὸν ἀφομοιούμενην· ἔστι γὰρ ἐκάστῳ τῶν ἱεραρχία κεκληρωμένων ἡ τελείωσις τὸ κατ' οἰκείαν ἀναλογίαν ἐπὶ τὸ θεομίμητον ἀναχθῆναι καὶ τὸ δὴ πάντων θεϊότερον ὡς τὰ λόγια φησι α Θεοῦ συνεργὸν » γενέσθαι καὶ δεῖξαι τὴν θεϊαν ἐνέργειαν ἐν ἑαυτῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν ἀναφαινομένην. Οἷον ἐπειδὴ τάξεις ἱεραρχίας.” In this context, “διακόσμησις” denotes a distinct group of individuals within a greater order. Ἱερουργοῦσα, from the verb ἱερουργέω indicates the performance of priestly, ritual action, including, but not limited to the offering of sacrifice, see n. 198 below.



the procession of the divine light and its cultic reception, knowledge and activity, and, not least, between symbols and reality must be considered in accordance with the focus and precision employed by Dionysius.

To more easily identify and understand the elements of Dionysian *ἱεραρχία* in their context, this chapter will consider the ‘who’, ‘why’, and ‘how’ of Dionysius’ hierarchical system with special attention paid to the terminology within of *CD* and its historical precedents, Christian and Neoplatonic. The ‘who’ addresses the taxonomy of *ἱεραρχία*, of its members and their organization in series of hierarchies. The ‘why’ addresses the goal of *ἱεραρχία*, the sharing out of divine light to intelligent creatures and their union and assimilation to God. The ‘how’ addresses the means by which the goal of *ἱεραρχία* is accomplished in its organization, that is, its proper cultic activity, the worship of the men and angels, each in their proper mode. Treating these three elements of Dionysian *ἱεραρχία* separately will allow the overlooked, essentially cultic character of all hierarchy to take its place alongside and integration with the well-known taxonomical features of *ἱεραρχία*. Furthermore, the categories of ‘who’, ‘why’, and ‘how’ distinguish constellations of ideas which can be traced through the reception history of Dionysian *ἱεραρχία* up to Bonaventure.

## **I.2 Who: The taxonomy of Dionysian Hierarchy**

Dionysius’ *ἱεραρχία* denotes more than serially-ordered group of persons, but it would be nothing at all if were not at least that since the activity and science proper to it are exercised through and by persons in a social structure. The personal-social structure

of hierarchy entails a complex taxonomy in which all the members of the whole system are related to one another according to the principles of hierarchical activity.

### I.2.1 The Structural Elements of Hierarchical Taxonomy

The members populating (or better, *performing*) the hierarchies are angels and human, and none other besides them. Not all humans and angels, however, belong to the hierarchies. The men and women who have not entered the catechumenate stand outside the Church,<sup>9</sup> while the fallen angels are excluded from the heavenly hierarchies. The Holy Trinity, the *θεαρχία*—a lexical parallel to *ιεραρχία*—, stands transcendentally above all the hierarchies as their source, but is in no way a member of it except in the incarnation of Christ.<sup>10</sup> Neither does any god or principle of the cosmos such as the neoplatonic triad of ‘Being’, ‘Life’, or ‘Intellect’ belong to it.<sup>11</sup> Nor do the irrational creatures, living or inanimate, populate its ranks.<sup>12</sup> Nor yet do the *τελεταῖ* (rites) and *δυνάμεις* (powers) of the hierarchies belong to it as members. Dionysius’ *ιεραρχία* is not, therefore, a comprehensive account of the act of creation or created cosmos. *Ἱεραρχία* is

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<sup>9</sup> It seems reasonable that this was also the case in the earlier hierarchy of law, which is associated with the cult of Israel. However, given that every nation is watched over by the last of the angelic hierarchies, whether there was more than one (pontential) such ancient hierarchy of the law must be further investigated.

<sup>10</sup> *Θεαρχία* sets up a linguistic parallel with *ιεραρχία*, distinguishing divinity from the priesthood by which is participated.

<sup>11</sup> Dionysius’ triadic hierarchies take the place of the Proclus’ triadic *σερίαι* of Being, Life, and Wisdom in describing the order of beings after the first principle, however they are never attributed any causal power over beings. Nevertheless, not all scholars agree that Dionysius did deny them such power.

<sup>12</sup> Ronald Hathaway and Eric Perl both represent the view that *ιεραρχία* is a principle of cosmological order and a cosmogenetic principle in addition to, or even inclusive of, its soteriological and anagogical character, see Hathaway, *Hierarchy and the Definition of Order*, 37–60.; Eric David Perl, *Theophany: the Neoplatonic philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), 65–81.

the divinely accomplished action by which humans and angels are united and assimilated to God as far as possible since they are incapable of achieving it by their own means.

The members of the hierarchical system, humans and angels, are arranged serially by proximity to God, however, according to their *created* capacity.<sup>13</sup> The angels are superior to humans. The individuals of each group also hold a position relative to the other members. One angel, for example, may be of higher status than another, equal to others, and yet inferior to others still. These distinctions in τάξις, or rank, include many persons of the same status. The human members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and legal hierarchy before it, are divided similarly into distinct τάξεις.

The taxonomy of the hierarchical system groups the τάξεις into several divisions of triads. Among the angels any one such triad is called a ‘διακόσμησις’, or, less frequently, ‘διακόσμον’ by Dionysius.<sup>14</sup> There are three διακόσμησεις of the angels arranged among themselves as first, second, and third in order from the nearest to farthest from God. The ranks within each of these triadic διακόσμησεις are distinguished as first, middle, and last.<sup>15</sup> The first διακόσμησις of the angels immediately around God includes the ranks of the Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones.<sup>16</sup> The second includes the Virtues, the Dominations, and the Powers. The third includes of the ranks of the Principalities, Archangels, and Angels.

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<sup>13</sup> *DN* IV.2 696A-D (144.18–146.5); *CH* X.1–3 272CD-273C (40.1–41.7); *CH* XI.2 284D-285A (41.20–42.12).

<sup>14</sup> René Roques, *L’Universe dionysien: structure hiérarchique du monde selon le Pseudo-Denys* (Aubier: Editions Montaignes, 1954), 75, n. 1. Roques identifies “διακόσμησις” with a hierarchy, or rather, what I prefer to term a hierarchical triad in order to distinguish hierarchy as an action or office from those who enact it. Nevertheless, Roques is aware of the scope of meaning of the “διακόσμησις” and notes that the term, insofar as it has the sense of beautiful order, is applied particularly to the intelligences more than to the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and that can even refer to both a triad or to single rank. (Roques, 55–56)

<sup>15</sup> *CH* X.2 273B (40.17–18); cf. *CH* X.3 273C (40.23–41.3).

<sup>16</sup> *CH* VI.2 200D-201A (26.11–21).

Among humans, the term διακόσμησις is used differently, nevertheless, the same triadic division is applied.<sup>17</sup> However, there are only two triads in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, that of the initiating and initiated τάξεις, respectively. The first triad includes the Hierarch, the Priests, and the Deacons (called λειτουργοί by Dionysius); the lower triad of the church includes the monks, the baptized laity, and the catechumens (and the penitents and possessed).<sup>18</sup> The members of the “hierarchy of the Law” (the Pentateuchal hierarchy) are not divided into triads, but only into the division of initiators (including Moses) and initiated.<sup>19</sup>

### I.2.2 The Structural Relationships of Hierarchy

The terms διακόσμησις and τάξις, and their lexical relatives, have a second, broader sense that denotes the total arrangement and relationship between the various divisions of members in hierarchical system.<sup>20</sup> Each of the distinct ranks are correlated to one of the δυνάμεις, the divinizing hierarchical powers. The exercise of these powers defines the relationships between ranks and between διακόσμεσεις or triads. As with the ranks in triads, the powers are also threefold: purification (κάθαρσις), illumination

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<sup>17</sup> It is applied to the members of a τάξις as a group, not abstractly, but in the context of the liturgical rites, see Roques, *L'Universe dionysien*, 56, n. 10. In particular, it is the hierarchs, the priests, the deacons and the monks who are all called by the term διακόσμησις, never the laity nor those under purification.

<sup>18</sup> *EH* V.1.6 505C-508B (108.5–109.12); *EH* VI.1.1–3 529D-533A (115.1–116.23).

<sup>19</sup> *EH* V.1.2 501C (104.9–16).

<sup>20</sup> René Roques gives a careful overview of these terms in his *L'Universe dionysien*. Roques distinguishes a double sense in which τάξις, and related terms regarding order, express both a systematic arrangement of the hierarchical system and divinely willed order, *ordre-arrangement* and *ordre-commandment*, respectively (Roques, 38.). Having its roots in military and civil contexts, the term can mean both a total arrangement of many elements, or a distinct rank of place within an order. (Roques, 36–38.)

(φωτισμός), and perfection (τελειώσις). Every rank is either (or both) the agent or patient of these powers, as noted by Dionysius in *CH* III.2:

For it is [the order of hierarchy] that some are purified and that others purify; that some are enlightened and others enlighten; that some are perfected and others perfect; the Divine imitation will fit each one in this fashion.<sup>21</sup>

These powers are serially arranged from first to last, and therefore, in virtue of the appropriation of powers to ranks, every triad in the hierarchical system has “first, middle, and last ranks and powers.”<sup>22</sup> Purification is the first, illumination the middle power, and perfection is last.<sup>23</sup>

The progressive order of the powers and their transitive character is deployed throughout the *CH* and *EH* as a principle of the total organization of all ranks and διακόσμησεις from greatest to least among both the nine choirs of angels and the six ranks of the church.<sup>24</sup> The ranks of the ecclesiastical hierarchy are more explicitly

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<sup>21</sup> *CH* III.2 165B-C (18.17–19.3). “Οἷον ἐπειδὴ τάξεις ἱεραρχίας ὡς τὸ τοὺς μὲν καθαίρεσθαι, τοὺς δὲ καθαίρειν καὶ τοὺς μὲν φωτίζεσθαι, τοὺς δὲ φωτίζειν καὶ τοὺς μὲν τελεῖσθαι, τοὺς δὲ τελεσιουργεῖν, ἐκάστῳ ἢ θεομίμητον ἀρμόσει κατὰ τόνδε τὸν τρόπον[...].”

<sup>22</sup> *CH* X.2 273B (40.17–18); cf. *CH* X.3 273C (40.23–41.3).

<sup>23</sup> *CH* III.2 165B-C (18.17–19.3); *EH* V.1.3 504A-B (106.4–8).

<sup>24</sup> The association of triple powers and ranks helps explain the logic of the threefold structure that obtains in every group besides the legal hierarchy, but its universality as a logic of distinction has been questioned. Stephen Gersh denies that the three triads of angels are subdivided by the powers for two reasons. First, he cites Dionysius’ lack of explicit association of any of the angels with the powers. Secondly he interprets the description of each triad of angels as ‘ὁμοταγής’, i.e. of the same rank, as indicative of an equality of status among the ranks within the triad. (Gersh, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena*, 173, n 214–216.) Regarding this first point, Roques is in agreement, and acknowledges that though *CH* III.2 does distinguish the powers, they are yet never applied to the angels individually, but rather, he supposes, that each triad of angels performs them collectively (Roques, *L’Universe*, 98–99). Nevertheless, the absence of a positive attribution of the powers is not an explicit denial. Moreover, Dionysius does associate purification with the Seraphim, the overflowing with illuminating wisdom with the Cherubim, and the reception of Divinity with the thrones without actually attributing individual powers to them (*CH* VII.1 205B-D), nor does collective activity necessarily stand in opposition to the proper association of one power to another. Roques acknowledges that among the clerics of the ecclesiastical hierarchy the superior have the powers of the inferior, and that all the powers are mutually related and exercised simultaneously. (*L’Universe*, 99–100.) While Gersh’s second objection, that the angelic triads are ὁμοτάγη and thus not really divided by status, but only by exegetical necessity, raises an important critique which I will consider

identified with the powers than any of the angels. The active and passive possession of the powers coordinates the two triads of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The Hierarchy, who perfects, and the monk, who is perfected, stand as the highest rank within their respective triads, while the priests, as second to the hierarchy, enlighten the laity, who stand as second to the monks, and the deacons purify while the catechumens, penitents, and possessed undergo purification.<sup>25</sup>

A word of caution is in order here because none of the ranks can be *exclusively* associated with any one of the powers, nor only as that power's agent. Every rank in every triad is being purified, enlightened and perfected, and the hierarchs and priests exercise more than one power actively.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, each of the powers is more fittingly *appropriated* to one of the ranks. Furthermore, as in the two ecclesiastical triads above, the taxonomy of hierarchy lends itself to identifying action and passion along the lines of active and passive triads, but the higher members of a triad (insofar as they are

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below, is not without weaknesses. Dionysius does attribute first, middle, and last ranks and powers specifically to those who are ὁμοταγής (CH IV.3 22.17–22). Furthermore, while Gersh calls upon Eriugena's *Exp in Hier* as a witness to the unimportance of the divided ranks within a group, the citation from Eriugena only applies to the triad of the Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones, who are all of immediate proximity to God (cf. Eriugena, *Exp in Hier*, VI.158–62). The ordering of the second triad, of the Dominations et al. is similarly, ambiguous, but the triad of the Principalities, Archangels, and Angels is differentiated between the status of each as CH IX.2 states, even calling the angels the "last Order" and placing them under the care of Principalities and Archangels. (CH IX.2 257C-260A [36.11–37.3].) Thus, while Dionysius does not clearly lay out how the powers and ranks of angels are related, he does deny it nor its importance, but admits it is among those things which we humans are not able to understand. Gersh, nevertheless regards the triple ranks and powers present in each group as a holdover from the pagan enneadic structures of the intermediary Being, Life, and Wisdom and their own processions into triads. (Gersh, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena*, 172–30)

<sup>25</sup> The lowest rank of the ecclesiastical hierarchy is itself composed of several different groups, usually divided into three: the catechumens, the possessed, and the penitent. However, on one occasion Dionysius expands them to four: the catechumens, the possessed, the penitents, and the not yet completely perfect (EH III.3.7 436B [87.12–20]).

<sup>26</sup> The hierarchy and the priest also perform the powers proper to those subordinate to themselves, according to the principle that the higher has the powers of the lower. (EH V.1.7 508C [109.13–21]). Furthermore, every individual mind has first, middle, and last ranks and powers, upon which the divine illuminations act. (CH X.3 273C [40.23–41.7])

active) also exercise their powers upon the lower. Hence the hierarch also perfects other hierarchs, priests, and deacons, and so on. Nor it is reserved to the ecclesiastical hierarchy. It is a universal law of the whole hierarchical system that applies to the angels too:

For not only with regard to the superior and inferior minds, but even for those of the same rank (ὁμοταγέσιν), this Law has been established by the superessential supreme ordinance (ταξιαρχίας), that, within each Hierarchy, there are first, and middle, and last ranks and powers, and that the more divine are instructors and conductors of the less, to the Divine access, and illumination, and participation.<sup>27</sup>

Similar remarks are made elsewhere in the *CH* regarding both the angels, the members of the Church, and on one occasion even the threefold ranks and powers of every individual angelic and human mind.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> *CH* IV.3 181A (22.17–22). “Καὶ γὰρ οὐ μόνον ἐπὶ τῶν ὑπερκειμένων τε καὶ ὑφειμένων νοῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ὁμοταγέσιν οὗτος ὁ θεσμὸς ὥριται παρὰ τῆς πάντων ὑπερουσίου ταξιαρχίας τὸ καθ’ ἐκάστην ἱεραρχίαν πρώτας καὶ μέσας καὶ τελευταίας εἶναι τάξεις τε καὶ δυνάμεις καὶ τῶν ἡττόνων εἶναι τοὺς θειοτέρους μύστας καὶ χειραγωγοὺς ἐπὶ τὴν θείαν προσαγωγὴν καὶ ἔλλαμψιν καὶ κοινωνίαν.” In this section, the contrasting applications of the laws of the second being elevated to God by the first to the higher and lower minds and then to those minds who are ὁμοταγής suggests that ὁμοταγής indicate belonging to the same διακοσμήσεις or group without eliminating the difference between the ranks and affirms that within the groups the ranks have active and passive positions.

<sup>28</sup> An identical division the angelic hierarchies at *CH* IX.2, in which the division and order of the powers is given as the reason for the middle position of the Archangels between the Principalities and Angels. (*CH* IX.2 257C (36.13–15) *CH* X.2 reaffirms this same scheme for the angels (*CH* X.2 273B (40.16–19). *CH* X.3 is more interesting, as it also affirms the same scheme, for humans and angels alike, but also compares the individual angelic and human minds to the various groups of members by stating that they (the minds) are likewise have first middle and last ranks and powers: “Προσθεῖν δ’ ἂν καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἀπαικώτως ὅτι καὶ καθ’ ἑαυτὸν ἕκαστος οὐράνιος τε καὶ ἀνθρώπινος νοῦς ἰδικὰς ἔχει καὶ πρώτας καὶ μέσας καὶ τελευταίας τάξεις τε καὶ δυνάμεις [...]” (*CH* X.3 273C (40.23–41.2) This sentence is of particular importance since, like *CH* IV.3, it includes the ranks and powers together, whereas *CH* IX.2 and X.2 only mention the first, middle and last powers are mentioned. Given that δυνάμεις can refer not only the acts of purification etc., but also, as *CH* XII.1–2 explains, to all the angels, setting ranks and powers next to each other in *CH* IV.3 and *CH* X.3 suggests a distinction between the hierarchical powers and the ranks that perform them rather than a case of hendiadys meaning the angels alone. The description of the capacity of individual minds to be purified, illumined, and perfected corroborates my interpretation by indicating in what sense δυνάμεις is meant in *CH* IV.3 and X.3 when paired with τάξεις. Furthermore, these ranks and powers of the mind are not treated elsewhere, and Dionysius does not lay out a particular tripartite psychology elsewhere (although he does mention θύμος and ἐπιθυμία in his description of the angels at *CH* II.4), but it worth noting that the mind, even the hierarchized mind, is conceptualized with a certain

The basic τάξις of hierarchical system, meant in the broad sense and applicable to both within and between διακομήσεις or triads, is the divine law that “through the first, the second are brought to the Divine Being.”<sup>29</sup> Mediation through the exercise of the hierarchical powers is, therefore, the particular and characteristic function of the hierarchical system.

### I.2.3 Δυνάμεις Between Διακομήσεις

In the *CH* and (a little less so) in the *EH*, the mediation between διακόσμησεις or triads is Dionysius’ taxonomic focus. It is a law of hierarchy that the members of higher διακόσμησις purify, illumine, and perfect the members of the διακόσμησις inferior to them:

For, this is divinely put in law [universally] by the Divine source of order (ταξαρχία) that, through the first, the second partake (μετέχειν) of the supremely Divine illuminations (ελλάμψεις).<sup>30</sup>

A ιεραρχία—any and every ιεραρχία—in the original Dionysian sense is precisely this mediatory relationship of one triad initiating another triad into the divine illumination. Hence the principle that the second is lead through the first is applicable to every hierarchy, starting with the διακόσμησις of the angels:

The middle [διακόσμησις] of the Heavenly Minds having these Godlike characteristics, is purified and [enlightened] and perfected in the manner described,

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symmetry to the system of which it partakes, an association which the medievals such as Thomas Gallus and Bonaventure will develop explicitly.

<sup>29</sup> *CH* IV.3 181A (22.16–17); *EH* V.1.4 504C (106.24–25); *EH* VI.3.6 (119.26–120.1).

<sup>30</sup> *CH* VIII 240D (34.14–16) “Τοῦτο γάρ ἐστι καθόλου τῇ θείᾳ ταξιαρχίᾳ θεοπρεπῶς νενομοθετημένον τὸ διὰ τῶν πρώτων τὰ δεύτερα τῶν θεαρχικῶν μετέγειν ἐλλάμψεων.” The ἐλλάμψεις are the coming of the light in the powers of purification, enlightenment, and perfection.



by the [thearchic] illuminations vouchsafed to it at second hand, through the first hierarchical [διακόμησις], and passing through this middle as a secondary manifestation.<sup>31</sup>

In its universality, this divinely-promulgated law also applies the interaction between the angels and humans:

But the Word of God (ἡ θεολογία), in its Wisdom, teaches this also—that [the Law] came to us through Angels, as though the Divine regulation were laying down this rule, that, through the first, the second are brought to the Divine Being.<sup>32</sup>

The system of hierarchical mediation is not a series of isolated instances of one triad affecting another by itself, but a process in which the all higher mediations of divine illumination are active in all the lower:

For these [angels], as knowing God first, and striving pre-eminently after Divine virtue [...] and to become first-workers, are deemed worthy of the power and energy for the imitation of God, as attainable, and these benevolently elevate the beings after them to an equality, as far as possible, by imparting ungrudgingly to them the splendour which rests upon themselves, and these again to the subordinate, and throughout each [διακόμησις], the first rank imparts its gift to that after it, and the Divine Light thus rests upon all, in due proportion, with providential forethought. [...] All the remaining Angelic Beings, then, naturally regard the highest (διακόσμησις) of the Heavenly Minds as source, after God, of every knowledge of God (θεογνωσία) and imitation of God [θεομίμησις], since, through them, the supremely Divine illumination is distributed to all, and to us.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> CH VIII.1 240B (33.24–34.2).

<sup>32</sup> CH IV.3 181A (22.14–17): “[...] διδάσκει δὲ καὶ τοῦτο σαφῶς ἡ θεολογία τὸ δι’ ἀγγέλων αὐτὴν εἰς ἡμᾶς προελθεῖν ὡς τῆς θεονομικῆς τάξεως ἐκεῖνο θεσμοθετοῦσης τὸ διὰ τῶν πρώτων τὰ δεύτερα πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ἀνάγεσθαι; [...]”

<sup>33</sup> CH XIII.3 301C-304A (45.18–46.1; 46.5–9): “Αὗται γὰρ ἐπιγνοῦσαι πρῶται θεὸν καὶ θείας ἀρετῆς ὑπερκειμένως ἐφίεμενοι καὶ πρωτουργοὶ γενέσθαι τῆς ὡς ἐφικτὸν θεομιμήτου δυνάμεως καὶ ἐνεργείας ἡξίωται καὶ τὰς μετ’ αὐτὰς οὐσίας [αὐταὶ] πρὸς τὸ ἐφάμιλλον ὅση δύναμις ἀγαθοειδῶς ἀνατείνουσιν ἀφθόνως αὐταῖς εταδιδοῦσαι τῆς εἰς αὐτὰς ἐπιφοιτησάσης αἴγλης, καὶ αὐθις ἐκεῖναι ταῖς ὑφειμέναις, καὶ καθ’ ἐκάστην ἢ πρώτη τῇ μετ’ αὐτὴν μεταδίδωσι τοῦ δωρουμένου καὶ εἰς πάσας ἀναλόγως προνοία διαφοιτῶντος θείου φωτός. [...] Τὴν οὖν ὑπερτάτην τῶν οὐρανίων νοῶν διακόσμησιν αἱ τῶν λοιπῶν ἀπάντων ἀγγέλων οὐσαὶ κατὰ τὸ εἶκος μετὰ θεὸν ἀρχὴν ἡγοῦνται πάσης ἱερᾶς θεογνωσίας τε καὶ θεομιμησίας ὡς δι’ ἐκείνων εἰς πάσας καὶ ἡμᾶς τῆς θεαρχικῆς ἐλλάμψεως διαδιδομένης.”

Dionysius is explicit: the initiation into divinity begins with the first gift of divine light to the first triad of angels, through which, (as will be discussed below), all other intelligent being have their purification, enlightenment, and perfection, even we humans.

In virtue of the serial and continuous hierarchical mediations, the entire hierarchical system is composed of integrated and interlocking hierarchies. The first διακόσμησις is purified, enlightened, and perfected by God immediately then, through first exercise of hierarchy, the second διακόσμησις receives the same initiation in due proportion from the first διακόσμησις, and in the second hierarchy, the third angelic διακόσμησις receives, again, the same initiation in due proportion from the second διακόσμησις, and so on down the line. In regard to this structure, the dictum that second is elevated to God by the first must be taken as short hand for the rest of the system: the third is initiated into God by the second, and the fourth (our clerics or the OT initiators who anticipate our clerics) by the third, and the fifth (the non-clerical human ranks) by the fourth, constituting a single, interlocking hierarchical system.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Rorem notes the interlocking character of this system as essential to the process of anagogy, see Rorem, *Biblical and Liturgical Symbols*, 103. Roques also outlines this serial relationship of initiation between the triads of the hierarchies from the perspective of the distribution of hierarchical ἐπιστήμη, see *L'Universe dionysien: structure hiérarchique du monde selon le Pseudo-Denys* (Aubier: Editions Montaignes, 1954), 118–9. Note that elsewhere he identifies the two ecclesiastical triads as distinct hierarchies because he treats every triad as hierarchy (ibid., 69–70), whereas I regard a single hierarchy as including the initiating and initiated triad. Sarah Klitenic Wear and John Dillon, however do not regard the angelic and ecclesiastical hierarchies as continuous, but treat each as a separate with an independent culmination in the vision of God, see Sarah Klitenic Wear and John Dillon, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition: Despoiling the Hellenes* (Abingdon, Oxon.: Ashgate, 2007), 57, 59. Their position is problematic. *CH IX.2* places the human hierarchies, likely the legal and ecclesiastical, in a series with the angels, being placed immediately under the care of the third and last angelic triad. *CH XIII* is dedicated to the discussion about how the hierurgy of the angels are performed upon a man. *CH IV.2* and 4 show the involvement of the angels both in the giving of the Law and in Jesus submission to them in good order in all the aspects of his incarnation, from conception to passion. Perhaps most problematic to Wear and Dillon's severing of the human and angelic hierarchies is our assimilation to their angelic priesthood as described at *CH I.3* and *EH I.1*, since it contradicts their claim that our hierarch has his own unmediated reception of the divine light, because in his priesthood the human hierarch is elevated to receive what the angels have received, communion with Jesus, precisely in communion with the angels too.

### I.2.4 The Interiority of Hierarchical activity

Dionysius does not treat the continuous series of hierarchical mediations between triads as a relay race or game of heavenly hot-potato. Rather, a hierarchy of one triad exercising purification, enlightenment, and perfection upon an inferior triad remains active in the same activities exercised by the hierarchy of the inferior triad to which they have ministered. *CH XII* explains that all the higher beings have the powers and characteristics of the lower in a higher mode, and the lower beings those of the higher but in a lower way.<sup>35</sup> *CH XIII* shows the same principle in explaining that Isaiah was indeed purified by the Seraph (Is. 6:6-7) albeit through a lowly angel proximately, who partakes of the Seraph's acts through the intermediating ranks.<sup>36</sup> This exegesis explains that for Dionysius mediation does not separate ranks from each other and from God; it is the very mode of God's (and the superior creatures') presence to the lower beings.<sup>37</sup>

According to this *τάξις*, a superior hierarchy's activity is interior to that of a lower insofar as the second is led to God by the first, and hence the third is led to God by the second as led by the first—a principle that would be come to be known as the *lex divinitatis*. The exercise of a lower hierarchy always includes the activity of every superior hierarchy as the ground of the action of the proximate active triad upon the proximate initiated triad.<sup>38</sup> Thus, not only does the last angelic *διακόσμησις* exercise its hierarchy in initiating the first human triad, so does every *διακόσμησις* superior to it. And

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<sup>35</sup> *CH XII.2* 293A (43.5–8).

<sup>36</sup> *CH XIII.4* 305–308B (48.19–49.12).

<sup>37</sup> Perl, "Symbol, Sacrament, and Hierarchy in Saint Dionysios the Areopagite," 345–53.

"Whenever a lower order receives illumination (being/knowledge) through the mediation of a higher, it participates directly in God himself: God is by nature and truly and properly the source of illumination to all those who are illumined, as the essence of light and the cause of being itself and of seeing [...]."

<sup>38</sup> Perl, 350. "But further, because all the activities of the lower orders are contained in the higher, the lower do not simply lack, but rather receive and manifest the higher activities in a lesser way."

likewise, *mutatis mutandis*, in the exercise of the hierarchy in which the higher, clerical, human triad initiates the non-clerical triad.

By the same principle, because God initiated and illuminated the first triad, God is interior to every subsequent hierarchical activity. More specifically, hierarchy is the very mode of Jesus', the paternal light's, deifying presence to intelligent creatures.<sup>39</sup>

Emanating from the Father, he shines through their hierarchies as a series of mirrors and, in fact, establishes the hierarchies and makes them such mirrors *of* his shining *by* his shining.<sup>40</sup> Accordingly, while God is present mediately through the activity which is hierarchy, God is also the immanent source and form (as first initiator) of all mediation.<sup>41</sup> Thus, the taxonomy of hierarchy does not function as a domino-like succession of graced interactions but the procession and multiplication of God's self-gift through the complex world of intelligent creatures.<sup>42</sup>

### I.2.5 There Are Four Lights: The Four Hierarchies

Heretofore I have used the term 'hierarchy' cautiously in order to avoid the misconception that the term is synonymous with either τάξις or διακόσμησις, in their

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<sup>39</sup> CH I.2 121A-B (7.9–8.10).

<sup>40</sup> CH III.2 165A (19.10–20.6).

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, trans. E. R Dodds (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), prop. 25. Proclus' first proposition in the section "On Procession and Reversion" explain that the closer a being is to the One, the greater the extent of its causal power. While Dionysius does not attribute creative power to the members of the hierarchies, nevertheless, the principle that the higher effects all that is inferior to it is adopted to Dionysius' monotheism and hierarchical concerns. Furthermore, the corollary to the same proposition affirms that that which is farthest from the One will not be the cause of anything else, which also holds true for Dionysius' hierarchies, in which the lower members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy do not exercise the hierarchical powers over some yet lower group.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. CH I.1–2. Perl describes it so: "Hierarchical mediation is thus the principle, not of the exclusion of the lower levels from direct participation in God, but rather of the direct communion of all things with him and the intercommunion of all creatures with one another." (Perl, "Symbol", 351.)

broad (organization) and narrow (rank or triad) senses, since ‘hierarchy’ denotes, instead, an activity that is accomplished in and governs a taxonomy of created, intelligent beings.<sup>43</sup> Hierarchy consists of immediate and mediated action between the διακόσμησεις of the angels and the taxonomically equivalent triads of the church. For this reason, it is of critical importance to distinguish between the διακόσμησεις or triads of intelligent beings and the hierarchy enacted between the διακόσμησεις or triads. For one διακόσμησις is not another (e.g. the first is not the second), but the hierarchy of any διακόσμησις only exists insofar as it is an action upon an inferior διακόμησις.<sup>44</sup> Thus a hierarchy is not merely an organized group of beings according to class but an active relationship between such beings. Moreover, the active relationship that defines hierarchy does not cease but perpetually raises minds to the divine illuminations.

The result of distinguishing hierarchy in general and any hierarchy from the διακόσμησις that performs it upon its inferior results in identifying not two, as is commonly asserted, but four hierarchies active between five triads. This interpretation of the hierarchical system, despite its contrariety to prevailing scholarship, is confirmed by the texts of *CH* and *EH*. That every hierarchy, angelic and human, consists of both the initiating and the initiated—and the initiating rite—is stated in *EH* V.1.1:

Now we have well shewn, as I think, in the Hierarchies already extolled by us (the three angelic hierarchies), the threefold division of every Hierarchy, when we affirmed that our sacred tradition holds, that every Hierarchical transaction is

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<sup>43</sup> The term is often used either as a synonym for διακόμησις. Roques, for instance, treats διακόσμησις as synonymous with ιεραρχία, taking Proclus use of the former term in the *Elements of Theology*, as a precedent, see *L'Universe*, 75, n. 1. Stephen Gersh treats διακόμησις, τάξις, σερίαι, and ιεραρχία as synonyms, although he notes, that *hierarchia* is novel and σερίαι is infrequently used by Dionysius, see Gersh, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena*, 152–53.

<sup>44</sup> For example, the first angelic διακόσμησις “hierurgizes”, i.e., performs, its hierarchy whereby it hierarchizes, that is, initiates into the hierarchical system, the second διακόσμησις. (*CH* VII.1 205B [27.8–9]; *CH* IX.2 260A [37.3–5])

divided into the most Divine Mystic Rites, and the inspired experts and teachers of them, and those who are being religiously initiated by them.<sup>45</sup>

How such an understanding of hierarchy as an act between triads entails four hierarchies can be inferred from the whole *CD* but most succinctly from *CH IX.2*:

For the very highest [διακόσμησις], as being placed in the first rank near the Hidden One, we must consider as [hierarchizing] the second, hiddenly; and that the second, which is composed of the holy Lordships and Powers and Authorities, leads the Hierarchy of the Principalities and Archangels and Angels, more clearly indeed than the first Hierarchy, but more hiddenly than the [hierarchy] after it, and the revealing [διακόσμησις] of the Principalities, Archangels, and Angels, presides, through each other, over the Hierarchies amongst men, in order that the elevation, and conversion, and communion, and union with God may be in due order; and, further, also that the procession from God vouchsafed benignly to all the Hierarchies, and passing to all in common, may be also with most sacred regularity.<sup>46</sup>

The first διακόσμησις exercising its hierarchy hierarchizes the second διακόσμησις. In turn the second διακόσμησις performs its hierarchy as leading the hierarchy of the third, διακόσμησις.<sup>47</sup> The third διακόσμησις presides (ἐπιστατεῖν) over the fourth hierarchy, the human hierarchies, that is, either the Church or the hierarchy of the Law before it, in which the clerical ranks initiate the lower ranks into the hierarchy.<sup>48</sup> This taxonomy of

<sup>45</sup> *EH V.1.1 501A* (104.11–15): “Καὶ τὴν μὲν ἀπάσης ἱεραρχίας τριαδικὴν διαίρεσιν ἐν ταῖς ἡδὴ παρ’ ἡμῶν ὑμνημέναις ἱεραρχίαις ὡς οἶμαι καλῶς ἐξεθέμεθα φήσαντες, ὡς ἡ καθ’ ἡμᾶς ἱερὰ παράδοσις ἔχει, πᾶσαν ἱεραρχικὴν πραγματείαν εἰς τὰς ὁσιωτάτας τελετὰς διαιρεῖσθαι καὶ τοὺς ἐνθόους αὐτῶν ἐπιστήμονας καὶ μύστας καὶ τοὺς ὑπ’ αὐτῶν ἱερῶς τελουμένους.”

<sup>46</sup> *CH IX 260A-B* (37.3–13), “Τὴν μὲν γὰρ ὑπερτάτην ὡς εἴρηται διακόσμησιν ὡς τῷ κρυφίῳ πρωτοταγῶς πλησιάζουσιν κρυφιοειδῶς οἰητέον ἱεραρχεῖν τῆς δευτέρας, τὴν δὲ δευτέραν, ἢ συμπληροῦται πρὸς τῶν ἁγίων κυριοτήτων καὶ δυνάμεων καὶ ἐξουσιῶν, τῆς τῶν ἀρχῶν καὶ ἀρχαγγέλων καὶ ἀγγέλων ἱεραρχίας ἡγεῖσθαι, τῆς πρώτης μὲν ἱεραρχίας ἐμφανέστερον, τῆς δὲ μετ’ αὐτὴν κρυφιοειδέστερον, τὴν δὲ τῶν ἀρχῶν καὶ ἀρχαγγέλων καὶ ἀγγέλων ἐκφαντορικὴν διακόσμησιν ταῖς ἀνθρωπίναις ἱεραρχίαις δι’ ἀλλήλων ἐπιστατεῖν, [...].”

<sup>47</sup> The *Liddel-Scott-Jones Greek-English Lexicon* (hereon, *LSJ*) explains that when ἡγέομαι takes a genitive, as it does in this case, it has the sense of leading a song, which is not inappropriate when hierarchy is considered a cultic action.

<sup>48</sup> Given the reference to both the legal or ecclesiastical hierarchy in the singular exclusively, “human hierarchies” ought to be treated as referencing both together rather than further dividing either.

hierarchies not only remains true to the details of the texts, its distinctions of activities between each hierarchy corresponds to the way in which each higher hierarchy acts in the lower. Although Dionysius does not spell it out precisely, the text implies that through the leading of the second hierarchy, the third hierarchy is also hierarchized by the first mediately and that through the third presiding, the fourth hierarchy is hierarchized by the first and led by the second.

### **I.2.6 Conclusion to the Taxonomy of Hierarchy**

The taxonomy of hierarchy, the system by which one triad composed of ranks of intelligent being is indeed, as in the colloquial sense of hierarchy, serial. This series almost surely modeled upon the late Neoplatonist Proclus' triadic *σείραι* of Being, Life, Intellect, Soul, and Body, is, in Dionysius teaching, the mediation of God's presence from the highest, from God himself and the highest creatures, to and through creatures of a lower status. Nonetheless, in every hierarchy, God is active and grounds the mediation through the hierarchies, which are four in number among five triads of creatures. Hierarchy in general and every hierarchy is social but nonetheless it is performed and participated by individuals.

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Support for this reading can be found in *CH* IV.2 and 4 explain the angels' role in both the transmission of the Law for the hierarchy of the law and the role of the angels in Christ's incarnation, birth, life, and passion, in which acts the ecclesiastical hierarchy was founded.

### I.3 Why: The Purpose of Dionysian Hierarchy

The taxonomy of the hierarchical system is an expression of and ordered towards a purpose. Dionysius' description of the σκοπός, or purpose, of hierarchy, as quoted above, demarcates four goals for the hierarchical system: 1) divinization or θέωσις,<sup>49</sup> which is assimilation (ἀφομοιώσις) and union (ἔνωσις) to God as far as possible<sup>50</sup> and is achieved 2) by having God as the leader in every holy science (ἐπιστήμη) and activity (ἐνέργεια)<sup>51</sup> and 3) by looking upon (ὁράω) and being modeled after (ἀποτυπούμενος) God's most divine comeliness (εὐπρέπεια)<sup>52</sup> 4) and thereby to make those who worship (θιασώτες) God clear mirrors filled by the 'archlight' (ἀρχιφῶτος), the 'thearchic ray' (θεαρχικὴ ἀκτίς), and the granted splendor (ἐνδιδομένη αἴγλη) in order to shine it upon others as far as possible.<sup>53</sup> In a single breath Dionysius integrates the personal or individual likeness to, vision of, and union to God with the communal performance of God-led activity and knowing, which is the sharing out of the divine light through other created beings of various conditions. Thus, he observes that elevation towards God is at once to be poured-out with God as a co-worker in the service of the salvation of others. The purpose of hierarchy, then, if it is to be reduced to one term, is θεομίμησις, the imitation of God so far as it is possible for each intelligent creature. Hierarchy,

<sup>49</sup> *EH* I.3 376A (66.12–13): θέωσις as ἀφομοιώσις and ἔνωσις: “ἡ δὲ θέωσις ἐστὶν ἢ πρὸς θεὸν ὡς ἐφικτὸν ἀφομοιώσις τε καὶ ἔνωσις.”

<sup>50</sup> *CH* III.2, 165A (17.10–11), “[...] ἢ πρὸς θεὸν ὡς ἐφικτὸν ἀφομοιώσις τε καὶ ἔνωσις [...]”

<sup>51</sup> *CH* III.2, 165A (17.11–18.1), “[...] ἔχουσα πάσης ἱερᾶς ἐπιστήμης τε καὶ ἐνεργείας καθηγεμόνα [...]”

<sup>52</sup> *CH* III.2, 165A (18.1–2) “[...] καὶ πρὸς τὴν αὐτοῦ θειοτάτην εὐπρέπειαν ἀκλινῶς μὲν ὁρῶν ὡς δυνατὸν δὲ ἀποτυπούμενος [...]”

<sup>53</sup> *CH* III.2, 165A (18.2–6), “καὶ τοὺς ἑαυτοῦ θιασώτας ἀγάλματα θεῶα τελῶν ἔσοπτρα διειδέστατα καὶ ἀκηλίδωτα, δεκτικὰ τῆς ἀρχιφῶτος καὶ ἀκτίνος καὶ τῆς μὲν ἐνδιδομένης αἴγλης ἱερῶς ἀποπληρούμενα, ταύτην δὲ αὐτὴς ἀφθόνως εἰς τὰ ἐξῆς ἀναλάμποντα κατὰ τοὺς θεαρχικοὺς θεσμοὺς, Οὐ γὰρ θεμιτὸν ἐστὶ τοῖς τῶν ἱερῶν τελεταῖς ἢ τοῖς ἱερῶς”



furthermore, is an aspect of God's *πρόδος* (procession), *μόνη* (remaining), and *ἐπίστροφη* (return), not as regards the divine ecstasy in bringing creatures into being but as regards the entrance of Jesus the paternal light into creation in order to raise intelligent creatures to a life that exceeds their natural powers. Hence Dionysius identifies Jesus, the incarnate Word, as the head and essence of every hierarchy.<sup>54</sup>

In order to explain the purpose and process of hierarchy as a divine act performed through creatures in an organized way, I will lay out Dionysius' logic and stages of *θέωσις* in what I believe is a coherent and progressive order from the most basic to the most conclusive: 1) the divine cycle of procession, returning, and remaining; 2) the divine illuminations; 3) *ἀναγωγή*; 4) *ἔνωσις* and 5) *ἀφομοιώσις*. Finally, this section will end with description of the Christic consummation of hierarchy's purpose, not only as the means of salvation, but of eternal and perfect worship.

### **I.3.1 Procession, Remaining, and Reversion and Hierarchy**

Dionysius situates his hierarchical system within the cycle of *πρόδος*, *μόνη*, and *ἐπίστροφη* by integrating that same cycle into *CH* I's account of the gift of the divine light from God, the Father of lights, and its elevating effect upon humans and angels. He terms the descent of the divine light from the Father as a procession (*πρόδος*) which in dwelling with us (*φωτῶσα*) fills us with "one-making power" (*ἐνοποιὸς δυνάμεις*), and turns us (*ἐπιστρέφει*) towards the "unity (*ἐνότης*) and God-making simplicity (*θεοποιὸς ἀπλότης*) of the gathering (*συναγωγός*) Father".<sup>55</sup> Divinization is the express goal of the

<sup>54</sup> *CH* I.1–2; *EH* I 372A (64.11–65.1); V.5 505A–B (107.13–17).

<sup>55</sup> *CH* I.1 120B–121A (7.3–7).

πρόοδος cycle in this context: light descends from the Father to created intelligences; they, in turn, ascend to the Father. The cycle's tidy reciprocity, however, belies an odd feature of this passage with respect to its articulation in neoplatonism: in *CH I* the subject of the descending procession and unifying ascent are not the same, being God in Jesus in the former and creatures in the latter case.<sup>56</sup>

In its neoplatonic origins, the triad of πρόοδος, μόνη, and ἐπίστροφη, (procession, remaining, and reversion) is a causal account of being, eternal generation, and the union of the lower beings to the higher, and ultimately, to the One beyond being.<sup>57</sup> Πρόοδος is the production of beings as emanations from the One and subordinate causal principles. Μόνη (remaining) is the produced effect's similarity to—*remaining in*—its cause (which cause is itself unchanged). Ἐπίστροφη is the union of the same effect to the One through its proximate cause.<sup>58</sup> Accordingly, the cycle of πρόοδος et al. was not only an ontological etiology for the Neoplatonists but even a soteriology insofar as it described union with the One and the Good for humans who suffer evil. In neoplatonism, and especially in the teachings of Proclus upon which Dionysius' drew, this cycle recurs universally, describing not only the single cosmic order but also the origin and end of every individual being on every level of reality, so that one produced effect will in turn be the source of another cycle of πρόοδος, μόνη, and ἐπίστροφη until the end of the

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<sup>56</sup> Beside this, μόνη or an equivalent is missing, but the unity of the “synagogue of the Father” may suffice for the term of rest, as it tends to be used, unlike among the Neoplatonists, as the final rest place of the cycle, see Gersh, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena*, 218.

<sup>57</sup> This cycle has its roots in the Neoplatonic thought of Plotinus and is first found fully formed in the philosophy of Iamblichus of Chalcis, and received by Syrianus, Proclus, and Damascius, see Gersh, *From Iamblichus to Eriugena*, 45–6.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Proclus, *El. Th.*, prop. 30–32. All that is caused both remains in its cause (μόνη), according to which it is both like and unlike it and reverts (ἐπίστροφη) upon its cause in order to reach the object of its appetite, namely, the Good. In so reverting, the cause has communion, κοινωνία, with its proximate principle.

whole series. Thereby, the transcendent One stands apart from all generation, while it remains the ultimate (and most immanent) principle and end of all beings.

The peculiarity of Dionysius' asymmetrical procession-cycle contrasts with the neoplatonic account. *CH*'s lack of a reference to an ἐπίστροφη for the light is a signal of much greater difference. Dionysius rejects intermediate causal or generative principles and, therefore, Jesus the paternal light's entrance into the created world in a mode besides its immanence in creation necessitates a different conception of transcendence than that which Neoplatonism's serial processions had guarded.<sup>59</sup> That the divine light comes to

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<sup>59</sup> The question of the relationship between creation and hierarchy spurred a debate going back to at least of the middle of the twentieth century. It involves really two interrelated questions, the first of which is more closely focused on the *CD* actual text, the second on the broader implications of Dionysius' philosophy: 1) whether the activities of the hierarchies as described by Dionysius are involved or cooperate in the generation of the cosmos; and 2) whether Dionysius' concept of hierarchy, which is of course only every applied to humans and angels, can be applied to the whole structure of the cosmos by extension. Both questions must be at least implicitly addressed by anyone intending to treat the hierarchies in detail.

Otto Semmelroth, in his article "Gottes Ausstrahlendes Licht. Zur Schöpfung Und Offenbarungslehre Des Ps.-Dionysius Areopagita," *Theologie Und Philosophie* 28, no. 4 (1953): 481–503, published only a year before *L'Universe Dionysien*, undertook a study of the divine light in the *CD*, coming to the conclusion that Dionysius does profess a doctrine of a free creation rather than a necessary emanation (Semmelroth, 485–86) and that there are no uncreated mediating beings active in the act of creation (Semmelroth, 489), but he identifies the divine light which descends through hierarchy is indeed creative, "schöpferisch", and that the higher levels of the hierarchies, since they possess the perfections of the lower levels, mediate the rays of God as co-creative, "mitschöpferisch", to the lower levels. (Semmelroth, 496.) While Semmelroth's position regards the divine light as God's act of creation and communion simultaneously, the way in he identifies the hierarchies as co-creative and distinguished from the productive hypostases of late Neoplatonism does not differ too greatly from Roques, since the role of the angels in both is to pass on what they have received. Semmelroth regards this as constitutive of the perfections of the lower orders, and thus, for him co-creative, but Roques does not regard this as a creative act.

A more much explicitly ontological-oriented reading of hierarchy is given by Ronald Hathaway, in *Hierarchy and the Definition of Order*, who attributes the traditional Neoplatonic doctrine of emanation from the first principle to Dionysius, but while Proclus does depicts deductive causal system, Hathaway notes that Dionysius does not explicitly treat the hierarchy as a deductively causal system (although he does not deny it), but as an expression of the λόγοι in higher beings (Hathaway, xvi–xvii; 48–50.). He argues that while Dionysius does call only men and angels hierarchical, the θεσμος or divine law that underlies the interactions of all the members of the hierarchies is the law of all cosmic order, which is animated by *Eros*, which drives the cycle of participation, in which beings possessed of a λόγος proceed, remain, revert to the proximate being above with the same λόγος (44–6, 51–2, 54–5). Hierarchy is, therefore, concerned more with cosmic ontology than sharing in the divine gifts which elevate one beyond their natural activities. Accordingly, besides the hierarchies of men and angels described by Dionysius, he proposes another hierarchy consisting of God, the ἀρχαί (being, life, etc.), and then the beings which participate in them and who are organized among themselves hierarchically (Hathaway, 58–60.). The result of Hathaway's

argument is the relativization of Dionysius' Christianity, since outside of barely superficial differences, his supposed Christianity is dominated with pagan Neoplatonic language and thought, on which grounds Hathaway completely rejects Corsini's thesis that Dionysius' has a Christian doctrine of creation (Hathaway, *Hierarchy and the Definition of Order*, xiv–xviii.). Two more recent accounts follow Hathaway's identification of hierarchy as an ontological principle, but return it to a more explicitly Christian, but not *non-Neoplatonic*, context. Eric Perl in "Symbol, Sacrament, and Hierarchy in Saint Dionysios the Areopagite," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 39, no. 3 (September 1994), aiming to defend Dionysius' authentic Christianity against charges of gnosticism, and in his book, *Theophany: The Neoplatonic Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), presenting an overview of Dionysius' philosophy, argues that being is theophany, argues that even if one were to follow Roques in treating the angels as revelatory and transmissive of divine gifts, what is revealed must be the actual being of beings in the world knowing God. (Perl, "Symbol", 313–319; Perl, *Theophany*, 73.) Thus he attempts to short circuit any opposition between hierarchy as principle of creation and divinization, and likewise between the sacraments as means of knowledge and sacramental efficacy in themselves. Furthermore, since he determined that hierarchy is creative, also calls the whole cosmos hierarchical. (Perl, *Theophany*, 65.)

Similarly, Sarah Klitenic Wear and John Dillon apply the term hierarchy to the whole cosmos saying, "Hierarchy indicates an order set out by God as an expression of divine law and will", hence the whole of creation is a hierarchy in virtue of being created in an order but not only that since "the activity of hierarchy is the act of God's creation, and the desire of that creation to return to God using hierarchy as the means of doing so.", see Klitenic Wear and Dillon, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition*, 57, 66. Nevertheless, even though they regard hierarchy as the universal order, they do not attribute creative power to the hierarchies, but rather, focus is on explaining the ecclesiastical and celestial hierarchies, as two distinct parts of this overall system, and their functions. (Klitenic Wear and Dillon, 59–60.) William Riordan, remarks that the universe is the means of divinization, explaining that Dionysius coined the term hierarchy in order that the whole universe might be described appropriately, and thus Riordan places the animals, plants, and minerals as the triad of the "subhuman hierarchy" below the ecclesiastical hierarchy, saying that "One can see, then, that the celestial and ecclesiastical hierarchies are included as elements within the *one total hierarchy of creatures*, [...].", see Riordan, *Divine Light*, 47–50. Riordan regards creation and divinization as a single action, one divine procession and reversion, but acknowledges that creation and divinization can be recognized as distinct moments. (Riordan, *Divine Light*, 154, 169–70.) Christian Schäfer says that "[h]ierarchy" is [...] a key-word for the entire Dionysian system, and the ontological hierarchies are Dionysius' fundamental contribution to an immense philosophical tradition.", see Schäfer, *Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite*, 98.

René Roques' answer to this question in *L'Univers dionysien* is perhaps the best known. He distinguishes Dionysius from his Neoplatonic contemporaries and forbearers by assigning hierarchy a "more humble" role than Neoplatonic intermediaries of Dionysius' contemporaries, because the hierarchies do not possess generative power, rather, "Rien n'appartient en propre aux divers ordres hiérarchique qui ne subsistent, [...], que par une référence constante aux Transcendants. Dans cette attitude essentiellement dépendant, tout leur rôle est de recevoir des réalités divines qui les dépassent." (Roques, *L'Univers*, 78–79. In combination with *L'Univers*, 102–104, Roques statement is often taken to mean that the angels only transmit knowledge, but Roques himself does not limit their mediation to knowledge, but rather says that it pertains to whole work of divinization in cooperation with God (Roques, 86). Furthermore, Roques takes the text at its word and only associates hierarchy with humans and angels, and, moreover denies that Dionysius is interested in the sensible creation in itself, and there is not interested in φυσιολογία, a total account of the created cosmos, but only in the spiritual world symbolized in the material: "[Denys] s'attache exclusivement à présenter un univers spirituel, l'univers où les intelligences sanctifiées peuvent s'unir à Dieu". (Roques, 53; cf. *ibid.* 69–70.)

Other readers of Dionysius follow Roques and strictly identify hierarchy with divinization. Andrew Louth treats hierarchies strictly as he means of sharing the divine light among intelligent creatures for the sake of their divinization, and neither attributes any creative power to hierarchy nor even treats hierarchy as a principle of the total organization of the created cosmos, but rather sees the concerns of the *CD* as primarily liturgical, see Andrew Louth, *Denys, the Areopagite*, Outstanding Christian Thinkers

already existing creatures in *CH I* necessitates two processions from God in Dionysius' modification of Neoplatonic theology. First, a creative procession of creatures from their creator in which God is their imminent cause as being, life, and wisdom. That creative

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(Wilton, Conn: Morehouse, 1989), 29–31, 38–40. Similarly, Alexander Golitzin rejecting an emanation theory of creation, identifies creation solely as an act of God and not of the hierarchies, which are filled with the divine light by providence in order to conduct intelligent creatures to God, who by their nature are both like yet inadequate to God, see Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 77–78, 108–109, 161–166. Similarly, Charles Stang recognizes that hierarchy is nothing other than the reception of Jesus who is the divinizing light and love which both initiates and courses through the celestial and ecclesiastical hierarchies, see Charles M. Stang, *Apophysis and pseudonymity in Dionysius the Areopagite: "No longer I"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 92ff. Golitzin's description of hierarchy in *Mystagogy* as the "mystery of God's presence and activity of a given plane of being" applies to Louth, Stang, and others who distinguish divinization as distinct from the act of creation. (Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 162.) Golitzin's definition is not meant in a sense which denies that God is operative immanently in the being, living, and knowing of creatures, but as the supernatural fulfilment of the capacities of creatures. (Golitzin, 165–5.) In this view, hierarchy is not a bare fact of reality, but the accomplishment of a divine deed among and together with creatures.

Thus, the question of meaning of hierarchy and its relationship to creation can be divided into two camps: those who regard it is the structural principle of the created world according a vertical valuation of higher and lesser beings, and those who regard hierarchy as the means of God's particular condescending and deifying gratuitous love for intelligent creatures. Between both groups there are many common points. First, both regard hierarchy as related to the procession, remaining, and reversion of both God and creatures. Second, both regard hierarchy as involved in divinization in one way or another. Third, both regard hierarchy as being coordinated with the varying status of creatures. Fourth, all regard hierarchy as related to God's presence in the world. The fault line between the two positions breaks open on the question of whether everything, every creature belongs to the hierarchy. If the answer is "yes", hierarchy is a cosmic, structural principle, ordered towards divinization, but not is not the accomplishment thereof. If the answer is "no", a reason must be given to explain why hierarchy is limited. The answer I propose for this limitation is that hierarchy is a cultic system that effects divinization and into which one must enter voluntarily, albeit, by divine aid.

Ultimately, hierarchy must be treated as either primarily an ontology or cult, and the latter is the position with the evidence on its side. They very etymology of the word, coined not to mean as "sacred order" or something similar, but from modifying *ἱεραρχης*, the cultic leader, to *ἱεραρχία*, in order to indicate his priestly office. This term corresponds to the cultic language used of the celestial and ecclesiastical hierarchies and their coordination in which they are described as *συλλειτουργόν* (co-liturgizers) and especially to the focus upon the hierarch's action in the *EH*, and the equivalent sacred actions discussed in the *CH*. Reading hierarchy as cultic rather than ontological frees a reader from having to suppose that Dionysius misspoke when he did not attribute hierarchy to the plants, animals, and minerals, or explain away that only some are initiated in the hierarchies. Certainly, some do try to subvert the opposition between cult and ontology, such Perl's argument that being is an intensive property, and hence non-participation in the hierarchy simply a less intense measure of human being. (Perl, "Symbol", 331.) Perl denies that the divine light is something superadded to creatures (Perl, "Symbol", 322), claiming instead that it *is* its creation, much like Semmelroth's position on the divine light as creative. Nevertheless, although Perl qualifies that that fall is a privation of being, this ignores the language of *CH I*, *EH I* and *DN IV* which present a gratuitous filling of the minds of humans and angels by hierarchy with the divine light, coming to creatures which already exist. Ultimately, this limiting the meaning of hierarchy to grace-bearing cult necessitates making a distinction between the multiple modes in which God proceeds into the world in Dionysius' thought, namely, on the one hand as the cause of being, life, and wisdom, but on the other hand, as Jesus entering the world for the sake of humans' and angels' divinization.

procession is largely treated in Dionysius' *DN*. On the other hand, *CH* I presents a second, personal procession of God—God the Son—into the created world to gather his intelligent creatures, humans and angels, to himself and raise them in a personal experience of His presence and cooperation in His proper activities. This latter procession is the coming of Jesus Christ to humans and angels. Although both processions, creation and divinization, share the same end (the union of creatures with God their source) God's entrance to the world in Christ is an intervention and not identical *to* nor a final term *in* creation.

### **I.3.1.1 The Light That Proceeds from God Is Christ**

As I noted several times above, the procession from God which is received and transmitted by the hierarchies is that of the divine light. This light is spoken of from the beginning of the *CH* and in connection with Christ. In *CH* I.2, Dionysius, invokes Jesus, whom he calls “the paternal light” who “illumines every man coming into the world,” and “through Whom we have access to the Father,” the “archlight”.<sup>60</sup> Almost immediately afterwards, he bids his reader to look upon the “primal and super-primal light-gift (φωτοδοσία) of the thearchic Father” that proceeds into multiplicity, always remaining one in itself, for the sake for the objects of its providence, humans and angels.<sup>61</sup> Indeed, from the beginning of the *CH*, this light that comes to and through the hierarchies is not merely connected to Jesus, it is Jesus, the Son of God entering creation.

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<sup>60</sup> *CH* I.2 121A (7.10–11). Cf. John 1:4–5, 9; Ep. James 1:17.

<sup>61</sup> *CH* I.2 121A-B (8.1–2).

Scholarship on the *CD*, however, rarely identifies Christ the paternal light with the paternal light-gift nor follows its implications for the *CD* as a whole (although there are exceptions), nevertheless the case for identifying Jesus Christ with the light of hierarchy is quite simple.<sup>62</sup> The textual proximity of the invocation of Jesus, the paternal light who illumines those in the world and the description of the illumining power of the paternal φωτοδοσία given to the hierarchies without an interposed qualification supports identifying Jesus as that light present throughout the hierarchies. *EH* I, similarly, identifies Jesus as the one who illumines humanity and the angels and assimilates them to his “proper light.”<sup>63</sup> Hence, illumination is characterized as participating in Jesus himself. And if Jesus is the divine light given to hierarchy, that light is best understood as an aspect of the operation of the economic Trinity.<sup>64</sup> While Dionysius does use terms for the

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<sup>62</sup> Cf. *EH* I.1 372A–372B, (63.11–64.7); Stang, *Apophysis and pseudonymity in Dionysius the Areopagite*, 93–95.; Riordan, *Divine Light*, 151–54.

<sup>63</sup> *EH* I.1 372A–B (64.2–14).

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Schäfer, *Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite*, 35. Schäfer, observes that all the divine names apply to the God entirely, and this is equally true of the term light (see *DN* IV.4–6). The identification of Jesus as the light in *CH* I.2 121A and *EH* I.1 372A–B, therefore, raises two questions. First, how Jesus as the light should be distinguished if at all from the identification of God as light generally (*DN* IV.5; *DN* IV.6), and from identification of the Spirit as another light of the Father, the “font of divinity” (*DN* II.7 645B [132.1–4]). The Good, or God, is called spiritual light on account of its light-giving role towards intellects, wherein they are purified from ignorance and gathered into one in God. (*DN* IV.5; *DN* IV.6.) Riordan suggest the Father, the arch-light (*CH* I.2) shines through the Son and that the rays do not seem to be distinguished from Jesus, see Riordan, *Divine Light*, 159, n. 120. While Jesus is singled out as the paternal light or light of the Father, Jesus also gives the Spirit (*EH* VII.7 564B [128.19–21]), and on the other hand, is consecrated by the Father and the Spirit (*EH* IV.3.10), and the Spirit also brings Jesus’ activity in the hierarchy to completion. (*EH* II.3.8 397A [73.7–10]; *EH* III.1 424C [79.2–6]; *EH* III.2 428A [81.9–13].) In this way, the divinizing action of the Trinity is manifested in Jesus, who manifests the light of the archlight and is intelligible and visible source of the Spirit’s mission to the world. Thus, the identification of Jesus (*EH* I.1 372A [63.12–64.1]) and the Trinity (*EH* I.3 373C–D [66.6–8]) as the ἀρχή of every hierarchy are neither in conflict nor a vague equivalence: the whole Trinity does indeed found hierarchy through the personal, proper acts of Jesus. Hence Dionysius identifies the Trinity as the source of life, the being of goodness, and cause of being (*EH* I.3 373C–D [66.6–8]), while Jesus is identified as the head, essence, and most thearchic power of every consecration, and theurgy, terms more proximate to the cultic character of hierarchy. (*EH* I.1 372A [63.12–64.1])

The second question, related to the earlier problem of distinguishing creation from divinization, is how the procession of the light which divinizes and raises intelligent beings to union with God is to be distinguished from the immanent procession of God in creation. Stang, who identifies Jesus as the light,

multiple participation in Jesus the light (φῶς) such as the act of illumination of an object (ἐλλάμψις) and the rays (ἁκτίνα) through which it is achieved, he teaches clearly that the paternal light, the second person of the Trinity, is never sundered into multiplicity.<sup>65</sup>

Jesus is the undivided light who shines upon the intelligent beings through his rays.

Since Jesus is the light reflected by the members of the hierarchies as mirrors, the purpose of all the hierarchies is precisely mediating the intellectual vision of and communion with him.<sup>66</sup> Jesus is not, however, passively mediated but is in fact the summit and primary actor in every hierarchy, the illumination that purifies, illumines and perfects each through its hierarchy.<sup>67</sup> He is the source (ἄρχη) and essence (οὐσία) and thearchic power of every hierarchy, consecration (ἁγιαστέα) and theurgy (θεουργία).<sup>68</sup> The hierarchical system depends entirely on Christ as its beginning, center, and end.

Christ's procession to created intelligences as the paternal light is entirely bound up with what Dionysius terms Christ's 'φιλανθρωπία,' his love of humanity and the incarnation wherein that love is demonstrated. In the *CD*, Christ's φιλανθρωπία, or philanthropy, takes aim at humanity's fallen state, which is reversed by Christ's incarnation and the theurgies he performs through it.<sup>69</sup> These theurgies include three prior to the fall: hypostasizing (ὑποστήσασα) our essence and life; mounding (μορφώσασα) our deformity to beautiful archetypes; establishing (καταστήσασα) us in the participation

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doesn't address this problem at all; Riordan doesn't address the problem directly but identifies only one procession, see Riordan, *Divine Light*, 154, 169–70.

<sup>65</sup> *CH* I.2 121B (8.5–10.)

<sup>66</sup> Cf. *EH* III.2 425C (80.15–16).

<sup>67</sup> *EH* V.1.5 505B (107.16–19).

<sup>68</sup> *EH* I.1 372A (63.12–64.1).

<sup>69</sup> See the discussion of Christ and theurgy in the I.4 below.



of a more divine habit and anagogy.<sup>70</sup> Three others follow our loss of the divine gifts: that we are recalled to the first state by the restoration of the good things lost; that God/Christ beneficently-works (ἀγαθοουργήσαι), or rather, accomplishes what is belongs to him as *the Good*, the most perfect distribution of what is *proper to him* by the complete taking up of *what is ours*; and by this communion with God the “divine things” are gifted to us.<sup>71</sup> The latter two theurgies explicitly refer to the incarnation, which includes many deeds recounted in the synoptic gospels, which Dionysius terms the “manly theurgies of Jesus.”<sup>72</sup>

Christ’s philanthropy is also not without importance for the angels. Indeed, his philanthropy benefits all the hierarchies. First, as noted above, Dionysius associates divinization with the presence of Christ as light in the activities of every hierarchy and, second, states that the angels “were the first initiated into the divine mystery of Jesus’ philanthropy.”<sup>73</sup> The angels, who once gave the Law to Israel, announce Christ’s incarnation and birth, sharing the “grace of γνῶσις” with us. However, they have an even more remarkable role in Christ’s philanthropy. Observing good order, the incarnate Christ submits himself to the Father through the angels, which is fitting for the founder of

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<sup>70</sup> EH III.3.7 436C-D (88.1–9), “Δοκεῖ γάρ μοι τῶν ὑμνουμένων ἀπασῶν θεουργιῶν ἡ πραγματεία περὶ ἡμᾶς γεγονέναι τὴν μὲν οὐσίαν ἡμῶν καὶ ζωὴν ἀγαθοειδῶς ὑποστήσασα καὶ ἀρχετύποις κάλλεσι τὸ θεοειδὲς ἡμῶν μορφώσασα καὶ θειοτέρας ἕξεως καὶ ἀναγωγῆς ἐν μετουσίᾳ καταστήσασα, κατιδοῦσα δὲ τὴν ἐξ ἀπροσεξίας ἐγγενομένην ἡμῖν ἐρημίαν τῶν θείωνδωρεῶν ἐπισκευαστοῖς ἡμᾶς ἀγαθοῖς εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἀνακαλέσασθαι καὶ τῇ παντελεῖ τῶν ἡμετέρων προσλήψει τὴν τελεωτάτην τῶν οἰκείων μετάδοσιν ἀγαθοουργήσαι καὶ ταύτῃ κοινωνίαν ἡμῖν θεοῦ καὶ τῶν θείων δωρήσασθαι.”

<sup>71</sup> EH III.3.7 436C-D (88.1–9). Cf. EH III.3.11 440C-441C (90.11–92.1). A longer description of the Fall and God’s beneficent and providential love for humanity is included in EH.3.11 but includes the account of theurgies by which God joins the human race and we in turn are liberated from rebellion and made to have communion with God. Like EH III.3.8, besides the incarnation, no specific mention is made of the events of Christ’s life.

<sup>72</sup> EH III.3.4 429C (83.20).

<sup>73</sup> CH IV.4 128B (22.23–24). Dionysius’ description of the angels’ way of participating in that φιλανθρωπία is one of the rare occasions on which the events of Christ’s life are mentioned.

the ecclesiastical hierarchy.<sup>74</sup> The angels minister to Christ as the head of ecclesiastical hierarchy guiding his life, even encouraging Jesus in Gethsemane for his saving beneficent work, a rare explicit reference to the paschal mystery.<sup>75</sup> Thus, Christ's philanthropy towards fallen humanity involves the angels, not as an ancillary function to their divinization but as essential to it insofar as they become cooperators in his philanthropy and so in their own assimilation to God. For the purpose of hierarchy, as shall be discussed further below, is not only union to God, but cooperation in the divinization of human or angelic persons.<sup>76</sup> Therefore, insofar as they share this light as far as possible, the hierarchies of the angels are directed towards the hierarchization of humanity, and accomplish this goal in both the giving of the Law and by ministering to Christ in all the aspects of his incarnation and those for whom he descended.<sup>77</sup>

### **I.3.1.2 Conclusion on Procession**

Hierarchy is set in the context of the cycles of procession, remaining, and return proper to both God and creatures. Creatures proceed from the transcendent God

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<sup>74</sup> *CH* IV.4 181C 923.10–18).

<sup>75</sup> *CH* IV.4 181C-D (23.10–24.4).

<sup>76</sup> Cf. *CH* III.2; *CH* IX.2; *EH* I.1.

<sup>77</sup> Dionysius states explicitly that the lowest hierarchy of the angels transmitted the Law to Moses (*CH* IV.2 180B [21.15–20]), but their role in incarnation is not so simple. Nowhere does Dionysius say that the angels literally transmit Jesus to humanity. Among the three angelic hierarchies, the higher share Jesus' divinizing presence as intelligible light to the lower. This is not the mere transmission of knowledge, but of divine communion or the knowledge of a person. Nevertheless, the Law is revealed by the angels, which reveals, in turn, a their own angelic hierarchies in a symbolic manner to humanity. Hence describing their relationship to humanity as solely transmitters of knowledge appears attractively simple in this case. However, *CH* IV is at pains to make the giving of the law and the angels' involvement with the incarnation parallels, and Jesus' submission to them suggest this especially. (*CH* IV.4 181B [23.10–14].) For as the angels gave the scriptures which prophesied Jesus, they were also involved in the acts (or theurgies) in which he fulfilled what was prophesied. (*EH* III.3.5 432B [84.18–21].) Regarding Christ's incarnation and life, the angels do more than announce his coming, but do not directly transmit him as they gave the law, the essential element of the legal hierarchy, but rather announce, protect, and accompany him. Dionysius means to show, it seems, that angels were as involved in giving the essential elements of the ecclesiastical hierarchies as they were in the legal hierarchies, Christ and the Law, respectively.

immediately (πρόοδος) and are preserved by God in their essences (μόνη) but they are also oriented towards communion with God, who exceeds every created capacity (ἐπίστροφή). God, without loss of transcendence (μόνη), proceeds into the world in two ways. First, as the immanent being, life, and wisdom of creatures, God causes the creatures' being and preserved existence. Second, God proceeds to creatures personally in Christ in order that they may share in divinity. Hierarchy is the means and fulfillment of the latter procession, whereby Christ's works through communities of intelligent beings in order to fill their members with his light inwardly, elevating them to God in excess of their own capacity and also fulfilling the creatures' orientation to God.

### **I.3.2 Light**

Dionysius uses the language of light to describe both the processive presence of God among created intelligence in the hierarchies and the complementary hierarchical activities with their coordinate role in divinization. Attention to distinct light-related terms such as φῶς, ἐλλάμψις, and ἀκτίς, clarifies Dionysius' understanding of Christ's presence in the hierarchies. Moreover, such attention distinguishes ἐλλάμψις, "shining-out" or "illumination", as a generic category for all three hierarchical powers of purification (καθάρσις), enlightenment (which Latin will call illumination) (φωτισμός), and perfection (τελείωσις).

#### **I.3.2.1 Light Terminology**

The distinction between φῶς, the light-source, and shining upon creatures, ἑλλάμψις and its ἀκτίς, or ray, is implicit in that φῶς is never referred to in the plural in

the *CH* and *EH*, but ἔλλαμψις and ἀκτίς are. Those three terms have an implicit relationship to each other just as grammar requires that a subject implies a predicate. Φῶς, the light itself, illuminates (ἐλλάμψις) objects through its ray or rays (ἀκτίς/ἀκτίνες).<sup>78</sup> So conceived, the shining and the ray are intrinsic to the light, describing the light or source-light as both diffusive and emitted-and-received. Thus, the rays, ἀκτίνες, of the light's shining are not derivative and intermediary lesser lights but are the light's mode of lighting beings. Since, however, the one light itself cannot be absolutely identified with any single relationship to creatures it shines upon, neither can it be absolutely identified with or reduced to any one ray or even all the rays of which it the source and thus, by its priority, exceeds them.<sup>79</sup> By the same logic, when Dionysius speaks of the hierarchies as objects of the ἐλλάμψει and as receiving the ἀκτίνες it is no less than God himself whom they receive—not an intermediary—but, nonetheless, God under the mode of a procession rather than as an essence comprehended in the manner of an object.

The nuanced relations of Dionysius' light terminology perform the double-duty of describing God's personal, active presence to the hierarchies while safeguarding God's transcendence. The same may be said more specifically of Jesus, who is the light-gift of

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<sup>78</sup> Gregory of Nyssa demonstrates a similar use of language for light, illumination, and the rays. See *De hominis opificio*, PG 44,165, line 42: “[...] ὅταν ἐπιλάμψη θερμότεραις ἀκτῖσιν ὁ ἥλιος [...]”; *De perfectione*, Gregorii Nysseni Opera 8, p.1 (Leiden: Brill, 1952), 184.24: “[...] μανθάνομεν, ὅτι χρῆ καὶ τὸν ἡμέτερον βίον ταῖς τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ φωτὸς ἀκτῖσι καταφωτίζεσθαι [...]”; *In Canticum canticorum*, Gregorii Nysseni Opera 6, p. (Leiden: Brill, 1960), 355.3–4: “[...] τῷ πυρὶ τῷ ἐπὶ τῆς βάρου φωτίζεται. μετὰ τοῦτο καὶ τὴν ἀκοὴν ταῖς τοῦ φωτὸς ἀκτῖσι διὰ τοῦ λόγου περιανγάζεται”; *idem*, 145.7: “[...] ἐπὶ τὰ ἐντὸς παραδύεται. μετὰ ταῦτα δὲ ἡ τελεία τοῦ φωτὸς ἔλλαμψις γίνεται [...]”; *Apologia in hexaemeron*, PG 44, 88, line 9: “Λαμπρὸς τε γὰρ γίνεται τῇ τοῦ φωτὸς ἐλλάμψει, [...]”

<sup>79</sup> Since Dionysius identifies the Good as the “fontal ray” (ἀκτὶς πηγαία), albeit not in the context of Christ particularly, it shows that divinity is not incompatible with being treated as the ray which actually “makes contact” with its object. (*DN* IV.7 701A [150.1–2].)

the Father. In proceeding, the light-gift which is Christ never departs from its simplicity but is multiplied in the ray or rays by which he illuminates his followers.<sup>80</sup> In every way of receiving the divine light noted by Dionysius (at least for the *EH* and *CH*) it is one and the same Christ, who as God is beyond being, knowing, and comprehension but in his *φιλανθρωπία* is received by and *personally*<sup>81</sup> present to all the members of the hierarchical system through the mediation of its superior members. The modes of this presence are expressed in the hierarchical activities of purification, enlightenment, and perfection.

### I.3.2.2 The Three Powers of Illumination

The thearchic—coming from the *θεαρχία*—or divine *ἐλλάμπεις* are experienced in the hierarchies as the *δυνάμεις*, or powers, of *κάθαρσις*, *φωτισμός*, and *τελείωσις*.<sup>82</sup> These three powers of illumination are progressively ordered towards uniting created intelligences with God in all aspects of their being, intellectual and otherwise.<sup>83</sup> Each

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<sup>80</sup> Cf. *CH* I.2 121A-B (7.9–8.10).

<sup>81</sup> Personally, because it is Jesus' deifying *φιλανθρωπία* and theurgies which are mediated in hierarchy and not an impersonal divine effluence.

<sup>82</sup> *CH* VIII.1 240B (33.24–34.2). Cf. *CH* VII.3 209C (30.17–22). In *CH* VIII.1, Dionysius attributes the purification, enlightening, and perfection of the members of the second angelic *διακόμησις* to the agency of the thearchic illuminations (*ἐλλάμπεις*). In *CH* VII.3, Dionysius says that the first *διακόμησις* of the angels seeks thearchic illuminations but attributes the agency of their purification et al. to the “*ἀπλέτου φωτός*,” the “boundless light.” I regard these two statements as referring to the same reality, insofar as the *ἐλλάμπεις* are the reception of this same boundless divine light (“*ἀπλέτου φωτός*”).

<sup>83</sup> Whether the intellectual life alone or a broader scope of life is the locus of these powers has been disputed. Rorem took the former position, saying “the Dionysian trio is not moral purification as distinguished from an intellectual illumination and a final mystical perfection. For the Areopagite, as this chapter begins to explain, all three powers concern spiritual knowledge or understanding”, see Paul Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to Their Influence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 59. Roques warns that it is tempting to identify *ἐλλαμψίς* and *ἐπιστήμη* insofar as both reveal the divine mysteries, but illumination includes conversion back to God and other aspects of divinization that are not properly *ἐπιστήμη* or “science”, which is the highest mode of knowing God, even higher than the *θεωρία* of the divine things that is proper to the laity, see Roques, *L'Universe dionysien*, 125–7. He also distinguishes intellectual activity from prayer and faith, which are mutually supporting and

power is the reception of the divine light, Jesus, but differ as moments of that reception as preparation, reception properly, and consummation. These three powers pertain both to individuals and the operation of hierarchies as communities. Moreover, insofar as they express the relationship between members and a whole hierarchy, these powers summarize the hierarchical system in both its goal and process: to share the divine light as far as possible. No action—no ἐνέργεια, nor γνῶσις or ἐπιστήμη, nor τάξις of the hierarchies—fails to enact these three powers in one mode or another. All members of the hierarchical system, human and angel, are affected by these powers, and all but the last also perform them because they have been *effected* participants of hierarchy by the powers.

As noted above, these powers structure the τάξις of hierarchy, not only as the means of divine union but simultaneously as the expression of union achieved with God, and particularly, Jesus, in every aspect of hierarchy.<sup>84</sup> The great diversity of these three powers in their multiple instances throughout the whole hierarchical system testifies to the multitude of ways in which God is intimately present to all who respond to his loving condescension.

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all dependent upon illumination. (Roques., 127–8.) Golitzin treats the three powers of illumination as centered around γνῶσις, as leading to it, being realized in it ever more deeply, and coming to divine union through it, but thereby inclusive of the whole of life, see Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 188–9. Andrew Louth argues also for the importance for the body's participation in what in the illumination which work through the sacraments, see Louth, "Pagan Theurgy and Christian Sacramentalism in Denys the Areopagite." While Rorem is correct that spiritual knowledge is present in an aspect of all three powers, they cannot be reduced to it. The more inclusive reading is better since Dionysius frequently refers to the divinization of both νοήσις and ἔξις as a pair expression of knowledge and habituated activity, and Dionysius look towards the resurrection of the body.

<sup>84</sup> Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 278.

### I.3.2.2.1 Κάθαρσις

Κάθαρσις, or purification, is the first of the powers, the gateway to the rest. As with all three powers it applies to humans and the angels. Among fallen humanity, purification has an evident moral connotation as a conversion from a disordered orientation, from following the way of the devil, back towards the life which is conformed to God.<sup>85</sup> Purification, however, is not restricted to moral conversion. Moral conversion is inapposite to the sinless angels who have never fallen towards an evil life, yet Dionysius applies it to them, too. Their purification is solely from their (innocent) ignorance (ἀγνοία) through the knowledge proper to a “more perfect initiation” (“τελεωτέρη μύησις”).<sup>86</sup> This second, noetic aspect applies to humanity in addition to its moral purification, so that purification may be described generically, in Roques’ words, as the turning away from all that make them dissimilar to God.<sup>87</sup> It marks, therefore, not just an elevation from the immoral to the moral, or the ignorant to the wise, but from the natural to the supernatural.

### I.3.2.2.2 Φωτισμός

Since all three powers are considered as the reception of the ἐλλάμψεις, φωτισμός, or enlightenment, they must be carefully distinguished from purification and perfection lest it be treated as a synonym for ἐλλαμψίς. Ἐλλαμψίς is light’s activity *ad extra* of shining, φωτισμός the reception and possession of and communion in the light

<sup>85</sup> Cf. *EH* II.3.1 397A-C (73.12–74.2).

<sup>86</sup> *CH* VII.3 209C-D (30.24–31.2); *EH* VI.3.6 537A (119.16–120.1). Dionysius does have a brief account the demons in *DN* IV, but he never suggests that they might be purified.

<sup>87</sup> Roques, *L’Universe dionysien*, 94.

(φῶς), Jesus. Hence enlightenment includes the vision of God and approaching likeness to God, but it is not yet the consummation of God's ecstatic presence in human and angelic lives. Enlightenment cannot be bypassed rightly any more than the exchange of vows between betrothal and marriage.<sup>88</sup>

Purification is ordered towards the possession of the light. Purification is the process by which the light by its shining makes the soul capable of being enlightened. Thus, purification and enlightenment are two inseparable moments of the one light's reception. This inseparable relationship between purification and enlightenment is most explicitly shown by Dionysius in his account of baptism, which rite he calls both the θεογενεσία, divine birth, and φωτισμός.<sup>89</sup> This sacrament of the Church makes the catechumen dead to sin and also a member of Christ, as represented by its numerous rituals.<sup>90</sup> The angels do not perform visible rituals but they partake no less of the same reality whereby they receive Christ the light having been made capable of seeing him.<sup>91</sup>

While turning away from the gloom of ignorance and malice in purification is inseparable from enlightenment's turning towards the light, enlightenment is also the vision (θεωρία) or knowledge (γνώσις) of that to which a participant of hierarchy will be

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<sup>88</sup> Enlightenment is correlated with terms of vision including θεωρία (*EH* V.1.3 504B (106.14) and ἐποπτεύω (*CH* III.3 168A [19.13–21]; *CH* VII.3 209D [31.3]). Ἐποπτεύω, according to the *LSJ*, can the meaning of being an onlooker of the mysteries of religion, and 2 Peter 1:16 employs the term for the witnesses of God's majesty.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. *EH* II.2.7 396D (72.21–73.2); *EH* II.3.6 404A (77.23); *EH* II.3.7 404B (78.26). The term baptism is only used with reference to the ritual immersion in water.

<sup>90</sup> These rituals include the abjuration of Satan and turning towards the East, the anointings, the baptism in water mixed with μύρον and signed with the cross, and the reception of the white vestment, see *EH* II.2.

<sup>91</sup> *CH* I.3 sees all three powers active in every hierarchy. The particular association of φωτισμός and the reception of the divine light in the case of the angels is made in *CH* VII.2 208A (28.17) when Dionysius explains in the course of his treatment of the Seraphim that the goal of every hierarchy is θεομίμησις and that every hierarchic activity (ιεραρχική πραγματεία) is divided into the holy participation (μετοχή) and distribution (μετάδοσις) of unmixed purification, the divine light (placed in the standard position of φωτισμός), and perfective ἐπιστήμη.



united in τελείωσις, the final power.<sup>92</sup> Dionysius' distinction between φωτισμός and τελείωσις understands the vision of God's presence and an intellectual awareness of one's incipient union to God as not yet the final summit of θέωσις. The practice of the Church and experience of Christians speaks to the ongoing transformation and deepening in wisdom that occurs over a lifetime. The progressive character of enlightenment is not restricted to the ecclesiastical hierarchy, but applies to the angels, who are depicted as seeking to more fully know who God is.<sup>93</sup> Its application to the angels is of particular importance because it identifies the simultaneity of the powers. While the powers are progressively ordered so that purification is ordered toward enlightenment and ultimately perfection, the reception and appropriation of the powers among the angels indicates that they are, all three together, also a concurrent and continuous act of divinization.

### I.3.2.2.3 Τελείωσις

The last of the three powers, τελείωσις, perfection, refers to θέωσις with God, which has two aspects, ἔνωσις (union) and ἀφομοίωσις (assimilation), each with a distinct denotation that will be discussed below. On several occasions, Dionysius associates perfection with ἐπιστήμη, however they are not strictly identical. Union with God exceeds even knowledge, as the *DN* I.4 and the *MT* teach.<sup>94</sup> On the other hand,

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<sup>92</sup> *CH* VII.3 209C (30.21–31.4); *EH* V.1.3 504A (106.5–6); *ibid.* 504B (106.13–14); *EH* VI.2.5 536D (119.12–13) Among the Seraphim, φωτισμός is associated with divine γνῶσις in contradistinction from the perfective ἐπιστήμη. Similarly, the priests are associated with the administering the “φωτιστικὴν μύησιν” to those who have been purified, while the hierarch is concerned with perfecting those initiated in the perfective ἐπιστήμη. On the passive side of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the laity are called enlightened (φωτιζομένη) and speculative (θεωρητική) of some holy things, while the monks have ἐπιστήμη of that which they were formerly just spectators (θεωρῶς).

<sup>93</sup> *CH* VII.3 209B–C (30.13–17).

<sup>94</sup> *DN* I.4 592C (114.7–115.5); *MT* V.

ἐπιστήμη is not merely the most accurate information about God but, as in the Platonic tradition, the supreme grasp of reality. Ἐπιστήμη is sometimes called *perfective*, or perfection is said to be “ἐν ἐπιστήμῃ” but neither perfection nor ἐπιστήμη is reducible to the other nor can either be reduced to receiving information.<sup>95</sup> Following the Greek philosophical dictum that like knows like, the knowledge of God implies a necessary transformation of the creature into a divine likeness. Hence union is simultaneous with assimilation to God, the goal of all the other powers and all the operations of the hierarchy, beyond which no other is possible. Perfection is, in sum, consummation in and likeness God as far as is possible for each member of the hierarchy.

As the summit of the whole purpose of the hierarchical system, τελείωσις is also a philologically poignant term. Its stem, τελ- finds itself at the intersection of the language of interior perfection in union with God and the cultic edifice of both the church and the angels, whereby this perfection, like purification and enlightenment, are accomplished through the hierarchically structured community. Τελείωσις not only denotes the personal assimilation to God, it also refers to clerical or hierarchic ordinations of the hierarchs, priests, and bishops. This is not accidental. A τελέτη refers to the cultic actions by which humans and angels are initiated into communion with God through Jesus, and τελέω and τελετουργία to the performance of the rituals whereby humans and angels are perfected (τελειόω, τελεσιουργία). It is both by reason of logic and etymology that those who are

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<sup>95</sup> Science, ἐπιστήμη, is called perfective in *CH* III.3 168A (19.14); *CH* VII.2 208A (28.17); *EH* V.1.3 504B (206.15–16); *EH* V.1.4 504D (107.9); *EH* V.3.7 513C (113.18). Nor is ἐπιστήμη alone called perfective. The sealing (χρῖσις) with μύρον is in Baptism is called perfective (*EH* II.3.8 [78.14]; *EH* IV.3.11 [102.19]), as are the mysteries in *EH* III.1 425A (79.17) and the τελεταῖ of the μύρον and συνάξις, and θεώσεις (*EH* III.3.7 433C [86.8]); hierurgy (*EH* IV.3.1 473B [95.19]), τάξις and powers (*EH* IV.3.3 476B [97.20]); the kiss of peace (*EH* V.2 509B (110.21); *EH* V.3.1 509C [111.5]); the power (and ἐπιστήμη) of every priesthood (ιερατεία) *EH* V.3.7 513C (113.18).

perfect perform the perfecting rites, since those who are perfected in likeness to God come to share in God's work of deification, although, in the earthly hierarchy, even the perfected must be explicitly consecrated to become perfective.<sup>96</sup> Nonetheless, more so than with the other two powers, the philological assonances of τελείωσις are indicative of the integration of communo-cultic and individual aspects of the hierarchical system. In Dionysius' system, perfection begets perfections structurally and personally.

### **I.2.2.3 Conclusion to Light**

The hierarchical system's purpose is to be the means and mode of the procession of the divine light, which in illuminating the intelligent creatures, purifies, enlightens and perfects them. This procession of Jesus, the light of the Father, is fully integrated into the matrix of inner and outer, personal and communal, and vertical and horizontal relationships that constitute the hierarchical system.<sup>97</sup> Inasmuch as they do, none of these three powers is ever surpassed and rendered obsolete. Even the Seraphim are constantly undergoing purification, illumination, and perfection and no less can be said of the lower members of the whole hierarchical structure.<sup>98</sup> Hierarchy's structure is the means God establishes for his own descent in order that by his descending intelligent creatures may ascend to participate in divinity as far as God has deemed in possible. The reverse side of this integration of the subjective and the objective in hierarchy, as Roques phrases it, is

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<sup>96</sup> See n.116 and 183 below.

<sup>97</sup> Roques, *L'Universe dionysien*, 84.

<sup>98</sup> Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 189.

the impossibility of personally receiving the divine light outside of the hierarchical system, that is, the Church.<sup>99</sup>

### I.3.3 Anagogy

The purpose of hierarchy is the descent of Christ the divine light unto the ascent of its members to participation in that which is more divine than themselves, namely God and the superior hierarchical ranks. This upward motion is termed *ἀναγωγή* by Dionysius, literally a ‘leading upwards.’ The elevation to participation in God and the divine (τα θεῖα) is not climbing through the ranks of the hierarchical system but a participation in one’s own rank of what exceeds it. *Ἀναγωγή* is not a subsequent response to the divine ἐλλάμψις by which Christ purifies, enlightens, and perfects through the hierarchies.<sup>100</sup> Christ’s presence to those humans or angels who are purifying and being purified *is* their ascent and participation in the divine.<sup>101</sup> Insofar as hierarchical activity has its source in the divine light and possesses that light as its participation in God, to be in one’s proper place in the hierarchies is not an impediment to participation in God but the very means of that participation. Accordingly, *ἀναγωγή* must always be understood in

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<sup>99</sup> Roques, *L’Universe dionysien*, 84–6, 119.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Roques, 102–3. Roques distinguishes the descent of the divine realities through the hierarchies and the ascent as two mediations, the transfiguring the descent of the divine realities and the ascent to the God, which corresponds to God’s πρόοδος and the ἐπιστροφή of the intelligent creatures. For Roques, these can be distinguished but not separated in reality, but their unity can be expressed as even more compactly if the possession of God as descending in the light is identified as the ascent of the creature. This characteristic of Dionysius’ account of *ἀναγωγή* is most clearly seen in the doctrine of θεομίμησις.

<sup>101</sup> *DN* III.1’s discussion says likewise on the topic of prayer, admonishing that by prayer we may seem to move God, but it is God who moves the one praying closer to him. In a similar way, the reception of the divine is God’s descent but as much the elevation of whomever received it, for God in descending never ceases to be God.

relation to Dionysius' doctrine of ἀναλογία, the doctrine that to be fully oneself is to realize the corresponding divine λόγος (or divine idea) in oneself.<sup>102</sup>

Anagogy, however, does involve distinct proximate and ultimate elevations. *CH* and *EH* frequently detail the elevating work between the triads of the hierarchical system with uses of anagogic language, and terms based on the stem '-γωγή,' which denotes leading.<sup>103</sup> The higher angels lead the lower angels to God, and the angelic hierarchies lead the ecclesiastical hierarchy to God by leading it to share in its own possession of God.<sup>104</sup> This is precisely the taxonomy identified in the in the previous section (II.2). So understood, the *CH* and *EH* can be read as forming a single mystagogical project in which the *CH*'s description of angelic hierarchies is the introduction to understanding the activity of God in the *EH*.

### I.3.3.1 Anagogy to the Angels

Dionysius' introduction to the *CH* explicitly links anagogy to the angelic hierarchies to anagogy to God, and the former is the first mentioned after the invocation of Jesus:

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<sup>102</sup> *CH* III.2 165B (18.15). See also Golitzin *Mystagogy*, 117–19. Golitzin differentiates the ἀναλογία of Proclus', the actuality of the ἐπίστροφη, from Dionysius' understanding of it as the capacity to accomplish the ἐπίστροφη. Golitzin understands ἀναλογία as the germ and locus of likeness to God or God's will for the creature in the creature, or even God's imminent presence in the creature as created. It expresses a tension in the capacity for and realization of union with God, which Roques identifies as double meaning for ἀναλογία, the divine idea in the creature and the intellect's conformity to God. (Roques, *L'Universe dionysien*, 60–65.)

<sup>103</sup> Terms used besides but similar to anagogy include chreirogogy, photogogy, and mystagogy.

<sup>104</sup> Rorem, *Biblical and Liturgical Symbols*, 102–3. Rorem describes the anagogy to the angels as a preliminary anagogy anticipating divine union, but hesitates to reckon it as an ontological movement, instead restricting it to an epistemological ascent. Nevertheless, as this chapter will explain, anagogy to the angels also involves becoming like to them in the performance of divine activities through hierarchy.

Invoking then Jesus, the Paternal Light, [...], let us aspire, as far as is attainable, to the illuminations handed down by our fathers in the most sacred Oracles, and let us gaze, [such as we will be], upon the Hierarchies of the Heavenly Minds manifested to us by them symbolically and anagogically [;] and having received, with immaterial and unflinching mental eyes, the gift of Light, primal and super-primal, of the [thearchic] Father, which manifests to us the most blessed Hierarchies of the Angels in types and symbols, let us then, from it, be elevated to its simple ray.<sup>105</sup>

In the above passage, there is only one light received, the light which is Christ, but this same light both reveals the angelic hierarchies and elevates humanity to its own simplicity. The order of the passage also places the revelation of the angels through scripture before the elevation to the simplicity of the light.<sup>106</sup> This anagogy to the angels does not cease with scriptural revelation in symbols, however, and *CH I* alone lists three other aspects of this angelic anagogy:

Wherefore, the Divine Institution of sacred Rites, having deemed [our most holy hierarchy] worthy of the super mundane imitation of the Heavenly Hierarchies [...], and having depicted the aforesaid immaterial Hierarchies in material figures and bodily compositions, in order that we might be borne, as far as our capacity permits, from the most sacred pictures to the [anagogies] and [assimilations] without symbol and without type, transmitted to us our most Holy Hierarchy [, since] it is not possible for our mind to be raised to that immaterial [imitation] (μιμεσίς) and contemplation (θεωρία) of the Heavenly Hierarchies, without using the material guidance suitable to itself, [...].<sup>107</sup>

<sup>105</sup> *CH I.2* 121A-B (7.9–8.5), “Οὐκοῦν Ἰησοῦν ἐπικαλεσάμενοι,[...], ἐπὶ τὰς τῶν Ἱεροτάτων λογίων πατροπαραδότους ἐλλάμψεις ὡς ἐφικτὸν ἀνανεύσωμεν καὶ τὰς ὑπ’ αὐτῶν συμβολικῶς ἡμῖν καὶ ἀναγωγικῶς ἐκφανθείσας τῶν οὐρανίων νοῶν ἱεραρχίας ὡς οἱοί τε ἐσμεν ἐποπτεύσωμεν καὶ τὴν ἀρχικὴν καὶ ὑπεράρχιον τοῦ θεαρχικοῦ πατρὸς φωτοδοσίαν, ἣ τὰς τῶν ἀγγέλων ἡμῖν ἐν τυπωτικοῖς συμβόλοις ἐκφαίνει μακαριωτάτας ἱεραρχίας, αὐλοὺς καὶ ἀτρεμέσι νοδὸς ὀφθαλμοῖς εἰσδεξάμενοι πάλιν ἐξ αὐτῆς ἐπὶ τὴν ἀπλὴν αὐτῆς ἀναταθῶμεν ἀκτῖνα.”

<sup>106</sup> The anagogic revelation of the angels seems to be the antecedent of the aorist participial phrase dependent upon εἰσδεξάμενοι, indicating its priority to the eventual elevation to the simplicity the ray of the φωτοδοσία.

<sup>107</sup> *CH I.3* 121C (8.14–21). “Διὸ καὶ τὴν ὁσιωτάτην ἡμῶν ἱεραρχίαν ἢ τελετάρχης ἱεροθεσία τῆς τῶν οὐρανίων ἱεραρχιῶν ὑπερκοσμίου μιμήσεως ἀξιώσασα καὶ τὰς εἰρημένους αὐλοὺς ἱεραρχίας ὑλαίοις σχήμασι καὶ μορφωτικαῖς συνθέσεσι διαποικίλασα παραδέδωκεν, ὅπως ἀναλόγως ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν ἱερωτάτων πλάσεων ἐπὶ τὰς ἀπλᾶς καὶ αὐτωπῶτους ἀναχθῶμεν ἀναγωγὰς καὶ ἀφομοιώσεις, ἐπεὶ μὴδὲ δυνατόν ἐστι τῷ καθ’ ἡμᾶς νοῖ πρὸς τὴν αὐλον ἐκείνην ἀναταθῆναι τῶν οὐρανίων ἱεραρχιῶν μίμησιν τε καὶ Θεωρίαν, εἰ μὴ τῇ κατ’ αὐτὸν ὑλαίᾳ χειραγωγίᾳ χρῆσαιτο [...].”

For the sake, then, of this our proportioned deification, the philanthropic Source of sacred mysteries, manifest[ed] by the Heavenly Hierarchies to us and constitute[ed] our Hierarchy as fellow-ministers with them, through our imitation of their Godlike priestliness (ιερώσις), [...] in order that it might lead us through the sensible to the intelligible, and from inspired symbols to the simple sublimities of the Heavenly Hierarchies.<sup>108</sup>

The anagogies and assimilations to the angels that occur through the sensible symbols of the ecclesiastical hierarchy are the immaterial contemplation (θεωρία) and the imitation (μιμείσις) of the angels, which depend upon our imitation or assimilation to their priesthood (ιερωσις).<sup>109</sup> The proximate purpose of the ecclesiastical hierarchy is to know what the angels know and do what the angels do as far as possible.

The anagogy of the ecclesiastical hierarchy to the angels is a function of the heavenly hierarchies' active sharing the light they have received to humanity. Dionysius highlights the relationship between the hierarchy of the lowest angelic triad and our hierarchy in *CH IX.2*:

[...] and the revealing order of the Principalities, Archangels, and Angels, presides, through each other, over the Hierarchies amongst men, in order that the elevation (ἀναγωγή), and conversion (ἐπιστροφή), and communion (κοινωνία), and union (ἔνωσις) with God may be in due order; and, further, also that the procession from God vouchsafed benignly to all the Hierarchies, and passing to all in common, may be also with most sacred regularity.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>108</sup> *CH I.3 124A* (9.8–15) “Ταύτης οὖν ἕνεκα τῆς ἡμῶν ἀναλόγου Θεώσεως ἡ φιλόανθρωπος τελεταρχία καὶ τὰς οὐρανίας ἱεραρχίας ἡμῶν ἀναφαίνουσα καὶ συλλειτουργὸν αὐτῶν τελοῦσα τὴν καθ’ ἡμᾶς ἱεραρχίαν τῇ πρὸς δύναμιν ἡμῶν ἀφομοιώσει τῆς θεοειδοῦς αὐτῶν ἱερώσεως αἰσθηταῖς εἰκόσι τοὺς ὑπερουρανίους ἀνεγράψατο νόας ἐν ταῖς ἱερογραφικαῖς τῶν λογίων συνθέσεσιν, ὅπως ἂν ἡμᾶς ἀναγάγοι διὰ τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἐπὶ τὰ νοητὰ καὶ τῶν ἱεροπλάστων συμβόλων ἐπὶ τὰς ἀπλᾶς τῶν οὐρανίων ἱεραρχιῶν ἀκρότητας.”

<sup>109</sup> See *CH I.3 121C–124A* (8.14–9.15); *EH I.1 372A–372B* (63.11–64.14).

<sup>110</sup> *CH IX.2 260A–B* (37.6–13), “[...], τὴν δὲ τῶν ἀρχῶν καὶ ἀρχαγγέλων ἀγγέλων ἐκφαντορικὴν διακόσμησιν ταῖς ἀνθρωπίναις ἱεραρχίαις δι’ ἁλλήλων ἐπιστατεῖν, ἵν’ κατὰ τάξιν ἡ πρὸς θεὸν ἀναγωγή καὶ ἐπὶ καὶ κοινωνία καὶ ἔνωσις καὶ μὴν καὶ ἡ παρὰ Θεοῦ πάσαις ταῖς ζῳαρχίαις ἀγαθοπρεπῶς ἐνδιδομένη καὶ κοινωνικῶς ἐπιφοιτῶσα μετ’ ἐξησχίμιοις ἱερωτάτης πρόοδος.”

Hence, that which from our earthly position is an anagogy towards the divine light through the vision and imitation of the angelic hierarchies, is an intentional hierarchical activity on the angels' part. The angels' care for humanity enables, in turn, humanity's own hierarchical vision and imitation of those same angels. The angelic ministrations are active all the way through an intensifying accession to God from anagogy, to conversion, communion, and finally union with God.<sup>111</sup> Humanity receives and extends this angelic succor in the ecclesiastical hierarchy so that all its acts and establishment in ranks lead to union with God and effect a likeness (and union) to the angels.<sup>112</sup>

Although Dionysius teaches that the whole of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, its scriptures, its ranks, and its sacraments reveal or clothe the angelic hierarchies, he gives special attention in *CH XII* to the relationship between the hierarchs and the lowest rank of the angels, i.e. the angels properly. Dionysius explains in *CH XII* that hierarchs are sometimes called angels, not because they become angels, ontologically speaking, but because they share in their “communicative idiom” (ὕποφητικῆς ιδιότης) and strive for “revelatory likeness” (ἐκφαντορικὴ ὁμοίωσις). Insofar as the church's sacred teaching and activity are a veiled revelation of the angels' action and the hierarch, as the center of teaching and the sacraments, has the special role, like the angels, of revealing the invisible visibly.<sup>113</sup> The hierarch's role is not only to possess what the angels possess, the divine Light, but to do what they do, to share it out as revealers and, by implication,

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<sup>111</sup> This series of terms from ἀναγωγή to ἔνωσις at *CH X.2* 260B appears to schematize the stages of ascent to God, with anagogy being the first, the most basic sense of elevation, which is available to all, even the non-baptized, in the scriptures and visible rites of the Church, while the three latter terms indicate the stages of intimacy with God.

<sup>112</sup> *EH VI.3.5* 536D-537A (119.8–15) explains that the ranks of the ecclesiastical hierarchy are like (ὁμοειδής) to those of the heavenly hierarchies, and *EH VI.3.6* 537A ff. shows that like the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the angels also have purified ranks.

<sup>113</sup> *CH XII.2* 293A (43.8–11).



initiators. Inasmuch as the hierarch is the proximate source of all the hierarchical activities in the ecclesiastical hierarchy (Jesus being their proper and ultimate source) of purifying, enlightening, and perfecting (which describes all the relations of both triads of the ecclesiastical hierarchy) the whole ecclesiastical hierarchy may be said to be conformed to and led by the angels at least because its hierarch is in the first place one like and specially associated with the angels.

### **I.3.3.2 Anagogy to God**

The great take-away from Dionysius' description of anagogy is that assimilation is manifestation. For the many ways in which the angels lead each other to God, and lead the Church to God as photagogues, and the higher members of the Church lead the lower members of the Church to God as hierogogues and mystagogues all share same general structure: the revealer(s) and the recipient(s) of that revelation are assimilated to that which is revealed (God or the angels) by the very act of revealing. That very assimilative relationship is the mode of the descent of the divine light. For what is revealed is God, but not God apart from the world in his incommunicable essence but, rather, God as communicating himself to every kind of intelligent creature, embodied and not. Hence human imitation of the angels is inseparable from their assimilation to God because to be assimilated to God for humanity is to be assimilated to God as communicating himself to the angels. All teaching and all sacred action are aimed at this divinization, or *θέωσις*, of which Dionysius distinguishes two aspects: union (*ἔνωσις*) and assimilation (*ἀφομοίωσις*).<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> *EH* I.3 376A (12–13); *CH* III.2 165A (17.10–11).

### I.3.4 Ἑνωσις

From the very beginning of the *CH*, Dionysius sets unity as the goal of the hierarchical system, in particular a union with and by God the Father:

Further also, every procession of illuminating light, proceeding from the Father, whilst visiting us as a gift of goodness, restores us again gradually as a unifying power (ἐνοποιὸς δύναμις) and turns us to the oneness (ἐνότης) of our [gathering] Father (συναγωγὸς πατήρ) and to a deifying simplicity (θεοποιὸν ἀπλότης).<sup>115</sup>

Oneness, gathering together, and simplicity are the fruit of the divine light's procession into creation, which has its source and end in God the Father. Therefore, union with God, Ἑνωσις, is also identified with the power of perfection, or τελείωσις.<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, terms related to 'one' (ἓν), 'gathering' (σύναξις), and 'simple' (ἀπλός) lexically or conceptually recur throughout *CH* and *EH* (and the entire *CD*) and indicate a divine status, either properly or by participation, because God is one. The centrality of divine unity in Dionysius' thought is not only owed to Judeo-Christian monotheism, and in

<sup>115</sup> *CH* I.1 120B (7.4–7). “Ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσα πατροκινήτου φωτοφανείας πρόοδος εἰς ἡμᾶς ἀγαθοδότης φοιτῶσα πάλιν ὡς ἐνοποιὸς δύναμις ἀνατακτικῶς ἡμᾶς ἀναπλοῖ καὶ ἐπιστρέφει πρὸς τὴν τοῦ συναγωγοῦ πατρὸς ἐνότητα καὶ θεοποιὸν ἀπλότητα.”

<sup>116</sup> Roques, *L'Universe dionysien*, 95, n. 3. Roques notes that Ἑνωσις is often employed as a synonym for τελείωσις, with the caveat that Ἑνωσις also can be used to express the purifying and enlightening powers, as other aspects of unification with God. Roques' reading of τελείωσις as essentially a possession of ἐπιστήμη of what was seen first in θεωρία helps to distinguish Ἑνωσις from solely intellectual event. Ἐπιστήμη is explicitly termed perfective by Dionysus (*CH* III.3 165D) but reducing τελείωσις to the possession of ἐπιστήμη is problematic, even if, as many commentators on the *CD* do, ἐπιστήμη is distinguished from an extrinsic knowing of an object. Τελείωσις, which is frequently used in the *LXX* to refer to consecration, is also used of the clerical consecrations in *EH* V, by which some become cooperators with God in actively divinizing others. The use of the term in this hierarchical context is not an accident, as all of the clerical orders are perfected, in the sense of triad of purification etc., and it is only as such that they are able to aid others. The Dionysian monk, of course, is perfected but does not perfect anyone, nevertheless, all the orders of the ecclesiastical show the divine activity in themselves as far as possible (see *CH* III.2 165A [18.15–18]; *CH* III.3 168A–B [19.21–20.2]), hence perfection must not only with subjective experience but also participation in Gods proper activity by receptivity. Moreover, if the *MT* is taken into account, God exceeds νόησις and ἐπιστήμη (*MT* V 1048A [149.7]), and hence ἐπιστήμη, even if perfective, cannot be the final word in divine union, just as *DN* I.4 attests in its account of supra-noetic union.

particular the Johannine expression of the unity of the Father, Son and believers as one (ἐν),<sup>117</sup> but also his Neoplatonic heritage, for which, beginning with Plotinus, the One (τὸ ἓν) is the utterly transcendent principle of all and the term of the soul's ascent in union (ἔνωσις).<sup>118</sup> Hierarchy is Dionysius' Christian recontextualization of ἔνωσις, establishing the union between persons as a necessary condition added to union with God and each being's inner unification. For Dionysius, God gathers creatures together out of difference and makes them simple (i.e. without opposition) so that they may participate the same divinity through each other. Therefore, Dionysian ἔνωσις is both horizontal and vertical, personal and social, "[f]or it is not possible to be collected to the One, and to partake of the peaceful union with the One, when people are divided amongst themselves."<sup>119</sup>

#### I.3.4.1 Union with God

Union with God is not a flight of the soul from the created world but is achieved in the world by receiving the divine light in hierarchy, as a human with a body or as an angel. In this union, the body is not shed, nor do the angels climb through (or out of) their ranks. Union is achieved as the fulfillment of one's ἀναλογία, as noted above, the proper place in the created order. Union is not personal annihilation or absorption by the divine essence, as suggested in some forms of Neoplatonism, but is a union with God without confusion (ἀσύγκυτος).<sup>120</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Dionysius distinguishes the Gospel of John from the synoptics in his list of scriptures in *EH* III.3.4 by calling it the "hidden and mystic vision of the beloved disciple" (*EH* III.3.4 429D [83.21–22]).

<sup>118</sup> See Plotinus, *Ennead* V.1.5–6.

<sup>119</sup> *EH* III.3.8 437A (88.13–15) "Οὐ γὰρ ἔνεστι πρὸς τὸ ἐν συνάγεσθαι καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἐνὸς μετέχειν εἰρηναίας ἐνώσεως τοὺς πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς διηρημένους."

<sup>120</sup> Andia, *Henosis*, 12–13. The Plotinian account of union with the One is process of interiorization of, whereby one enters one's own soul, leaving matter behind, becomes united first to

If not absorption, this union must be intimacy between God's love for creatures, and the intelligent creature's love for God. Putting aside the question of the essence/energy distinction, Dionysius states clearly that we will see, know, and even more-than-know God himself in the resurrection, when the redeemed humanity will "always be with the Lord."<sup>121</sup> Of this "Christoform and most blessed rest", Dionysius says that redeemed humanity will be filled with the visible manifestation of God (ὁρατὴ θεοφανεία), as in the Transfiguration, and with the intelligible gift of light (νοητὴ φωτοδοσία), and will partake of the "union beyond mind (ἔνωσις ὑπὲρ νοῦν) in the unknowing and blessed grasp (ἐπιβολαῖ) of the superluminous rays."<sup>122</sup> This union with God is thus at once union in body, mind, and beyond, and it applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the angels.<sup>123</sup>

### I.3.4.2 Union in the Hierarchical System

Unity with God is not only achieved through the descent of Christ the light of the Father through the hierarchical system, but in it. It is not, *pace* Plotinus, the flight of the alone to the alone,<sup>124</sup> but with the "gathering Father," in whom creation returns

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Intellect, the first of hypostasis which proceeded from the One, and then by way of intellectual negation, become infrequently elevated to an ecstatic union with the One beyond knowledge. In these moments of ecstasy, the soul is one and the same as the One. Andia distinguishes ἔνωσις in the *Enneads* from its use in the *CD* in two important ways: 1) For Plotinus, union with the One is ephemeral, for Dionysius, it is stable and motivated by the love of the creator; 2) for Plotinus union with the One is identity with the one, for Dionysius it is an intimacy that does not dissolve personal or ontological distinction. In other words, not to become God, but to become *of* God. (Andia, 429.)

<sup>121</sup> DN I.4 592C (114.8).

<sup>122</sup> DN I.4 592C (114.7–115.3).

<sup>123</sup> DN I.4 592C (115.3–5).

<sup>124</sup> Plotinus, *Ennead* IV.9 [9].11.50: "φύγη μόνου πρὸς μόνον." I am not distinguishing Dionysian hierarchy from a "narcissistic" or "autoerotic" reading of Plotinus' mysticism, which reading Kevin Corrigan disputes in "'Solitary' Mysticism in Plotinus, Proclus, Gregory of Nyssa, and Pseudo-Dionysius," *The Journal of Religion* 76, no. 1 (1996): 28–42, but to emphasize the essential social character of the

(ἐπιστροφή) not unto the denial of all difference, but through fulfillment sharing the presence of one and the same God.

Creaturely relationships are directed to union with God in three ways. First, humans are joined to the angels in the Church, joining the visible and invisible (or noeric/noetic) creation, as was discussed above vis-à-vis anagogy. Second, the multitude of human beings are brought out of opposition and falling away to sin and nothingness by being gathered into the Church. Third, faculties of the individual are saved from their opposition and decline towards sin by entering the Church.<sup>125</sup> These three aspects show that the visible unity of the Church both effects and embodies the inner unification of individuals and their elevation to know and imitate the angels. The necessary union among creatures is dramatized in *Ep. VIII*, the rebuke of the monk Demophilus, who ejected a priest reconciling a sinner in the sanctuary. The monk's entry where he was not permitted and judgment of his superior expressed an inward corruption: pride.<sup>126</sup>

Dionysius demonstrates the necessity of unity among creatures for their spiritual perfection in his description of the exclusivity of the Eucharist and the consecration of μύρον which exclude those living in division (i.e. sin inwardly and outwardly) from the more important parts of the liturgy.<sup>127</sup> These rites separate the like (holy) from the unlike

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Dionysius' thought. Corrigan suggests that μόνος does connote privacy, but with an emphasis on intimacy or nakedness of self, stripping away all obstacles to the One. (Corrigan, 32–3.). That sense of μόνος as intimate union is not alien to Dionysius, as most thoroughly depicted in *MT V*.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. *CH X.3* 273C (40.3–41.4).

<sup>126</sup> *Ep. VIII.1* 1084B–1085A (171.3–11); *EP. VIII.1* 1088B (175.4–13); *Ep. VIII.3* 1093B (183.4–10).

<sup>127</sup> The order of our hierarchy sets entirely apart (ἀποδιάστελλω and ἀποκληρώω) everything in disarray (ἄτακτον), unordered (ἀκόσμητον), and confused (συμπεσσομένην) without being mixed with any of it (ἀμυγῶς), see *EH V.1* 500D (104.7–9). Those who will not understand the sacred actions undertaken in these rites are excluded, as those who are doing penance and cannot worthily receive the Eucharist. Those who cannot yet be edified cannot be unified, while those who can are gathered into one, both spatially, and spiritually. *EH III.2*. 425C (80.12–16); *EH III.3.6–7* 432C–436B (84.22ff); *EH IV.3.4* 477B (98.14–18). *CH IV.1* 177B–C (20.3–7). Dionysius attributes to the angels a “most deiform simplicity.”

(sinners) but they also, and even more importantly, gather the holy intelligences together. It is the purpose of Baptism and the Eucharist, literally termed the συναξίς or gathering, to make humans one and members of the body of Christ. In baptism the baptizand imitates the death of the life-giving Jesus and becomes adorned by a luminous life, striving towards the One, and is then led to partake of the Eucharist.<sup>128</sup> The Eucharist perfects striving for the One and communion with Christ. Dionysius sees in the Eucharist the entrance of the “One” and “simple” and “hidden” of Jesus in to the world of multiplicity by which we, through the “unifying communion” (ἑνοποιὸν κοινωνία), have been united to Him as limbs to a body (μελή σώματι).<sup>129</sup> The kiss of peace is given in the Eucharist, because

it is not possible to be collected to the One, and to partake of the peaceful union with the One, when people are divided amongst themselves, by all kinds of lusts and enmities, but bound together in all of its parts, both among the living and the dead.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> *EH* II.3.7–8 404B–C (78.6–14). Dionysius’ meditation on Baptism does not make specific mention of becoming a member of the body of Christ, but considers the rite and the baptizand’s actions, moving from his rejection of evil, to the confession of faith, anointing with oil to follow Christ the athlete, and imitation of his death in the submergence in water, and finally to the reception of the garment that symbolizes a life full of light (τῇ φωτεινῇ καθόλου ζωῇ), all of which is completed looking towards Eucharistic communion, in which is explicitly identified with being a member of the Body of Christ. Thomas Campbell suggests that the luminous light anticipates the beatific vision, but the association of Christ and the light throughout the *CH* and *EH* also suggests Christoformity, see Thomas L. Campbell, *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* (Washington, D.C: University Press of America, 1981), 133, n. 82.

<sup>129</sup> *EH* III.3.12 444A–B (92.21–93.4)

<sup>130</sup> *EH* III.3.8 437A (88.13–15). Heil notes that enmity is metaphysically opposed to hierarchy itself, and if so Dionysius warning against strife in this passage is not only a moral admonition, but an explanation of a requisite condition for divine union, see Gunther Heil, *Über die himmlische Hierarchie ; Über die kirchliche Hierarchie*, trans. Günter Heil, Abteilung Patristik 22 (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1986), 169, n. 43.

Hence the clerics salute each other in the clerical consecrations, the holy dead are named to show their union with Christ in the Eucharist, in the funeral rites all the faithful kiss the departed, and even the altar is kissed during the baptismal rite.<sup>131</sup>

### I.3.4.3 Conclusion to ἕνωσις

Dionysius' conception of ἕνωσις affirms the goodness of the created order and establishes that the maintenance of union among creatures is the correlate of unity with God. Union between God, creatures, and within oneself cannot be separated, because the latter are only actual in the first. The procession of Christ the light accomplishes the gathering that is attributed to the Father in *CH I*.<sup>132</sup> As many as partake of Christ, human and angel are gathered into his body.

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<sup>131</sup> Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 276–8. *EH* II.2.4 393C (71.8–9); *EH* III.2 425C–D (80.21–81.2); *EH* III.3.9 437C (89.6–10); *EH* V.2 509B–C (110.21–22); *EH* VII.2 556D (123.12–15).

<sup>132</sup> Klitenic Wear and Dillon, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition*, 118. Wear and Dillon distinguish union with Christ and the Spirit from ἕνωσις with the Father. They understand the union to the Son or the Spirit as the means to the ultimate ἕνωσις with the Father. Their reading stands almost entirely as the opposite of Roques', who, as noted above, regards ἕνωσις as inclusive of the whole process of purification, illumination, and perfection. Where they agree is that ἕνωσις is not identical with the intellect's vision of God. Klitenic Wear and Dillon are on sure ground by regarding ἕνωσις as the term of the whole process of divinization (cf. *CH IX.2*) and fruit of Christ's procession into the world as light (cf. *CH I.1*). After all, ἕνωσις in a Neoplatonic context is the ultimate encounter with divinity above mind and Dionysius does not depart from this aspect of the Neoplatonic doctrine. (cf. *DN I.4*; *MT V*) Nevertheless, instrumentalizing communion with Christ or the Spirit is untenable. Such a reading of the *CD* is a strained one. In particular, Dionysius' account the Eucharist sets ἕνωσις (*EH* III.1 424C [79.10–12]; *EH* III.3.8–10) as the context and goal for the celebration of the mysteries on the altar (*EH* III.3.11–12), a fact underlined by calling the Eucharist the 'σύναξις', recalling the Father as 'συναγωγός'. (cf. Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 18.) Moreover, there is no sense in which the Eucharist or the sacrament of μύρον, as the perfective sacraments, are treated only preparatory for union with God, as if the all of the negations of the *MT* were in opposition to the actions the hierarchies (cf. David Newheiser, "Ambivalence in Dionysius the Areopagite: The Limitations of a Liturgical Reading," *Studia Patristica* XVIII (2010): 211–16), rather than an apophatic vision of what is accomplished in them. Furthermore, Klitenic Wear and Dillon's instrumentalizing of the union to Christ and the Spirit is tantamount to attributing a form of subordinationism to Dionysius insofar as the One is identified with the Father alone. Union with Christ and Spirit do not begin with begin with the ecstatic experience of ἕνωσις, at least not explicitly, but neither is such union necessarily transcended by ἕνωσις, rather it is consummated. On this very point Rosemary Arthur's research of on the *Book of the Holy Hierotheos* raises the possibility that Dionysius was concerned with refuting just such a mysticism which saw Christ transcended *en route* to an even higher state. She

### I.3.5 Ἀφομοίωσις

Whereas ἔνωσις denotes proximity and belonging to God, the second aspect of θεώσις, ἀφομοίωσις, or assimilation, denotes becoming like God.<sup>133</sup> In Dionysius' thought, assimilation holds together the belief in ἔνωσις with the disavowal of any kind of absorption of the individual by God and his affirmation that we will encounter God in the body, the mind, and beyond both. Assimilation (ἀφομοίωσις), literally, becoming similar (ὁμοίως) to God accounts for ἔνωσις in two ways, by reaffirming the ancient doctrine that like knows like, and by appropriating divine activities to creatures by which they become like God so far as possible. Dionysius employs two terms most frequently to describe this assimilation to God: deiformity (θεοειδεια) and God-imitation (θεομίμησις). The former refers to sharing in the divine characteristics, the latter to a share in the divine actions exhibited in illumination, as the first definition of hierarchy in *CH* III.1 suggests:

Hierarchy is, in my judgment, a sacred order and science and operation, assimilated, as far as attainable, to the likeness of God (το θεοειδές), and conducted (ἀναγομένη) to the illuminations granted to it from God, according to capacity, with a view to the Divine imitation (το θεομίμητον).<sup>134</sup>

Though distinguished, both aspects constitute together a single reality since “the goal of every hierarchy” is “theomimetic deiformity” (θεομιμήτη θεοειδεία).<sup>135</sup>

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suggests that the *CD* may have been written as corrective to an undervaluing of the role of Christ as found in the *Book of the Holy Hierotheos*, which described Christ as transcended by soul that have become equivalent to Christ as must proceed above Christ to reach true union with God, see Rosemary A. Arthur, *Pseudo-Dionysius as Polemicist: The Development and Purpose of the Angelic Hierarchy in Sixth Century Syria*, Ashgate New Critical Thinking in Religion, Theology and Biblical Studies (Aldershot, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), 15–19, 135–6.

<sup>133</sup> Andia, *Henoisis*, 429 : “L’union à Dieu est définie par des relations d’appartenance et de proximité.”

<sup>134</sup> *CH* III.1 164D (17.3–5).

<sup>135</sup> *CH* VII.2 208A (28.14–15).



### I.3.5.1 Θεοειδεία

The *CH* and *EH* never supply a handy definition of all the aspects of deiformity.

What it is must be drawn from the instances of its application and from Dionysius' understanding of God. That which is attributed deiformity, include the "deiform priesthood" of the angels,<sup>136</sup> and their "deiform minds",<sup>137</sup> their "deiform simplicity,"<sup>138</sup> their "divine characteristics,"<sup>139</sup> the "deiform habit(s) (ἔξις)"<sup>140</sup>, and the "(most-)deiform powers,"<sup>141</sup> "deiform activity (ἐνέργεια),"<sup>142</sup> "deiform movement (κινήσις),"<sup>143</sup> the "deiform good-order (ἐυκοσμία) of the heavenly hierarchies,"<sup>144</sup> the "deiform intelligent beings,"<sup>145</sup> "deiform relief,"<sup>146</sup> the "deiform renunciations" of Baptism,<sup>147</sup> the "deiform apathy of opposites,"<sup>148</sup> the "[Eucharist's] deiform folding-together of divided unto communion and union (ἔνωσις),"<sup>149</sup> the "deiform truth of the archetypes,"<sup>150</sup> "deiform beauty,"<sup>151</sup> "deiform righteousness (δικαιοσύνης),"<sup>152</sup> "deiform τάξις,"<sup>153</sup> "deiform

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<sup>136</sup> *CH* I.3 124A (9.11).

<sup>137</sup> *CH* II.1 137A (10.2); *CH* XIII.3 304A (46.10); *CH* XV.6 336A (55.24); *EH* V.3.2 509D (111.15)

<sup>138</sup> *CH* VI.1 177C (20.6).

<sup>139</sup> *CH* VII.1 205B (27.6); *CH* VIII.1 240B (33.24); *EH* VI.3.5 536D (119.15)

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, (27.13); *EH* II.3.5 401B (77.3); *EH* III.2 428A (81.13); *EH* III.3.7 436B (87.16); *EH* III.3.12 444B (93.9); *EH* III.3.14 445A (94.9); *EH* IV.3.3 477A (98.3); *EH* VII.3.561B (127.6).

<sup>141</sup> *CH* VII.2 208B (29.1); *CH* XIII.4 304D (47.10, 13); *EH* IV.3.7 481A (100.19); *EH* V.1.3 504A-B (106.4–8);

<sup>142</sup> *CH* VIII.1 240A (33.9–10).

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.* (33.12).

<sup>144</sup> *CH* VIII.2 241C (35.22).

<sup>145</sup> *CH* XII.2 292D (43.2–3);

<sup>146</sup> *CH* XV.9 340A (59.1).

<sup>147</sup> *EH* II.3.5 401B (76.17).

<sup>148</sup> *EH* II.3.8 404B (78.12).

<sup>149</sup> *EH* III.1 424C (79.11)

<sup>150</sup> *EH* III.3.1 428A (81.16)

<sup>151</sup> *EH* III.3.3 428D (82.14); *EH* III.3.11 441B (91.19); *EH* V.3.1 513B (113.11, 15)

<sup>152</sup> *EH* III.3.6 432C (85.3)

<sup>153</sup> *EH* III.3.6 433B (85.23)

life,”<sup>154</sup> “deiform rest,”<sup>155</sup> “deiform virtue,”<sup>156</sup> “deiform appearance (ἰνδαλμα),”<sup>157</sup> “deiform perfection/consecration,”<sup>158</sup> “deiform splendor,”<sup>159</sup> the monk’s “folding the together the divided into a deiform monad,”<sup>160</sup> a “most deiform change of state” for the holy souls who have died,<sup>161</sup> “divine surety (ἀναδόχος),”<sup>162</sup> Some activities are also performed “deiformly.”<sup>163</sup> Furthermore, some of the members of the hierarchical system are also called deiform: the ἱεροτελεστής, the last members of angelic hierarchies, and the Hierarch.<sup>164</sup> It is also used intensively on a least one occasion, referring to the “more deiform men”.<sup>165</sup>

Some of the above terms could be applied to God, such as life, power, simplicity, beauty, others cannot, such as a change of state and renunciations. The ἔξις, or habit, of human and angels is the most frequently termed deiform (eight times) with minds and powers following with four and five references, respectively. “Deiform” is responsibly interpreted not as that which is proper to God is the sense of being equally attributable to the divine essence, but as that which discloses God’s action in the world. This reading sufficiently accounts for the inapplicability to God of some those things that are called deiform, since, for example, the renunciation of former evil cannot be attributed to God, but it does disclose God’s activity in the renouncer. In other words, that which is deiform

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<sup>154</sup> *EH* III.3.7 433D (86.18); *EH* VII.2 553C (121.12, 4)

<sup>155</sup> *EH* III.3.9 437B (88.25)

<sup>156</sup> *EH* IV.3.1 473B (96.2, 17)

<sup>157</sup> *EH* IV.3.1 473C (96.11)

<sup>158</sup> *EH* V.1.7 508D (110.1)

<sup>159</sup> *EH* IV.3.6 480D (100.11)

<sup>160</sup> *EH* VI.1. 533A (116.18)

<sup>161</sup> *EH* VII.1.1 553A (121.1).

<sup>162</sup> *EH* VII.3.11 568C (131.29)

<sup>163</sup> *CH* VIII.1 240A (33.16); *CH* IX.1 257B (36.5); *CH* XIII.4 308A (49.10)

<sup>164</sup> *CH* IX.1 257B (36.2); *EH* I.6 377A (68.11); *EH* II.3.6 401C (77.9); *EH* V.3.7 513C (113.24); *EH* VI.3.5 536 (119.10).

<sup>165</sup> *EH* V.1.4 504D (107.3).

is an icon of God, not only outwardly but in virtue of *θέωσις* or an inner assimilation to God, since those revealing God do so only by their real participation in God's actions, that is, their *θεομίμησις*.

### I.3.5.2 Θεομίμησις

*Θεομίμησις* is at the heart of the concept of *θέωσις* and is the achievement of the procession of Christ as the light of the Father, i.e. the perfect reception of that light. It is the fruit of God's love for humanity, his *φιλανθρωπία*, and the love of intelligent creatures for God who receive the divine light as the vision God himself in Christ and even a union of the lover and beloved beyond all knowing.<sup>166</sup> In his procession as light, Christ does not only elevate the intelligent creatures to the *vision* of that light, but *fills them up* so that they may also share it out.<sup>167</sup> In the hierarchical system, God is not possessed as an a static object of wonder but as actively drawing all things to their end. *Θεομίμησις* is not an extrinsic or artificial imitation of an object seen, but to be a '*Θεοῦ συνεργόν*', a co-worker with God in God's very own actions.<sup>168</sup>

The locus of *θεομίμησις* is the deiform *ἔξις*, or habit, which describes the disposition of the whole being's subjectivity and exteriorly oriented activity. Every member of the hierarchical system exhibits *θεομίμησις*, albeit in varying degrees according to the role apportioned to each, either as purified or purifying and so on.<sup>169</sup> The degree of *θεομίμησις* in every member of the hierarchical system depends on the extent

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<sup>166</sup> Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 186–87.

<sup>167</sup> *CH* III.2 165A (18.4–6); *CH* III.3 165D (19.10–12); cf. *CH* VIII.2 240C (34.5–9).

<sup>168</sup> *CH* III.2 165B (18.16). Dionysius does use the language of 'molding' (*EH* III.3.7 436C [88.4]) the members of the hierarchical system, but this language must be taken metaphorically as referring to the deiformity of creatures through their participation in God's actions.

<sup>169</sup> *CH* III.2 165C (19.2–3).

to which they participate in God's work of elevating creatures to himself, that is, in God's θεωργίαι, or theurgies. The term 'theurgy' most frequently recalls the cultic practice, especially of sacrifice, in Neoplatonism, in which the human performance of divine actions result in the union with God of which philosophy is not capable.<sup>170</sup> For Dionysius, this description of the structure of divine union through cultic action is true, but he distinguishes between the θεωργίαι as God's acts for the created world and ιερουργίαι, or hierurgies, which are the participation of creatures in the θεωργίαι.<sup>171</sup> Hence, the highest members of the hierarchical system, the first angelic triad of the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones are attributed θεομίμησις most highly because they have communion in the first of power of God's theurgic and philanthropic deeds, and thereby they are the "first-workers" active in the θέωσις of all the subsequent members of the hierarchies.<sup>172</sup>

The most succinct explanation of θεομίμησις in Dionysius' own words comes from the general description of hierarchy in *CH* III.2 and 3. He concludes the chapter with this summation of the activity of hierarchy:

Thus each rank of the Hierarchical Order is led, in its own degree, to the Divine co-operation, [...] performing, through grace and God-given power, those things which are naturally and supernaturally in the Godhead, and accomplished by It superessentially, and manifested hierarchically, for the attainable imitation of the God-loving Minds.<sup>173</sup>

<sup>170</sup> See n. 198 below on theurgy.

<sup>171</sup> See n. 199 below on hierurgy.

<sup>172</sup> *CH* VII.2 208C (29.11–15); Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 186.

<sup>173</sup> *EH* III.3 168A (19.21–20.2) “Οὐκοῦν ἐκάστη τῆς ἱεραρχικῆς διακοσμήσεως τάξις κατὰ τὴν οἰκείαν ἀναλογίαν ἀνάγεται πρὸς τὴν θεϊαν συνεργίαν, ἐκεῖνα τελοῦσα χάριτι καὶ θεοσδότῳ δυνάμει τὰ τῇ θεαρχίᾳ φυσικῶς καὶ ὑπερφυσικῶς ἐνόντα καὶ πρὸς αὐτῆς ὑπερουσίως δρώμενα καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἐφικτὴν τῶν φιλοθέων νοῶν μίμησιν ἱεραρχικῶς ἐκφαινόμενα.”

The actions performed in hierarchy are truly God's actions but yet also accomplished (τελοῦσα) by humans and angels, just as the light which the hierarchies receive and pass on is no less also Jesus the light of the Father who distributes himself. This is what is meant when Dionysius says just beforehand that:

For each of those who have been called into the Hierarchy, find their perfection in being carried to the Divine imitation in their own proper degree; and, what is more Divine than all, in becoming a fellow-worker with God, as the Oracles say, and in shewing the Divine energy in himself manifested as far as possible.<sup>174</sup>

Hierarchical activity, the activity of the deiform, is the manifestation of God saving and elevating through their cooperation in that salvation and elevation. Θεώσις is not only to be with God but, even more, to act as God acts as far as possible, not competitively but synergistically, by sharing God out to others. Θεομίμησις shows that θεώσις is not a personal affair but necessarily linked to humans and angels as they are divinized and (cooperatively) divinize in turn. Perfection and union with God are, therefore, not opposed to multiplicity; rather, multiplicity is the context and means for the manifestation of perfection in God's love and goodness.<sup>175</sup>

### II.3.6 Ascent to the Altar

Dionysius carefully interweaves several elements of neoplatonism with Christian credenda to explain how the objects of faith and hope are achieved in hierarchy. The

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<sup>174</sup> CH III.2 165B (18.14–17): ἔστι γὰρ ἑκάστω τῶν ἱεραρχία κεκληρωμένων ἡ τελείωσις τὸ κατ' οἰκείαν ἀναλογίαν ἐπὶ τὸ θεομίμητον ἀναχθῆναι καὶ τὸ δὴ πάντων θειότερον ὡς τὰ λόγια φησι α Θεοῦ συνεργὸν » γενέσθαι καὶ δεῖξαι τὴν θεῖαν ἐνέργειαν ἐν ἑαυτῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν ἀναφαινομένην. Οἷον ἐπειδὴ τάξις ἱεραρχίας.”

<sup>175</sup> Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 187.

hierarchical system is the means by which intelligent creatures are united with God and each other and neither to the detriment of the other. The center of this system is Jesus Christ, the light of the Father, who proceeds into the world of angels and humans in order to join them to himself and his work, elevating them to divinity and uniting the objects of his providence as the single body of Christ, and uniting them to and transforming them into God as far as possible.

Christ's own procession from and return to the Father enables all anagogy, union, and assimilation to God for the creatures who proceeded from God and were oriented towards returning and resting in God. Far from being a natural cosmology, the hierarchical system is a deeply cultic affair. It is the actuality of what is depicted in the scriptures: God's boundless generosity as the creator, philanthropic redeemer, and divinizer. The cultic language employed throughout the *CD* and especially in the *CH* and *EH* deflects accusations that Dionysius sold out a worshipping Christianity for a private, intellectualist Platonism. On the contrary, the divinization of angels and humans is itself an act of worship, even Christ's act of worship, which Dionysius describes echoing the high-priestly prayer of the Gospel of John 17 and the Epistle to the Hebrews 10:

For if our most Divine Altar is Jesus—the supremely Divine sanctifying of the Godly Minds—in Whom, according to the Logion, [we] being sanctified and mystically offered as a whole burnt-offering, we have the access, [...] (cf. Heb. 10:10) let us gaze with supramundane eyes upon the most Divine Altar itself (on which things being perfected, are perfected and sanctified), being perfected [by him who is] the most Divine Μύρον itself[. F]or the altogether most holy Jesus sanctifies Himself on our behalf (cf. John 17:19), and fills us full of every sanctification, since the things consecrated upon it pass fraternally afterwards in their beneficent effects to us, as children of God.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> *EH* IV.3.12 484D-485C (103.4–12) “Εἰ γὰρ ἐστὶ τὸ θεϊότατον ἡμῶν θυσιαστήριον Ἰησοῦς, ἡ θεαρχικὴ τῶν θείων νοῶν ἀφιέρωσις, ἐν ᾧ, κατὰ τὸ λόγιον, ἀφιερούμενοι καὶ μυστικῶς ὀλοκαυτούμενοι τὴνπροσαγωγὴν ἔχομεν, ὑπερκοσμίως ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐποπτεύσωμεν αὐτὸ τὸ θεϊότατον θυσιαστήριον, ἐν τὰ

There are two altars in view here, Jesus and the physical altar of the Church. The altar is at once the place of sacrificial oblation and sanctification because worship and union to God are one and the same. The goal of hierarchy, the complete hallowing of its members (ἀφιερούμενοι), is the total inflammation of them by the fire which is God, at once evoking worship in the sense of a whole-burnt offering and θέωσις by the consumption by God as if by fire, which Dionysius uses as an image for God.<sup>177</sup> The purpose of the *EH* specifically (and even the *CD* more generally) is to lead the soul of its fictional recipient, Timothy the presbyter, and all readers more broadly, to this divine inflammation: “I am confident”, Dionysius says, “that, by what has been said, I shall strike the sparks of the Divine Fire stored up in thee.”<sup>178</sup>

Ultimately, the reflection on the altar’s relationship to the consecration of μύρον, the climax of the *EH*’s investigation of the τελεταῖ, passes into the ineffable Alleluia, just as the praise of God’s good works (ἀγαθουργίαι) through reading scripture passes over to worship.<sup>179</sup> The cultic life of the church and of the angelic hierarchies is not merely the disposable means by which God’s love accomplishes its purpose. Insofar as the cultic acts of worship, material and immaterial, are also the very acts of God accommodated to

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τελούμενα τελεῖται καὶ ἀγιάζεται, πρὸς αὐτοῦ τοῦ θειοτάτου μύρου τελούμενον. Ἀγιάζει γὰρ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἑαυτὸν ὁ παναγιώτατος Ἰησοῦς καὶ πάσης ἡμᾶς ἀγιαστείας ἀποπληροῖ τῶν ἐπ’ αὐτῷ τελουμένων οἰκονομικῶς εἰς ἡμᾶς ὡς θεογεννήτους λοιπὸν ἀγαθουργικῶς διαβαινόντων.”

<sup>177</sup> Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 27–28. Golitzin compares the image of consumption by fire to the apophatic approach of the *MT*, which burns away all false understanding of God in the course of union with God beyond knowing. In this sense, the image of God as fire burns up all that is not capable of receiving God.

<sup>178</sup> *EH* VII.3.11 569A (132.4–6): “Θαρρῶ γάρ, ὅτι τοῖς εἰρημένοις ἐγὼ τοὺς ἐναποκειμένους ἐν σοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ πυρὸς ἀνασκαλεύσω σπινθῆρας.” See also Stock, *Theurgisches Denken*, 36–37.

<sup>179</sup> *EH* IV.3.12 485B (103.19–104.2). Dionysius’ indicates the Alleluia only by a circumlocution. In *EH* III.3.5, Dionysius teaches that θεωργία is the fulfillment of θεολογία, explaining why the scriptures precede the Eucharistic concecration. Simi

human and angelic modes, they are expressive of θεομίμησις, divine imitation, the realization of divinization. Indeed, the manifestation of union and assimilation to and participation in God and, in particular, in Jesus by those souls and spirits he has saved from sin and finitude is worship. For in being divinized they are offered to their creator as a sweet incense and whole-burnt offering and therein at once glorify God by revealing his splendor inasmuch as they are totally given to and rest in him.

#### **I.4 How Hierarchy Is Accomplished by Cult**

The purpose of hierarchy as described in the foregoing section, the union and assimilation to God through the reception of Christ the light, is accomplished through the worship proper to every hierarchy. The first pages of the *CH* establish the context of hierarchy and perhaps even the whole *CD* as cultic.<sup>180</sup> *CH* I.3 coordinates the earthly and heavenly liturgies, accounting our hierarchy as an assimilation to the priesthood of the angels and explains that all that is received in the earthly liturgy is also received by the angels.<sup>181</sup> Similarly, *CH* III's three definitions of all hierarchy and the introductory explanation of hierarchy in *EH* I have a cultic resonance.<sup>182</sup> The first of three definitions of hierarchy in *CH* III defining hierarchy as α τάξις, ἐπιστήμη, and ἐνέργεια describes how hierarchy is theomimetic and that its God-conformed beauty as good, simple, and

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<sup>180</sup>See Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, xxxvi–xxxvii, 15–40, 50–57 for his liturgical oriented reading of the order of the *CD*.

<sup>181</sup> *CH* I.3 121C-124A (8.14–9.15). Golitzin esteems this passage as the most important of the whole *CD*, see Golitzin, 16.

<sup>182</sup> By cultic, I mean the practice of ritual acts, that is, acts performed by the natural powers of creatures but which have a supernatural goal and, by divine condescension, effect that exceeds their naturalness, whereby, in these very acts, God is at once and integrally worshipped and participated.



the “source of rites” or “sacraments” (τελεταρχικόν)<sup>183</sup> distributes “its proper light to each according to his worthiness and [is] perfective in the most divine τελετή”, i.e. sacrament.<sup>184</sup> The second definition calls those who become mirrors of the divine brightness “θιασώται”, that is, worshippers or followers of a divinity.<sup>185</sup> The third definition of hierarchy describes every hierarchy as “celebrating (“hierurgizing”) the mysteries of its proper illumination in τάξις and ἐπιστήμη.”<sup>186</sup> *EH* I.1 establishes a link

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<sup>183</sup> The adjective, τελεταρχικόν, and the related noun, τελεταρχίς, do not appear in the *LSJ*, and Lampe only finds the former in the *CD* and in one of Maximus the Confessor’s scholia upon it, and the latter in Dionysius alone. Lampe assigns them two meanings: perfective/perfecting or consecratory/consecrating, the latter having an overtly cultic connotation. The language based of τελ- stem includes terms denoting both perfection (i.e. τέλος) and initiatory ritual (τελετή), the latter sense being a particular extension of perfection insofar as sacred rituals are perfect their partakers in divine things. Accordingly, translating the panoply of τελ- stem words in the *CD* with sensitivity to their sense and context is, as Gunther Heil confesses, is difficult, and not only for his German translation. (Günter Heil, Notes to *Über die himmlische Hierarchie; Über die kirchliche Hierarchie*, Abteilung Patristik 22 (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1986), 165, n. 1.) In his notes to his translation of the *EH*, he provides a brief review of these τελ-stem terms. He explains that τελετή is borrowed from mystery cult terminology to refer to the sacraments, and thus denotes that through which the goal of a religious desire is reached or perfected (in the sense of “achieved”), and therefore it has a natural connection with τέλος and τελείωσις. The verbal form, τελέω, therefore denotes the accomplishment of the desired end state, or more particularly, aspects of the total accomplishment of the goal, such as baptism, and consecrating the μύρον. The source of these sacraments or ‘τελεταῖ’ is the ‘τελετάρχης,’ whose accordant action is termed, ‘τελετάρχεια.’ (Heil, *ibid.*) In his translation of the first definition of hierarchy in *CH* III.1, Heil observes that τελεταρχικόν literally translates “*Weiheprinzip*” (Heil, 78, n. 3), but prefers to translate it as “*Ursache der Vollkommenheit*” for the explaining the goal of hierarchy. (*ibid.*, 36) Gandillac translates τελεταρχικόν as “*principe de toute initiation*”, in Gandillac et al., *La hiérarchie céleste*, Sources chrétiennes, no 58 (Paris: Du Cerf, 1958), 87, and Parker follows a similar translation, “source of initiation”, while Colm Lubhied’s translation prefers “so much the source of perfection.” (Pseudo-Dionysius and Paul Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, trans. Colm Luibhéid, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 154.) Although for Dionysius the sacraments and perfection in God are inseparable, the translation of τελεταρχικόν is better served by the literal translation “source of initiation-rites” because it more clearly establishes the liturgical context of hierarchy while neither excluding the notion that the hierarchy’s sharing in divine beauty is the source of perfection.

<sup>184</sup> *CH* III.1 164D (17.5–9), “[...], τὸ δὲ θεοπρεπὲς κάλλος ὡς ἀπλοῦν ὡς ἀγαθὸν ὡς τελεταρχικόν ἀμιγὲς μὲν ἐστὶ καθόλου πάσης ἀνομοιότητος, μεταδοτικὸν δὲ κατ’ ἀξίαν ἐκάστῳ τοῦ οἰκείου φωτὸς καὶ τελειωτικὸν ἐν τελετῇ θειοτάτῃ [...]” “The most divine τελετή” may be a Eucharistic reference, since *EH* III.1 calls the Eucharist the τελετῶν τελετή, “the sacrament of sacraments” (*EH* III.1 424C [79.3]) and the “most diving Eucharist” (*EH* III.1 424D (79.15), and Eucharistic gifts are consistently referred to as the “θειοτάτα” throughout the chapter.

<sup>185</sup> *CH* III.2 165A (18.2). The *LSJ* gives the first definition of θιασώτης as “a member of a θίασος”, of a Bacchic revel or religious confraternity. The choice of the pseudonym Dionysius does raise eyebrows. Could the *CD*’s author have in mind the mythic and historic religious community around Dionysius? The centrality of worship, indeed, of that god’s τελετή, in Euripides’ *The Bacchae* offers tempting path for a future study.

<sup>186</sup> *CH* III.2 165B (18.12–13).

with the *CH* by identifying Jesus as the one who grants us the power of the priesthood by which our hierarchy approaches the angels.<sup>187</sup> *EH* I.3 emphasizes the performative character of cult, calling our hierarchy the “all-encompassing performance (πραγματεία) of the rites/offerings (ιερῶν) proper to it.”<sup>188</sup> Finally, *EH* V.1.1-2 describes the elements of every hierarchical activity (ιεραρχικὴ πραγματεία), angelic or human, as the τελεταῖ, the initiators, and the initiated.<sup>189</sup>

The character of these depictions and definitions of hierarchy, human or angelic, demonstrate that Dionysian hierarchy cannot be conceived apart from cultic practice. These passages, however, are only the tip of the iceberg. The *CD*, and especially the *CH* and *EH* are replete with cultic terminology, most frequently, with nouns, verbs, adjective and adverbs related to τελετή (and τέλος more broadly), ἀγιάζω, μυστήριον, θεουργία, ιερά and ιεουργία.

The cultic character of hierarchy is also built into the term ιεραρχία itself. The word was coined by Dionysius, derived from the ιεράρχης or the chief cultic figure, a terminological link which Dionysius points out.<sup>190</sup> The ιεραρχία is that function which is proper to the ιεράρχης, namely, leadership in priestly matters.<sup>191</sup> ‘Hierarchy’, therefore, is the relationship among the cultic leader, the priestly acts (τα ιερά) performed by him or

<sup>187</sup> *EH* I.1 372B (64.6–9).

<sup>188</sup> *EH* I.3 373C (65.24–66.1), “Ἡ καθ’ ἡμᾶς οὖν ιεραρχία λέγεται καὶ ἔστιν ἡ περιεκτικὴ τῶν κατ’ αὐτὴν ἀπάντων ιερῶν πραγματεία.”

<sup>189</sup> *EH* V.1.2 501A (104.3–5).

<sup>190</sup> *EH* I.3 373C (66.2); *EH* II.2.2 393B (70.19).

<sup>191</sup> Heil explains that the philological relationship between ιεραρχία and ιεραρχῆς has many parallels expressing the relationship of a role and that which it has command over, such the πολεμάρχης, war leader, and πολεμαρχία, his command over war matters, see “Einleitung” in Heil, *Über die himmlische Hierarchie ; Über die kirchliche Hierarchie*, 1–3. Heil takes the office of overseeing the ιερά, the cultic acts, as nothing less than the priesthood of the hierarch. Heil does not deny that a more general definition of hierarchy as that by which God is manifested in the ordering of the world is valid, but it is derived from the cultic action of the hierarchs by which God is made manifest. (Heil, 3)

others, the wider body of lay worshippers, and the purpose for which they are performed. This conceptual structure applies equally to angels and human ecclesiastical hierarchies, to which our hierarchy's assimilation to the priesthood of the angels' attests.<sup>192</sup>

Conceptually, priesthood coordinates several aspects of the hierarchical system. It connects the taxonomy of the hierarches to their purpose because the mediatory character of cult functions through relationships of initiators and initiated. This coordination reflects the notion of θεομίμησις discussed above for divine participation is only had in the cooperation of sharing God out to others. Therefore, θέωσις (the purpose of hierarchy) can only be achieved by activity (cult) in a network of personal relationships (taxonomy).

Furthermore, priesthood shows how Jesus the God-Man, who proceeds into the world as the light of the Father, is concretely participated by created intelligences. While the ecclesiastical hierarchy is assimilated to the angels' priesthood, priesthood is given *by* Jesus, who is the “οὐσία, ἀρχή, and “most-thearchic δύναμις of every hierarchy, theurgy, and consecration (ἀγιαστέα),”<sup>193</sup> and that priesthood is the express participation in Jesus' θεουργίαι, theurgies, literally ‘God-works’, and their fruits through ιερουργίαι, hierurgies, i.e., ‘priest-works’. For the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the hierurgies are principally accomplished in the three τελεταῖ of Baptism, Eucharist, and the consecration of μύρον, in which sacraments the activity of God and the angelic cult is shown to and

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<sup>192</sup> *CH* I.3 124A (7.11). The invisible cult of the angels is shown through the veil or ‘embroidery’ of the sensible symbols of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, see *CH* I.2–3. The *CH* does use priestly language for describing the activities undertaken in the angelic hierarchies, but Dionysius never transfers the particulars of the Church's liturgy to them because their worship does not use symbols (*EH* V.1.2 501A [104.16–18]).

<sup>193</sup> *EH* I.1 372A (63.12–64.1).

participated by those with spiritual eyes.<sup>194</sup> Hence, this section will treat two topics in that order: 1) the relationship between Jesus' theurgies and the hierarchies' hierurgies and 2) how the purpose of hierarchy is accomplished and the angelic liturgy is manifested in the ecclesiastical hierarchy's cult.

#### 1.4.1 Jesus, Theurgy and Hierurgy

The works of God, and in particular, the works of Jesus in his procession into the world as light (cf. John 1:17) and in his further incarnation are called theurgies by Dionysius. The term theurgy is a portmanteau of θεός and ἔργον.<sup>195</sup> For some it meant a ritual work affecting a god or demon, as it did for Porphyry with a salutary result for the practitioner, while for others, and most notably Iamblichus and his successors including Syrianus, Proclus, and Damascius, it meant the works of a god which in which humans participate by divine condescension in their god-given priestly activities of divination and sacrifice, resulting in divine κοινωνία and ἔνωσις.<sup>196</sup> Dionysius follows Iamblichus' logic

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<sup>194</sup> CH I.2 121B (8.4); CH IV.1 177C (20.5); CH VIII.1 237B (32.14). Elsewhere, "spiritual eyes" are associated with the middle power of φωτισμός or enlightenment more generally, which enables the vision of the angels (CH III.3 165D [19.12]) and also the vision of the divine realities of the three sacraments (EH III.3.13 441D [92.9]; EH IV.3.6 480D [100.9]; EH IV.3.10 484B [102.11]), and especially Jesus' self-consecrating activity as their ground in seeing the altar (EH IV.3.12 484D [103.7]).

<sup>195</sup> For origins of the term see, E. R. Dodds, "Theurgy and Its Relationship to Neoplatonism," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 37 (January 1, 1947): 55–56.

<sup>196</sup> Iamblichus, *Iamblichus: De Mysteriis*, trans. Emma C. Clarke, John M. Dillon, and Jackson P. Hershbell, Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Greco-Roman World, no. 4 (Boston: Brill, 2004), I.10–14 (42–57). Iamblichus' *De Mysteriis* is a response to Porphyry's critique of theurgy in the no longer fully extant *Letter to Anebo*, that theurgy treats the gods as if they are passive and subject to human influence. The rehabilitation of Iamblichean theurgy as a sophisticated and cogent form of Neoplatonism has challenged the earlier and dominant reading of theurgical thought as decadent betrayal of true Neoplatonism, as typified by E. R. Dodds', "Theurgy and Its Relationship to Neoplatonism." Dodds regarded theurgy as presuming to act upon or even create gods (Dodds, 56), and termed the *De Mysteriis* a "manifesto of the irrational", a flagrant departure from the purity of Plotinus. (Dodds, 57–59) An overview of the shift in scholarship to a more favorable and accurate interpretation of theurgy in Wayne Hankey's "Re-Evaluating E. R. Dodds' Platonism," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 103 (January 1, 2007): 499–541. In recent Dionysian scholarship some vestiges of the earlier interpretation have persisted. Paul

of theurgy in many ways, but distinguishes the divine works themselves performed by the triune God from human ritual participation in them by the terminological distinction between theurgy<sup>197</sup> and hierurgy.<sup>198</sup> By this participation, the members of the hierarchical system each become a “Θεοῦ συνέργος,” a co-worker with God.

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Rorem attributes to Iamblichus theurgy meaning a “work addressed towards the gods”, and argues that it was who Dionysius took theurgy as a subjective genitive, “God’s work,” see Paul Edward Rorem, *Biblical and Liturgical Symbols within the Pseudo-Dionysian Synthesis*, Studies and Texts 71 (Toronto, Ont., Canada: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1984), 14–5. A similar position is found in Louth, *Denys the Areopagite*, 76. While it is true that Dionysius understood in the sense of the subjective genitive, others including Emma C. Clarke and Gregory Shaw have pointed out that this distinction is a false opposition when applied to Iamblichus because he taught that theurgic ritual only had any efficacy in achieving some good or communion with the gods because it is already a divine or supernatural act, see Emma C. Clarke, *Iamblichus’ De Mysteriis: A Manifesto of the Miraculous*, Ashgate New Critical Thinking in Theology & Biblical Studies (Aldershot, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Pub. Co, 2001), 24–31; Shaw, “Neoplatonic Theurgy and Dionysius the Areopagite,” 587–595. Iamblichus’ own words: “It is plain indeed, from the rites themselves, that what we are speaking of just now is a method for salvation for the soul; for in the contemplation of the “blessed visions” the soul exchanges one life for another and exerts a different activity, and considers itself to be no longer human—and quite rightly so: for often, having abandoned its own life, it has gained in exchange the most blessed activity of the gods.” (Iamblichus, *De Mysteriis*, I.12.41.9–13 [52].) The metaphysical background for Iamblichus’ defense of the theurgy is the notion that the soul is fully descended from the One, and thus, unlike Plotinus’ notion of the soul remaining inwardly connected to the One, cannot simply enter itself by its natural intellectual powers and be joined to Intellect, and finally, the One, but needs an aid that exceeds intellect. (Clake, Dillon and Hershbelle, “Introduction to *De Mysteriis*”, xxviii; Clarke, *Iamblichus’ De Mysteriis*, 19; John M. Rist, “Pseudo-Dionysius, Neoplatonism, and the Weakness of the Soul,” in *From Athens to Chartres: Neoplatonism and Medieval Thought: Studies in Honour of Edouard Jeuneau*, ed. Edouard Jeuneau and Haijo Jan Westra, Studien Und Texte Zur Geistesgeschichte Des Mittelalters, Bd. 35 (Leiden ; New York: E.J. Brill, 1992), 142; Gregory Shaw, *Theurgy and the Soul: The Neoplatonism of Iamblichus*, Hermeneutics: Studies in the History of Religions (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 10–16; Klitenic Wear and Dillon, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition*, 104; Stock, *Theurgisches Denken*, 152–54.)

<sup>197</sup> Stock, *Theurgisches Denken*, 162. Stock describes Dionysius’ transformation of the term theurgy so: “Dionysios transformiert den Begriff, indem er ihn auf das Wirken Gottes in der Heilsgeschichte überträgt. *Theourgia* ist Gottes Tat, die Tat eines persönlichen Gottes für die Menschen, nicht die Aktivität des Göttlichen im Kosmos.” A thorough summary of Dionysius’ uses of the term theurgy is found in Peter Struck’s, “Pagan and Christian Theurgies: Iamblichus, Pseudo-Dionysius, Religion and Magic in Late Antiquity,” *Ancient World* 32, no. 2 (2001): 31–38.

<sup>198</sup> Hierurgy is not a term exclusive to Dionysius. It was employed by Christians, Jews, and pagans to refer to priestly ritual practice. It was even used by Iamblichus with nuanced distinction from theurgy, cf. Klitenic Wear and Dillon, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition*, 100–101. He uses the term in *De Myst.* V.14.217.8–9 to refer the performance of the sacrifices by the priests; in V.17.223.1 to refer to a mode of priestly practice; in V.23.232.1–2, to the “ποικίλος τρόπος τῆς ἐν ταῖς ἱερουργίας ἁγιαστέας τὰ μὲν ἀποκαθαίρει, τὰ δὲ τελειοῖ τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν ἢ περὶ ἡμᾶς ὄντων,” which Clarke translates as “[...] the varied mode of cult in theurgic rites, purifies some things, and brings others to perfection, of what is inherent or otherwise connected to us, [...]”, see Iamblichus, *De Mysteriis*, 265–67. Hierurgy is the particular ritual performed by priests in the theurgical activity of sacrifice, that is its human component or expression, which is similar, if not almost identical to Dionysius’ use of the term. For further discussions of Dionysius use of the term theurgy see Struck, “Pagan and Christian Theurgies: Iamblichus, Pseudo-

Theurgy is primarily, but not exclusively, attributed to Christ in his procession into the world as light and in his incarnation.<sup>199</sup> Christ's theurgy is central to Dionysius' soteriological and sacramental thought. For Christ's saving theurgy is a single act that redeems humans and raises them along with the angels to participation in divine life by purification, enlightenment, and perfection.<sup>200</sup> Nevertheless, his saving work, however unified, is accomplished through distinct theurgies which include: creation (proper to the whole Trinity), the initial divinization of humans and angels, the incarnation, the various events of the life of Jesus, and the climactic passion and cross (*CH* IV.4 181C-D [23.18-24.3]; *EH* II.3.7 404B-C [78.6-10]; *EH* V.3.4 512A-B [111.21-26]; *EH* VI.3.3 536A-B [118.6-11]), the resurrection (*EH* II.3.7 404B-C [78.6-10]), ascension (*CH* VII.3 209B-C [30.4-17]), and the sending of the Holy Spirit (*EH* V.1.5 512C [11.15-17]; *EH* VII.3.7 564B [128.19-20]).<sup>201</sup> The latter incarnate theurgies are not only pertinent to humanity

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Dionysius, *Religion and Magic in Late Antiquity*,” 34–38; Klitenic Wear and Dillon, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition*, 100–102; Stock, *Theurgisches Denken*, 160–5; Knepper, *Negating Negation*, 83–89.

<sup>199</sup> Theurgy is generally attributed to Christ, and Dionysius is careful to distinguish acts of the Father and Spirit from the Son, see *DN* II.6 644C [130.5–11]; Rorem, *Biblical and Liturgical Symbols*, 14–15. The Father and Holy Spirit, however, are not entirely excluded from theurgy entirely, but only from that which is particular to Jesus does as a man, so that they are not born in his birth, nor do they suffer in his passion, or rise in his resurrection. In particular, *EH* IV.3.10 484A [101.22–23] and 11 484C [102.21]) present a counter balance by depicting Jesus as consecrated (ἁγιαζόμενον ἀνδ καθαγιασθέντος) by the Father and the Holy Spirit. Other exceptions include the reference to the Spirit as moving the hierarchy to contemplation of the theurgies renewed in the liturgy (*EH* II.2.8 391A [73.8–10]; *EH* III.2 428A [81.11–13]), and, of course the act of creation (*EH* III.3.7).

<sup>200</sup> Theurgy is used in the singular on three occasions. First, the archangel Gabriel announces Jesus “manly theurgy,” his incarnation in *CH* IV.4 181B (22.5–23.3). Second, identifying theurgy as the consummation of theology in *EH* III.3.5 432B (84.21), most likely the fulfillment of the OT prophecy by NT acts, see Campbell “Notes” to *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 160, n. 147; Struck, “Pagan and Christian Theurgies: Iamblichus, Pseudo-Dionysius, Religion and Magic in Late Antiquity.”, 31–32; Stock, *Theurgisches Denken*, 163. Third, at *EH* IV.3.12 484C-D (103.2–4) Jesus’ the “supercosmic and superessential theurgy” is called the “source, and being, and power of every theurgic consecration (ἁγιαστέα),” echoing the similar attribution to Jesus in *EH* I.1 372A (63.11–64.1).

<sup>201</sup> His uses of theurgy in the plural indicate particular acts or effects, both pre- and post-incarnation. The former include creation and pre-fall deification of humanity and presumably the angels (*EH* III.3.7 436C [88.1–4]); the latter include the numerous effects human redemption, namely healing our weakness and receiving a share in Christ (*EH* III.3.7 436C [88.4–6]) and the acts through they were accomplished, many of which are listed at *CH* IV.4 181B–181D (22.23–24.1). How Jesus deified humanity

but even to the angels, who are first initiated into Christ's philanthropy and exercise their θεομίμησις or θεομιμήτων in concert with them, and are a source of the angels' "theurgic γνῶσις."<sup>202</sup>

Christ purifies, enlightens, and perfects his followers as a living offering of worship and cooperators with him through his divinizing theurgies, which they receive and participate in through hierurgies of the τελεταῖ.<sup>203</sup> Human hierurgies are material rituals that both veil and accomplish a noetic reality, while the angels' hierurgies are purely noetic and without material symbols.<sup>204</sup> Dionysius distinguishes Christ's deifying theurgies from the ritual hierurgies performed by creatures, while affirming that Christ is active in his theurgies in the hierurgies, and therefore, that the sacraments are genuinely efficacious of divinization.<sup>205</sup> They are called "perfective images of the thearchic

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before the fall and incarnation is not discussed explicitly by Dionysius, although he mentions the visible theophany of God in *DN* I.4 as an eschatological expectation, which might reflect an earlier yet still sensible mode of divinization, see John Jones, "Filled with the Visible Theophany of the Lord: Reading Dionysius East and West," *Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 53, no. 1–2 (2012): 13–41.

<sup>202</sup> *CH* IV.4 181B (22.5–23.3); *CH* VII.3 209B (30.7–10).

<sup>203</sup> Exemplary descriptions of participation in Christ through hierurgical acts include but are not limited to *CH*'s citations of participation in Jesus: *CH* I.3 124A (9.6–7); *CH* VII.2 208C–209A (29.9–15, 17–24).

<sup>204</sup> Explicit references to angelic hierurgies are found at the first angelic triad hierurgizing the first hierarchy (*CH* VII.1 205B [27.9]) and the angelic purification of Isaiah. (*CH* XIII.3 300C [44.14].) The general attribution of hierurgy to every hierarchy insofar as all "hierurgize the mysteries of their proper illumination," applies to the angels as much to humanity. (*CH* III.2 165B [18.12].)

<sup>205</sup> Recent scholarship has involved debate about sacramental efficacy and realism in Dionysius' writings. Rorem denies it, judging the symbols of the liturgy to be tokens in a divinely motivated epistemology, see *Biblical and Liturgical Symbols*, 66, 76–77, 106–110; *Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to Their Influence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 93. Kenneth Paul Wesche follows him, see Kenneth Paul Wesche, "Christological Doctrine and Liturgical Interpretation in Pseudo-Dionysius," *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 33, no. 1 (1989): 61; "Appendix: A Reply to Hieromonk Alexander's Reply," *Saint Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 34 (1990), 326. Several scholars attribute sacramental realism to Dionysius. Roques recognized the possibility of non-sacramental reading, but he does not deny sacramental realism and reads Dionysius as explaining the symbolism in terms of the intelligible realities towards which the sacraments conduct their recipients, see Roques, *L'Universe dionysien*, 266–71. Golitzin has long argued in favor a sacramental realism, (see Alexander Golitzin, "'On the Other Hand': A Response to Father Paul Wesche's Recent Article on Dionysios in St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly, Vol. 33, No. 1," *Saint Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 34 (1990), 305–23; Perl, "Symbol", 56) and recently centered his argument for a doctrine of the real presence on Dionysius' choice of words in the presentation of the Eucharistic symbols, literally bringing Jesus'

power”<sup>206</sup> by Dionysius, and hence are a θεομίμησις as a “renewing memorial of the most holy theurgies.”<sup>207</sup> These sacraments render a created way of life (ἔξις) theomimetic and capable of seeing and knowing (θεωρία, ἐπιστήμη, and γνῶσις) Christ’s theurgic presence in the same sacraments, and even prepare the body for the resurrection.<sup>208</sup>

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theurgies before the eye (ὕπ’ ὅψιν), see Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 267–72 (Peter Struck made a similar argument in Struck, “Pagan and Christian Theurgies: Iamblichus, Pseudo-Dionysius, Religion and Magic in Late Antiquity,” 34). Perl has argued that Dionysius, as a Neoplatonist, recognized knowing as an aspect of every being, and therefore any effect the sacraments have upon knowledge effect the totality of the being, and vice versa, see Eric, “Symbol,” 328. Timothy Knepper has pointed to Dionysius’ use of the language of hierurgy as a clearly indicating the efficacy of the rituals are also understood, see Knepper, *Negating Negation*, 83–89. Ysabel Andia Several scholars have pointed to Dionysius’ use of the logic and terminology of theurgy to demonstrate his commitment to sacramental efficacy. Louth, adverting to the importance of the term theurgy, has pointed out that sacraments affect the body as well as the mind, see Louth, “Pagan Theurgy and Christian Sacramentalism in Denys the Areopagite,” 438. Shaw has argued for sacramental efficacy in Dionysius on the basis of his similarity to Iamblichus on the topic of theurgy, see “Neoplatonic Theurgy and Dionysius the Areopagite,” 587–595. Dillon and Wear do likewise, but attend especially to the use of the word σφραγίς as indicative as indicative efficacious mark upon the soul in Klitenic Wear and Dillon, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition*, 99–115. Dylan Burns attends to Dionysius similarities to Proclus in the necessity of theurgic versus rational practice, see Burns, “Proclus and the Theurgic Liturgy of Pseudo-Dionysius,” 121–26. Stock has pointed out that the use of adjective “theurgic” to describe the extension of Christ’s theurgies into the hierurgies, see *Theurgisches Denken*, 164. Peter Stuck argues in similar vein that Dionysius does not so strongly distinguish theurgy and hierurgy, so that theurgic and thearchic action can be predicated of human ritual activity, see Struck, “Pagan and Christian Theurgies: Iamblichus, Pseudo-Dionysius, Religion and Magic in Late Antiquity,” 36–38. Timothy Riggs argues that the τελεταῖ are the means of Christ’s presence in every hierarchy, human and angelic, see Riggs, “Eros as a Hierarchical Principle: A Re-Evaluation of Dionysius’ Neoplatonism,” 94.

<sup>206</sup> *EH* V.1.5 505B (107.21–23).

<sup>207</sup> *EH* III.3.12 441C (92.2–3); Stock, *Theurgisches Denken*, 164–65.

<sup>208</sup> Dionysius’ affirmation of sacramental efficacy is corroborated by the inclusion of ἔξις alongside modes of awareness (θεωρία, ἐπιστήμη, and γνῶσις or similar terms of subjectivity) in descriptions of the results of cultic practice, especially the location of assimilation in ἔξις, evidenced by the recurrent reference to “deiform ἔξις.” More specific examples of the effect of cultic practice on ἔξις includes the reading the diptychs during the Eucharist leads to the “most blessed ἔξις and deiform rest of the departed” (*EH* III.3.9 437B [88.24–25]); the hierarch completes the Eucharist beholding “blessed and noetic visions” through the purity of a divine ἔξις (*EH* III.2 428A [81.12–13]). Stock argues that in the *CD*, ἔξις is a characteristic, and in the *EH*, a dynamic habit which can be gained and lost, see Stock, 132–33. Her assessment comports with Dionysius’ use of “deiform ἔξις,” that indicates the assimilation to God. More narrowly, ἔξις denotes capacity for activity in virtue of the assimilation to God. Dionysius includes it in a trio of terms which, he tells his interlocutor, “Timothy,” are what Jesus has perfected: ζωή, ἔξις, and ἐνέργεια. Examples of an active sense of ἔξις include the “theoretic ἔξις” (*CH* III.3 165D [19.11]), which is given in baptism to the laity (*EH* V.3 504B [106.13–14]); the “ferrying ἔξις” in which the ranks angels elevate each other and humanity (*CH* XIII.3 [45.6]); the receptive and distributive ἔξις formed by psalms during the Eucharist (*EH* III.3.4 432A [84.5–6]); the theometric ἔξις of the angels which constitutes their τελετή. Among these, the sense of ἔξις comports with the habit in the Aristotelian first actuality, an unexercised capacity to act, between potentiality simply and the activity exercised. (*EH* I.1 372B [64.6]; cf. Aristotle *De Anima*, 412a 27–412b9.)



Dionysius' use of gnoseological language in the description of angelic and ecclesiastical cult is indicative of its being integral and internal to cultic activity and not, as Rorem and those who follow him read it, posterior (if even simultaneous) to cult.<sup>209</sup> Hierarchical cult is effective and revelatory of Christ deifying, like window letting light in; cult is not pictorial or a didactic drama.

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<sup>209</sup> The precise relationship between cult and γνῶσις in the *CD* has been a matter of debate and belongs to the larger debate over sacramental efficacy. It generally follows the main lines of the latter, with Rorem's position that the cultic rites are only tokens for interpretation as focal point. His position stands on four central points about cult: 1) the purpose of cult is to be led up to a spiritual knowledge of the intelligibles, the mysteries of God (Rorem, *Biblical and Liturgical Symbols*, 46, 54–58, 60); cultic practice does not cause *per se* the spiritual vision of said intelligibles (Rorem, 109); the vision of said intelligibles is not the fruit human reason but of a divine elevation of the mind (Rorem, 103); nevertheless, cultic practice is the indispensable context for such an elevation (Rorem, 105). Rorem's position sets γνῶσις as subsequent and superior to cult, which in his view is strictly symbolic and *behind which* the intelligible realities of divine lie hidden (Rorem, 51), because the referent of cult and the sufficient means of access to it are distinguished from cult, which is a necessary but not sufficient condition of the vision of God. Rorem's position, by design, ends up equating the symbolism of the bible and the liturgy as both symbols that are not what they symbolize, but the initial path towards it (Rorem, 49–54).

The response of the affirmers of sacramental efficacy in the *CD* is not to mitigate the importance of γνῶσις, which is of obvious importance to Dionysius' account of cult, but to understand the integration of γνῶσις as an integral element of cult. Rorem distinguishes Dionysius from Iamblichus on his perceived difference that only the latter regarded ritual as effecting γνῶσις of the divine *per se*. He is half right, insofar as for Iamblichus γνῶσις is integral to true theurgy. Clarke explains that for Iamblichus, theurgical practice is a supernatural action of the gods with human cooperators, and thus to participate in and observe it is to experience a divine epiphany in a supra-intellectual γνῶσις (Clarke, *Iamblichus' De Mysteriis*, 29; cf. Iamblichus, *De Mysteriis*, II.9.87, 11–88.6). Iamblichus and later Proclus both acknowledged that the highest form of cult is immaterial and proper to the mind alone, and reserved to very few (Clarke, *Iamblichus' De Mysteriis*, 44, 46–47; Burns, "Proclus and the Theurgic Liturgy of Pseudo-Dionysius.": 117–21; Sara Ahbel-Rappe, *Reading Neoplatonism: Non-Discursive Thinking in the Texts of Plotinus, Proclus, and Damascius* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 173). Thus, in later Neoplatonism, a supernatural γνῶσις is integral to (i.e. not posterior to) and even the locus of cult.

An alternative approach to the distinction in the use of symbolic cult between Dionysius and his Neoplatonic predecessors is offered in Burns' evaluation of the Dionysius' account of the Eucharist. He observes that its status exceeds that of material theurgy for Neoplatonists in two ways, first, in that it takes on the unitive capacity of their immaterial theurgy, but second, in as much as it remains material because it has a public, corporate beneficence that private immaterial theurgy does not (Burns, "Proclus and the Theurgic Liturgy of Pseudo-Dionysius.": 121, 123–4, 127–8). Dionysius expands the role of symbol to be effective of the highest forms of γνῶσις, de-privatizing it (cf. Klitenic Wear and Dillon, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition*, 115). In this way, the material cult clothes Christ's highest theurgies so as to be accessible and *known* by material beings elevated by the sacraments to the very capacity to behold that which has so elevated them (cf. Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 254–57; Klitenic Wear and Dillon, *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition*, 110; Knepper, *Negating Negation*, 86–89).

### I.4.2 Hierarchy and The Hierarchy

Because the rites of the Church are effective of divinization, it is necessary to review the specifics of how the rites are conducted within the Church in order to fully understand Dionysian hierarchy. The division of the three powers of purification, enlightenment, and perfection coordinate the ecclesiastical hierarchy's initiators, initiates, and sacraments.<sup>210</sup> The hierarchy, the bishop, is the coordinating center of this set of relationships as the proximate source of the powers within the ecclesiastical hierarchy and so studying the hierarchy summarizes the entire vision of Dionysian hierarchy in him.<sup>211</sup>

The hierarchy is at the center of two co-ordinations, the "horizontal" gathering together of the local Church as the Body of Christ, and the "vertical" coordination of the personal inner spiritual life with the visible rites of the Church and the heavenly hierarchies (and the blessed departed). This latter, vertical coordination shows an integration of two theological genres: the inward and anagogic Alexandrian mystagogy with the liturgical exposition of the Church Order tradition, a synthesis towards which Dionysius may have been guided by the Evagrian and Macarian asceticism.<sup>212</sup> The combination of the exposition of liturgical practice and ecclesiastical governance makes explicit the connection between personal divinization as the condition and fruit in both receiving and administering the sacraments and in seeing that they are in fact a heavenly reality on Earth. Dionysius thus synthesizes aspects of the Church which had come into

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<sup>210</sup> *EH* V.1.2–3 501D–504C (105.24–106.23)

<sup>211</sup> *EH* V.1.5 505A–B (107.13–19).

<sup>212</sup> Rorem suggests Dionysius' may have read and modeled his use of the θεωρία sections of the *EH* upon the Gregory of Nyssa' *Life of Moses*, see *Biblical and Liturgical Symbols*, 44, n. 112. For a further assessment of Dionysius possible sources, see Golitzin, *Et Introibo Ad Altare Dei*, 233–392 ; Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 305–63.

tension in the course of its history: the personal and the communal, the clerical and the charismatic, the visible and the invisible, the ritual and the spiritual, the terrestrial and celestial.

Dionysius, however, is not entirely innovative in this regard. The Syrian *Liber Graduum*, which predates the *CD* by perhaps up to a little over a century articulates a similar coordination of the inner Church, the visible Church, and the Church above.<sup>213</sup> *Mēmṛā* 12.1-2 describes the sacrifice offered on the visible altar, altar of the heart and spiritual altar of heaven, while *mēmṛā* 12.4-5 explains that all are true worship but the visible worship leads to the worship in the heart and culminates in heavenly worship (both eschatologically and in the present) without rejecting the visible church.<sup>214</sup> The *Liber Graduum* also presents the heavenly Church as the source of the light of Christ which it shines through the visible and inner Church.<sup>215</sup> Its triple schema of the inseparability of the Church within, without, and above is aimed at certain monks who have rejected the proper order of the Church, a concern which is also shared by Dionysius.<sup>216</sup> Dionysius, perhaps a Syrian himself, may have known the work and the similarities are striking.<sup>217</sup> Dionysius follows the same basic schema: public worship

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<sup>213</sup> Robert A. Kitchen and M. F. G. Parmentier, trans. and eds., *The Book of Steps: The Syriac Liber Graduum*, Cistercian Studies Series, no. 196 (Kalamazoo, Mich: Cistercian, 2004), 120: “Since we know the body becomes a hidden temple and the heart a hidden altar for spiritual worship, let us be diligent in this public altar and before this public temple. Although we are weary in these things, we shall live forever in that great freeborn and heavenly Church, and in that altar that is adorned and erected by the Spirit, before which angels and saints serve, and Jesus celebrates and offers up [His sacrifice] before them, and above them and on all their sides.”

<sup>214</sup> *Liber Graduum*, 122: “When, however, a person is diligent in this visible church, he is living in that church of the heart and in that higher [church].”; Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 338.

<sup>215</sup> Kitchen and Parmentier, *The Book of Steps*, 121.

<sup>216</sup> Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 23, 336–9. Dionysius’ articulation of Hierarchy may have a similar polemical concern, suggested most explicitly by Ep. VI’s warning against direct arguments and Ep. VIII’s taking Demophilus to task.

<sup>217</sup> For an alternative reading, arguing See, Paul L. Gavrilyuk, “Did Pseudo-Dionysius Live in Constantinople?,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 62, no. 5 (2008): 505–14. Paul Gavrilyuk argues that Dionysius may have lived in Constantinople.

inculcates a personal θεομίμησις which is an assimilation to heavenly worship now and in the eschaton. Dionysius' treatment is, however, far more expansive and while the *Liber Graduum* mentions the ministrations of priests, Dionysius develops the triple schema of public, inner, and heavenly worship in the actions of the hierarch. Dionysius' hierarchs are the chief priests of the Church, at once its most holy members, who understand the heavenly realities of the sacraments and scriptures and administer them to the Church both by their own ministrations and by consecrating priests and deacons (λειτουργοί) to carry on this ministry, thereby effecting and revealing and communicating in the τελεταῖ both holiness and heavenly worship to the lower members as is proper to each.

The hierarch stands in the place of Christ as the proximate source of purification, enlightenment, and perfection in knowledge, activity, and body. Moreover, like Christ, the hierarch is present throughout the hierarchy through mediation. As Christ acts immediately upon the first angelic triad and thereafter is present in the first's ministrations to the second, and the first and second's to the third's and so on, the hierarch is active in his priests and deacons, as priests join him in purifying and enlightening, and deacons in purifying alone.<sup>218</sup> Through his sending forth of the priests and deacons, particularly in the rites of and leading up to Baptism the uninitiated are led to the hierarch, who regularly stands at the altar. Together, the hierarch and the altar, which represents Christ's self-oblation and consecratory power, are the center of the connection to the angelic liturgy, of the performance of the τελεταῖ, and the source and highest instance of holiness. Accordingly, the better part of the *EH*'s explanation of rites are centered on the hierarch's action at or near the altar, to which I will now turn.

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<sup>218</sup> *EH* V.1.7 508C (109.13–18).

### I.4.3 The Τελεταῖ of the Church

The *EH* treats six distinct rites of the Church: Baptism, the Eucharist, the consecration of μύρον, clerical consecration, monastic consecration, and the burial service, but only the first are called τελεταῖ. These three alone are to be received (or attended)<sup>219</sup> by all the members of the Church in order come to communion with God in Christ and thereby be divinized. Like the members of the hierarchical system, these τελεταῖ are associated with the three powers of illumination, but not by a one-to-one relationship. Baptism effects purification and enlightenment, while the Eucharist and the consecration of μύρον are both associated with perfection.<sup>220</sup> Furthermore, the Eucharist and the μύρον rite's joint association with perfection lends itself to their being read together, in a way, as single extended treatment of the Eucharist. In fact, *EH* IV fills out the description of Christ's saving work and directly considers the altar. In this way, the Eucharist, which is exalted as the "sacrament of sacraments" is not displaced from the central chapter and climax of the treatise, *EH* IV, but consideration thereof comes to its conclusion in meditating on the theurgic power of Christ himself in his own self-offering.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> The consecration of μύρον is not received by any person, but the consecrated μύρον is received by all the baptized at the conclusion of the baptismal rite (*EH* II.2.7 396B (73.5–5)).

<sup>220</sup> *EH* V.1.3 (106.17–22); *EH* IV.1.1 This division is helpful for understanding the powers correctly, because it indicates that being baptized into Christ properly belongs to enlightenment (Christ is the light after all), and that perfection is not only the consummation of each, but as the explanation of the rite of μύρον indicates, the power of the μύρον is active employed both in Baptism and for consecrating the altar upon which the Eucharist is celebrated.

<sup>221</sup> Cf. Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 251–52.

### I.4.3.1 Baptism

The rite of Baptism, termed enlightenment (φωτίσμος) or “God-birth” (θεογενεσία) by Dionysius, and the instruction that leads up to it has a double effect. It purifies catechumens from sin and ignorance and also sets them in the very first stages of deiformity in receiving Christ the Light and the Holy Spirit.<sup>222</sup> This birth into divine life is linked with baptism into Christ’s death and the emptiness of the tomb.<sup>223</sup> The baptizand becomes a member of the lay congregation and receives a theoretic ἔξις, that is, the ability to see, understand and commune in the Church’s more secret and higher rites.<sup>224</sup> He or she is therefore granted access to the Eucharist and to be present at the μύρον rite.<sup>225</sup> In sum, it grants enlightenment as both a share in and vision of Christ, which, as noted above, are inseparable.

#### I.3.4.1.1 Ritual Symbols and Themes

The central actions and images of the baptismal rite recall several themes: procession and return, hierarchical mediation, and the struggle of the Christian life. Unlike the other rites, its central action is not set at the altar, although it concludes there. After the initial reception of the catechumen, readings and hymns, the hierarch kisses the

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<sup>222</sup> *EH* II.1 392B (69.7–13); *EH* II.2 393A (70.1). Rorem casts doubt on the authenticity of the term ‘φωτίσμος’ as Dionysius’ name for Baptism, suggesting that it may be an editorial insertion. (Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius*, 97.) However, *EH* III.1 illustrates the propriety of the name of each rite with reference to Baptism as named for being the first impartation of light, and Campbell points out Clement of Alexandria and Gregory Nazianzus as using similar titling for Baptism, see “Notes” to *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 116, n. 125.

<sup>223</sup> *EH* II.3.6 405A (77.20–24); *EH* II.3.7 404B–C (78.6–10).

<sup>224</sup> *EH* VI.1.2 532B (115.18–20); *CH* III.3 165D (19.10–11)

<sup>225</sup> *EH* II.3.8 404D (78.19–21); *EH* VI.1.2 532B–C (115.20–116.4).

altar and approaches the baptizand.<sup>226</sup> This spatial difference underlies an implied procession and return by the hierarchy, who is described as follows: “When he has finished these things, he elevates himself from his progression to things secondary, to the contemplation of things first [...].”<sup>227</sup> The hierarchy, both inwardly and exteriorly returns to the altar, the locus of the higher mysteries.<sup>228</sup> This movement embodies the hierarchy’s initial proclamation in the rite:

God being compassionate towards those upon earth, out of His own proper and innate goodness, deigned Himself to come to us with outstretched arms, by reason of his [philanthropy] [...].<sup>229</sup>

The second half of the hierarchy’s proclamation introduces the theme of assimilation: “and [God has come], by the union with Him, to assimilate, like as by fire, things that have been made one, in proportion to their aptitude for deification.”<sup>230</sup> The primary image of assimilation and unification in the rite is the baptizand’s journey through the hierarchy’s members to the hierarchy himself. The catechumen is led by his sponsor, “one of the initiated”,<sup>231</sup> to the hierarchy, who receives both as a shepherd (the

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<sup>226</sup> *EH* II.2.4 393C (71.5–10).

<sup>227</sup> *EH* II.2.8 387A (73.7–8): “Ταῦτα δὲ τελέσας ἀπὸ τῆς ἐπὶ τὰ δεύτερα προόδου πάλιν ἐπὶ τὴν τῶν πρώτων ἀνατείνεται θεωρίαν [...].”

<sup>228</sup> The text does not say explicitly that his cession of his procession to secondary things is a spatial movement, but because Baptism is concluded by the Eucharist (*EH* II.3.8 404D [78.19–21]; *EH* III.1 424D–425A [79.14–19]), it is necessary that he return to the altar.

<sup>229</sup> *EH* II.2.1 393A (70.4–6): “θεὸν ἴλεω τοῖς ἐπὶ γῆς ἐξ οἰκείας ὄντα καὶ φυσικῆς ἀγαθότητος αὐτὸν ὡς ἡμᾶς ἀφικέσθαι διὰ φιλανθρωπίαν ἀξιώσαντα [...].”

<sup>230</sup> *EH* II.2.1.393A (70.6–7): “καὶ τῇ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐνώσει δίκην πυρὸς ἀφομοιωῖσαι τὰ ἐνωθέντα κατὰ τὴν αὐτῶν πρὸς θέωσιν ἐπιτηδειότητα.” The use of the fire imagery is noteworthy, since it is Dionysius’ preferred image for God, which will surface again in the *μύρον* rites description of the Christian as a holocaust on the altar of Christ.

<sup>231</sup> *EH* II.2.2 393B (70.11–13). The term, “ἐπὶ τινα τῶν μεμνημένων” is not used elsewhere to refer to any of the ranks specifically acting as a sponsor. If it includes the laity or the monks, including sponsors in infant Baptism, it constitutes the only active role by either in extending Christ’s saving work to another in the *CD*. I have found no scholarship that engages this question.

Christ imagery is obvious here).<sup>232</sup> There is yet further mediation. The baptizand is stripped of his clothes, representing the old life, and led to renounce Satan by the deacons,<sup>233</sup> and then to be anointed by the hierarch, which is completed by the priests who lead him to the font before being baptized and anointed with μύρον by the hierarch.<sup>234</sup> Hence in the moment of the true birth in God accomplished by the hierarch, the process of mediation through the clerical ranks has manifested the unity of the church and of the inner life of the baptizand.

The pre-immersion anointing and the baptism speak to a holy, Christoform athleticism, which combines the image of death, struggle, and also the approach to the noetic realities. These two images stand side by side in the text. The bodily anointing suggests entrance into a contest in which Christ is at once the umpire of the game and giver of rewards, a contest for holy living and against evil, but it is also the contest which Christ himself enters with the other “athletes,” gaining victory over death and destruction.<sup>235</sup> This struggle, which represents the journey to the Church, comes to its completion in baptism as mystical death with Christ in baptism:

[...] and when after following in the Divine footsteps of the first of athletes, through goodness, he has overthrown, in his struggles after the Divine example, the energies and impulses opposed to his deification, he dies with Christ—to speak mystically—to sin, in Baptism.<sup>236</sup>

<sup>232</sup> *EH* II.2.3 393C (71.1–4).

<sup>233</sup> *EH* II.2.6 396A–B (71.19–72.4); *EH* II.2.7 396C (72.9–11).

<sup>234</sup> *EH* II.2.7 396C (72.9–10–13); *EH* II.2.7 396C–D (72.17–19).

<sup>235</sup> *EH* II.3.6 401C–404A (77.8–17).

<sup>236</sup> *EH* II.3.6 404A (77.20–23). “ἐπιβὰς δὲ τοῖς θείοις ἔχνεσι τοῦ ἀθλητῶν πρώτου δι’ ἀγαθότητα ταῖς θεομιμήτοις ἀθλήσεσι τὰς πρὸς θέωσιν ἐναντίας αὐτῷ καταπαλαίσας ἐνεργείας τε καὶ ὑπάρξεις συναποθνήσκει Χοιστῶ μυστικῶς εἰπεῖν τῇ ἀνασῳα κατὰ τὸ Βάπτισμα.”



The catechumen's mystical death with Christ in baptism segues immediately into a further reflection on mystic death as the context of divinization. Dionysius transforms the image of death as the separation of the body and soul, itself a passing into invisibility into a symbol of attaining the invisible realities: "For since death is with us not an annihilation of being, as others surmise, but the separating of things united, leading to that which is invisible to us [...]." <sup>237</sup> This death is interpreted as the θεομίμησις of the "supremely divine death of the life-giving Jesus", passing through which the baptizand is then clothed in bright (φωτοειδεῖς) clothing, representing the luminous life in Christ. <sup>238</sup> Thus the rite of baptism symbolizes its effects: moral effort supported by divine grace and passing over to higher realities in the darkness of invisible light.

#### I.4.3.2 The Eucharist

The Eucharist, called the 'κοινωνία' and 'σύνάξις' ('gathering'), by Dionysius, brings the divinization begun in Baptism to fruition and accomplishes the purpose of the "gathering Father's" sending the Son into the world. <sup>239</sup> Although one is born into life in Christ in baptism, baptism is oriented towards the Eucharist in which Christ's saving theurgies are manifested, received, and more perfectly participated. The celebration of the

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<sup>237</sup> EH II.3.7 404B (77.25–78.2). "Καὶ γὰρ ἐπειδὴ θάνατός ἐστιν ἐφ' ἡμῶν οὐ τῆς οὐσίας ἀνυπαρξία κατὰ τὸ δόξαν ἑτέροις ἀλλ' ἢ τῶν ἠνωμένων διάκρισις εἰς τὸ ἡμῖν' ἀφανὲς ἄγουσα [...]." The passage goes on to explain that the soul becomes invisible by the loss of the body in death, but the invisible cannot have a negative connotation in the explanation of Baptism. The loss of the body could be read as a reference to asceticism, however the reception of the theoretic ἔξις that sees the theurgies veiled in symbols with "spiritual eyes" (see, n. 194 above) is a simpler reading.

<sup>238</sup> EH II.3.8 404C (78.11–14).

<sup>239</sup> Christopher Meconi points out that the name describes both the ecclesial gathering and the cosmic gathering of the Church into unity with God, see David Vincent Meconi, "Augustine and Dionysius the Areopagite: Two Christian Responses to Theurgy," in *Divine Promise and Human Freedom in Contemporary Catholic Thought* (Lanham, US: Lexington Books, 2015), 29.

Eucharist accomplishes the union and assimilation of the Church's members to God by the division and distribution of the divine symbols (bread and wine) that are sacrificed on the altar and become Christ who gathers the faithful as members of his body.<sup>240</sup> As the Christian's deformity is intensified and perfected she ascends from θεωρία to the ἐπιστήμη of the heavenly realities (νοήτα) present before her in the rite. Unlike baptism, the celebration of the Eucharist is not only the means of perfection but its entelechy, the ceaseless worship that is end (τέλος) and climax (κεφάλαιος) of almost every other rite.<sup>241</sup> It is, therefore, called the sacrament of sacraments (τελετῶν τελετή). Dionysius' treatment of the Eucharist is not, however, the final word on Christ's theurgy active in the hierurgies. For while *EH* III focuses on what is accomplished through Christ's theurgy, *EH* IV focuses on Christ's theurgy in itself.

#### **I.4.3.2.1 Ritual Symbols and Themes**

The ritual actions of the Eucharist progress through a series of gatherings and purifications as if moving through intensifying grades of unity until at the simplest point the most divine things and acts are accomplished and overflow back out towards as many

<sup>240</sup> *EH* III.3.12 444B (93.3–4).

<sup>241</sup> *EH* III.1 425A (79.13–23). “Οὐ γὰρ ἔνεστιν σχεδόν τινα τελεσθῆναι τελετὴν ἱεραρχικὴν μὴ τῆς θειοτάτης εὐχαριστίας ἐν κεφαλαίῳ τῶν καθ' ἕκαστα τελουμένων τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ ἐν τοῦ τελεσθέντος ἱεουργούσης συναγωγὴν καὶ τῇ θεοπαραδότῳ δωρεᾷ τῶν τελειωτικῶν μυστηρίων τελεσιουργούσης αὐτοῦ τὴν πρὸς θεὸν κοινωνίαν. Ἐἰ τοίνυν ἐκάστη τῶν ἱεραρχικῶν τελετῶν ἀτελὴς μὲν οὖσα τὴν πρὸς τὸ ἐν ἡμῶν κοινωνίαν καὶ σύναξιν οὐ τελεσιουργήσει καὶ τὸ εἶναι τελετὴ διὰ τὸ ἀτέλεστον ἀφηρημένη, τὸ δὲ τέλος ἀπάσῃ καὶ τὸ κεφάλαιον ἢ τῶν θεαρχικῶν μυστηρίων τῷ τελουμένῳ μετάδοσις, εἰκότως ἡ ἱεραρχικὴ σύνεσις ἐπωνυμίαν αὐτῇ κυρίαν ἐκ τῆς τῶν πραγμάτων ἀληθείας ἐφεῦρεν.” Every rite is ordered towards communion with God, but it is only actually accomplished through the Eucharist. Baptism makes one able to receive the Eucharist, while monastic consecration brings one deeper understanding of it, and the clerical consecrations facilitate its celebration. Even the μύρον rite, equal in status to the Eucharist, enables the participation and celebration of the Eucharist by its use in baptism and the consecration of the altar.

as can receive them.<sup>242</sup> As with Baptism, the rite is situated within the context of procession and return. At the beginning of the rite, the hierarch departs the altar to incense the whole Church but, unlike his movements in the baptismal rite, he returns to the altar to complete the rest of the rite.<sup>243</sup> Dionysius' reflection upon the censuring procession echoes *CH* I.2's description the divine light's multiplication without loss of self-sameness for the sake of gathering all into one.<sup>244</sup> The hierarch's incense procession is, therefore, an image of Christ's work in miniature.

From that point on, the Eucharistic rite (and Dionysius' θεωρία of the rite) draws closer to the altar. Every ritual act prior to the Eucharistic offering proper is a preparatory gathering of the faithful into one, inwardly and outwardly, so that union is both the condition and fruit of the Eucharist.<sup>245</sup> All the members of the Church, including the catechumens, possessed, and penitents are present for and join in the chanting of the psalms.<sup>246</sup> They remain for the scriptural readings, but Dionysius focus narrows since they are read by the deacons alone.<sup>247</sup> Chanting the psalms harmonizes individual souls and makes the Church a single choir, granting "a [ἔξῃς] suitable for the reception and

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<sup>242</sup> Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 250–52. Golitzin has argued for an interpretation of the *EH* II–IV as a movement from the doors of the Church all the way to the altar. This interpretation is sound and helpfully situates the altar at Dionysian theology, and as the climax of the *EH* and the *MT*.

<sup>243</sup> *EH* III.2 425B (80.8–10); *EH* III.3.3 428D–429A (82.13–17). Since the processions returns to the altar, what the hierarch accomplishes on the altar thereafter may represent the ascended Christ's worship, cf. Hebrews 9:15–28.

<sup>244</sup> *EH* III.3.3 429A (82.17–83.3); cf. *CH* I.2 121B (8.5–10).

<sup>245</sup> Cf. Augustine, *Civ. Dei*, X.6. Augustine's insight that the Church is what she offers might be taken as an equivalent image. For a comparison of Dionysius' and Augustine's accounts of worship see Meconi, "Augustine and Dionysius the Areopagite," 15–36. In particular, he describes Dionysius expressing in his Christian recontextualization of theurgy precisely what Augustine did by contrasting the Eucharist to pagan theurgy in three dimensions, the cultic, anthropological, and ecclesial: "The Eucharist is how God continues his original theurgy in Christ (cultic), it is what saves the human person in his and her fullness (anthropological), and it what unites the human race in one common Lord and Savior (ecclesial)." (Meconi, 26.)

<sup>246</sup> *EH* III.2 425B–C (80.10–160).

<sup>247</sup> *EH* III.2 425B–C (80.10–160).

distribution of every Hierarchical mystery” and “establish[es] an accord with things Divine, and themselves, and one another.”<sup>248</sup> The readings then expand “the things more strained and obscure in the intellectual language of the mystic Psalms” so that the hearer might perceive the unity and inspiration moved by the Holy Spirit, perceiving the unity of the Old and New Covenants.<sup>249</sup> Union within the soul, between souls, and with God grants the vision or awareness of that very same union. In short, for Dionysius, to be unified is to know unity.

Those, however, who will not or cannot yet see spiritually nor communicate are excluded from the superior hierurgies of the synaxis, leaving the laity (including the monks) and the clergy, not as a sign of division, but setting the Church apart from inner and outer discord as it draws nearer to the climax of the Eucharist.<sup>250</sup> The singing of the ‘catholic hymn’ that extolls the theurgies and accompanies the preparation of the symbols on the altar is a step closer still to the oblation on the altar in space and thought.<sup>251</sup> Once the altar is prepared, several rituals manifesting unity are celebrated (hierurgized): the kiss of peace, the reading of the diptychs, and the washing of the extremities by the hierarch and priests. These acts dispel, as far as possible, any division in the Church on earth, above, or within.<sup>252</sup> Finally, when the unity has peaked in intensity the climax of

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<sup>248</sup> *EH* III.3.5 432A (84.7–11).

<sup>249</sup> *EH* III.3.5 432A-B (84.11–14).

<sup>250</sup> *EH* III.2 425C (80.14–15); *EH* III.3.6 432CD (84.25–85.6); *EH* III.3.7 436B (87.12–20).

Dionysius first references the holy doors, near which some of the deacons stand, immediately after the exclusion of the penitence, signaling a transition to a more hidden, unified, and exclusive stage in the liturgical action.

<sup>251</sup> *EH* III.2 425C (80.16–21).

<sup>252</sup> *EH* III.2 425C-D (80.21–81.5); *EH* III.3.8 437A-B (88.10–21); *EH* III.3.10 437D-440A (89.11–21). The three kinds of unity described herein accord with the three churches of the *Liber Graduum*. The kiss of peace and the reading of the diptychs depict a vertical and horizontal union, respectively, while the washing of the extremities recall the priestly washing of the Temple, and places personal purity and psychic unification in a cultic light.

the Eucharist mounts to an even greater unity. Standing at the center of the altar, “before the gaze of Christ who judges all things in the symbols,” the hierarch is united to the divine things and hierurgizes (i.e. sacrifices) the most divine things on the altar (θυσιατέριον), which are the manifestation of the active presence of Christ’s incarnate theurgy, “which he brings to sight”.<sup>253</sup> Through the hierarch, Jesus multiplies and communicates himself to us through the distribution of these symbols offered on the altar, the locus of communion with God, in order to assimilate us to himself.<sup>254</sup> The hierarch receives the symbols first and then they are distributed to the rest of the Church in order.<sup>255</sup> Thus do Christians partake of Jesus’ saving work and exist as members of his body and living temples of the Holy Spirit.<sup>256</sup>

Dionysius completes the chapter with an exhortation to “taste and see.” The result of initiation is to know that into which one is initiated, a final unity for this chapter of unities:

by the sacred initiation of things Divine, the initiated recognize their munificent graces, and, by gazing with utmost reverence upon their most Divine height and breadth in the participation, they will sing the supercelestial beneficent works [ἀγαθουργίαι] of the Godhead with gracious thanksgiving.<sup>257</sup>

<sup>253</sup> *EH* III.2 425D (81.5–7); *EH* III.2.10 440B (90.3–10); *EH* III.3.12 440A (92.14–18).

<sup>254</sup> *EH* III.2 425D–428 (81.7–9); *EH* III.3.12 444A (92.18–21); *EH* III.3.13 444C (93.11–14); *EH* III.3.13 444C–D (93.19–22). Structurally, the peak of the unity is not communion in our sense of distribution of the sacrament, but the Eucharistic oblation is the center. Dionysius never refers to the isolated distribution of the sacrament as “κοινωνία,” rather, it refers to the whole reality of divine union accomplished through the rite.

<sup>255</sup> *EH* III.3.14 445A–B (93.26–94.3).

<sup>256</sup> *EH* III.3.7 433C (86.6–12); *EH* III.3.12 444B (93.3–6).

<sup>257</sup> *EH* III.3.15 445C (94.18–22): “Τῇ γὰρ ἱερᾷ τῶν θεῶν μνήσει τὰς μεγαλοδώρους αὐτῶν οἱ μυσούμενοι χάριτας ἐπιγνώσονται καὶ τὸ θεϊότατον αὐτῶν ὕψος καὶ μέγεθος ἐν τῇ μεθέξει πανιέρως ἐποπτεύοντες τὰς ὑπερουρανίας εὐχαρίστως ὑμνήσουσι τῆς θεαρχίας ἀγαθουργίας.”

Sight, however, for Dionysius, is not the final word of Eucharistic communion. Tasting the sacraments sensibly becomes vision of the νοητά, but in turn, Dionysius characterizes vision as a banquet.<sup>258</sup> For Dionysius, the Christian life is not mere epistemological progress from the sensible to the intelligible, but through an ever deeper “tasting” of God, whose sweetness is symbolized in the aroma of the “most theurgical μύρον.”<sup>259</sup>

### I.4.3.3 The Consecration of Μύρον

The rite of the consecration of μύρον is described as equal (ὁμοταγή) in the perfective rank with the Eucharist<sup>260</sup> and stands as the literary summit and climax of the whole *EH*, the central chapter, fourth of seven, and the last of the three τελεταῖ.<sup>261</sup> It is not last because it adds to something lacking in the Eucharist.<sup>262</sup> Rather, the rite of the consecration of μύρον sits in the central of the *EH* because the “most-theurgic” μύρον, which consecrates the baptismal water and the altar, foundational elements of the other two τελεταῖ,<sup>263</sup> expresses Christ’s self-consecratory and consecrating theurgy that

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<sup>258</sup> Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 254–57.

<sup>259</sup> *EH*.2.7 396D (73.5).

<sup>260</sup> As the effective sign of Jesus’ activity in the rites of the Church, according to which it is called “most theurgic”, the consecration of μύρον does not compete with the Eucharist. It is a testament to the Eucharist’s perfective power insofar as the altar and the symbolic elements offered thereupon share in Christ’s single self-oblation into which humanity and the angels are initiated. See Stock, *Theurgisches Denken*, 165.

<sup>261</sup> *EH* IV.1 472D (95.3); *EH* IV.3.3 476C (97.19–23).

<sup>262</sup> Note, the only applications of μύρον to persons occur in Baptism and the clerical consecrations, both of which look the Eucharist, but from opposite directions, the Baptizand is prepared to receive alone and the other, the hierarch, priest, or deacon celebrates and ministers in the Eucharist.

<sup>263</sup> The symbolism of μύρον as representing Jesus’ saving self-consecration and entry into the world (visible and invisible) is expressed precisely in regard to Baptism and Eucharist. Unless the latter have a genuine *per se* efficacy, the μύρον’s symbolism is at cross-purposes with itself.

grounds the whole hierarchical system.<sup>264</sup> For this reason, Dionysius goes so far to call it “God’s τελετή.”<sup>265</sup> Furthermore, the μύρον itself expresses what it accomplishes, the assimilative perfection of creatures:

Let us then affirm that the composition of the μύρον is a composition of sweet-smelling materials, which has in itself abundantly fragrant qualities, of which (composition) those who partake become perfumed in proportion to the degree to which they partake of its sweet savor.<sup>266</sup>

Those two referents, Jesus’ theurgy and assimilation, are combined by Dionysius into a single vision; the μύρον itself “depicts to us Jesus Himself” because “the most supremely Divine Jesus is superessentially of good savor, filling the contemplative part of ourselves by bequests of Divine sweetness for contemplation.”<sup>267</sup>

#### 1.4.3.3.1 Ritual Symbols and Themes

The symbols and themes taken up by *EH IV*’s θεωρία-section can be divided into three groups: 1) the sweetness of God in noetic reception and assimilation; 2) the intimacy of the Seraphim with Jesus; 3) the consecratory effect of Jesus’ self-offering.

<sup>264</sup> *EH IV*.3.10 484A (100.5); *EH IV*.3.10 484B (100.9–12); *EH IV*.3.11–12 484C (100.16–101.2).

<sup>265</sup> *EH IV*.3.12 485A (103.15).

<sup>266</sup> *EH IV*.3.4 477C (98.23–26): “Λέγωμεν τοίνυν, ὡς ἡ τοῦ μύρου σύνθεσις συναγωγή τις ἐστὶν εὐπνῶν ὑλῶν ἐν ἐαυτῇ πλουσίως ἔχουσα ποιότητος εὐόσμους, ἧς οἱ μετασχόντες εὐωδιάζονται κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τοῦ ποσοῦ τῆς ἐγγενομένης αὐτοῖς τοῦ εὐώδους μεθέξεως.”

<sup>267</sup> *EH IV*.3.4 480A (99.9–10): “Οὐκοῦν ἡ τοῦ μύρου συμβολικὴ σύνθεσις ὡς ἐν μορφώσει τῶν ἀμορφῶτων αὐτὸν ἡμῖν ὑπογράφει τὸν Ἰησοῦν πηγαῖον ὄντα τῶν θείων εὐωδῶν ἀντιλήψεων ὄλβον ἀναλογίαις θεαρχικαῖς εἰς τὰ θεοειδέστατα τῶν νοερῶν ἀναδιδόντα τοὺς θειοτάτους ἀτμούς, ἐφ’ οἷς οἱ νόες εὐπαθῶς ἡδόμενοι καὶ τῶν ἱερῶν ἀντιλήψεων ἀποπληρούμενοι τροφῇ νοητῇ χρῶνται τῇ πρὸς τὸ νοερὸν αὐτῶν εἰσδύσει τῶν κατὰ θεῖαν μέθεξιν εὐωδῶν διαδοσεων.”; *EH IV*.3.4 477C (98.26–99.1): “Πεπείσμεθα δὲ εἶναι τὸν θεαρχικώτατον Ἰησοῦν ὑπερουσίως εὐώδη νοηταῖς διαδόσει τὸ νοερὸν ἡμῶν ἀποπληροῦντα θείας ἡδονῆς.” The manner in which the Chrism represents Christ has led Stock to regard the μύρον like the Eucharistic symbols, that is, image and means of Christ’s presence and action in cult, and as a precedent she cites Gregory of Nyssa’s interpretation of the Chrism in his commentary on the Song of Songs, see Stock, *Theurgisches Denken*, 73.

*EH* VI's θεωρία-section spends little time on the actions of the rite as a whole, since many are identical to the Eucharist.<sup>268</sup> Dionysius gives a brief interpretation of those similar rituals but shifts their focus of their meaning towards assimilation rather than ἔνωσις.<sup>269</sup> Dionysius' true focus is the μύρον set upon the altar, hidden from the sight of the laity by a twelve-winged veil. In this way, the μύρον rite completes the literary and liturgical approach to the altar. Ultimately, Dionysius' spatial focus contextualizes the interpretation of the μύρον rite as a meditation upon the altar's significance as the place in which the divine worship of earth and heaven meet in Christ's eternal self-offering.<sup>270</sup>

*EH* IV.3 favors the language of sweetness or aroma (ἐὼσμη) for describing the experience of God rather than the reception of light. The sweet fragrance of incense illustrates assimilation to God through the experience of God. Such imagery is approached in two ways. First, the ethically-oriented introductory anagogy of *EH* VI.3.1 observes that the aroma of μύρον represents two theomimetic aspects of divinized life: sweetness and invisibility. Just as the divine comeliness is sweet (ἐνώδης) beyond mind and hidden, "sweet assimilations to God" are hidden from vain appearance and known only to the intelligent (νοεοῖ), those who know the spiritual realities (νοητά).<sup>271</sup> Since the true image is conformed to its archetype, only the humble Christian lives inwardly to

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<sup>268</sup> *EH* IV.2 473A (95.9–12). The initial incense procession, reading and psalms, the dismissal of those undergoing purification are all retained from the Eucharist.

<sup>269</sup> *EH* IV.3.3–4 476D–447C (97.19–98.18). In *EH* IV.3 the incense procession is an image of participation in divine things while the psalms and scripture readings form their hearers into adopted sons of God.

<sup>270</sup> Cf. Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 34–40, 300–302. Golitzin's argues in *Mystagogy* that *EH* should be the lens to read *MT*, so that *MT*'s profoundly apophatic vision is not an ultimate renunciation of the hierarchical system, but is rather a vision of the reality of God accessed through the altar. Timothy Knepper argues likewise against a radically apophatic reading of the *CD* in his *Negating Negation*. A short summary of the opposite position can be found in Newheiser, "Ambivalence in Dionysius the Areopagite."

<sup>271</sup> *EH* IV.3.1 473B (95.23–96.5).



the hidden God.<sup>272</sup> This, reflection on the manner of living the Christian life in hidden sweetness passes on to a deeper vision of heavenly realities first through contemplating the sweetness the angels receive from Jesus, and then arises to a vision of Jesus himself.

The second approach begins in *EH* IV.3.2 when Dionysius turns to the deeper understanding of the material symbolism accessible only immediately to the clergy who stand around the hierarch during the consecration (τελεσιουργία) of the μύρον on the altar.<sup>273</sup> On the one hand, they are illuminated immediately and filled with sweetness by the “ray of the all holy things,” but on the other hand, they conceal this illumination from the multitude with the winged veils, who must approach the μύρον through enigmas as if through the veil of the Temple.<sup>274</sup> What do those peering through the veils see?

Jesus’ self-distribution, not in the more typical image of light, but sweetness:

Wherefore, the symbolical composition of the Μύρον, as expressing in form things that are formless, depicts to us Jesus Himself, as a well-spring of the wealth of the Divine sweet receptions, distributing, in degrees supremely Divine, for the most Godlike of the contemplators, the most Divine perfumes; upon which the Minds, joyfully refreshed, and filled with the holy receptions, indulge in a feast of spiritual contemplation, by the entrance of the sweet bequests into their contemplative part, as befits a Divine participation.<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>272</sup> *EH* IV.3.1 473B (95.20–23); *EH* IV.3.1 473D–476A (96.16–20). It is noteworthy that while in *EH* IV.3.1ff language based on νοῦς is used, γνώσις and ἐπιστήμη are hardly used. It may be a way of expressing that the experience of the divine “comeliness beyond mind” exceeds any category knowledge and is better associated with the immediacy ἔνωσις and perfect assimilation to God.

<sup>273</sup> *EH* IV.3.2 476B (97.3–9).

<sup>274</sup> *EH* IV.3.2 476B–C (97.12–18). The language used herein moves back and forth though vision (θεω-) and veiling (περικαλύπτω, παραπετάσματα), recalling the temple imagery of the veils that appears elsewhere in the *CH* and *EH*.

<sup>275</sup> *EH* IV.3.4 480A (99.8–14). “Οὐκοῦν ἡ τοῦ μύρου συμβολικὴ σύνθεσις ὡς ἐν μορφώσει τῶν ἀμορφώτων αὐτὸν ἡμῖν ὑπογράφει τὸν Ἰησοῦν πηγαῖον ὄντα τῶν θείων εὐωδῶν ἀντιλήψεων ὄλβον ἀναλογίας θεαρχικαῖς εἰς τὰ θεοειδέστατα τῶν νοερῶν ἀναδιδόντα τοὺς θειοτάτους ἀτμούς, ἐφ’ οἷς οἱ νόες εὐπαθῶς ἡδόμενοι καὶ τῶν ἱερῶν ἀντιλήψεων ἀποπληρούμενοι τροφῇ νοητῇ χρῶνται τῇ πρὸς τὸ νοερὸν αὐτῶν εἰσόδῳ τῶν κατὰ θεῖαν μέθεξιν εὐωδῶν διαδόσεων.”

The aesthetic quality of the *μύρον* expresses Jesus' invisible activity in the *τελετή*, whereby he is experienced as delight and savor, fulfilling *EH* III.3.15's exhortation to "taste and see." "Tasting" the divine sweetness sensibly arrives at a depiction of Jesus' distributing an even greater sweetness through noetic food (*τροφὴ νοητῇ*) in which intellectual creatures (*νόες*) indulge (*ἡδόμενοι*).

The vision of those clerics around the *μύρον* does not perceive Jesus alone but also the angels who surround him, in accordance with principle that our priesthood shares in their heavenly priesthood:

Now it is evident, as I think, that the distribution of the fontal perfume to the Beings above ourselves, who are more Divine, is, as it were, nearer, and manifests and distributes itself more to the transparent and wholesome mental condition of their receptive faculty, overflowing ungrudgingly and entering in many fashions; [...].<sup>276</sup>

In particular, the twelve wings of the veil over the *μύρον* represent the Seraphim who are "established and fixed around Jesus, casting [themselves] upon the most blessed contemplations of Him, as far as permissible, and filled reverently with the contemplated truth distributed in most pure receptions."<sup>277</sup> Their reception of Jesus bursts into worship as they cry out unceasingly in the "hymn of praise." Dionysius interprets this meaning of this angelic hymn as "[...] their perpetual and persistent science and conception of things Divine, with full concord and thanksgiving", which describes the noetic worship of the heavenly liturgy.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> *EH* IV.3.5 480B (99.15–19): "Ἐστι δὲ ὡς οἶμαι δηλον, ὅτι ταῖς ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς οὐσίαις ὡς θειοτέρως ἢ τῆς πηγαιᾶς εὐωδίας ἀνάδοσις ἐγγυτέρω πῶς ἐστιν καὶ μᾶλλον ἑαυτὴν ἐκφαίνει καὶ διαδίδωσιν, εἰς τὸ διειδιστατον αὐτῶν καὶ εὐεκτικὸν τῆς κατὰ νοῦν ἀντιληπτικῆς δυνάμεως ἀφθόνως ὑπερβλύζουσα καὶ πολυπλασίως εἰσδυομένη, [...]."

<sup>277</sup> *EH* IV.3.5 480B-C (99.21–100.1).

<sup>278</sup> *EH* IV.3.5 480C (100.1–5).

These Seraphim are essential to Dionysius' vision of Jesus' sweet self-distribution in the *μύρον*. He devotes several sections to description of the attributes of the Seraphim as a way of interpreting the presence of the clergy around the *μύρον* with the hierarch, whom he identifies as a type of the highest *διακόσμησις* of the angels.<sup>279</sup> *EH* IV.3.6-9 examine the symbolism of their many faces, the paired arrangement of the six wings,<sup>280</sup> and their crying to each other as symbols of their vision of divine illuminations, their power to be elevated or lead others to God, and their sharing of their visions, respectively.<sup>281</sup> The most important attribute of the Seraphim is their eponymous heating or kindling, with Dionysius associates with their calling God, "the being sweet beyond mind", into manifestation, and that God loves (*φιλέω*) to be so called.<sup>282</sup> Interpreted as such Seraphim's "burning" corresponds to the clerics' hierurgical role.

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<sup>279</sup> *EH* IV.3.6 480D (100.9–12). Dionysius does not clarify whether the Seraphim alone are meant here by "highest angels", or all the angels of the first triad.

<sup>280</sup> *EH* IV.3.7 481A (100.16–17). Dionysius explicitly denies any numerological significance to their wings.

<sup>281</sup> *EH* IV.3.7–9 481A–C (100.13–101.10).

<sup>282</sup> *EH* IV.3.10 481D (101.15–18). "Ἡ γὰρ ὑπὲρ νοῦν εὐώδης οὐσία πρὸς τῶν διαπύρων καὶ καθαρωτάτων νοῶν εἰς ἔκφανσιν ἀνακινεῖσθαι φιλεῖ καὶ τὰς θειοτάτας αὐτῆς ἐπιπνοίας ἐν πανολβίαις διαδόσεσι δωρεῖται τοῖς οὕτως αὐτὴν ὑπερκοσμίως ἐκκαλουμένοις." It is unclear, from this sentence alone, what the burning of the Seraphim has to do either with the symbolism of the *μύρον* rite, or more importantly, with the calling of God to manifestation. Fire, of course, has long been associated with sacrifice, in both Pagan and Jewish sacrifice. In terms of Dionysius' Neoplatonic provenance, Iamblichus' account of theurgical sacrifice in *De Myst.* V connects fire and theurgy, which may offer interpretive clues. Indeed, an important similarity between Dionysius and Iamblichus is that both use of the verb *φιλέω* in describing theurgical or sacramental acts. In *De Myst.* V.9.209, 9–11, Iamblichus describes the basis of sacrifice not as any kind of mundane transaction or cosmic sympathy, but the gods' friendship (*φιλία*) for humanity, whereby they condescend to elevate the physical fires of sacrificial hierurgy as a means to elevate the oblation and offeror to the divine fire. The image of burning of the Seraphim around the altar under the symbol of the cloth and the *μύρον* comports with the sacrificial image of fire in Iamblichean theurgy, since sacrificial context is also employed in *EH* IV.3.12's description of the holy minds as a holocaust on Jesus the altar raised into intimacy with God. This not to say that Iamblichus lies directly behind these words, but against the backdrop of the medieval association of Seraphic fire and love, the theurgical Neoplatonic tradition provides a reminder that an altogether different sets of symbolic tapestries surrounded the *CD* in its late ancient context.

In *EH* IV.4.10, Dionysius' narrative ascends by way of the Seraphim to the climax of the chapter, the discussion Christ's being sanctified, consecrated, or even sacrificed (ἀγιάζεσθαι).<sup>283</sup> Because the Seraphim call God to manifestation they see "the most supremely Divine Jesus, when He descended for the purpose of being sanctified," who "sanctifies himself for our sake" and is the "sanctified one sanctifying."<sup>284</sup> Dionysius' identification of Christ as sanctified, with its priestly and sacrificial overtones, references the high priestly prayer of John 17: "And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be consecrated in truth." (John 17:19) In that Gospel, this prayer is pointed towards Jesus' 'glorification', his cross and resurrection, and Dionysius follows the same trajectory. The Seraphim, we are told, recognize the incarnate Jesus

[...] lowering Himself in our belongings, through Divine and inexpressible goodness; and when viewing Him sanctified, in a manner befitting man, by the Father and Himself and the Holy Spirit, recognized its own supreme Head as being essentially unchanged, in whatever He may do as supreme God.<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> In the LXX and NT, ἀγιάζω, denotes consecration or setting something apart for God. The verb is frequently connected to worship and priesthood. Exodus 29 in the LXX describes the consecration (ἀγιάζειν) of the Aaronic priesthood and the altar of the temple as ordered towards the offering of a perpetual sacrifice of lambs and makes sacrifice and anointing the precise means of their consecration. Ex. 29, in fact, makes it clear that the priests (Ex. 29:1), the altar (Ex. 29:36), and whatever is sacrificed upon the altar (29:37) are consecrated (ἀγιάζεσθαι). This aligns with the description of Jesus' self-consecration in *EH* IV.3.10–12 in which Jesus is conceived of explicitly as the altar, and the means by which everything as perfected and consecrated (for which Heil and Ritter's critical edition of the *EH* posits Ex. 29:37 as the background, see p. 103). Furthermore, Jesus is also identified with priesthood insofar as he 1) is the one who consecrates himself; 2) is the source of the priesthood (*EH* I.1 372B [64.5–7]); and 3) is identified as the exemplar of every hierarch (*EH* V.1.5 595B [107.16–17]). Finally, insofar as he consecrates himself "for our sake" (*EH* IV.3.12 485A [103.9]; cf. John 17:19), Jesus is priest, altar, and the offering, the principal offering in which all intelligent creatures may become offerings (*EH* IV.3.12 484D [103.6]).

<sup>284</sup> *EH* IV.3.10 484A (100.3–7). "Καὶ προσέτι τὸ θεϊότερον, ὅτι τῷ θείῳ μύρῳ χρῆται πρὸς παντὸς ἱεροῦ τελεσιουργίαν ἐναργῶς ὑποδεικνύσα κατὰ τὸ λόγιον ἀγιάζοντα τὸν ἀγιαζόμενον ὡς αἰεὶ ταύτῳ ὄντα ἑαυτῷ κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν θεαρχικὴν ἀγαθουργίαν."

<sup>285</sup> *EH* IV.3.10 484A (101.19–102.1). "Οὐκοῦν ἡ θειοτάτη τῶν ὑπερουρανίων οὐσιῶν τάξις οὐκ ἠγνόηκε τὸν θεαρχικώτατον Ἰησοῦν εἰς τὸ ἀγιάζεσθαι κατεληλυθότα, νοεῖ δὲ αὐτὸν ἱερῶς ἐν τοῖς καθ' ἡμᾶς ἑαυτὸν ὑφέντα διὰ θείαν καὶ ἄρρητον ἀγαθότητα, καὶ πρὸς τοῦ πατρὸς ἑαυτοῦ τε καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ἀνθρωποπρεπῶς ἀγιαζόμενον ὁρῶσα τὴν οἰκείαν οἶδεν ἀρχὴν, ἐν οἷς ἂν θεαρχικῶς δρᾷ, τὸ κατ' οὐσίαν ἀναλλοίωτον ἔχουσαν."

This describes the angelic sight of the theurgies of his earthly life. These theurgies do not, however, exhaust the seraphic recognition of Jesus; their vision extends to Jesus operating in the sacraments:

Hence the tradition of the sacred symbols places the Seraphim near the Divine μύρον, when it is being consecrated, recognizing and describing the Christ as unchanged, in our complete manhood in very truth. And what is still more divine is, that it uses the Divine Μύρον for the consecration of everything sacred, distinctly shewing, according to the [scripture], the Sanctified Sanctifying, as always being the same with Himself throughout the whole [thearchic beneficence (ἀγαθουργία)].<sup>286</sup>

Jesus is recognized as active in his theurgies in the μύρον and thus, by implication, in (almost) every other rite. Just as the Eucharistic oblation brings Jesus' theurgies into sight (ὕπ' ὀψίν) in the most divine symbols, the cruciform injections of μύρον into the baptismal water brings to sight (ὕπ' ὀψίν):

the Lord Jesus descending even to death itself through the cross, for our Birth in God, benevolently drawing up, from the old gulping of the destructive death, by the same Divine and resistless descent, those, who, according to the mysterious saying, "are baptized into His death," and renewing them to a godly and eternal existence.<sup>287</sup>

<sup>286</sup> *EH* IV.3.10 480A (102.1–7). "Ὅθεν ἡ τῶν ἱερῶν συμβόλων παράδοσις ἀγιαζομένων τῷ θείῳ μύρῳ τοὺς Σεραφίμ περίστησιν ἀπαράλλακτον εἰδυῖα καὶ διαγράφουσα τὸν Χριστὸν ἐν τῇ καθ' ἡμᾶς ὀλικῇ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν ἐνανθρωπήσει. Καὶ προσέτι τὸ θεϊότερον, ὅτι τῷ θείῳ μύρῳ χρῆται πρὸς παντὸς ἱεροῦ τελεσιουργίαν ἐναργῶς ὑποδεικνύσα κατὰ τὸ λόγιον ἀγιάζοντα τὸν ἀγιαζόμενον ὡς αἰεὶ ταύτῳ ὄντα ἑαυτῷ κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν θεαρχικὴν ἀγαθουργίαν." The term "ἀγαθουργία" is also used with reference to Christ's saving passion at *CH* IV.4 181D (24.1).

<sup>287</sup> *EH* IV.3.10 484B (102.8–16). "Ὅθεν ὡς οἶμαι καὶ τῷ καθαρτικῷ βαπτιστηρίῳ τὸ μύρον ἐν σταυροειδέσι βολαῖς ἐπιχέων ὁ ἱεράρχης ὑπ' ὅψιν ἄγει τοῖς θεωρητικοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἄχρις καὶ αὐτοῦ <τοῦ> θανάτου διὰ σταυροῦ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ὑπὲρ τῆς ἡμῶν θγενεσίας καταδυόμενον αὐτῇ τῇ θείᾳ καὶ ἀκρατήτῳ καθόδῳ τοὺς εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὸ κρύφιον λόγιον βαπτίζομένους ἐκ τῆς τοῦ φθοροποιοῦ θανάτου παλαιᾶς καταπόσεως ἀγαθοπρεπῶς ἀνασπῶντα καὶ ἀνακαινίζοντα πρὸς ἔνθεον καὶ αἰώνιον ὕπαρξιν."

By bringing Christ's saving cross into focus, Dionysius openly locates Jesus' priestly, sacrificial death within his heavenly, descending self-consecration, and sets the stage to conclude his meditation on Christ's eternal priesthood by identifying Christ as the archetypal altar (θυσιατέριον) upon which he makes of men and angels a perfect oblation.<sup>288</sup>

The consecration of the altar by the μύρον ritually identifies the self-consecration of Jesus the true altar as the empowerment of the liturgical altar to fulfill its consecratory function. The consecration of the altar demonstrates that Jesus' "supercelestial and superessential [theurgy] is [the] source and essence, and perfecting power, of [every theurgic consecration]." <sup>289</sup> the Eucharist and μύρον perfected (τελέσθαι) and consecrated (ἀγιάζεσθαι) on the altar extend Christ's sanctifying theurgy hierurgically to the members of the Church:

[...] the most holy Jesus sanctifies Himself on our behalf, and fills us full of every sanctification, since the things consecrated upon [the altar] pass fraternally afterwards in their beneficent effects to us, as children of God.<sup>290</sup>

Those who partake of the τελεταῖ from the altar, and those angels who receive Jesus noetically, are themselves "sanctified and mystically offered as a whole burnt-offering" upon Jesus the altar. He is the locus of true sacrificial worship, literally, the θυσιατέριον

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<sup>288</sup> The sacrificial dimension of *EH IV* comports with and may even be corroborated by Dionysius' attention to the aroma of the μύρον in light of Ephesians 5:2, "καὶ περιπατεῖτε ἐν ἀγάπῃ, καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ἡγάπησεν ἡμᾶς καὶ παρέδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν προσφορὰν καὶ θυσίαν τῷ θεῷ εἰς ὁσμὴν εὐωδίας." *Ep.* VIII.1 1088B (175.3–4) applies the language of John 10's good shepherd pericope to Jesus who lays down his soul for those who wander (John 10:11, 15), pointing to the sacrifice of the cross in an oblique manner.

<sup>289</sup> *EH I.1* 372A (63.12–64.1).

<sup>290</sup> *EH IV.3.12* 485A (103.9–12). Ἀγιάζει γὰρ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἑαυτὸν ὁ παναγιώτατος Ἰησοῦς καὶ πάσης ἡμᾶς ἀγιασθείας ἀποπληροῖ τῶν ἐπ' αὐτῷ τελουμένων οἰκονομικῶς εἰς ἡμᾶς ὡς θεογεννήτους λοιπὸν ἀγαθουργικῶς διαβαινόντων.

and the priest of “God’s τελετή”, his own heavenly offering through which humans and angels have access to God the Father. The final concern of *EH* IV.3.12 is a circumlocutive description of the ‘Alleluia’ that praises the divine works and cements the latreutic character of Dionysius’ vision of the sacramental system. Like John’s gospel, Dionysius extolls a Christ who in gloriously sanctifying himself not only gathers his followers but in doing so glorifies the Father.

*EH* IV’s vision of the heavenly worship of Christ and the angels recapitulates the axiom of the *CH* and *EH* that the symbols of the priestly tradition are veils of the heavenly reality.<sup>291</sup> *EH* IV is a bookend to *CH* I.3’s coordination of heavenly and earthly worship, and a concrete depiction of *CH* III.2-3’s attribution of divine activities to the hierarchies. *EH* IV provides a lens see the heavenly hierarchies described in the *CH* as invisibly interior to the Church’s worship. Furthermore, what it depicts of Jesus’ activity as the source of the efficacy of humans and angelic hierurgies underwrites the association of the hierarch as standing in Jesus’ place.<sup>292</sup>

Finally, *EH* IV.3 presents a constellation of themes relevant for the study of St. Bonaventure’s reception of hierarchy. It includes three elements that would later appear in St. Francis’ vision on Mt. Laverna: the Seraphim in their intimacy with Christ, Jesus’ death on the cross in his sanctifying of himself, and the offering of humans and angels as

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<sup>291</sup> Cf. (*CH* I.2 121B-C (8.10–13); *EH* IV.3.2 476B (97.4–8)). Dionysius describes the concealment-revelation of spiritual realities in symbols with the terminology reminiscent of the veils of the temple. The most frequent is ‘ποικιλία’, which in scripture refers to the embroidered decoration on the veils of tabernacle (at least on the outer veils), and less frequent are the παραπετάσματα, (LXX Ex. 26:37; Ex. 38:18) the veils themselves, and terms indicating veiling, περικαλύπτω and related terms, or unveiling, αποκαλύπτω and related terms, (see LXX Ex. 26:31; Ex. 26:36; Ex. 27:16; Ex. 35:35; Ex. 36:35). His choice of language performs the double duty of describing the symbols’ role in being images of what they clothe, in reference to the varied embroidery of the temple veils, and also situates his works in proximity to the tradition of temple-centric writings and theological reflections, see Golitzin, *Mystagogy*, 54.

<sup>292</sup> Cf. *EH* V.1.6. *CH* XIII also indicates the hierarchical status of the Seraphim, and by extension, the hierarch-like figures in among the angelic hierarchies

a living holocaust. The similarities between *EH* IV.3 and St. Francis' vision may be only remarkable coincidence (or maybe not!) but that these images should be combined to produce an account St. Francis as the hierarchical man by Bonaventure is likely not.

### **I.5 Concluding Summary**

As an action, hierarchy mediates between creatures and God and individuals and their communities. Christ proceeds to angels and humans as the light of the Father, but they must consciously, voluntarily receive him. The reception of Christ inwardly by an individual human or angel depends upon the proper order of the community but this order also depends upon holiness of its members. Hierarchy, thus, stands at the nexus point between vertical and horizontal. Christ's descent to creatures and their subsequent elevation is reproduced in all interactions between creatures in the hierarchy, as the higher raises the lower, the exterior ritual of a community initiates the individual inwardly (as in baptism), and the inward deformity of the individual facilitates the holiness of an entire community (as in the role of the hierarch) through the powers illumination, that is, purification, enlightenment, and perfection. Hierarchy exists only in the charged relationship between procession and elevating reversion, approach and response, and its purpose is entirely this, the meeting between the higher and lower, not just at the point of first contact, i.e. the first triad of angels, but throughout all the range of the intelligent creatures and within all of their interactions with each other. Through right order and ordered rite, sensible and intelligible, humans and angels are raised to union, assimilation, and imitation of God, into most hidden secrets and unto the widest shining of the divine splendour.



## II. HIERARCHY IN THE CORPUS DIONYSIACUM PARISIENSE

### II.1 Introduction: Text Availability

Having established a baseline conception of Dionysian hierarchy in the previous chapter, the present chapter will present the status of that doctrine and its constitutive elements as it was available to Bonaventure in his mid-thirteenth century milieu. H. F. Dondaine's yet-unsurpassed examination of the *Corpus Dionysiacum's* (CD) state in thirteenth century Paris, *Le corpus dionysien de l'université de Paris au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* will be used as a foundation. I will not plot a direct influence of the various receptions of the CD on Bonaventure's understanding of hierarchy. Rather, I intend to distinguish the traditions and tropes of interpreting Dionysius available to a thirteenth century reader in order to compare them to and clarify the Seraphic Doctor's understanding of hierarchy as presented in the later chapters. For outlining the distinct interpretive traditions and tropes offers the categorical resources to distill an undifferentiated Dionysian current in Bonaventure's corpus to into its component trajectories and facilitates assessing the precise ways in which Bonaventure's Dionysianism differs from his contemporaries.

The various receptions of Dionysius in the middle ages and especially in the thirteenth century can be charted by two sets of opposed trends. Intellective versus affective readings are the better-known dichotomy. The distinction between primarily

political and cultic understandings of hierarchy is less well known but equally important.<sup>1</sup> The first opposition locates divinization effected by hierarchy either primarily in the intellect or in the desire of the will. This distinction reflects the struggle to make sense of the Neoplatonic doctrine of union beyond knowing central to the *CD*. The second opposition distinguishes a concept of hierarchy as a system of governance that facilitates divinization from the concept of hierarchy as the cultic activity that is itself the participation in divine life. To be sure, these two oppositions represent a spectrum rather than strict antinomies and none of the Dionysian interpreters in the thirteenth century completely separate the political from the cultic nor vice versa. It would be nearly impossible to do so in the context of a medieval Church whose *ad intra* clerical law is integrated with its role in temporal politics. Nevertheless, these two sets of trends supply a heuristic that reflects real differences in interpretation.

In order to furnish a critical distinction and discussion of the trends and tropes in the reception of Dionysian thought in the space of a single chapter I have chosen to focus on the contents of the Dionysian corpus as it was available in textbook form in mid-

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<sup>1</sup> See David E. Luscombe, "The Commentary of Hugh of St. Victor on the Celestial Hierarchy," in *Die Dionysius-Rezeption im Mittelalter, Internationales Kolloquium in Sofia vom 8. bis 11. April 1999 unter der Schirmherrschaft der Société Internationale pour l'Étude de la Philosophie Médiévale* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2000), 167–69; Wayne J. Hankey, "Dionysian Hierarchy in Thomas Aquinas: Tradition and Transformation," in *Denys l'Aréopagite et Sa Postérité en Orient et en Occident: Actes du Colloque International, Paris, 21–24 Septembre 1994* (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1997), 428, 437. Luscombe and Hankey both point to a shift that occurs in hierarchy whereby the hierarchy becomes attached to the governance exercised by the hierarchs rather than their role in performing the sacraments, a turn hinging upon the understanding of the papal office's role in the hierarchical scheme. While all hierarchs (i.e. bishops) exercise the same sacramental powers, the pope's superiority is political, even in the strictly sacred sphere. Thus understanding papal power introduces category of differences outside of Dionysius cultic logic and pushes the interpretive center in another direction. Evidence that the political reading of hierarchy prevails in the thirteenth century is found in the use of Dionysius to explain the governing powers of the Church by Henry of Ghent in his *De ecclesiastica potestate* and of the pope by Boniface VIII in *Unam sanctam*, see Edward. P Mahoney, "Pseudo-Dionysius' Conception of Metaphysical Hierarchy and its Influence on on Medieval Philosophy," in *Die Dionysius-Rezeption im Mittelalter, Internationales Kolloquium in Sofia vom 8. bis 11. April 1999 unter der Schirmherrschaft der Société Internationale pour l'Étude de la Philosophie Médiévale* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2000), 462–63, 468.

thirteenth century Paris, namely the *Corpus Dionysiacum Parisiense* (*CDP*), a collection of translations and commentaries and annotations on the *CD*. While the Dionysian renaissance of the twelfth century spurred familiarity with the *CD* and the production works employing it, including the works of the later Victorines, I will leave these works to the side in favor of attending to the contents of the *CDP* for two reasons. First, while we do not have access to Bonaventure's library, Dondaine has shown that the *CDP* was a standard text employed at the University of Paris by the time Bonaventure was publishing his major works, and thus even if he had not set eyes on it personally in precisely the form Dondaine treats, its concepts would have been available—in the water, so to speak. Moreover, the wealth of distinct commentary traditions contained within the *CDP* provides a sufficiently wide scope to take stock of divergent-yet-contemporary receptions of the *CD*.

### II.1.1 The Context and Content of the *Corpus Dionysiacum Parisiense*

Dondaine's reconstruction of the *CDP* that was available in thirteenth century Paris takes the form of a textbook consisting of translation with an apparatus of various commentaries and supplementary translations. For all the variety of its contents, Dondaine's examination of the manuscript evidence of thirteen mss., privileging BnF Lat 17341 as its fullest form has shown a great regularity in the arrangement of its constitutive elements.<sup>2</sup> By the thirteenth century the *CD* in the translation of Eriugena, which developed in two different textual traditions, had acquired a translation of many of the scholia to which Eriugena did not have access in his Greek Text (BnF 437), material

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<sup>2</sup> Dondaine, *Le Corpus Dionysien de l'Université de Paris au XIII. Siècle*, 72–77.

added by later scholiasts, interlinear corrections and clarifications, three commentaries on the *CH*, a new translation (the *Nova translatio*) of the whole *CD* by John the Saracen, and Thomas Gallus' early rephrasing of the *CD*, his *Extractio*.<sup>3</sup> All of these materials were found together in two manuscripts, identically organized into four major component groups: the *Opus maius*, subdivided into *Compellit me* and the *Opus alterum*, the Saracen's *Nova translatio*, and Gallus' *Extractio* of the *CD*. These four component elements are found in different combinations in thirteenth and fourteenth century manuscripts but each of the four retains the integrity of its contents no matter the combination.<sup>4</sup>

Dondaine's reconstruction of the Paris textbook provides a useful, but not exhaustive, summary of the different interpretations of the *CD* that shaped the understanding of hierarchy's taxonomy, purpose, and means of accomplishment in Bonaventure's day. Other major works on the *CD* were available in mid-thirteenth century Paris, including the rest of Gallus' commentaries on the *CD*, which were all completed by 1243. Besides these, works dating from the late eleventh and the twelfth centuries that continued to be read and were at least partially informed by Dionysius: they include the writings of St. Bernard on the angels, Honorius Augustodunensis' adoption of Dionysian thought through Eriugena, the spiritual writings of Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, and Alan of Lille's short treatise on hierarchy. Besides these, uses of Dionysian thought in the commentaries on the *Sentences of Peter Lombard* and other *summae* of

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<sup>3</sup> See L. Michael Harrington, Pseudo-Dionysius, and Johannes Scotus Erigena, *A Thirteenth-Century Textbook of Mystical Theology at the University of Paris: The Mystical Theology of Dionysius the Areopagite in Eriugena's Latin Translation, with the Scholia Translated by Anastasius the Librarian, and Excerpts from Eriugena's Periphyseon*, ed. Anastasius, Dallas Medieval Texts and Translations 4 (Paris ; Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2004), 15–16, 23–25.

<sup>4</sup> Dondaine, *Le Corpus Dionysien de l'Université de Paris au XIII. Siècle*, 69–77.

Albert of the Great and of the community of scholars around Alexander of Hales, contemporary or nearly contemporary with Bonaventure, present definitions and elements of hierarchy which, if drawn outside of their native location in the *CD* or its versions, by their sheer use shed light on its understanding in the schools.

The complete mapping of the trends and tropes in the understanding of hierarchy in the mid-thirteenth century, however, exceeds the scope of a chapter. This chapter will be restricted to the investigation of only a few of the sources in the interest of treating them with the necessary detail to distinguish the differences in their nuanced presentations of hierarchy. I will attend to three sets of texts. First the Eriugenian translation, including their annotations, and Eriugena's commentary on the *CH*. Second Hugh of St. Victor's popular commentary on the *CH*. Third and finally, Thomas Gallus' *Extractio*. This selection is not arbitrary but based upon treating Bonaventure as a *reader* of the *CD*, and not only a utilizer of its ideas. In all mss. of *Compellit me*, Hugh, Eriugena, and the Saracen's commentaries on the *CH* are arranged as continuous commentaries on Eriugena's *versio* of the Areopagite's writings together with Maximus' and Anastasius' scholia. Thus, a reader of the *CH* would be faced with copious commentary dominating each page. The *EH*, *DN*, *MT*, and *Ep. X* in the *Opus alterum*, again from Eriugena's *versio*, came along with a series of scholia from Maximus (or John of Scythopolis), Anastasius the Librarian, Pseudo-Maximus (often Eriugena himself) and a series of interlinear glosses Dondaine termed "E'."<sup>5</sup> Thomas Gallus' *Extractio*, while only contained in two mss. of the *CDP*, presents a summarized reading of John the Saracen's translation with occasional observations and clarification added. Bonaventure

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<sup>5</sup> Dondaine, *Le Corpus Dionysien*, 72.

makes reference to Gallus' writings on the *CD* in his *Hex*, and his use of coordinations between the angelic and ecclesiastical hierarchies and the powers of the soul indicates a familiarity with his works, be it the *Extractio*, the *Explanatio*, on the *Glossa in Angelicam Hierarchiam*.<sup>6</sup> It is not, therefore unreasonable, since the *CDP* is treated as present in Bonaventure's scholarly world, to suspect that the *Extractio* provided elements of Bonaventure's hierarchical thought.

## II.2 The Eriugenian Conception of Hierarchy from the *Opus maius*

The contents of the *Opus maius*, apart from the substantial commentaries of Hugh of St. Victor and John the Saracen, present a body of text not entirely composed by Eriugena, but formed around Eriugena's translation or *versio* of the *CD*, his commentary on the *CH* (*Exp in Hier*), and even excerpts his other writings (mainly the *Periphyseon*) later appended as scholia. I shall call this collection of Eriugenian material in the *Opus maius* "*E*". The understanding of Dionysian hierarchy in *E* remains, on the whole, very close to Dionysius' own vision of hierarchy as outlined in the previous chapter. *E* retains and explicitly affirms the four-fold distinction of hierarchies and their total integration into a single hierarchical system of mediation. *E* also maintains a clear presentation and explanation of the goal of hierarchy as deification, understood to be the unification and assimilation to God through the reception and cooperative distribution of Jesus Christ as the ray of the Father. Finally, it is evident throughout *E* that hierarchy is conceived as a thoroughly cultic system in which deification is the worshipful sacrifice of those (in the

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<sup>6</sup> *Hex* XX.24.

objective and subjective genitive senses) who receive Christ through his condescension to humans and angels in the manner accommodated to the limitation of created natures.

### II.2.1 Taxonomy

Three points on the interpretation of the taxonomy of hierarchy in Eriugena's understanding, or rather, in *E* with all its minute additions, deserve special attention. First, Eriugena's novel identification of the Trinity as a hierarchy. Second, Eriugena's faithfulness to the Dionysian system of mediation through the four hierarchies and how certain peculiarities of *E*'s presentation of hierarchy's taxonomy do not disturb Dionysius' original logic. Third, that *E* consistently shows a parallel interest in the Dionysius system of mediation of the divine light with an "Augustinian" confidence in the immediacy of the vision of God for humans and angels.

Maurice de Gandillac regarded Eriugena's calling the Trinity a hierarchy a "*très audacieuse formule*," and in comparison to the role of the Trinity in the *CD*, his assessment is not wrong.<sup>7</sup> The terminology of the *CD* makes ample use of parallel terms based on the root stems of θεω- and ἱερ-, the former, such as θεαρχία, denoting the realm of the divine and the latter the realm of the temple and priestly (ἱερός, ἱερεύς and its relatives) participation in the divine. As noted in the previous chapter, the realms denoted by the two roots are not hermetically sealed. For example, hierurgies are called theurgic and Jesus, the Son of God himself, is the source of priesthood, while the deeds performed

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<sup>7</sup> Maurice de Gandillac, "Ange et Hommes dans le Commentaire de Jean Scot sur la «Hierarchie Céleste»,» in *Jean Scot Érigène et l'histoire de la Philosophie: Laon, 7-12 Juillet 1975*, Colloques Internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, no. 561 (Paris: Éditions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1977), 395.

in the rites (ἱέρα) are vehicle for the thearchic rays.<sup>8</sup> Nonetheless, Dionysius never breaches the clear distinction between the θεαρχία, the divinity, and ἱεραρχία, the cultic participation of all intelligent creatures in the divine.<sup>9</sup> Hence Eriugena's calling the Trinity the "first and highest hierarchy" is a striking departure from Dionysius' language and, moreover, the Areopagite's precise understanding of what a hierarchy is.<sup>10</sup> Eriugena does, however, not call the Trinity a hierarchy as a translation of θεαρχία but glosses θεαρχία as *summa deitas* or *divinitas plus quam essentia*.<sup>11</sup> Rather, his identification of the Trinity as a hierarchy serves to explain another term attributed to the Trinity by Dionysius, τελεταρχία:

Thus, the holy Trinity is our ΘΕΩΣΙΣ, that is, our deification; for it deifies our nature by leading it into the heights of the angelic nature through sensible symbols, and deifying [that nature] in those who pass over into God himself beyond all things. [The Trinity] is our ΤΕΛΕΤΑΡΧΙΑ, that is, the most perfect source of our purgation and sanctification. It is the first and highest hierarchy. For there is no order in heaven or earth, that is, in that public city constituted for the worship of the one true God from out of rational and intelligible [natures], that is, from that human and angelic natures, whose *ratio* would not precede in the [the Trinity], proceed downward from [the Trinity] above, nor be recalled from below into the heights.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See Stock, *Theurgisches Denken*, 160–165.

<sup>9</sup> Jesus, however, as a man does subordinate himself to the angelic hierarchies in his earthly life (*CH* IV.4 181C [10–14]) and having entered the world as the light of the Father is the source, essence, and most thearchic power of every hierarchy (*EH* I.1 372A [63.12–64.1]; cf. *CH* I.1 121A [7.9–11]).

<sup>10</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 19.644–45.

<sup>11</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* II, 31.428, 435; VII, 100.344–45; VIII, 116.49–53. *Thearchia*, the Latin transliteration, appears once in the plural referring to the angelic hierarchies, whose *ornatus* (in the more general sense of διακόσμησις) our hierarchy imitates, see VIII, 133.544–547. Other references fall within the *deficit*, a section of the *Exp in Hier* missing from the *CDP* between III.58.83–VII.97.247: III. 65.378–85 and IV, 67.50, 56.

<sup>12</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 18.639–19.650: "Ipsa igitur sancta Trinitas nostra ΘΕΩΣΙΣ est, hoc est deificatio; deificat enim nostram naturam, reducendo eam per sensibilia symbola in altitudinem angelice nature, et deificans eam in his qui ultra omnia in ipsum Deum transeunt. Ipsa est nostra ΤΕΛΕΤΑΡΧΙΑ, hoc est perfectissime nostre purgationis et sanctificationis exordium. Ipsa est prima et summa ierarchia. Nullus enim in celo uel in terra, hoc est in illa publica ciuitate, que, sub cultu unius ueri Dei, ex rationabili et intelligibili, hoc est ex humana et angelica constituitur natura, ordo est, cuius ratio non precedat in ipsa et ab ipsa non procedat a summo usque deorsum, uel in ipsam non reuocetur a deorsum usque ad sursum."



This excerpt comes from his commentary in *Exp in Hier* on *CH* I.3, one of the cultic framing pieces of the entire *CD*, and in particular, the larger explanation of how God, as *τελεταρχίς* (an adjective), is the source of the divinizing rites whereby humanity and the angels are joined to each other and God and so deified.<sup>13</sup> Eriugena defines the Trinity as a hierarchy because it possesses *in itself* the *ordo* that when donated to the humans and angels makes them worshippers of the one true God and returns them to unity. The Trinity is not included within the ranks of creatures—Eriugena’s appreciation of divine transcendence would abhor such a claim—but it is understood as prepossessing the activity that makes hierarchies what they are. Thus the *CD*’s sense of hierarchy as primarily an activity belonging to persons remains uncompromised in *Exp in Hier*, but hierarchy nonetheless undergoes a development. The Trinity is, for Eriugena, the effective exemplar of the hierarchies of creatures. The conception of hierarchies as cooperations in activities proper to the *θεαρχία* is genuinely Dionysian. Eriugena’s novel treatment of that concept, however, makes a precise determination of the character of created participation in divine activities that diverges from the *CD*. Whereas Dionysius locates *θεομίμησις* in participating the *ad extra* procession of the divine light, Christ himself, into the world and in the return to the Father—a function of the whole Trinity<sup>14</sup>—Eriugena locates the *ordo* that defines hierarchy in the Trinity *ad intra* prior (“*ordo precedat in ipsa*”) to its procession.<sup>15</sup> Thus Eriugena laid the groundwork for later

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 13.463ff.

<sup>14</sup> All three persons of the Trinity are described as light, and the theurgies are attributable to all three except for what is achieved in humanity, which is proper to Christ alone.

<sup>15</sup> Eriugena does not develop any further description of how *ordo* in the Trinity specifically determines the *ordo* of the hierarchies by way of describing the relationships of the three divine persons. The mystery of the inner relations of the Trinity is preserved. A further softening of the identification of *ordo* in the hierarchies and in the Trinity by applying the principle that the name of an effect can be used to

theologians, including Bonaventure, to speculate on the Trinitarian shape of hierarchical activity.

For all its novelty, Eriugena's terming of the Trinity as the first and highest hierarchy does not compromise the Dionysian taxonomy of hierarchical mediation. Eriugena preserves all the essential elements of Dionysius' hierarchical taxonomy while a handful of peculiarities are added in *E*'s acquired comments. All hierarchical mediation depends upon God's prior condescension to intelligent creatures, of which there are two major groups, angels and humans.<sup>16</sup> Hierarchy does not denote groups of persons but a principle of action, i.e. *sacer principatus*, the command-execution of sacred matters by the hierarch (frequently translated by *summus sacerdos*) with the assistance of his subordinates.<sup>17</sup> Four hierarchies are counted in total, three angelic and the human ecclesiastical hierarchy, which Eriugena explicitly called the fourth.<sup>18</sup> In his terminology, the hierarchies, although sometimes used as a shorthand to refer to the groups of beings, are distinguished from the constituent groups of members that perform them, the *ornatus* or *dispositio* (translating διακόσμησις) and its three constituent *ordines* (translating τάξεις).<sup>19</sup> Among the angels there are three hierarchies arranged as first, middle and last,

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signify a cause, which Eriugena elsewhere uses to explain, in part, his calling the Trinity a *hostia*, see *Exp in Hier* III, 58.74–79. On the other hand, that the Trinity is *first* and *highest* hierarchy precludes completely relativizing Eriugena's attribution altogether through an appeal to a doctrine of analogy.

<sup>16</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 10.361–368.

<sup>17</sup> Dionysius and L. Michael Harrington, “On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy”: *The Thirteenth-Century Paris Textbook Edition*, Dallas Medieval Texts and Translations 12 (Paris ; Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2011), 44, 64, 66. Eriugena correctly interprets the triple distinction of τελετα, instructors, and instructed from *EH* V.1.1 as the constituents of hierarchical action rather than membership, (idem, 178).

<sup>18</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* X, 154.86–88; XIII, 175.330–338.

<sup>19</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII, 108.652, 113.825–30 (*dispositio* and *ornatus* translate διακόσμησις); VIII, 121.153, 122.186; IX, 134.5–8, 136.105, 138.178, 141.260–271 (*dispositio* and *ornatus* yet once more translate διακόσμησις); X, 152.12, 154.107–155.126; XII, 162.19, 24; XIII, 183.622, 627. *Ornatus* is also used to translate εὐκοσμία. Several other uses of *ornatus* and *dispositio* to translate διακόσμησις as a group of beings fall within the *deficit*: III, 64.368 49 (here *dispositio* and *ornatus* are synonyms for translating διακόσμησις); V, 83.32 (translating διακόσμους), 83.47–85.49 (*dispositio* and *ornatus* again translate

each of which has three *ordines* also arranged as first, middle, and last.<sup>20</sup> The ranks of these groups of angels and of the Church are identical to Dionysius' lists.<sup>21</sup> The lowest angels exercise their hierarchy directly upon our ecclesiastical hierarchy so that by their action our hierarchy comes to act in a heavenly manner.<sup>22</sup> Thus our hierarchy is ordered by all the angels insofar as higher angels hierarchize and sanctify the lower by sharing out participation in the divine distributions to them.<sup>23</sup> For this reason, all of the angels who participate in this sharing of the divine distribution are explicitly identified as *summi sacerdotes*, with the caveat that each is so in their proper degree, while the chief human receptors of this distribution, the hierarchs or *summi sacerdotes* (both terms are used), are identified as angels.<sup>24</sup> Insofar as one and the same divine distribution is spread throughout the whole the hierarchy, all the participants also have a fullness of the same powers of purification (*purgatio*), enlightenment (*illuminatio*), and perfection (*consummatio*), so that even the third angelic hierarchy through the action of the second angelic hierarchy shares in the power (*virtus*) of the first according to its capacity.<sup>25</sup> Thus, the more invisible power of the higher is at work in the more manifest activity of the lower hierarchies, and moreover, in all cases, God is "preoperative" in every action performed

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διακόσμησις); VI. 87.8–22, 89.90–93 ("Quas, essentias plane, divinus noster perfectior in tres ornatus ter dividit, id est, in novem ordines, qui in ternarium numerum ter grati tres ierarchias perficiunt."), 90.126, 90.165–91.166.

<sup>20</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier X*, 154.107–155.126.

<sup>21</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier X*, 155.138–156.150; Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 124–6.

<sup>22</sup> Eriugena, *Exp, in cel. VIII*, 133.562–565: "Nam ecclesiastica ierarchia per celestes virtutes et ordinatur et formatur et reducitur ad superessentialem omnis ierarchie, ad ipsam scilicet omnium causam."; XIII, 166.4–11.

<sup>23</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier VIII*, 121.152–123.192. This passage explains that the divine distributions are shared through all the angels and extend even to the chiefs of the human hierarchy who are called angels when they announce what they have received from their superiors to their inferiors, i.e. the prophets and the hierarchs.

<sup>24</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier VIII*, 130.463–131.470.

<sup>25</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier XIII*, 174.298–175.322.

by angelic and human hierarchies.<sup>26</sup> The whole system, faithfully received from Dionysius, describes the descent of the divine distributions and the coordinate ascent to God belonging to creatures receptive of the distributions through a series of mediators. In sum, Eriugena's taxonomy of hierarchy, following Dionysius' own, combines mediation with the cycle of *exitus-reditus*.<sup>27</sup>

Within its overall faithfulness to Dionysius' hierarchical taxonomy, *E* also includes a number of minor differences or novel emphases. Eriugena presses the triple division of the ranks of each angelic διακόσμεσις or *ornatus* further into the level of the *ordines* so that even the Seraphim and other ranks angels are internally divided by first, middle, and last groups of members.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, whereas Dionysius only indicates that both individual humans and angels have first, middle, and last powers of the mind corresponding to perfection, enlightenment/illumination (starting with Eriugena, no distinction is made between φωτίσμος and ἐλλάμψις), and purification, Eriugena identified these three powers (*virtutes*) of the participants of the hierarchical system: the

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<sup>26</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* XIII, 167.67–168.79: “proprium actionem purgationis non sibi ipsi reposuit, id est deputavit, sed Deo, qui omnium purgationum initium est; et in ipsa prima hierarchia, per quam Deus preoperatur, et in ceteris sequentibus celestibus ierarchiis et humanis purgationem perfecit virtutem.”; 174.291–297: “[...] quoniam excellentissima celestis disposition immediate post Deum est, propterea inferiores virtutes omnem suam sacram Deoque similem operationem non in seipsas referent, sed primo in Deum, et consequenter in primos intellectus qui primo operatores sunt et magistri divinorum, seu luminum vis subaudire, seu mysteriorum, seu arcanorum ceterorumque similium.” Both excerpts describe the actions of the lower as belonging to the higher angels and to God in clear terms. The double attribution explained in both by Eriugena indicates the cooperative nature of human and divine action, in line Dionysius. The sacred action of a creature is the action of God but does not eclipse the created action. The term ‘preoperative’ applied to God maintains the lines of the cooperation and distinction in hierarchical action and frees the creatures to be genuine operators.

<sup>27</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* XIII, 175.330–338: “De ultima autem celestium hierarchia, deque humana subintelligendum relequit. Ut enim secunda participat virtutes prime, ita tertia virtutes secunde, et quarta tertie, at si ignea et sapiens et sciens Deique susceptoria virtus primus a Deo in primam, secundo in per primam in secundam, tertio per secundam in tertiam, quarto per tertiam in quartam descendit hierarchiam; gradatim quidem, non tamen equaliter. Et iterum quarta per tertiam, tertia per secundam, secunda per primam, prima per ipsum Deum un prefaras reducitur virtutes.”

<sup>28</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* X, 155.131–134. The *ordines* and their subdivisions are termed “special” and “single” *ordines* at X, 156.164–165.

intellectual or theological power, the natural or rational power, and the moral power which determines exterior (human) or interior (angelic) motion.<sup>29</sup> A third distinction is that in Eriugena's commentary on the *CH*, he explains the meaning of equality between the ranks of the angelic triad denoted by ὁμοτάγης to be "equipotent", a "colleague", or "similarly honorable", suggesting similarity rather than identity.<sup>30</sup> *Exp in Hier* also associates the fiery character of the Seraphim with divine love (*amor*), although this falls within the *deficit*.<sup>31</sup> Regarding the rank structure of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, Eriugena clearly identifies the apostles as hierarchs, which Dionysius does not specify.<sup>32</sup> A more unusual divergence in *E*, from a scholion and not Eriugena himself, describes the hierarchy as the chief of all the priests, and the archdeacon as the chief of the "hierarchy of deacons", a that schema never reappears in *E* and does not represent Eriugena's views.<sup>33</sup> A more persistent divergence on the structure of the ecclesiastical hierarchy applies the three distinct hierarchies of *EH* V.1.2 (itself absorbed by in *EH* IV in the *Versio Dionysii*) to the ecclesiastical hierarchy as a temporal progression: the legal hierarchy, the hierarchy of the Church on earth, and the heavenly human Church.<sup>34</sup>

One of the most distinctive aspects of *E* is its emphasis on the equality of humanity with the angels in the eschaton, even diverging from Dionysius in teaching that

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<sup>29</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* X, 156.177–157.209; Paul Rorem, *Eriugena's Commentary on the Dionysian Celestial Hierarchy*, Studies and Texts 150 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2005), 126.

<sup>30</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* IX, 137.73–138.75.

<sup>31</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII, 95.154–173.

<sup>32</sup> Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 206.

<sup>33</sup> Dionysius and Eriugena, 48.; cf. *PG* 4: 117.15, 117.14.

<sup>34</sup> Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 34; Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* IX, 141.267–271. The reference in *Exp in Hier* directs the reader to the *EH* in order to explain why the odd term "human hierarchies" used in *CH* IX, which his introduction to the *EH* explains in full, and thus also triple division at *EH* V.1.2. Cf. Rorem, *Eriugena's Commentary on the Dionysian Celestial Hierarchy*, 84–86.

being set under the angels befits humanity's fallen state while implying that humanity was created equal to the angels and will cease to be ruled by the angels so that humans and angels will populate the various degrees of the hierarchies together.<sup>35</sup> Such an eschatological reorganization of the hierarchical taxonomy does not mean the end of all mediation, however, since the angels among themselves have always mediated the divine light to each other.

The topic of mediation is, in another way, also the difference from Dionysius for which Eriugena is best known, in that he adopts St. Augustine's dictum from *De vera religione* that between God and the mind "*nulla natura interposita est*."<sup>36</sup> However, that doctrine actually has little bearing on the treatment of hierarchy in *E*. Scholars have differed in judging the extent to which Eriugena's navigation of "Augustinian immediacy" and "Dionysian mediation" describes an eschatological restoration of humanity which achieves an immediate union with God that ends the role of angelic mediation and even mediation altogether.<sup>37</sup> Such arguments, however, depend on

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<sup>35</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 15.506–508; II, 43.874–876; VII, 102.427–432; Duclow, Donald F., "Isaiah Meets the Seraph: Breaking Rank in Dionysius and Eriugena?," in *Eriugena: East and West: Papers of the Eighth International Colloquium of the Society for the Promotion of Eriugenian Studies, Chicago and Notre Dame, 18–20 October 1991*, ed. Bernard McGinn, Willemien Otten, and Society for the Promotion of Eriugenian Studies, Notre Dame Conferences in Medieval Studies, no. 5 (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), 42–44. Duclow highlights material from the *Periphyseon* that even stresses a greater divergence from Dionysius' identification of the angels as ultimately inferior, at least in nature, to humanity, insofar Christ even saves the angels by becoming human, a point also made in *Exp in Hier* IV, 81.670–82.692. For the eschatological transformation of humanity, see also Donald F. Duclow and Paul A. Dietrich, "Virgins in Paradise: Deification and Exegesis in Periphyseon V," in *Jean Scot écrivain: actes du IVe colloque international, Montréal, 28 août-2 septembre 1983*, ed. Guy-H. Allard and Société internationale pour la promotion des études érigéniennes, Cahiers d'études médiévales 1 (Montréal: Bellarmin; Vrin, 1986), 29–49.

<sup>36</sup> Augustine, *De vera religione*, LV, 111–113.

<sup>37</sup> Duclow offers a brief summary of Eriugena's treatment of this topic in *Exp in Hier*, his commentary on Gregory of Nyssa's *De hominis opificio*, and the *Periphyseon*, in which he concludes that the scarce reference to the final exaltation of humanity in *Exp in Hier* compared to the other two works is a function of its focus on fallen humanity, and that Eriugena's doctrine is that God never abandoned human nature, and that when human nature is restored, humanity will fill out all of the angelic ranks, so that hierarchy itself will be preserved, see Donald F. Duclow, "Isaiah Meets the Seraph: Breaking Rank in

statements made in the *Periphyseon*. Eriugena comments in *Exp in Hier*, written after the *Periphyseon*, only affirm, as noted above, that in its restored state, humanity will no longer have the angels as its *superiors* but mediation itself is never said to come to an end.<sup>38</sup> The one section in which Eriugena directly addresses the meaning of Augustine's dictum vis-à-vis humanity in *Exp in Hier* falls within the *deficit*,<sup>39</sup> and even then, its answer is quite conservative. Eriugena turns to the Church Fathers and affirms with St. John the Evangelist that "no one has ever seen or will see" God except through the theophanies transmitted to creatures, that is, angels and humans.<sup>40</sup> Every other use of

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Dionysius and Eriugena?", 241–44. Paul Rorem's recounts at length Eriugena's agreement with Dionysius through the Fathers that none has or will see God, but only the theophanies manifested through the angels, see Rorem, *Eriugena's Commentary on the Dionysian Celestial Hierarchy*, 128–31. However, he then suggests that Eriugena proposes interprets the quotation from *De vera religione* as descriptive of humanity's original state and goes so far to state that although Eriugena never explicitly limits the theophanies as condescension to fallen humanity, "[y]et the general exposition and all his examples fit this pattern", i.e. the giving of the theophanies to the patriarchs, the temple, and great figures and sacraments of the New Law. (Rorem, 132–33) He concludes that Eriugena is able to reconcile Dionysius and Augustine through salvation history and faithfulness to the "fuller eschatology" of Gregory of Nyssa and Maximus the Confessor, in which the role of angels is all but disregarded by Rorem. (Rorem, 134–37) Rorem's argument, however, overestimates its textual support. Eriugena does not associate immediacy with our original state, but only with the dignity of human nature that God *never* abandoned even in the fall (*Exp in Hier* IV, 75.410–12, "[...] numquam tamen deserta ab eo [Deo] per naturae dignitatem"), so that even in our fallenness that same immediacy endures. Furthermore, while our original and final state will be one of equality with all the angels, Rorem neglects to mention that the angels are never treated as seeing God *in se*, but only know God through his invisible theophanies since God is beyond not only sense and intellect, and this is what the angels share with each other *and* humanity. (*Exp in Hier* I, 17.596–604; V, 88.40–42, "[intellectualis creatura] inveniatur quidem ipsius theophaniam, non inveniatur ipsius substantiam."; VII, 93.67–72; ) The clearest contradiction of Rorem's position is given in *Exp in Hier* VIII, 133.555–559: "Imagines vocat, ut arbitror, theophanias, in quibus et ipsi angeli et homines in equalem eis beatitudinem glorificati ipsum Deum videbunt, quoniam per seipsum invisibilis est et erit omni intellectui." Wayne Hankey is critical of attributing either simple immediacy to Augustine, in light of mediation through the human mind as an image of God, or of mediation alone to Dionysius, since the *MT* points to a immediate *ἔνωσις* in the vein of Plotinus' mysticism, see Wayne J. Hankey, "Augustinian Immediacy and Dionysian Mediation in John Colet, Edmund Spencer, Richard Hooker, and the Cardinal de Bérulle," in *Augustinus in der Neuzeit: Colloque de la Herzog August Bibliothek de Wolfenbüttel, 14–17 octobre 1996*, ed. Kurt Flasch, Dominique de Courcelles, and Herzog August Bibliothek (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 125–31; Wayne J. Hankey, "Dionysius Becomes an Augustinian. Bonaventure's Itinerarium VI," in *Studia Patristica*, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone, vol. XXIX (Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 251–59.

<sup>38</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII, 102.427–432.

<sup>39</sup> As noted above, a section of the *Exp in Hier* is missing from the *CDP* between III.58.83–VII.97.247.

<sup>40</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* IV, 74.380–77.482.

Augustine's dictum is applied to the first angelic triad, whose hierarchy alone, as Dionysius taught, is immediately illuminated and initiated by God.<sup>41</sup> Besides this, there is one excerpt from *Periphyseon* IV appended to the *Opus alterum*'s version of *MT* I, in which, under the lemma of *et sensus desere*, Eriugena's explanation "that unless the human mind surpassed itself and everything under it, it could not cling to its founder, since, as Augustine says, no creature [etc.]" is given.<sup>42</sup> This commentary affirms an ecstasy of union between human minds and God, but it says little about humanity's relationship to the hierarchical taxonomy, especially since the mind specifically "surpasses itself." A final reference to immediacy in *E.* is found in a scholion in *EH* IV, which says that the bishop is not illuminated by another, but being immediately present the sacred chrism receives an "unveiled beam of intelligent light from God."<sup>43</sup> That scholion raises questions about the mind of the scholiast on the immediacy of the ecclesiastical hierarchy to God, seemingly standing in contradiction to the revelatory role the angels play towards humanity as explained in the *CH*.<sup>44</sup>

Overall, Eriugena's emphases display a distinctly more anthropological concern than Dionysius but the taxonomy of the hierarchical system present in *E.*, that is, the

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<sup>41</sup> E.g. Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII 110.717.

<sup>42</sup> Dionysius and Eriugena, *MT 13th Century Textbook*, 156–58; Johannes Scotus Eriugena, *Periphyseon* IV, ed. Edouard Jeuneau, CCCM 164 (Turnholt: Brepols, 2000) 42.8–26.

<sup>43</sup> Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 156; PG IV, 153.6 (1–13).

<sup>44</sup> Rorem explains that in the *Exp in Hier*, Eriugena makes a similar claim that some humans will be in a superior position given Eriugena's solution to the question of mediation at *CH* XIII, which proposes an immediate purification of Isaiah by Christ, an immediacy supported in part by the *EH* see Rorem, *Eriugena's Commentary on the Dionysian Celestial Hierarchy*, 91; Donald F. Duclow, "Isaiah Meets the Seraph: Breaking Rank in Dionysius and Eriugena?," 236–41. Wear and Dillon claim similarly that the ecclesiastical hierarchy is in a parallel with the angels, and not its continuation, and hence its first member is immediately illuminated by God, but this is a minority position, see *Dionysius the Areopagite and the Neoplatonist Tradition: Despoiling the Hellenes* (Abingdon: Ashgate Publishing Group, 2007), 59.



material of *Opus maius* without the commentaries of Hugh and the Saracen, remains altogether Dionysian.

### II.2.2 Purpose

The purpose of hierarchy attested to in *E* follows Dionysius' teachings closely. Glossed by Eriugena as *sacer principatus*, hierarchy remains a principle of cultic deification, and is not in itself a cosmological principle.<sup>45</sup> As in the *CD*, *E* presents deification as both union with and likeness to God through the reception of Jesus the light of the Father, or as *E* expresses it more regularly, "the ray" of the Father.<sup>46</sup> The discernable novelty in *E*'s sense of the purpose of hierarchy is that the non-cosmological (or perhaps, non-cosmogonic) act of hierarchy is set within a more explicit cosmology than in that articulated in the *CH* and *EH* and, furthermore, Eriugena's account of deification (*deificatio* is the word which Eriugena uses to translate θέωσις) contained therein tends towards intellectualism somewhat more than Dionysius' account.

The fundamental likeness of *E*'s purpose of hierarchy to the *CD*'s, that is, θεομίμησις, can be demonstrated along six points. First, deification is the goal of hierarchy and is conceived of as both union and assimilation to God.<sup>47</sup> Second,

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Hathaway, *Hierarchy and the Definition of Order*, 44–6, 51–2, 54–5.

<sup>46</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 9.311.

<sup>47</sup> Eriugena's *Versio Dionysii* included, naturally, a translation of Dionysius own definition of hierarchy as given in the *CD*: "Interpretatio igitur hierarchiae est ad Deum quantum possibile similitudo et unitas" (occurring in *CH* III.2) and "ad Deum nostra, ad quantum licet, et similitudo et unitas." (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* III, 58.93–94; Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 60.) Eriugena explains the meaning of this definition of hierarchy in *Exp in Hier* III, stating that hierarchy is the possession of God as the leader of all our action and knowledge, not generally, but as participants of God, who praise God precisely through their participation and unity with him in becoming mirrors by receiving the primal light, the Father, and his ray, the Son, and thus show forth the divine glory to inferiors. (*Exp in Hier* III, 58.99–59.133.) Eriugena's explanation of hierarchy follows the *CD* very closely by coordinating divine union, assimilation, participation of the divine persons, praise, glorification, and mediation, however, it falls

deification, *qua* divine, is perfected beyond intellect and sense.<sup>48</sup> Third, the proximate goal of hierarchy for humanity is assimilation to the angels, who are themselves

theomimetic.<sup>49</sup> Fourth, the means of all hierarchical divinization is the reception of and

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within the *deficit*. Nonetheless, even if a reader did not have access to the explanation in the *deficit*, the same coordination is borne out of *E*'s material in the *Opus maior*. A briefer explanation of hierarchy occurs just before the *deficit*, saying that perfect habit of contemplation is to ascend into God himself, "to whom we will be similar and in whom we will stand incommunicably", so that by hierarchy "every deiform participant of [God]" will be lifted into God according to their reception of the divine illumination. (*Exp in Hier* III, 56.36–57.48.) Eriugena explains deification again borrowing from *Exp in Hier* III in a later chapter: "Omnis, inquit, hoc est uniuersalis, ierarchie speculationem, diffinitionem plane, Deum imitanti deiformitate dependentem, id est que desuper pendit, originem que ducit ex similitudine diuine formositatis, superius, siquidem in tertio capitulo, uniuersalem ierarchiam diffiniuit dicens: "Ierarchia est ad Deum, quantum possibile, similitudo et unitas". [...]." (*Exp in Hier* VII, 99.310–316) Having explained that deification is unity and assimilation and the imitation of God who descends into the world, he continues by stating that such deification is effected by the participation of God and the transmission of purification, enlightenment, and perfection. (*Exp in Hier* 99.316–100.1.) Dionysius' θεωρία on the Eucharist at *EH* III.3.13 444C-D (93.20–22) also teaches that union with God occurs through assimilation to God, which Eriugena's *versio* translates: "Siquidem unimur ipsi divinissimae vitae ad eam nostram iuxta virtutem similitudine, et per hoc etiam ad veritatem communicators dei et divinissimarum consummationum erimus." (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 142). A scholion on this passage adds that by union with Christ we are made communicants of the divine nature, see Dionysius and Eriugena, 144.

<sup>48</sup> Christ enters the world as the supra-intellectual and supra-sensible ray of the Father and is only known through the "connatural veils", the intelligible theophanies and sensible symbols of the Church and the created order, corresponding to *CH*, *EH*, and *DN* (see n. 34 above). (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 10.347–11.368.) Hierarchy does not end with the reception of the intelligible theophanies, but in passing over (*transire*) into God himself who is beyond all things. (*Ibid.*, 18.639–642) The passing over into God described again in Eriugena as ascent in to God himself (*ascendere*) or being lifted up (*sublevare*). (*Exp in Hier* III, 56.36–57.48.) The supra-intellectual and supra-sensible character of deification is expressed through darkness language. The *versio* of the *MT* describes the "free mysteries" which a scholion clarifies as those that are not of "intellect or word or symbol but of darkness", which, coupled with the exhortation to go beyond the seen and unseen, the known and unknown, places the trajectory of the experience of deification beyond the intellectual realm so that even true praise occurs precisely in *not-seeing* and *not-knowing*. (Dionysius and Eriugena, *MT 13th Century Textbook*, 56, 74.)

Michael Harrington has shown that Dionysius' *versio* of the *MT* and the scholia appened to it reduce the Plotinian ecstasy of Moses beyond mind into the height of intellectual activity, however, that fact alone does not compromise an overall understanding of deification as supra-intellectual. Harrington notes that the *Periphyseon*, written after Eriugena's first attempt at translating the *CD*, does appreciate the supra-intellectual character of God and divine union, an understanding that is also explicit in *Exp in Hier*, which was written after the *Periphyseon*. ("Introduction," in Dionysius and Eriugena, *MT 13th Century Textbook*, 12–26.) Being set within *E*, the accounts of the darkness of intellect in the *MT* can be read together with scholia added from the *Periphyseon* that affirm that God is beyond being and also with the descriptions of passing over into God beyond intellect in the *Exp in Hier*, so that, in the final result, union beyond knowing is an interpretation available to a reader of *E*.

<sup>49</sup> The ecclesiastical hierarchy is assimilated to the angels through the practice of symbolic cult, and the goal of assimilation is not only imitation of the angels in mode befitting humanity as an inferior creation, but the restoration of humanity's original equality to the angels. In addition to the texts of the *versio*, which pronounce our assimilation to the angels, Eriugena's comments in *Exp in Hier* explicitly affirm our elevation to the angels. Contemplation and the sacred use of symbols leads to a vision of the

participation in transmitting the divine light through the purifying, enlightening, and perfecting powers.<sup>50</sup> Fifth, Jesus is the *claritas* or ray of the Father who by entering the cosmos in an act of mercy (i.e. his *φιλανθρωπία*) gathers creatures together and passes over with them to the Father, in other words, he is the basis and power of mediating the divine light.<sup>51</sup> Sixth and finally, the deification of creatures is, as in the *CD*, also at the

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angelic hierarchies and the divine gift of light, or *claritas*, within them (*Exp in Hier* I, 8.278–292, 14.498–505). The vision of the *claritas* in the angels is not only a matter of subjective awareness; the ecclesiastical hierarchy is elevated to equality to the angels through these visions, and equality anticipated by the reception of the Eucharist (*Exp in Hier* I, 14.488–494, 17.578–584), and is collected out of visible multiplicity into the spiritual simplicity of the angels (*Exp in Hier* I, 13.446–459). Hilduin’s introduction to the *EH*, included in the *Opus altera*, makes much the same point from another perspective, that the angelic ministrations make the ecclesiastical hierarchy act like the angels. (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 36.)

<sup>50</sup> Light and its mediation are inseparable concepts in both the *CD* and in Eriugena’s understanding of hierarchy. God is the *lux invisibilis* and *inaccessibilis* exceeding sense and intellect, and yet who illuminates through all created things, even rocks and sticks, which are *lumines*, (*Exp in Hier* I, 3.76–4.146). What is given through hierarchy, however, are not these created *lumines* but the *radius lucis* or and the divine illumination and multiplication, the *φωτοδοσία* of the *CD*, which is also translated in the *versio* by *claritas*. It is this divine illumination or *claritas* which manifests and is manifested through the angelic hierarchies to humanity in symbols proportionate to our nature. (*Exp in Hier* I, 8.274–286, 8.294–9.296.) The divine illumination has three effects, purgation from ignorance (or sin), enlightenment in wisdom (i.e. the vision of the *claritas* in symbols and intellect), and perfection in divine science and deification, which Eriugena coordinates novelly with the definitive functions of hierarchy: functions of *ἐνέργεια*, *ἐπιστήμη*, and *ταξίς*, respectively. (*Exp in Hier* III, 56.8–17 ; III, 63.300–65.385; X, 152.20–24; cf. René Roques, “Recherches Sur l’influence Du ‘Corpus Dionysiacum,’” *Annuaire Ecole Pratique Des Hautes Études, Section Sciences Religieuses* 79 (72 1971): 342.) The divine illumination comes first to the first angelic hierarchy (at least in the state post-fall) who purified, enlightened, and perfected are consecrated pontiffs (*pontificata* and *sanctificata*) with a priesthood, who, in sequence, initiate others into the same illumination and priesthood and are thus called the “cooperators and administrators of our salvation and deification.” (*Exp in Hier* VII, 106.565–567, 111.755–760; X, 152.14–20). Thus by the light of the Trinity, the *claritas*, shining through hierarchy, humans and angels are led back to God and made to shine with God’s beauty, each receiving the divine light in a proportionate way, like fire warming through the series of the four elements. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier*, VII, 104.502–105.529; XIII, 170.148–171.195.) Such a priesthood like the angels is exercised by the hierarch, translated as *divinus summus sacerdos* in *E*, when he shines the *claritates* of his divine doctrine copiously, imitating the *divinum lumen* which is always prepared for the sacred transmission (*divina traditio*) or its *propria*. (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 78–80.) Hence in a scholion of *E*’s *EH* V, the hierarch is said to be illuminated first, illumines others, and in turn perfects those he has illumined. (Dionysius and Eriugena, 190.)

<sup>51</sup> Eriugena understands that Dionysius identifies the *claritas* of the Father given in the divine illumination and the *radius* of the Father as the one and the same Word and Son of the Father: “Et ne existimes quod aliud sit claritas Patris et aliud radius Patris: claritas Patris, radius Patris est Filius suus, qui Patrem clarificavit mundo [...]” (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 10.355–358; Gandillac, “Anges et Hommes Dans Le Commentaire de Jean Scot Sur La «Hierarchie Céleste»,” 395.) The text of *E*, both in Eriugena’s commentary on the *CH* and elsewhere, clearly shows Jesus to be the one who principally purified, enlightens, and perfects the intelligent creatures, and not only individually but even gathers them into unity with each other, Himself, and the Father and Spirit with whom he acts. Hence it is Jesus who has first

same time the worship of the creator, evidenced in the use of fire language to describe the soul as once purified, deified, and offered to God.<sup>52</sup>

Two aspects of Eriugena's thought set the overall similarity in the understanding of the purpose of hierarchy into a different set of emphases. First, the thoroughly cosmological thought of Eriugena, treated at length in the *Periphyseon*, makes its way into *E*'s treatment of hierarchy, especially in *Exp in Hier*. *E*'s cosmological situation does not press a divergence in Eriugena's conception of hierarchy's purpose. Eriugena distinguishes between *datio* and *donatio*, an exegesis of the famous quotation from the letter of James, "every best donation and perfect gift [etc.]," as the gifts of nature and grace respectively, the former as the cause of the being of things, the latter as the return of all things to their creator.<sup>53</sup> This distinction facilitates distinguishing the act of

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taught the angels, is the basis of their (and our) *pontificatus* and *sacerdotium* by which they and we cooperate in deifying and are deified, and he is, therefore, the salvation of the universal Church composed of humans and angels. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* II, 54.1263–55.1297; VII, 105.540–106.557, 109.685–110.706; Dionysius and Eriugena, *MT 13th Century Textbook*, 52.) This saving action constitutes Jesus, and the whole Trinity's φιλανθρωπεία, that is, *humanitas*, *misericordia*, and *clementia*. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier*. I, 18.625–630.)

<sup>52</sup> The recipients of the divine *claritas* and *radius Patris* are formed into *laudatores*, who sing the "divine praise interiorly and exteriorly." (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* II, 21.33–46.) The sacrificial character of this worship, attested to in *EH* IV.3.12, which translates the description of Jesus as "our Altar" by translating ἀφιερῶσις as "*oblation*" *E*'s version calls him the "divine oblation of divine souls" and those souls in him "*oblati et mystice holocaustomati*", with an interlinear note qualifying *oblati* as *sanctificati*. (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 174.) *E*'s version of the *MT* corroborates this sacrificial or oblatinal understanding of deification by including a long excerpt of *Periphyseon* IV that explains how the Trinity, as fire "*nostra delicta consummunt, et nos velut holocaustum quoddam theosin—id est deificationem—in unitatem suam convertunt.*" (Dionysius and Eriugena, *MT 13th Century Textbook*, 50; cf. Eriugena, *Periphyseon* IV, 2.4–4.11) Harrington points out that the thirteenth-century text is defective, lacking *per* before *theosin*, so that it should be understood to mean that as a kind of holocaust, we return to God's unity through θέωσις ("Notes" in Dionysius and Eriugena, *MT 13th Century Textbook*, 112, n. 3.) Nonetheless, the general sense remains the same, deification is not only an ontological and personal transformation, but even cultic and latreutic reality.

<sup>53</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in hier*. I, 1.27–32: "Que apostolica sententia diuinam dationem ex diuina donatione mirabili discernit differentia, optimam quidem dationem uniuersalis creature substitutioni distribuens, perfectam uero donationem diuine gratie largitati; quoniam omne quod est duobus modis diuinam participat bonitatem, quorum primus in conditione nature, alter in distributione gratie perspicitur." Eriugena adds that no creature lacks either procession from God: "Nihil quippe est, in uniuersali creatura, quod his duobus careat [...]" (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 2.3–34.) and that no creature is perfect without being able to return to its creator: "Quoniam uero nullius creature substitutio perfecta sit, nisi ad creatorem

creation, in which creatures proceed from God as *lumina* from the *Pater luminum* through his Word, from the act of hierarchization or grace, whereby all creatures receive grace from the Spirit of the Father and the Son.<sup>54</sup> The irrational creatures are not, however, placed immediately into the hierarchical system after humanity, rather, unlike intelligent (angelic) and rational (human) creatures which return to God immediately, the irrational creatures return to the “*principium universitatis*” through mediation of the rational and intelligent creatures.<sup>55</sup> In this way Eriugena is able to identify both creation and hierarchization as processions of light from God through Christ, distinguish them as nature and grace, and thereby properly relate them so that the hierarchization of rational and intelligent creatures redounds to the return of the whole cosmos to God.

Second, Eriugena’s positioning of humanity, and Christ’s humanity, at the center of creation and its return to God underscores the importance of the incarnation not only for humanity, but even for the angels. That the incarnation belongs to angelic salvation too is not necessarily a notion absent from the *CD*, although it is not expressly thematized

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conuertatur, sequitur: et omne donum perfectum. Precedit itaque optima nature substitutio, cui ad perfectionem additur ad creatorem conuersio. Et ne mireris quod diximus nullam substitutam creaturam, nisi conuertatur ad creatorem, perfectam fieri posse.” (Eriugen, *Exp in Hier* I, 2.43–58.)

<sup>54</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 2.57–67.

<sup>55</sup> Eriugena, I, 2.51–54: “Intellectualia quidem et rationalia immediate per se, intellectu uero et ratione carentia quadam medietate rationabilium et intelligibilium interposita, ad unum uniuersitatis principium conuertuntur.” These lines recall the Augustinian “*nulla interposita*” discussed in n. 36 above. I understand the difference indicated here to be that the irrational creatures do not receive the Christ as the ray of the Father as humans and angels do and will, that is, through the theophanies both *in specie* (meaning unveiled for Eriugena), and under the sacred symbols which lead to such a vision. In *Periphyseon* V, Eriugena describes how the lower creatures will pass over into the higher without the loss of their substance, struggling to express how the carnal state of creation cannot endure in the eschaton and yet must not be obliterated but perfected in divine beauty. (Johannes Scotus Erigena, *Periphyseon: The Division of Nature*, Cahiers D’études Médiévales 3, trans. Inglis Patrick Sheldon-Williams and John Joseph O’Meara (Montréal : Washington: Bellarmin ; Dumbarton Oaks, 1987, 570–85). Eriugena refers to that passage in *Exp in Hier* II, 48.1028–1039, explaining that every corporeal and spiritual creature is joined in substance together (*copulatur*) and they become one spiritual creature in Christ, the inferior passing over into the superior, now by *hope* and in the future, *in re per speciem*, in the unveiled and final union with God.

as it is in *Exp in Hier.*<sup>56</sup> Eriugena's explicit description of the eschatological union of humans and angels is set side-by-side with his explanation that 1) Christ's supraintellectual and suprasensible humanity is the object of our participation *in specie* and 2) that the incarnation reveals the supreme dignity of humanity in creation with clear affirmation of the incarnation's necessity for the restoration of the whole cosmos, angels included.<sup>57</sup> Even apart from Eriugena's description of the incarnation as the source of γνῶσις for the angels in the *Periphyseon*, *E* evidently elevates humanity's status over its presentation in the *CD*.<sup>58</sup>

## II.2.3 How

The means of achieving the purpose of hierarchy presented across *E* remains, as in the *CD*, cultic, not only because Eriugena's *versio* of the *CD* retains the cultic language of the Greek original but because his commentary and other added scholia and glosses attend to the cultic language. Nevertheless, Eriugena's sacramental theology has been judged as less robust than Dionysius', less realist than some of his contemporaries, and even as disinterested and merely symbolist, elevating contemplation above cult.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> The angels in the *CD* are first initiated into the Christ's philanthropy (*CH IV*), they participate Jesus and his theurgies (*CH VII*), they receive new knowledge through the incarnate theurgies (*CH VII*), their θεομίμησις in which they are acting as deified is exercised upon humanity in virtue of Christ's philanthropy.

<sup>57</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier I*, 17.578–594.

<sup>58</sup> Duclow, Donald F., "Isaiah Meets the Seraph: Breaking Rank in Dionysius and Eriugena?," 244–45; cf. Johannes Scotus Eriugena, *Periphyseon V*, ed. Edouard Jeauneau, CCCM 165 (Turnholti: Brepols, 2003), 51.1599–1608 (895B), 74.2361–75.2391 (912B–913A), 86.2727–2748 (920D–921B).

<sup>59</sup> Rorem observes that in Eriugena's commentary on the *CH*, he rarely adverts to the *EH*, citing his disinterest in the sacramental theology, and moreover judges that the Scot held the Eucharist to be but "merely a symbol of Christ" while Christ is eaten with the intellect alone, see Rorem, *Eriugena's Commentary on the Dionysian Celestial Hierarchy*, 85." Rorem's case may be overstated here, the Eucharist is nonetheless the "most divine Eucharist" that is "confected and sanctified" on the altar daily. Eriugena's argument is not that the offering and reception of the Eucharist is an inefficacious reminder of

Furthermore, in his commentary on the *CH*, Eriugena does not embrace the doctrine that will come to be called transubstantiation, let alone the worship of the sacraments, which he condemns as mistaking means for their end.<sup>60</sup> Nonetheless, Eriugena is not anti-sacramental nor a-cultic; the sacraments are both efficacious and the necessary manner for participating now (*per fidem*) in a cult which exceeds the limits of the veils in which it is apportioned to our earthly state, but will lead into a cult *in specie*.<sup>61</sup> In fact, Eriugena's commentary along with rest of *E* explicates the cultic character of the *CD* in three ways:

- 1) its translation of the Greek uses more explicitly sacrificial language than in the original Greek text, which clarifies that hierarchy is a cultic act that effects divinization; 2) it affirms the priesthood of Jesus and the angels explicitly on more occasions than the *CD*;
- 3) it adverts to God as the origin and prototype of all cultic sacrifice. The resulting

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participation in Jesus but that material realities cannot simply be identical with the unity of Christ's "divine and human substance" which exceeds sense and intellect, so that even the angels do not know the *veritas* of Christ through the theophanies. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, I, 17.578–610.) The sacraments are nonetheless a means towards participation of Christ, which even if not that which they signify, their use nevertheless a type of the spiritual participation undertaken. Marcia Colish regards Eriugena's thought as much less ecclesiological and sacramentally centered than Dionysius and Maximus', however, she is making a judgement almost exclusively from the *Periphyseon*, see "John the Scot's Soteriology and Christology in Relation to His Greek Sources," *Downside Review* 100, no. 4 (1982): 138, 148. Even so, the *Periphyseon* II, IV and V call Baptism the beginning of divine life and freedom from sin. (Eriugena, *Periphyseon* IV, 149.4589–4589; Eriugena, *Periphyseon* V, 109.3473–3475.) In *Exp in Hier*, Eriugena also declares that "[...] the first illumination of the rational soul returning to its creator is the gift of faith, which is given and signified through baptism." (Eriugena, *Exp in hier.* II, 45.943–956) while the interior life of the soul is conceived in cultic terms as an entry into the holy of holies made accessible only Christ the high priest who offered his "general sacrifice" and "price of the world" to the Father. (Eriugena, *Periphyseon* V, 169.5495–170.5545 (981A-982A). Furthermore, Eriugena's *Commentarius in evangelium Johannis* treats Baptism at length and very clearly teaches that Baptism eliminates original sin and sin generally, and brings about divine filiation in the recipient, and moreover, includes both a visible sacrament and invisible doctrine in order to purify both the body and the invisible soul, so that the body is made a temple of God in the present and transformed in the resurrection. (Johannes Scotus Eriugena, *Iohannis Scotti seu Eriugeneae Homilia super "In principio erat verbum"* ; et *Commentarius in Evangelium Iohannis*, ed. Édouard Jeuneau, Andrew J. Hicks, and Johannes Scotus Eriugena, *Corpus Christianorum* 166 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), I, 69.94–100, 75.38–46; III, 80.27–81.44.)

<sup>60</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 17.578–610.

<sup>61</sup> Eriugena, *ibid.*; see n. 53 above for other examples of Eriugena's sacramental thought. It should also be noted that the symbolist treatise, *De corpore et sanguine domini*, now attributed to Ratramnus of Corbie, was formerly attributed to Eriugena. (Deirdre Carabine, *John Scotus Eriugena*, *Great Medieval Thinkers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 9–10.)

presentation of hierarchy in *E* is, like the *CD*, thoroughly priestly and cultic, not in contrast to its focus on contemplation but as the very context of that contemplation.

In *E*, sacrificial terminology denotes the cultic action whereby God is glorified and humans and angels are deified. Five terms for sacrifice or verbal relatives are so employed in *E*: *sacrificium*, *immolatio*, *hostia*, *holocaustum*, and *oblatio*. These five terms are found in Eriugena's *versio* of the *CD* as well as in his attached commentary and the other appended scholia and interlinear glosses in *E*. The particular uses of the terms are as follows. First, *sacrificium* and *hostia* are used to translate or given as an equivalent for τελετή and its Latin transliteration, *teleta*.<sup>62</sup> Second, *sacrificare* and *immolare*, alongside *sanctificare*, are used to translate the Greek verbs describing cultic action among the angels and the Church, especially as a translation of ιερουργέω.<sup>63</sup> Third,

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<sup>62</sup> In his *Exp in Hier*, Eriugena defines a τελετή as "[...] *hostia purgativa omnium peccatorum, per quam deus efficitur deus*." (Eriugena, *Exp in hier.* I, 13.346–347). *Hostia* is the most frequent translation of τελετή in *E*, Baptism is called the "*sacrae hostiae divina generatio*," (an error in which Eriugena followed the reversed nominative and genitive cases of his Greek ms.). (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 74, 272 n.23.) The Eucharist or Synaxis is praised as the *hostiarum hostia*, translating τελετών τελετή, likewise the τελετή of μυστών by *chrismatis hostia* (Harrington points out a variation in the A and V texts of Eriugena's *versio* that predate the textbook version), and the τελετών θεσμοεσία which directs the anointing of the altar by *hostiarum legislation*. (Dionysius and Eriugena, 96, 150, 172.) Nevertheless, *E*'s version of the *EH* more frequently uses the transliteration of τελετή, *teleta*, for which the scholia and interlinear notes gives equivalences: *hostia* (Dionysius and Eriugena, 108, 112); *sacrificium* (Dionysius and Eriugena, 96); *sacramentum* (Dionysius and Eriugena, 112). The *Exp in Hier* also translates τελετή, used in the first definition of hierarchy in *CH* III.1, by *sacrificium* while the angels are said to understand our mystic *hostias* and *immolationes* through their intellectual contemplation. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* III, 57.53; VIII, 123.195–203.) The liturgical action is also called sacrifice in Eriugena's *versio* of *EH*, when at the conclusion Dionysius warns that what has been passed to the hierarchy is not given through the "common part of the sacrifice", but in the sacred symbols, and is not for everyone. (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 52.) Similarly, the rite of μυστών is called the *sacrificium ugenti*. (Dionysius and Eriugena, 174.)

<sup>63</sup> *Sacrificare* is the more common of the two. *E*'s *versio* of the *EH* sees it used most frequently. The goal of every hierarchy is to have *dilectio* for God and for the divine *teleta* to be sacrificed, which the accompanying scholion explains means the offering of *latria* (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 50; Cf. *EH* I.3 376A [66.15]; PG 4 120.6); no *teleta* can be completed and gathered into one except by the "*peficiende sacrificio*" of the divine Eucharist (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 96; *EH* III.1 424D [79.16]); the hierarch sacrifices the *divinissima* upon the altar (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 102, 132, 134, 140; *EH* III.2 425D [81.6]; *EH* III.3.10 440B [90.10]; *EH* III.3.11 440B [90.14]; *EH* III.3.12 444A [92.17]); the hymns prepare the congregation for the things about to be sacrificed in the latter part of the Eucharist (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century*



*hostia*, *holocaustum*, and *sacrificium* denote that which is offered to God, including the soul itself.<sup>64</sup> This pervasive sacrificial language is never mollified so as to be term for

*Textbook*, 112; *EH* III.3.5 432A [84.8]); the *teletae* “sacrifice the deification of the perfect” (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 124.; *EH* III.3.74 37A [87.24]); the deeds preceding the anaphora (the kiss of peace, reading the diptychs, etc.) are “sacrificed” (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 130; *EH* III.3.10 437D [89.11]); the Eucharist hierarchically sacrifices our “society and coordination” (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 150; *EH* IV.1 472D [95.2]); the holy activity of the rite of the *μυρόν*, just as the Eucharist, is looked upon and sacrificed immediately only by the most sacred [people] (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 160; *EH* IV.3.4 447C [98.18, 22]); “[...] everything to be [sacrificed] according to the Law [...]” (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 180; *EH* V.1.2 501C [105.15]); after the hierarchs, the priests sacrifice their *sacras actiones* (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 194; *EH* V.1.6 505D [108.10]); the salutation of the ordination rite is “sacrificed” (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 208; *EH* V.3.6513B ([113.13])); the hierarchs sacrifice the approach of the priests and deacons who come to be “put under divine yokes” (i.e., their ordination) (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 210; *EH* V.3.8 516A [114.13, 14]); the divine law gives communion to body and soul, “sacrificing the salvation of the whole man” (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 264; *EH* VII.3.9 565C [130.4]). *E*’s *versio* of the *CD* does not always translate *ἱεουργέω*, employing *sancta agere* for the kiss of peace (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 126; *EH* V.3.6 513B [113.13]) while the consecrating invocation for monastic ranks is sanctified (*sanctificare*) according to Eriugena’s translation (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 220; *EH* VI.1.3 533A [116.23]). Eriugena’s *versio* of the *CH* and the accompanying commentary also include of the verb *sacrificare*. *CH* XIII describes the Seraph “sacrificing” the purgation of the prophet (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* XIII, 167.37, 64, 69). In his commentary on *CH* IX, Eriugena explains that first hierarchy “sanctificare, id est ordinare, vel, ut proprie transferetur sacrificare secundum” (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* IX, 140.223–224). The most conceptually important use of *sacrificare* in the *Exp in Hier* actually falls within the *deficit*, the commentary on *CH* VII.1’s explanation of the term *ἱεουργεῖται*. Eriugena there examines Dionysius’ statement that the first hierarchy is “hierurgized” (sic. *ἱεουργεῖται*) by the first triad of angels, which he translates as *sanctificatur*, but glosses as *sacrificatur* and explains that literally that *sacrificatur* and *sanctificatur* (mapping on to *ἱεουργεῖται* and *ἀγιαζεσθαι*, respectively) are distinct, but have the same meaning since “whatever is sacrificed is perfectly sanctified” (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII, 92.35–93.48). He goes on to explain that this means that angels and their hierarchies, since the terms are in the Greek middle voice, are simultaneously made into praise and joined to God, who is the proper end of sacrifice as the first cause, and thereby bring glory to God, and accordingly the first angels are said to be sacrificed to God and to sacrifice to God because in their action they manifest the glory of God through their mediation (lit. sacrifice) of the theophanies which flow to the ranks below. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII 93.48–76) Eriugena’s concept of sacrifice here retains sense of an offering to God and joins doxology and deification into two sides of the same act: whatever is joined to God manifests God’s glory. Although this section is not included in *E*, falling within the *deficit*, a reflection of it follows after the *deficit*, saying that God, the source of all perfection, sanctifies, sacrifices, and immolates the angels of the first hierarchy (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII, 108.634–637). Finally, of Christ, it is said that he is not immolated to a superior being, since he is God, which both clarifies that Jesus’ sacrifice must be conceived of differently than other sacrifice (“*plus quam hostiam esse*”) and also affirms that Eriugena’s use of the term *immolare*, if not also other sacrificial language, retains the oblatinal character traditional associated with those terms (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* III, 58.76–81) and should not be tamed to mean a generic performance of sacred actions.

<sup>64</sup> There are three principal example of *E*’s sacrificial language applied to that which is offered. Eriugena’s commentary on *CH* III asks how Jesus is the *hostia* immolated for the purgation of the whole world if he is not immolated to anything higher. (Eriugena, *Exp in hier.* III, 57.70–58.76.) *E*’s *versio* of the *EH* IV.3.12 strengthens the already clearly sacrificial meaning of the Greek text by translating ἀφιέρωσις and by *oblatio*, and thus that Jesus is the principal *oblatio* (ἀφιέρωσις) of the divine souls and altar upon which the they are *oblati* (ἀφιερούμενοι) and *holocaustomati* (ὀλοκαυτούμενοι). (Dionysius and Eriugena,

sanctification independent of oblation.<sup>65</sup> Eriugena is fully aware that sacrifice is that which is offered to God: the sensible rites by the Church, the invisible theophanies by the angels, and, as noted above, the deified soul itself through Christ's saving incarnation and his defied humanity

Eriugena's sacramental thought must be appreciated in this sacrificial-cultic context. The best summary of his sacramental views is given in his definition a τελετή as "a *hostia* purgative of all sins, by which a human is made divine (*deus*)," which, *mutatis mutandis*, applies to the angels.<sup>66</sup> The visible sacraments confected and sanctified on the altar signify a spiritual participation in Christ *per fidem*, which will pass into the angels' participation of Christ *per speciem*, and then at last, into divinity beyond all knowledge as a holocaust consumed by the fire of the Trinity.<sup>67</sup> The sacraments and rites are effective of deification (and accomplish the worshipful oblations of humans and angels) but they are not to be confused with God himself.

Eriugena's cultic understanding of hierarchy is no less well-expressed by the frequent attention to Christ and the angels as hierarchs or *summi sacerdotes*, an office which was more often implied to belong to the angels the *CD* but attributed explicitly in *E*.<sup>68</sup> His attention to the role of priesthood preserves the original sense of ἱεραρχία as the

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*EH 13th Century Textbook*, 174; *EH IV.3.12* 484D (103.4–6) The sweet fragrance of the baptized at the conclusion of *EH II* given a sacrificial reading through an attached scholion connected to Noah's fragrant offering (*oblatio*) after exiting the ark, as well as being identified as the fragrance of Christ, which is both preached in the Gospel (figuratively) and poured in the Chrism (literally). Finally the section of the *Periphyseon IV* appended to the *MT* as a scholion calls the θέωσις of the soul a holocaust lit by the Trinity. (Dionysius and Eriugena, *MT 13th Century Textbook*, 50; cf. Eriugena, *Periphyseon IV*, 4.32–34.)

<sup>65</sup> Roques, "Recherches Sur l'influence Du 'Corpus Dionysiacum,'" 339–42.

<sup>66</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier I*, 13.346–347.

<sup>67</sup> Dionysius and Eriugena, *MT 13th Century Textbook*, 50.

<sup>68</sup> The role of hierarch is applied to Christ analogously and to the angels only once in the *CD* at *EH V.1.5*.

performance of office of the hierarch, whereby God is participated and worshiped. Christ is the ray of the Father shining upon the world and as such makes himself available to others through the priesthood of the hierarchs, who shine the light of Christ on their subordinates.<sup>69</sup> The hierarch or *summus sacerdos*, as one revealing this light is called the “angel of the Lord” and an imitator of God because he reveals God and grants to other the grace granted to himself by God.<sup>70</sup>

Eriugena calls Jesus the *summus pontifex* and *summus sacerdos*.<sup>71</sup> As *summus pontifex* Jesus is the *principium*, *medium*, and *finis* of every hierarchy.<sup>72</sup> Eriugena holds the New Testament to be a teaching about the new priesthood.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, he also regards Melchizedek the king and high priest of God as a type of Christ since the former led many nations into the divine cult while the latter formed the Church out of many nations and joined them to himself.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, as shown above, *E* does not only show Christ as priest, but also as *hostia* and the altar through and upon which all souls are deified offerings to God. The biblical images of the cornerstone and of anointing symbolize Christ’s ecclesial role. The cornerstone symbolizes Jesus as he in whom the disparate meet: namely the Jew and the gentile, the human and divine, the Word and flesh while the scriptural images and ritual use (and consecration) of the μύρον directly and indirectly in the rites of the Church symbolize Christ’s deifying presence to humans and angels through his incarnation.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 80, 190.

<sup>70</sup> Dionysius and Eriugena, 256–58.

<sup>71</sup> Dionysius and Eriugena, 34, 44.

<sup>72</sup> Dionysius and Eriugena, 34.

<sup>73</sup> Dionysius and Eriugena, 181.

<sup>74</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier IX*, 146.460–147.483; Rorem, *Eriugena’s Commentary on the Dionysian Celestial Hierarchy*, 39–41.

<sup>75</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier II*, 47.996–1020.

The angelic priesthood is denoted by several terms. All of the angels are called *summi sacerdotes* and *pontifices* exercising their *sacerdotium* and *episcopatus* through their “pontified” (*pontificata*) hierarchies.<sup>76</sup> In other words, Eriugena highlights the similarity of the hierarchs or bishops and the angels. Like the bishop in his Church, the hierarchies of angels lead their incorporeal inferiors and humanity to salvation, deification, and true worship by their offering of the theophanies to the glory of God.<sup>77</sup> The first angels made hierarchical and receiving their *sacerdotium* through participation of Christ are, following Dionysius, like worshippers at the tabernacle and temple.<sup>78</sup> There is, therefore, a single priesthood insofar as Dionysius’ system presumes a single serial mediation of the divine light through which the one Church on earth and heaven participates and imitates Christ.<sup>79</sup> However, Eriugena’s more explicit eschatological

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<sup>76</sup> The celestial hierarchy is glossed as the *episcopatus* of the super mundane powers. (Eriugena, I, 4.38–44.) Every angel should be called *summus sacerdos* because they are *pontifices*, but not all in an equal way. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VIII, 131.466–47.) The first hierarch of angels is purified, illumined, and perfect, and thus sanctified and “*pontificata*” (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII, 111.755–760.) Similarly, the same immediate sanctification of the angels first around God is the “*primum sacerdotium*” of the angels, in which they are pontified or “sublimated to the pontifical order. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* X, 152.14–20.) The lower angels, although able to be called *summi sacerdotes*, are also prophets of the angelic high priests, announcing the divine mysteries to the human high priests. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* XII, 164.85–87.)

<sup>77</sup> The first angels, who lead the rest, are cooperators and administrators of our salvation and deification. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII, 106.564–566.) The nature of this activity is that angels exercise *imperium* and *principatus* over the human nations through science and wisdom because humans are intellectual creatures in order to lead them to right worship of the true God. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* IX, 142.315–319.) The commentary on *CH* VII.1 that falls within the *deficit* in the *Expositiones* describes the glorifying sacrifice of the theophanies as their being distributed downwards to the other angels, and thus eventually, to the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

<sup>78</sup> The first angels are deified by knowing Jesus deifying them. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII, 105.546–106.551.) The first angelic hierarchy are established in the temple, the pure spirit, in which God dwells and is worshipped. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII, 101.380–386) Furthermore, the first triad of angels in their immediacy to and their intellectual circling around God are likened to the Israelites with their high priests and Levites before tabernacle around the tabernacle. (Eriugena *Exp in Hier* VII, 113.825–837.) Hilduin’s prologue to the *EH* describes the worship of the angels as being established around Jesus and the Seraphim singing the *sanctus*, while the rest sing the alleluia. (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 36; cf. *EH* IV.3.5 480B–C [99.21–100.1]; *EH* IV.3.12 485B [103.19–104.2].)

<sup>79</sup> Eriugena follows Dionysius closely, humanity and angels receive what the other does through their proper modes of cult, which Eriugena specifies, in the cognition of the *ipsam veritatem*, Christ and Trinity who deifies them both through the symbols and theophanies, leading humanity to be like the angels so that they constitute one city and worship. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII, 117.596–119.650.) The Church’s

reunification of humanity and the angels implies that the essential identity of their priesthood will be manifest in the eschaton.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, Eriugena teaches that even now the angels do not only know Christ saving them through the invisible, intelligible theophany of his theurgy but even in Church's symbolic τελεταῖ.<sup>81</sup>

Finally, the cultic context through which the purpose of hierarchy is accomplished is emphasized by Eriugena's descriptions of the Trinity's and the incarnate Christ's deifying activity in cultic, sacrificial language. The aforementioned *Periphyseon* IV excerpt attached to *E*'s *MT* describes the Trinity as fire consuming the imperfections of the soul and receiving it as "holocaust θέωσις," but two other passages in the *Exp in Hier* offer further insight into his cultic conception of divinity. First, Eriugena, commenting on *CH* I, discusses the meaning of "τελετάρχης ιεροθεσία", that which raises humanity to *see* and *be like* the angels, glossing it as τελετάρχη *sacerdotium* and defining that [...]

τελετάρχη *sacerdotium*, est summa sanctaque Trinitas, prima omnium ierarchium

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symbols participate veiledly and anticipate the brightness of the invisible theophanies, so that for Eriugena, the Church's symbolic cult both manifests and conceals Christ's saving work among the angels, and their cooperative deification of humanity. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII, 119.650–664.) Hilduin applies such a logic in his prologue to the *EH*, describing chapters II–VII as descriptive of how the angelic ministry ("angelico mysterio") performs what the ecclesiastical ranks celebrate both in a heavenly manner and together with the ranks of the Church, taking *CH* I.3 as the lens for the *EH*. (Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 36.)

<sup>80</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 15.506–508; II, 43.874–876; VII, 102.427–432; cf. Duclow, Donald F., "Isaiah Meets the Seraph: Breaking Rank in Dionysius and Eriugena?," 43–44. Eriugena, *Periphyseon* V, 204.6603–6610.

<sup>81</sup> Eriugena describes the angels as contemplative of both the intelligible and sensible symbols, that is, sacraments of the old Law, especially the tabernacle, the visions of the prophets, and the mysteries of the New Testament, whose innermost light the angels perceive clearly. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII, 103.465–472.) The phrase, "intelligible symbols" are the invisible theophanies that receive the species of the truth, and as indicative of their quasi-sacramental status. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII, 103.473–104.482) While Eriugena insists that somehow the angels really do contemplate the sensible with a "spiritual eye", but nevertheless qualifies they are led back to God by higher light, the triple light of the Trinity shining in all the hierarchies. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* VII, 104.485–105.529.) The angel's contemplation of the sensible is not novel, but an expansion of Dionysius' notion that the angels even recognize Christ in his humanity in the μυστήριον consecrated on the altar. (*EH* IV.3.10 484A [101.19–102.7].)

ierarchia, ex qua omnes ierarchie in celo et in terra et facte et ordinate et tradite sunt.”<sup>82</sup>

Indeed, the Trinity is a priesthood, that is, a hierarchy. Eriugena goes on to explain its priesthood by means of an analysis of τελετάρχης into its etymological components, τελετή and ἀρχίς, in which he gives the definition of τελετή as “a purgative *hostia* through which a god is made of a man,” and reduces it to a speculative meaning, τελετῶν ἀρχή, insofar as the Trinity is the “cause and *principium*” of purgation and deification, it is the, *principium* and *finis* of purgation.<sup>83</sup> Nor is the Trinity just the cause of deification, it is the “ἱεροθεσία,” the *positio sacrorum* (ἱερῶν θεσία—the establishment of rites or mysteries) and thus the fundament of all the sacrosanct mysteries whereby the human rational nature is taught by doctrine, purged in action, enlightened by knowledge, and perfected by the power of deification.<sup>84</sup> Thus, the Trinity is not only τελετάρχης (an adjective) but the τελεταρχία and *summa ierarchia* that grants and receives back the *ordo* of the worshipful city composed of humans and angels.<sup>85</sup>

The hierarchies, that is, the exercise of priesthood, have their origin in a Trinitarian priesthood and hierarchy that, moreover, is manifest principally in the incarnate Christ. After engaging in an etymological analysis and definition of τελεταρχία into “the principle *hostia*” (τελετή ἀρχίς) Eriugena describes Christ as the *initium purgationis* and the *unica hostia* immolated for the purgation of the whole

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<sup>82</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 12.431–13.462: “[...] τελετάρχε sacerdotium, est summa sanctaque Trinitas, prima omnium ierarchium ierarchia, ex qua omnes ierarchie in celo et in terra et facte et ordinate et tradite sunt.”

<sup>83</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 13.463–14.474. Eriugena claims that in Greek, ἀρχή denotes both the source and the term, which, in at least in the Platonic and Aristotelian intellectual traditions, is true, if an extension beyond the most basic sense of the term as a source simply.

<sup>84</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 14.475–480.

<sup>85</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 19.643–650.

world.<sup>86</sup> Both the angels and humans are purged, but although Christ's humanity is immolated, Eriugena specifies that his divinity (and thus even that of the Trinity) is the *initium, principium purgationis*, and *hostia*.<sup>87</sup> The sacrificial logic of an *hostia*, which should be expected to be offered to one higher, elicits Eriugena's explanation that the divinity is not offered to one higher than itself but is so named because it has the effect of an *hostia*: purgation and deification.<sup>88</sup> Even with that qualification, however, Eriugena does not back away from naming Christ's self-offering in his divinity an *hostia* nor does he deny that it is immolated at all but calls it *plus quam hostiam* and the *principium hostiarum* in the manner of Dionysius' other titles unifying the apophatic and cataphatic attribution (e.g. God is more than being and cause of all being).<sup>89</sup> Thus, the divinity of the Trinity is the proto-cult, of divinity offered to divinity, from which all heavenly and earthly sacrifice receives its order and efficacy.

## II.2.4 Conclusion

The treatment of hierarchy in *E*, Eriugena's translations of the *CD*, his own commentaries, and the scholia and glosses they picked up over their history represent a transmission of Dionysian thought that retains the *CD*'s taxonomy of hierarchy along

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<sup>86</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier III*, 57.54–58.76.

<sup>87</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier III*, 57.54–58.76.

<sup>88</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier III*, 58.76–83.

<sup>89</sup> Eriugena says that Christ's *hostia* is so called, "non quod illa hostia [...] ulli superiori se imoletur" (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier III*, 58.76–83) but because of its effect. Whether the immolation to a superior is denied or immolation absolutely is denied is not clear. If not denied absolutely, another kind of immolation, between equals, such as between the persons of the Trinity, would be required. Gandillac suggests that Eriugena has in mind his commentary on *CH III.1* that Christ as the *hostia* is an intra-Trinitarian sacrifice in which Christ is offered as God to God, see Gandillac "Angeles et Hommes Dans Le Commentaire de Jean Scot Sur La «Hierarchie Céleste»,» 399. Nonetheless, Eriugena keeps any speculations veiled behind its status as *plus quam hostiam*.

with the explicit awareness that hierarchy is God-imitating and glorifying (and thus cultic) deification. Christ's central role is preserved as is the conception that the whole hierarchical system is a priesthood that shares in Christ's divine acts. Moreover, it preserves the vision of God as beyond knowledge and thereby that true union with God must be placed beyond knowledge, yet without relying on the affective approach, a development in Dionysianism yet to come, for explaining such a union. Nonetheless, Eriugena's treatment of Dionysian hierarchy, by combining it with elements from Augustine and Maximus the Confessors thought, foretells its future use in the cosmologically and subjectively centered spiritualities of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Moreover, in treating the Trinity as a hierarchy, Eriugena opens the way to future coordinations of the Trinity with the inferior hierarchies, a trend that will find its way into Bonaventure.

### II.3 The Hugonian Conception of Hierarchy in *Super ierarchiam Dionysii*

Hugh of St. Victor's commentary on the *CH*, *Super ierarchiam Dionysii* (*Super Hier*), has been judged as the text which made Dionysius accessible in spite of the doctrinal and philological difficulties associated with the *CD* and propelled Dionysius into theological prominence in twelfth-century Latin theology and onwards.<sup>90</sup> Hugh's commentary depends upon Eriugena's translation of the *CD* and some of its content

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<sup>90</sup> Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century: Essays on New Theological Perspectives in the Latin West*, trans. Jerome Taylor and Lester K. Little, Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching 37 (Toronto ; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press in association with the Medieval Academy of America, 1997), 80.; Rebecca Moore, *Jews and Christians in the Life and Thought of Hugh of St. Victor*, South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 138 (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1998), 52; Dominique Poirel, *Des symboles et des anges: Hugues de Saint-Victor et le réveil dionysien du XIIIe siècle* (Turnhout, Belgique: Brepols, 2013), 22–24, 314–33;



suggests that the Hugh knew Eriugena's commentary. Hugh maintains several elements of Eriugena's developments, such as including his identification of the Trinity as hierarchy and the association of the fire of the Seraphim with love while further developing the role of love.

In other ways, Hugh's commentary is remarkably different from Eriugena's. Hugh explicitly links the triadic structures of the angelic hierarchies with the Trinity's own distinctions, and even with the persons, while elsewhere he initiates the Latin tradition of affective Dionysianism by attributing to love the ability to exceed knowledge in approaching and savoring God. Furthermore, whereas Eriugena retains Dionysius' strongly cultic vision of hierarchy, Hugh, without dismissing the cultic associations, primarily describes hierarchy's deifying activity through the language of governance (*gubernatio, officium, ministerium, potestas*) and infuses it with a moralizing, Augustinian psychology of love combined with a concern for Church history.<sup>91</sup> The starkness of this contrast is amplified by the wealth of material in *E*, which besides *Exp in Hier* with its pervasive cultic context also includes the liturgically-focused *EH* in Eriugena's *versio* with its acquired scholia and glosses. Hugh, on the other hand, either did not elect to comment on the *EH* and the rest of the *CD* or never managed to do so, nor did he apply the language of hierarchy to his treatment of the Church and the sacraments in his *De sacramentis christianae fidei*.<sup>92</sup> Rather, *gubernatio*, the power of ruling, stands

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<sup>91</sup> Moore, *Jews and Christians in the Life and Thought of Hugh of St. Victor*, 53–56; Grover Zinn, "Suger, Theology and Pseudo-Dionysian Tradition," in *Abbot Suger and Saint-Denis: A Symposium*, ed. Paula Lieber Gerson (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986), 34; Robert Javelet, *Image et Ressemblance Au Douzième Siècle, de Saint Anselme À Alain de Lille* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1967), xvi, 41.; René Roques, *Structures Théologiques, de La Gnose À Richard de Saint-Victor: Essais et Analyses Critiques* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1962), 308.

<sup>92</sup> Poirel, *Des symboles et des anges*, 195ff. Poirel suggests that the common title of Hugh's commentary, *Super ierarchiam Dionisii* and its introduction's attention to the divine, angelic, and human

at the center of gravity in Hugh's vision of how hierarchy both imitates God and participates in the work of deification, not to the exclusion of *sacerdotium*, but indeed, it draws *sacerdotium* towards *gubernatio*.

### II.3.1 Taxonomy

Hugh's taxonomy of the hierarchical system is, overall, faithful to Dionysius' conceptual system of mediation and identical with Eriugena's understanding of its organization.<sup>93</sup> Like the Scot, he treats the Trinity as a hierarchy, and counts three hierarchies or exercises of power: the Trinity as simple and ineffable power is the first; the second is hierarchy as it is received from God and participated by the angels; the third is ordained in human nature by our imitation of the angels proximately and God ultimately.<sup>94</sup> Like Eriugena, Hugh subdivides the angelic hierarchy, which he calls a universal hierarchy, into three singular hierarchies that are each exercised by one of the three divisions of angels (*ornatus* or *dipositiones*) corresponding to them.<sup>95</sup> Each division contains a triad of angels divided into first, middle, and last *ordines* (orders or ranks) each of which are then further sub-divided into first, middle and last groups of members. These further divisions neither fracture the unity of *officium* and *dignitas* of the hierarchy

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hierarchies suggests he had a larger plan to comment on all the whole *CD*, a task left unfinished by his death.

<sup>93</sup> René Roques, *Structures Théologiques, de La Gnose À Richard de Saint-Victor: Essais et Analyses Critiques* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1962), 323–25; Poirel, *Des symboles et des anges*, 253–54.

<sup>94</sup> Hugh, *Hugonis de Sancto Victore Super ierarchiam Dionisii*, ed. Dominique Poirel, *Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis*, CLXXVIII (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2015), I-Prol., 408.230–246.

<sup>95</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* I-Prol., 408.230–246; 412.339–340: “Ipsam autem angelicam ierarchiam in tres subdividit hierchias [...]”; V-VI, 548.1–13 (1027D-1028C); IX-X, 649.147. The terminology for the personal divisions of the angelic hierarchies (*ornatus/dipositio* and *ordo*) is taken from Eriugena's *versio*.

nor undermine the numbering of the nine orders of angels.<sup>96</sup> The human hierarchy is subordinate to and guided by the lowest of the angelic triads, completing the series which is governed throughout by the *lex divinitatis*, “the second is always led back to divinity by the first.”<sup>97</sup> Thus the hierarchies proper to creatures number four.<sup>98</sup> This structure is also explicitly serial. Hugh accounts for hierarchy as a differentiated participation in the divine hierarchy, so that as the execution of the superior hierarchies enables the execution of the inferior, each exercises its allotted power differently.<sup>99</sup> For Hugh as for Eriugena, hierarchy is a single system of deification effected principally by God as the distribution and handing on of divine illumination through the hierarchies, in which the operation of the higher benefits both the proximate inferiors and all subsequent inferiors.<sup>100</sup> Hugh specifies that God is the *principium* of the divine illumination that is shared but from the perspective of the inferiors the proximate superiors are the (relative) *principium* of divine

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<sup>96</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier*, I-Prol., 412.340–343 (932B); IX-X, 648.116–119 (1102B); V-V, 535.17–18 (1019B-C); V-V, 543.270–545.310 (1024D-1025D).

<sup>97</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* V-IV, 523.270–524.296 (1011B–1011D); 527.393–528.418 (1014A-C). This latter passage gives what has been called the *lex divinitatis*, which as explained by Hugh is thoroughly serial, not only are the angels led by God, men by angels, lower angels by the higher, and lower men by the higher, Hugh adds that even those of the same rank (*ordo*) are not necessarily equals, implying that persons of can lead another of the same rank if they have a greater participation in divine grace.

<sup>98</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IX-X, 646.63–70, especially 66–67: “Prima enim hierarchia angelica convertit secundam, secunda terciam, tertia angelica convertit humanam [hierarchiam].” Unlike Eriugena, Hugh does not explicitly call them four distinct hierarchies, but the structure is identical.

<sup>99</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* I-Prol., 406.195–407.228 (928D-930B).

<sup>100</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* I-Prol., 412.352–413.382 (932C-934A), especially 412.355–358: “[...] ut in illo [summo bono] unum sint omnes, quoniam dona eius lumina sunt, et lumina faciunt lucentia et illuminata lucentia et illuminata ipsa; et fiunt lux lucentia et illuminata lumina, sicut lucentia et illuminantia lumina lux sunt.” The distribution of the illumination integrates the illuminated into the act of illuminating., Hugh clarifies, following *CH* V and *CH* XII, that all the heavenly spirits are involved in revealing the “divine secrets”, hence all can be called angels even if it is proper to the two lowest orders, angels and archangels properly speaking, to announce them to humanity, since these secrets, i.e. divine illumination, are received from the superior spirits beginning with the Seraphim, who receive them from God. (V-V, 536.30–537.55. [1019B–1020B].) This is the Dionysian doctrine that the higher spirits always possess the powers of the inferiors (V-V, 540.160–167 [1022C].) Hugh uses the image of fire heating and lighting, and water flowing to describe the serial nature of divinization.

illumination.<sup>101</sup> In this way, Hugh emphasizes the extent to which the operation of the created hierarchies is a participation in divine action, while also retaining the Dionysian doctrine that the superior principles operate “more hiddenly” (κρυφιοειδέστερόν).

The major divergences, omissions, and developments in Hugh’s taxonomy are as follows. First, Hugh makes no comment on the distinction of the plural “human *hierarchies*” mentioned in *CH IX* whereas Eriugena assumes that the plural aligns with a temporal distinction between the hierarchy of the Law and the hierarchy of the New Testament.<sup>102</sup> Second, although Hugh does not, as Eriugena does, understand the *ordo* of the Trinity or divine hierarchy to descend and order the hierarchies operated by creatures, he does introduce a novel association of the members of the first angelic triad with the persons of the Trinity and their proper attributes, which will be developed by Thomas Gallus and employed by Bonaventure. He identifies the Thrones with the Father and *dominatio*, the Seraphim with the Holy Spirit and *dilectio*, and though he makes no explicit mention of it, the Cherubim, who stand around the Trinity through *cognition* are identified by implication with the wisdom proper to the Son.<sup>103</sup> Hugh makes these associations in the course of the inquiry as to the manner in which the members of each triad are of equal status (ὁμοταγής), which question Eriugena also raised, but answered less definitely than Hugh, who describes the members of every hierarchy as equal in *potestas* and *officium*, and those of the first angelic triad as beings without any subjection

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<sup>101</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier IX-XIII*, 673.347–356: “Ita enim ‘consequens est’ ut Deum primum principium cognoscant, deinde et ipsos qui primi sunt ‘post Deum’, suo modo principium ad sequentian venerentur, per quos gratia divina ad eos qui subiecti sunt descendit.”

<sup>102</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier IX-IX*, 630.161–631.188.0

<sup>103</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier VII-VII*, 594.798–808.

to each other in imitation of the persons of the Trinity.<sup>104</sup> Finally, Hugh does not import Eriugena's speculations about the primordial or eschatological equality of angels and humans into his system and in this way remains closer to Dionysius.

### II.3.2 Purpose

As with taxonomy, Hugh's understanding of the purpose of the hierarchies is basically the same as Eriugena's: it is deification, understood as assimilation and union with God in divine imitation and cooperation (through grace rather than nature) in receiving and distributing the divine illumination.<sup>105</sup> Hugh's understanding of hierarchy's purpose is, as René Roque remarked, faithfully Dionysian.<sup>106</sup> The core elements of Dionysian hierarchy can all be accounted for: 1) hierarchy is the transmission of the divine illumination of the *claritas*, *radius*, and *lumen Patris* i.e., Jesus as the eternal Word and wisdom of the Father, through whom humans and angels are purified, enlightened, and perfected;<sup>107</sup> 2) cooperation in the distribution of the divine illumination

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<sup>104</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* VII-VII, 594.808–822. Cf. I-Prol., 412.341–343: “*Et omnem ierarchiam unius potestatis et unius officii et unius dignitatis.*” Hugh's version of the question involves the Trinity because it seems at first the Seraphim are the highest order of angels because of their being treated first in *CH* VII, but since the Thrones may be associated with the Father's *dominatio*, they might also be placed first.

<sup>105</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier*, VII-VII, 576.226–577.252 (1050A–1050C). That hierarchy is a matter of grace see I-Prol., 420.186–187 and VIII-VIII, 610.57–59 (1074D).

<sup>106</sup> Roques, *Structures Théologiques, de La Gnose à Richard de Saint-Victor*, 325–26.

<sup>107</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* II-I, 425.346–426.361 (942D-943B); VII-VII, 603.1071–1075 (1068B-C): “[t]radidit dico seipsam ‘tanquam deiformem hierarchiam,’ hoc est Dei conformitatem et similitudinem habentem, et Deum imitantem in eo quod ab ipso illuminata alios illuminat, et seipsis quasi formam, et exemplar proponit divinae conformitatis.” The providential descent of the *claritas* is described in *Super Hier* II-I, 424.298–315. Csaba Németh reads Hugh as teaching that the descent of Christ as the light is as the Divine Wisdom rather than Eriugena's association of the descending light as the uncreated Word, see Csaba Németh and Dominique Poirel, “The Victorines and the Areopagite,” in *L'Ecole de Saint-Victor de Paris: Influence et Rayonnement Du Moyen Age À L'époque Moderne.*, Bibliotheca Victorina, 22 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 346, 348–9.

is the imitation and participation of God (θεομίμησις), culminates in the experience of unity with God, and makes the members of the hierarchical system temples of God;<sup>108</sup> 3) the distribution of illumination is a social action whereby the superior attend to the salvation of the inferior, and the inferior take on likeness to the superior as far as possible, so that angels work for each other's and humanity's salvation, and humanity looks to and imitates the angels in a terrestrial context.<sup>109</sup> In short, hierarchy is imitation of and union with God through a sacred (i.e. supernaturally performed) social action through the descent of and ascent with the divine illumination.

Hugh, however, does depart both the Scot and the Areopagite on some details of hierarchy's purpose and the means of its accomplishment. There are, principally, three points of distinction. 1) Hugh conceives of contemplation as the summit of divine union through love that exceeds knowledge in adapted apophaticism, whereas in both Eriugena and Dionysius apophatic theology proposes the radical union with God even beyond contemplation. 2) Hugh, in part, articulates the process of deification through a psychological framework and develops the moral and affective personal dimensions of hierarchy. 3) Hugh casts the foundational hierarchical doctrine that the hierarchies imitate God by transmitting the divine light as a political or gubernatorial act derived from God who is chiefly the *rector*, subtly departing from Dionysius and Hugh, for whom God is principally the chief actor in the deifying cult, i.e. the *τελεταρχία*. I will explain these divergences in more detail below.

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<sup>108</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* VII-VII, 595.845–596.856 (1063C-1063D): “Duo sunt ista apud nos magna bona, et non inueniuntur alia maiora his, neque ad gaudium uel ad felicitatem nostrum magis operantia: lumen et dulcedo.” Those in whom God dwells and fills are likened to temples. (Hugh, *Super Hier*, VII-VII, 580.338–355 (1052C-D); cf. I-Prol., 418.120–126 (938A).)

<sup>109</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* II-I, 445.946–446.975 (956A-C); V-IV, 527.393–528.418 (1014A-C); 533.580–534.591 (1018B–1018C).

### II.3.3.1 Contemplative Apophaticism through Love

Hugh's understanding of contemplation has been seen as the watershed moment of the affective Dionysian movement. It is a working out of the tension implicit in Dionysius' teaching that the super-intelligible and super-essential God is participated by intelligent creatures.<sup>110</sup> For Hugh as for Dionysius and Eriugena, contemplation (or θεωρία) of the divine realities (i.e. God's operation through the angelic hierarchies and the Church's rites) is an intellectual activity (seen with the "eyes of the mind"), but whereas divine union, for Dionysius and Eriugena, exceeds the vision of the active presence of God in divine illumination in a union beyond νοῦς, Hugh expands intellectual contemplation into the more-than-intellectual but not surely not super-subjective summit of a graced life. For Hugh, contemplation is ultimately tasting the sweetness of God through *amor*, *caritas*, and *dilectio*.<sup>111</sup> While the language of divine sweetness is not alien to Dionysius, especially in the treatments of the Eucharist and μύρον in of *EH* III and IV, Hugh uses the language of taste's implied intimacy and immediacy to account for intelligent creatures' union with the supra-intelligible God.<sup>112</sup> Hugh does not, however,

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<sup>110</sup> Dionysius and Eriugena, *MT 13th Century Textbook*, 12–16. Harrington follows the distinction between the intellectualist "speculative" and experiential "affective" approaches to resolving the tension of union with God who exceeds humanity's natural powers. He locates the inception of the affective tradition to the early thirteenth century with Thomas Gallus and the later Victorines, but Coolman places the root of this tradition in Hugh, see Boyd Taylor Coolman, "The Medieval Affective Dionysian Tradition," *Modern Theology* 24, no. 4 (October 2008): 615–32. Coolman specifies that affective tradition is a resolution of a tension between an Augustinian expectation of a *visio Dei* and the divine darkness of Dionysius. (Coolman., 615.)

<sup>111</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IV-III, 512.460–467: "Ecce quid caritas facit: solis animis diligentibus Deum abscondita divina manifesta facta dicuntur et ad imitandum possibilia. Interna namque et aeterna bona rationales animi per solam caritatem percipiunt, illa per dilectiones et gustando ut intelligent, et sequendo ut apprehendant. Nisi enim diligerent, non intelligerent, quia non intelliguntur nisi cum diliguntur; et rursum nisi amerent, non quererent, et nisi quererent non invenirent, quia non inveniuntur nisi non quererunt." (VI-VII, 562.288–563.310 [1040C-1041A].)

<sup>112</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* VI-VII, 556.103–557.114. That the angels circle God through *dilectio* is explained by Hugh, who commenting on *CH* VII's statement in Eriugena's *versio* that the Seraphim's

sidestep apophaticism through love; love penetrates to God's presence in things in a way intellect cannot, but love cannot penetrate to God as he is in himself.<sup>113</sup> Eriugena's own reading of the hierarchical system as the means of a personal and cosmic *transitus* into God is nowhere to be found in Hugh's commentary, however one might expect to appeal to Hugh's interest in the restoration of the world.<sup>114</sup>

### II.3.3.2 Psychologized, Moralized Hierarchy

Hugh's novel elevation of the role of love also extends to a greater emphasis on the particular and personal psychology of hierarchy's participants.<sup>115</sup> Dionysius' psychology in the *CH* and *EH* is altogether formal, even superficial, while Hugh grants a wider scope to hierarchy's operation in personal, subjective experience.<sup>116</sup> Hugh, certainly, follows the basic Dionysian schema of deification: union with God occurs through cooperation with and imitation of God in distributing the purifying, enlightening, and perfective divine illuminations. Hugh expresses this doctrine succinctly: by receiving

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motion around the *divina* is "*incessabile et calidum et acutum et superfervidum*" interprets these to mean perpetuality, *amor*, and wisdom, which are all joined in *dilectio*. (Hugh, *Super Hier* 557.115–126 (1036D–1037A).) Through this *dilectio* union is achieved since "[a]mor autem unum te facere cum ipso [*dilecto*], et iccirco penetrat omnia et appropinquat quantum potest ad unum ipsum." (Hugh, *Super Hier* 558.163–165 (1037D–1038A).)

<sup>113</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* VI–VII, 563.302–310 (1041A).

<sup>114</sup> Boyd Taylor Coolman, *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor: An Interpretation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 12–29.

<sup>115</sup> Roques, *Structures Théologiques, de La Gnose À Richard de Saint-Victor*, 325–26.

<sup>116</sup> Every intelligent soul has capacities to be acted upon by the corresponding to the hierarchical powers of purgation, enlightenment, and perfection; furthermore, Dionysius explains that hierarchical activity frees its participants from ignorance and sin and unifies its divided parts. Cf. Chenu, *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century*, 80. Chenu points out that Augustine's "sensitivity" to the interior movements of the soul contrasts with the cosmic, Proclean scope of Dionysian thought.



the divine light (*lumen*), the angels and humans become luminous (*lucentes*), much as in Dionysius' image of worshippers as mirrors of the divine light.<sup>117</sup>

Hugh narrows the meaning of the divine self-communication as light to being the source of the ultimate knowledge or recognition of God rather than of union by "unknowing" while simultaneously expanding it to be the power that elicit acts of a good will, that is, of love, which takes the place of union by "unknowing."<sup>118</sup> Hugh merges the

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<sup>117</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier*, VII-VII, 584.482–485 (1055C): "Deifica similitudo' ipsa est contemplation divina, quia dum per eam illuminati lucentes fiunt, quodammodo ipsius illuminantis similitudinem accipiunt." This applies to the highest triad of angels in the text, but the principle is universally applicable throughout Hugh's understanding of hierarchy, cf. Hugh. I-Prol., 412.352–413.382 (932C-934A); Németh, "The Victorines and the Areopagite," 348–49.

<sup>118</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier*, IV-III, 511.419–446 (1001A-C), especially 440–446: "Quae traditio iccirco 'perfectiva' vocatur quia hoc solum hominem ad perfectum ducit, quando bona quae per intelligentiam cognoscere non potuit, per studium boni operis apprehendit. Tali ergo doctrina ipsi perfectores perficiendos perficere debent, ut sint sancti et perfecti bonitate, imitantes illum, ad cuius formam et similitudinem reformantur, et superiores tribuendo, et inferiores percipiendo gratiae divinae participationem."; VII-VII, 592.745–593.75 (1061B-C): "Iccirco 'lucidissimam doctrinam' vocat quae in habitu virtutis constat, quia magistra intelligendi experientia est, et ille optime virtutem novit, qui eam non audiendo solum, sed et gustando et faciendo didicit. In experientia et habitu virtutis, cognitio veritatis perficitur, quae in sola intelligendi illuminatione inchoatur. Quod totum quia per divinae scientiae assumptionem acquiritur, iccirco ipsa et purgatio et illuminatio et perfectio convenienter appellatur."; IX-IX, 632.228–633.245 (1092A-B): "[...] id est, propria voluntate, 'recidentes' a 'recta reductione', id est cognitione, per quam homo reducitur in divinum, ut crederent deos, qui non erant dii; illos, inquam, ipsos accusandos, qui propria voluntate, in quantum liberi arbitrii erant, a veritate in errorem lapsi sunt, et hoc ex amore proprio, quia seipsos amaverunt plusquam Deum et suam gloriam quaerebant." This last passage shows very clearly, albeit negatively, how knowledge or recognition of God leads (*reducere*) human free will back to God, but that love, as free can be withheld and misdirected. For Eriugena (and Dionysius), the Light is the presence of Christ transcending but also condescending to intellects, not restricted even to a divine presence that teaches, but a divinizing divine presence simply. Roques observes that Hugh, like Dionysius, regards the lights as all the goods received from God, citing II-I, 416.52–54 (936C): "*et ipsum bonum, a quo sunt omnia bona, bonum et lumen est, [...]; et bona lumina sunt [...]*" (Roques, *Structures Théologiques, de La Gnose à Richard de Saint-Victor*, 308–9.) While knowledge is not the only gift, as God also gives the power to receive the divine illuminations and to will in accordance with them (IX-IX, 634.271–289 (1092D-1093A), nevertheless, almost every reference to illumination treats it as the reception of the divine science and even cognition of God, and it is in response to these that good actions are performed through love, which is more perfectly aware of God than intellect. Both Coolman and Rorem lay a particular stress on Hugh's singling out of love not as action a moralized account of hierarchization, as Roques correctly points out, but as the subjectivity which exceeds knowledge in approaching union with God. (Coolman, "The Medieval Affective Dionysian Tradition," 619.; Paul Rorem, *Hugh of Saint Victor*, Great Medieval Thinkers (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 172–75.) Csabe Németh, however, regards Hugh's reading of Dionysius as intellectualist when compared with the apophaticism of Dionysius insofar as Hugh makes God an objection of direct, "anagogical" cognition in contemplation. (Németh, "The Victorines and the Areopagite," 345–54.) Surprisingly, Németh has little to say about the role of either morality or penetrating love in Hugh's reading of Dionysius and even distinguishes spirituality of pre-Gallusian Victorines as sapiential, "the conformation of human wisdom to divine wisdom" in direct

immediate deification of the first angelic triad with the traditional fire imagery of the Seraphim: they are not only illumined by receiving the *claritas* sent from the Trinity, but inflamed with love, too. The God-given fire and light that bring knowledge and inflame love are thereafter mediated through the hierarchical system to the lower angels and humanity.<sup>119</sup>

Hugh's simultaneous narrowing of light to a source of knowledge and expansion to an incitement to love maps onto a stable psychology employed throughout his commentary.<sup>120</sup> Light brings *scientia* and *cognitio Dei* to the intellect, to which the will is free to respond with love and worship—or not to do so.<sup>121</sup> This is borne out by his

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contrast to the Cistercian “identification of human love and divine love”, calling the efforts of the latter to so incite “human love to coincide with divine love” as “alien to the Victorine way.” (Németh, 350.) While Roques and Németh appear opposed over Hugh's intellectualism, they both locate cognition of God as the end of hierarchization without extended reflection on the way love has priority in any such cognition. Their seeming opposition is based upon two sets of contrasts. Roques contrasts Hugonian moralism and Dionysian intellectualism, while Németh contrasts Hugonian intellectualism with Dionysian apophatic union. Roques' labelling of Dionysius as intellectualist really refers to Dionysius' interest in the awareness of the divine action impelling the soul to union rather than engagement in the world. Thus both Németh and Hugh recognize Hugh's departure from Dionysius' concern to describe divine union. However, it is precisely in this regard that attention to Hugh's injection of affectivity into the hierarchical system, as Coolman and Rorem have, is necessary to appreciate the actual character of Hugh's reading of hierarchy while nonetheless locating the root of later more strictly intellectualist interpretations of the *CD*.

<sup>119</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IX-XIII, 669.236–285 (1119C-1120D); X-XV, 709.559–564 (1149A): “‘Et’ significat etiam utpote ‘in argento, claritatem apertam, et luciformem, et caelestem,’ sicut argentum nitidum est et lucens. Sic ergo electum secundum utramque speciem, auri scilicet et argenti significat nitidum et fulgidum, id est clarum et igneum, quia superna sapientia, quae in illis spiritibus lucet, et clara est per cognitionem, et ignea per dilectionem.” Hugh developed the fire imagery of the Seraphim into a sign for the power of love to approach God, a single association made by Eriugena but greatly expanded by Hugh, see Rorem, *Hugh of Saint Victor*, 172–75.

<sup>120</sup> Németh, “The Victorines and the Areopagite,” 349–50. Németh regards Hugh's theology as “sapiential”, which form him means a contemplation that is initiated by wonder of beauty and subsisting in the understanding of divine wisdom, which he distinguishes it from a Cistercian theology that regards contemplation as first motivated by love. Cf. Boyd Taylor Coolman, *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor: An Interpretation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 36, 118. Coolman shows the sapiential character of Hugh's theology is a tendency to show the relation of all the aspects of the order of creation and redemption, which need not be exclusive of the evident affective dimension of his thought, see Coolman, “The Medieval Affective Dionysian Tradition.”; Paul Rorem, “The Early Latin Dionysius: Eriugena and Hugh of St. Victor,” *Modern Theology* 24, no. 4 (October 1, 2008): 601–14. Németh, however, does not, here, regard Hugh as the initiator of the affective Dionysian tradition, but rather, sees Thomas Gallus as its founder.

<sup>121</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IX-IX, 632.228–633.250 (1092A-B).

emphasis on hierarchy as the process of imparting true doctrine and guiding right action, perhaps an unsurprising emphasis from Hugh the great master of St. Victor.<sup>122</sup> Hugh even interprets the first definition of hierarchy as *ordo*, *scientia*, and *actio* to mean the *officium* (or power and authority to act), the knowledge of what to do, and to do it, respectively.<sup>123</sup> Hugh, following Dionysius and Eriugena his interpreter, explains that purification is from ignorance and all uncleanness, but Hugh uniquely defines illumination as the cognition that establishes *scientia* and perfection as the cognition that demonstrates the form of good *mores* and virtuous habits, and accomplishes such good actions by, in fact, desiring them.<sup>124</sup> The hierarchical actions, for Hugh, have an explicitly moral thrust. Hugh's vision of hierarchy, however, cannot be reduced to the formation and operation of a moral psychology in which intellect proposes actions to the will. He explains that knowledge is not perfect unless its object is also loved: the words of the Word "are not

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<sup>122</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* VII-VII, 591.705–714 (1060C): “‘Comprehendens autem et hoc dixerim fortassis non immerito.’ Tanquam si quaeretur, quae sit ista purgatio, respondet ‘quia assumptio divinae scientiae’ in animo rationali ‘et purgatio est, et illuminatio, et perfectio’: ‘purgatio’ quia ignorantiam purgat, ‘illuminatio’ quia divina cognitione illuminat, ‘perfectio’ quia illuminando scientia perfectarum doctrinarum, sive disciplinarum secundum habitum illuminatum consummat.” The language of illumination as teaching is not, however, absent from the *CD* and Eriugena's *Expositio*. What makes Hugh's commentary distinctive is that teaching is an organizing concept for illumination.

<sup>123</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IV-III, 497.10–498.45 (992B-993A).

<sup>124</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* VII-VII, 591.705–714 (1060C); 592.738–741 (1061B): “Hoc tamen interest, quod illuminatio proprie ad illam cognitionem pertinet, quae scientiam edificat, perfectio autem ad illam cognitionem quae bonorum morum formam et habitum virtutum demonstrat.”; 600.998–1003 (1066D): “Et rectus est ordo. Primum per claritatem cognitionis illuminatur; postea per dulcedinem dilectionis reficitur, ut sic Deo et communicet in virtute, et cooperetur in actione, sicut scriptum est: ‘Si quis diligit me, sermonem meum servabit; et Pater meus diliget eum, et ad eum veniemus, et mansionem apud eum faciemus,’ [...]”; Roques, *Structures Théologiques, de La Gnose À Richard de Saint-Victor*, 309–10. It must be noted that Eriugena's commentary uses the language of *habitus* together with *perfectio* twice. Eriugena explains that the *ordo* which is hierarchy establishes the *habitus animi* as *perfectus*, which is distinguished, however from the *actio* wherein the soul is purified in accomplishing the divine commands. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* III, 56.8–21) Towards the end of his commentary on *CH* III.3, Eriugena also describes perfection as the ascent in *habitus ipus incommutabilem scientiae divinarum mysteriorum*, which not a moral habit but an experience of God. (*Exp in Hier* III, 64.329–334.)

understood unless they are loved, and they are not loved unless they are tasted.”<sup>125</sup> Thus Hugh recognizes the trio of powers (purification, enlightenment/illumination, and perfection) as edification in divine science without conceiving hierarchy as merely a transmission of doctrine: divinely given knowledge elicits the actions of love, or religion, which in turn penetrate the intelligibles proposed to it more deeply than intelligence itself.<sup>126</sup> Despite retaining a mystical consummation, Hugh’s commentary must nevertheless be judged as a departure from Dionysius’ cosmic-liturgical vision by its sourcing of the *CD* to address subjective, personal psychological concerns.<sup>127</sup>

### II.3.3.3 Gubernatorial Hierarchy

In Hugh’s reading of the *CH*, the historical Christian life lived day to day (as a human or angel) displaces cult performed in the sanctuary as the privileged locus (at least, *literary* locus) of divine imitation and union. For Hugh, cult is the result of hierarchy governing so as to form affective and moral dimensions of life through

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<sup>125</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* VI-VII, 556.107–108 (1036D). Roques suggests that Hugh makes a significant structural distinction on the role of morality between human and angelic illumination. He argues out that Hugh, like Dionysius, regards the purification of the angels from ignorance as consumation in knowledge, but deviates from Dionysius by regarding human purification as only a moral purification from corruption, that is, evil actions, at the expense of its intellectual dimensions (René Roques, *Structures Théologiques, de La Gnose À Richard de Saint-Victor*, 307–8.) Thus he characterizes Hugh as giving Dionysius’ thought a moral, rather than intellectualist, inflection. While I do not disagree with that overall characterization, in his commentary, Hugh’s always presents purification as a function of receiving divine *scientia*, and his comments on the “*divinissimum sacrificium*” of *CH* III indicate that it purifies humanity not only from the “corruption of evil” but from “defects so that the good might become better.” (Hugh, *Super Hier* IV-III, 499.76–80 [993D].) Roques also observes that love both proceeds and follows knowledge and looks to Hugh’s account of how knowledge cannot attain its object apart from love in VI-VII 1036C-D, see Roques, *Structures Théologiques, de La Gnose à Richard de Saint-Victor*, 314–15. He also highlights love’s penetrative power. (Roques, 315–19.)

<sup>126</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* V-IV, 516.43–70 (1006C-D): “Sola ergo religione et gratiarum actione Deus laudari potest, qui investigare et comprehendere non potest.”

<sup>127</sup> Roques, *Structures Théologiques, de La Gnose à Richard de Saint-Victor*, 310–12.

education. The foremost indicator of this paradigm shift is Hugh's prologue to *Super Hier*, in which he lays out his understanding of hierarchy as participation and cooperation in the divine *gubernatio* that belongs to God as *rector*, a term which Eriugena never uses of God.<sup>128</sup> Eriugena's commentary has no prologue and thus the introduction of God as τελεταρχία and τελεταρχίς in *CH I*, the source of all *hostiae* and itself even the very first *hostia*, frames his hierarchical vision while Hugh's gubernatorial account of hierarchy relativizes cult's explanative power for divinity.<sup>129</sup> Eriugena's translation of ιεραρχία as *sacer principatus* or *episcopatus* indicates the hierarch's leadership in the sacred activities wherein the divine light is received and transmitted. Hugh never uses *episcopatus* but offers *sacer potestas* as an alternative translation. The weight of *sacra potestas* lies in the *potestas* personally exercised through *gubernatio*, *officium*, or *ministerium*.<sup>130</sup> Wayne Hankey sees this interpretive shift as the watershed moment in which hierarchy steps out of the cultic escape from the secular and begins to be conceived politically in western thought, in as much as Hugh teaches that the "whole world is ruled by these hierarchies, or *sacris principatibus*."<sup>131</sup> The personal psychology

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<sup>128</sup> Furthermore, Eriugena also uses the language of rule, *regere* and *gubernare* sparingly in his commentary in comparison to Hugh, depending mostly upon their use in his *versio* of the *CD*.

<sup>129</sup> Eriugena's analysis of the terms τελεταρχία and τελεταρχίς attends to their relationship to *hostia* or τελετή as the source of all deifying purgation, of which God is the source as the principle deifier, but Hugh's discussion of those terms in *CH I* has no reference to *hostia*, but only explains them its meaning as the "*principium purgationis*." (Eriugena, *Exp in hier.* I, 12.426–14.480; Hugh, *Super Hier*, II-I, 434.599–619 [948B-D].) In these two passages, Eriugena regards the Trinity as the source of all the sacred veils, the mysteries through which humanity is elevated while Hugh is more general, describing only humanity's elevation through the visible to the invisible.

<sup>130</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* I-Prol., 405.160–407.208 (927C-929A); 411.319–413.382 (931C-934A). These sections introduce the association of hierarchy with *potestas*, *ministerium*, *officium*, *gubernatio*, and *regere* and the identification of God as *rector*. The language especially of power, office, and ministry will recur throughout the Hugh's commentary, language which is not synonymous with hierarchy for Eriugena and which he uses very sparingly.

<sup>131</sup> Hankey, "Dionysian Hierarchy in Thomas Aquinas," 430–33. Hankey notes that all the theologians after Hugh, excluding John of Paris, regard hierarchy as a concept which can be applied to the Church's power of the secular order. See also Luscombe, "The Commentary of Hugh of St. Victor on the

noted in section II.3.3.2 above complements the notion of hierarchy as personal governance: the exercise of hierarchy facilitates a relationship between its participants like that between master and teacher. Every rank in the hierarchical system exercises their imitation of divine *gubernatio* differently, including through command (*imperatio*), teaching, announcing, giving example, preaching, and the administration of the sacraments.<sup>132</sup>

The turn from a cultic to gubernatorial logic is also evidenced by Hugh's distinction between transmitting and dispensing the divine light. Dionysius taught that each rank in the whole hierarchical schema is led to synergy with God and shows the divine activities in itself by grace, i.e. both those whose purify and are purified, and so on.<sup>133</sup> Hugh, on the other hand, teaches that to receive illumination from above is hierarchical but to give illumination to inferiors is divine.<sup>134</sup> For Dionysius, any participation in cultic action is supernatural because all hierurgies extend the theurgic light of Christ to creatures, be it under symbols or not. The divinity of reception is not a function of the receiver, but of the illumination received. To receive the light for Dionysius (and for Eriugena too) is to be carried with it as it descends and so to cooperate in its own self-communication as far as possible, even by receiving it. Hugh, on the other

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Celestial Hierarchy," 167–69; Hugh, *Super Hier* I-Prol, 411.326–329: "His hierarchiis, id est principatus sacris, totus regitur mudus. In quibus summa potestas est, quae imperat tantum, et infima, cui tantum imperatur; et media quae imperat inferiori, et cui a superiori imperator."

<sup>132</sup> Cf. Poirel, *Des symboles et des anges*, 200–2. In other words, the angelic transmission of the divine illumination and the human extension of it looks rather like that life of a canon at St. Victor. Even Hugh's commentary, Poirel observes, is pedagogic more so than speculative. (Poirel, 309.)

<sup>133</sup> *CH* III.3 165D–168B (19.9–20.2).

<sup>134</sup> Hugh, *Super hier*, IX-IX.119–120 (1089C): "*Illuminationem quippe a superiori suscipere hierarchicum est, inferiori autem dare divinum.*" Note, however, that Hugh does acknowledge that the good will whereby the divine light received is not a human power, but a God-given gift, while its rejection is solely the fault of the rejecter, see IX-IX.271–279 (1092D–1093A).

hand, sees the imitation of God and likeness to the angels on the part of humans exclusively in the continuation of God's sending the illumination to intelligent creatures.<sup>135</sup> In the former, the light given is God, in the latter, giving the light is God's act. These two perspectives are not necessarily contradictory, but they display two models for thinking about the operation of hierarchy's proximate purpose: the transmission of divine illumination.

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Hierarchy as a serial system composed of angelic and human members is, therefore, especially pedagogical for Hugh. The higher angels lead the lower angels to God by inculcating love and teaching wisdom to the lower angels, and all the angels, in varying degrees of the proximity teach humanity to do the same. The ecclesiastical hierarchy imitates the angels, and especially the hierarch himself, by continuing the work of announcing Christ for the sake of salvation but the elevation of humanity to angelic conformity (ontologically or at least by interior unification) is nowhere to be found in Hugh as it is Eriugena, nor is there an explicit emphasis on humanity and the angels constituting one worship. This not to say that Hugh only conceives of divine imitation and union as external acts approximations of divine action, for in his *De archa Noe*, he identifies the soul which God inhabits as a temple where God dwells, as does Eriugena.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> It necessary to understand that Hugh is not simply an intellectualist who argues that teaching leads to love. It is only through revelation, and not "worldly wisdom" that God comes to be known and loved. Nonetheless, Hugh gives much more attention to the "wordly wisdom" than Dionysius does, and dedicates part of the prologue to an analysis of it, see Roques, *Structures Théologiques, de La Gnose À Richard de Saint-Victor*, 296–97, 299–301.

<sup>136</sup> Hugh, *Hugonis de Sancto De archa Noe*, ed. P. Sicard, CCCM 176 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2001), I.3, 11.65; Eriugena, *Exp in Hier VII*, 101.379–306.

Nonetheless, this concept receives no expansion besides its single assertion in Hugh's commentary.<sup>137</sup>

In sum, the purpose of hierarchy as found in Hugh's commentary is to experience God as far as possible through knowledge, and much more, by love (which is not unknowing) and to become able to do what good God wills in imitation of him by the exercise of the power given to us through divine illumination.

### II.3.3 How

What has been said above regarding Hugh's concept of personal *gubernatio*, *officium*, and *potestas* as the engines of hierarchy already sheds light on hierarchy's practical operation. However, to better contrast his vision of its actual operation with Eriugena's understanding, I will attend to three aspects of Hugh's commentary. First, I will show how he makes priesthood, *sacerdotium*, much more explicitly political. Second, I will show that he never disregards the importance of the sacraments in the hierarchical system but does place them alongside other avenues of sanctification. Third, I will show that while the language of sacrifice is much diminished in Hugh's commentary, he nonetheless retains the importance of sacrifice as integral to the expression of hierarchy as a sacred action.

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<sup>137</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* VII-VII, 580.338–341.



### II.3.3.1 Priest Kings

Hugh uses terms related to *sacerdotium* less frequently than Eriugena or the interpretive materials found in *E* but when he does, he connects the priests to governing authority. Like Eriugena, Hugh does not hesitate to speak of the angels as executing a *sacerdotium*. In fact, the one place in Hugh's commentary in which *sacerdotium* comes to any sustained attention is in the explanation of *CH IX.3-4*'s discussion of how the lowest angels, or angels properly so called, rule the nations of the earth. His treatment of the topic naturally follows Dionysius' narrative and Eriugena's terminology. The topics treated therein are: 1) how the fall of humanity from recognition (*cognitio*) and worship (*cultus*) of God was not the fault of the angels;<sup>138</sup> 2) that the angels rule the nations through their *sacer potestas* or *sacerdotium* so that the people are led back to the knowledge and worship of God;<sup>139</sup> 3) that Melchizedek the pre-Jewish high priest exercises a similar ministry;<sup>140</sup> 4) that all nations are administered by angels who rule through revelation, even those besides Israel.<sup>141</sup>

<sup>138</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier IX-IX*, 632.223–634.279.

<sup>139</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier IX-IX*, 635.317–636.345 (1094A-C).

<sup>140</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier IX-IX*, 636.346–638.414 (1094C-1096A).

<sup>141</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier IX-IX*, 636.355–359: "[...] sed ut ostendat quia non solum angelorum, sed etiam sanctorum et Deo placentium hominum aîisque hominibus, in his quae divina fuerunt, prepositurum opera et ministerio factum sit quod increduli ex gentibus ad fidem et cultum veri Dei converti sunt. Secundum hunc itaque modum, quo angeli ex officio praelationis suae sacerdotio functi sunt in genitibus ad fidem veri Dei convertendis, 'intelligendum' est 'Melchisedech summum sacerdotem' fuisse existentem Domino amicissimum' omnium 'existentium; [...]'." A little later on, in *IX-IX.381–414*, Hugh characterizes Melchizedek's *sacerdotium* as his bringing Israel and the other nations to *fidem* and *cognitio Dei*, letting cult drop aside. Eriugena's commentary on the same passages calls Melchizedek *rex et summi Dei sacerdos* and only describes him as turning many nations to the worship (*cultus*) of God. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier IX*, 146.460–464.) Eriugena's double attribution does not specify whether his role as *rex* and *sacerdos* are distinguished, but given the paucity of gubernatorial language in his *Exp in Hier*, it seems likely to be a distinguishing feature of Melchizedek. In Hugh, however, the *rex* and *sacerdos* do not need to be distinguished. As his earlier treatment of the angels clarifies, as does the context provided by the preface: priesthood is a form of rule.

As Hugh proceeds to comment on these topics he clarifies his understanding of *sacerdotium*. Commenting on 2), Hugh characterizes the angels as rulers, the *duces*, *ministri*, (terms from Eriugena's *versio*), and *rectores* (Hugh's own term) who are subordinate to and imitative of God the *rector*.<sup>142</sup> Hugh explicitly identifies the angels' ruling power with their *sacerdotium*, glossing it as *sacer prelatio* or *sacer potestas* that leads people in the nations back (*reducere*) to their *principium*, God.<sup>143</sup> His comments on Melchizedek, a human hierarch, or *summus sacerdos*, explain that without being an angel, he continues this angelic *officium* or *ministerium* of leading nations to faith, worship, and cognition of God.<sup>144</sup> If what is attributed to Melchizedek is key for understanding how the angels lead the nations back to God, then *sacerdotium* ought to be defined as a governance that leads to faith, worship, and recognition of God. The nature of this governance is specified by Hugh's treatment of the angels that lead other nations: all nations, such as the Egyptians and Babylonians have God as their *rector*, but are also under the immediate power of an angel, who receives visions from God who has power, providence, and dominion over all things, and then passes this vision on to the human

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<sup>142</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IX-IX, 636.335–341 (1094B): “[...] sed unus Deus illis imperabat et dominabatur, [...], ita est unus Dominus et rector sub cuius potestate constituta sunt universa. Qui sicut ipse in se bonus erat, ita bonos sub se ministros, rectores et duces angelos constituit, ‘et’ illi ‘angeli reducerunt’ nos ‘sequentes’ per fidem ‘ad ipsum’ principium nostrum [...]” *Ministri* and *duces* appear in Eriugena's *versio* and commentary on the same passage, but sparingly elsewhere. God as *rector* and the angels as *rectores* is a novel addition, never appearing in either Eriugena's *versio* nor his commentary on the *CH*. *Minister* only appears three times in Eriugena's commentary, while *ministerium* does not appear at all, while Hugh uses the latter term to refer the action proper to hierarchy, and as Eriugena describes humanity's elevation to the angels and even God's *sacerdotium*, Hugh describes humanity's sharing in the angelic *ministerium*. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier*, I, 12.431–436, 13.459–462; Hugh, *Super Hier* II-I, 445.955–961 [956B]) *Dux* and related words has a greater frequency than *minister* in Eriugena's commentary.

<sup>143</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IX-IX, 635.317–636.345 (1093D-1094C). The language of reduction is common to Hugh and Eriugena. *Ministerium* is defined here as the means of being led through faith to God and to being filled with his illumination. (Hugh, *Super Hier* IX-IX, 635.322–325 [1094A].) *Sacer prelatio* and *sacerdotium* are treated as controvertible, then *sacerdotium* is called controvertible with *sacer potestas*. (Hugh, *Super Hier* IX-IX, 636.341–345 [1094B-C].)

<sup>144</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IX-IX, 636.348–359 (1094C-D).

priestly figures so that the nations are set into order.<sup>145</sup> He follows by explaining that no nation is ruled directly by God and that the angels command them (*imperare*), insisting that the nations are ruled (*regi*) by providence and the governance of God through the angels, who rule through exciting the will of humanity by suggestion and help rather than by compulsion.<sup>146</sup>

Eriugena and Dionysius, also understood the angels to have a ruling power over humanity, but at least three novelties distinguishes Hugh's treatment of *CH IX.3-4*: 1) the greater space given over to the description of angelic rule;<sup>147</sup> 2) the context of the discussion which looks to God as *rector* in the immediate passage; 3) the distinct order in which cult and knowledge of God are related, namely, that cult is a response to the knowledge of God given through angelic revelation.<sup>148</sup> Taken together, Hugh presents

<sup>145</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier IX-IX*.415–454 (1096A-D).

<sup>146</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier IX-IX*, 642.535–643.553, esp.: “Angeli enim humanas mentes ad Deum amandum virtutue suggerendo excitant, non coactas necessitate, sed sequentes voluntate.” Eriugena's commentary on the end of *CH IX.4* has the angels leading humanity out of error and to recognition of the *principium* of all things, who is our “salus [...] et purgation et illuminatio et perfectio et summa beatitudo et deificatio.” (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier IX*, 150.613–151.614.) The full scope of Dionysius' hierarchical activities is on display; the angels lead us to deification, beatitude, and passing into God (*redere in Deum*), i.e. the content of worship for both Dionysius and Eriugena. The gubernatorial language is partly found in Eriugena. *Regere* is used four times by Eriugena: explaining that the third angelic hierarchy is ruled (*regitur*) by the second (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier IV*, 78.543); God's people are ruled (*reguntur*) and corrected by providence (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier VIII*, 125.274); the angels rule the nations (*regunt*) through science and wisdom (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier IX*, 143.329); all generations are ruled (*reguntur*) by one providence (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier IX*, 148.521). *Gubernare* is used twice, once to describe the second angelic hierarchies governing of the third angelic hierarchy, (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier IV*, 78.543) and once in his comments on *CH IX* to describes rule of all creatures communally against the “Jewish opinion” that God ruled Israel without any angelic mediation. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier IX*, 149.549.)

<sup>147</sup> Hugh gives over one hundred additional lines to his treatment of *CH IX.3-4* than Eriugena (330 vs. 205).

<sup>148</sup> *Cognitio Dei* and *cultus* align with the distinction between science and love described Hugh's commentary on *CH VII*. This order is also confirmed by Hugh's comments on humanity's departure from the worship of God at *IX-IX*, wherein, following St. Paul in Romans 1:21–22, he states that humanity knew but refused to glorify God on account of pride, and then blinded out of pride came to worship gods that did not exist, the visible idols. (Hugh, *Super Hier IX-IX*, 632.235–633.265) In this scheme, as love responds to knowledge (and which even passes into a greater deeper knowledge) similarly worship similarly responds to the recognition of God through the exercise of free will. In this way, worship is a specification of love, the right exercise of the will toward to God. Eriugena does not show the same scheme, as close reading of his own comments on *CH IX* shows. For him angelic and human *principes* do not simply leading the

priesthood as an imitation and subordinate continuation of God's ruling power by which people are led through knowledge to the worship of God, and thus cult is a *creaturely* response to a *divine* revelation. Whereas, for Eriugena, God is first of all the proto-cult which created cultic activity participates in imitation of God, for Hugh, God is principally the *rector* and the exercise of the ruling office is the center of divine imitation.<sup>149</sup>

### II.3.3.2 Word and Sacrament

Hugh almost entirely ignores the sacraments in *Super Hier* save for the conclusion of *CH* I.3, whose sacramental overtones in II-I he largely ignores except when he rejects Eriugena's symbolic interpretation of the Eucharist with an explanation that it may be

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nations to worship but command them through the laws of worship: "Pulchre, ut dixi, post Angelos gentium principes introducitur, ut per hoc intelligamus non solum Angelos, uerum et sanctos homines, cultus diuine dispensationis atque prouidentie legibus, singulis linguis et nationibus imperare." (Eriugena, *Exp in hier.*, IX, 147.477–480.) Elsewhere he does identify the angelic *imperia* and *principatus* with *scientia*, but Eriugena does not relate worship and knowledge contrastively, whereas Hugh does so explicitly. Eriugena teaches that manifestations of the Word of God, through which God has providence and power, are distributed throughout the whole hierarchy all the way to human prophets. The act of manifesting the divine illumination, however, is not merely an epistemological activity that grants *scientiam* and *cognitio*, but a cultic act wherein the theophanies, as specified *CH* VII.1 (albeit within the *deficit*) and, as by VII.2, the angels themselves are sanctified, sacrificed, and immolated. Furthermore, when Eriugena does make reference to the angels leading nations to *cognitio Dei*, it is not contrasted with cult. (Eriugena., IX, 149.569–573; 150.578–582.) Furthermore, whereas Hugh's account of humanity's fall from the worship of God makes it clear that humanity knew they ought to worship but because of the self-love they did not, Eriugena's explanation on the same lemma makes no explicit distinction between knowledge and cult in the process of the fall, but when self-love makes men proud (*superbi*) they are "seduced by the worship of their own opinion" and then given over by God to their reprobate senses. (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* IX, 143.341–346.) Unlike Hugh, for Eriugena cult is the *locus* and *context* of rather than response to heavenly polity and knowledge but for Hugh, worship is the result of the exercise of power which brings knowledge (*scientia*) and recognition (*cognitio*) of God.

<sup>149</sup> Hugh does follow Eriugena's language that the Trinity is a priesthood but does not place the same emphasis upon God as the origin, end, and even prototype of cult. Like Eriugena, Hugh identifies the Trinity as the source of all purgation and illumination, but Eriugena alone has the extended reflection on the meaning of *teletarchis*. After all, Hugh does align priesthood with rule primarily, while Eriugena associate those things which make cult what is with God principally. His later identification of the power of the Son's *hostia* with divinity as *plus-quam-hostia* further cements the connection.

simultaneously figure and truth.<sup>150</sup> The defense of sacramental realism comes within an excursus (II-I, 435.632-442.853) on the human need for *visibilia* in order to be able to ascend to contemplation and imitation of the invisible.<sup>151</sup> When he comments on Dionysius' description of the "most divine Eucharist" as an image, and *form* (adds Hugh) of participation in Jesus, he explains that what we receive from the altar now is to joined (*coniugimur*) to Him in spirit through *dilectio*, and in the future we will be united (*uniemur*) to Jesus in the same form appearing with the full similitude of glory.<sup>152</sup> Up to this point, Hugh echoes Eriugena's description of the Eucharist confectioned upon the altar as the "*typicam similitudinem*" and "*maximum typum*" of spiritual participation in Jesus whom we taste (*gustamus*) by the intellect alone, by which we participate Jesus by faith now, but will in the future participate him *in specie* and will be united to him through charity.<sup>153</sup>

While Hugh, like Eriugena, looks at the Eucharistic participation in union with Christ as not yet fulfilled, he also immediately forestalls any application of Dionysius' teaching as a support for a merely symbolic account of the earthly Eucharist:

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<sup>150</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* II-I, 434.620–438.745 (948B-951B); Németh, "The Victorines and the Areopagite," 350–51. The overt and striking departure from the liturgical sense of the various parallel sensible-noetic pairs, which he interprets as the way in which sensible experience attests to the intelligible realities. Cf. *CH* I.3, 121D-124A (8.21–9.7).

<sup>151</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier*, II-I, 435.632–634 (949A).

<sup>152</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* II-I, 438.740–745: "'Ipsa' enim 'assumptio divinissimae Eucharistiae', id est sanctissimae perceptionis corporis et sanguinis Christi Iesu, quam nunc sacramentaliter et uisibiliter in altari tractamus, imago est et forma illius 'participationis Iesu', qua vel nunc ei in spiritu per dilectionem coniugimur, vel postmodum in eadem forma gloriae apparentes plena similitudine uniemur."

<sup>153</sup> Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 16.569–17.584. Jean Châtillon credits Hugh with introducing the concept of participation into Latin sacramental thought and transforming the notion of a sacramental symbol by introducing the notion of participation in that which the symbol signifies. (Jean Châtillon, "De Guillaume de Champeaux à Thomas Gallus: Chronique d'histoire Littéraire et Doctrinale de l'école de Saint-Victor," *Revue Du Moyen Age Latin* 8 (1952): 160–61.) Eriugena, however, did introduce this notion first, even if he did not popularize it.

This is certainly to be known that they suppose that they make a defense of their error from this this place, saying that the reality of Christ's body and blood is not in the sacrament of the altar but that rather only an image and figure [of them] are found in it [...].<sup>154</sup>

He places the blame for such an error on a poor reading of scripture and a personalized *sensum fidei*. Hugh strikes back with apostolic fervor: "is the sacrament of the altar not a reality because it is a figure? Is the death of Christ therefore also not a reality because it is a figure, and resurrection of Christ not a reality because it is a figure?"<sup>155</sup> As the New Testament writers had treated Christ's death and rising symbolically without denying its reality, so Hugh implores that the Eucharist be treated similarly,<sup>156</sup> and proceeds to describe the conceptual elements of this sacrament in order to make sense of the reality-figure duality. The Eucharist has a visible *species*, the *veritas* of the body (and blood), and the *virtus* of spiritual grace.<sup>157</sup> Regarding the first two, Hugh employs the subtle distinction of what will become the Church's official teaching on transubstantiation at the turn of the thirteenth century, that in the Eucharist the bread and wine are exclusively the *species*, while the body and blood are the *res sacramenti*, and thus the *species* is really an image and the body and blood are actually the substance of the sacrament.<sup>158</sup> Thus the sacrament as a visible species of the body and blood of Jesus is the image of the invisible reception of Him and infusion of the grace of the Holy Spirit.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* II-I, 438.746–439.751 (951C): "Sane hic notandum quod quidam ex hoc loco munimentum erroris sui ducere putaverunt, dicentes in sacramento altaris veritatem corporis et sanguinis Christi non esse, sed imaginem illius tantum et figuram".

<sup>155</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* II-I, 439.764–766 (951D): "Quid enim? Nunquid ideo sacramentum altaris ueritas non est quia figura est? Ergo nec mors Christi ueritas est quia figura est, et resurrectio Christi ueritas non est quia figura est!"

<sup>156</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* II-I, 439.766–440.781 (951D-952B).

<sup>157</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* II-I, 440.782–784 (952B).

<sup>158</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* II-I, 440.782–441.812 (952B-D).

<sup>159</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* II-I 441.813–442.853 (953–953D).

The language of being able to taste God continues later in Hugh's commentary, but after this treatment of the Eucharist the sacraments effectively drop out as does most cultic language until IX-IX, except in IV-III's discussion of the *divinissimum sacrificium*. The one other direct reference to priests of the Church, as *summi pontifices* and *sacerdotes* associates them with *alii ministri verbi Dei*, who are all called angels in as much as they announce the word of God just as the angels do, albeit as human.<sup>160</sup> Given Hugh's earlier understanding of angelic priesthood and the exercise of divinely imitating *officium* and *ministerium* as an act that brings knowledge and recognition of God, human priesthood here is similarly conceived primarily in terms of preaching, announcing, or teaching the word of God rather than any explicitly sacramental action (although it cannot be strictly excluded). The association of priesthood (generally) and the teaching of scripture is corroborated by Hugh's comments on *CH* I that divine illumination comes first to the angels and then to human minds for participation through the "mystic narration of sacred scripture (*sacri eloquium*).<sup>161</sup> Through reading scripture, the mind is elevated to the contemplation of the divine light which belongs first to the angels.<sup>162</sup>

Hugh's commentary on the *CH* largely conceives of priesthood as a governing, anagogic teaching. Whether this would have been different had he come to comment on the *EH*, as Poirel believes he may have intended, the overall picture may be different.<sup>163</sup> Nonetheless, if the prologue to Hugh's commentary is taken as an introduction to the

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<sup>160</sup> Hugh., IX-XII, 657.1–5 (1108C); 660.105–106 (1110C).

<sup>161</sup> Hugh. II-I, 424.295–305 (942A). Poirel shows that associations with angelic life were not limited to the monastic milieu of constant prayer and virginity, but that sacramental and magisterial work of the priesthood, the center of the life of the 12<sup>th</sup> century canons, was sometimes explicitly described as a likeness of the angels who were themselves conceived of as priests and prophets. (Poirel, *Des symboles et des anges*, 200–202, n. 28.)

<sup>162</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier*, II-I, 424.305–315 (942A-942B).

<sup>163</sup> Poirel, *Des symboles et des anges*, 215–16.

whole *CD*, the whole hierarchical system is cast in a gubernatorial and magisterial light, including the *EH*.

### II.3.3.3 Sacrifice

Although Hugh does not use the language of sacrifice (*sacrificium*, *hostia*, *immolatio*) as frequently as Eriugena's commentary, he does nevertheless comment upon it since it is present in Eriugena's *versio*: three times in IV-III and once in X-XIII. The first definition of hierarchy in the *versio* concludes by affirming that the divine beauty (*divina pulchritudo*) is "perfective in the most divine sacrifice (*sacrificio divinissimo*)" insofar as it unifies those who are perfected. Hugh's initial unpacking of "*sacrificium divinissimum*" calls it the:

illumination, grace, and propitiation by which those to be purified and saved are purified and cleansed, not only from the corruption of evil so that they may become good, but they are also purified from want of the good so that they may be better.<sup>164</sup>

Following Eriugena's *Exp in Hier*, he notes that this sacrifice is *teletarchis* (Hugh's text transliterates the Greek word) and the "*principalis purgationis hostia*," but whereas Eriugena immediately identifies it with Christ immolated as *divine*, Hugh only associates it with Christ obliquely in a passage that simultaneously, if implicitly, connects it with the Eucharist:

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<sup>164</sup> Hugh. IV-III, 499.77–80 (993D): " 'Diuinissimum sacrificium' uocat ipsam illuminationem diuinam et gratiam et propitiationem; quo purgantur et emundantur purgandi omnes et saluandi non solum a corruptione mali, ut boni fiant, sed a defectu quoque boni purgantur, ut meliores existant." The notion that this sacrifice makes those who are to be good even better than what they have lost is a recurrent theme in Hugh's understanding of creation's progressive development and its restoration, see Boyd Taylor Coolman, *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor: An Interpretation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 12–15.



It is the highest offering (*summa oblatio*) and *teletarchis*, the principal *hostia* of purgation, the divine grace offered to us and for us. It is offered to us as purgation, for us for propitiation; offered to us so that we might have it; for us so that through it we may be pleasing; offered to us through infusion, for us through cleansing; offered to us when we began to be what we were not, offered *by* us when we exhibit and present what we are—it is therefore *teletarchis*, the principle *hostia* of purgation and the divine sacrifice, without which all *hostiae* and sacrifices are not able to have an effect or profit, and that by which the divine beauty perfects those are perfected unto itself [...].<sup>165</sup> (Emphasis added is my own.)

He concludes this effusive reflection on divine sacrifice by remarking how it is through this sacrifice that the divine beauty reforms the creature to perfect similitude with itself.<sup>166</sup> This language of similitude is also present in Eriugena's *Exp in Hier* but the language of deification has been eliminated and Hugh does not retain explicit reference of the effect of this divine sacrifice for the angels in addition to humanity.<sup>167</sup>

The second sacrificial reference in Hugh's comments on *CH III* is explicitly sacramental. That "*fas non est*" for the perfectors and perfected in the hierarchical system that anything be done "*preter propria hostiarum misteria aut sacras ordinationes*," is

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<sup>165</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IV-III, 499.80–500.90 (993D-994A): "Ipsa ergo oblatio summa et theletarchis, id est principalis purgationis hostia, ipsa uidelicet gratia diuina quae nobis offertur et pro nobis offertur - offertur nobis ad purgationem, offertur pro nobis ad propitiationem; offertur nobis ut eam habeamus, offertur pro nobis ut per eam placeamus; offertur nobis per infusionem, offertur pro nobis per emundationem; offertur nobis dum incipimus esse quod non fuimus, offertur a nobis dum exhibemus et presentamus quod sumus - ipsa ergo theletarchis, id est principalis purgationis hostia, et 'sacrificium diuinissimum', sine quo omnes hostiae et sacrificia omnia nec effectum habere possunt nec prodesse, ipsum est quo diuina pulchritudo perficit et perfectos facit eos qui perfecti facti sunt 'ad ipsam' [...]." Insofar as this sacrifice is identified with propitiation and as the root of all other sacrifice it is identified with Christ, insofar as it is received or had (*habere*) it aligns with the Eucharist, as it does when it is offered by us "when we exhibit and present what we are", although the latter can even refer to living of a holy life, as the two later references to sacrifice will show.

<sup>166</sup> Hugh. IV-III, 500.90–96 (994A).

<sup>167</sup> Cf. Eriugena, *Exp in hier.* III, 57.63.-65, "Purgat enim celestes animos ab ignorantia summi boni, ipso que superbo et irrationabili motu quo apostate spiritus in eternum precipitati sunt tormentum; [...]."; Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* III, 58.86–91 : "Et perfectiua, hoc est perficit in sacrificio diuinissimo quo deus de homine seu angelo efficitur et consecratur, secundum ad ipsam diuinam pulchritudinem compacte et similiter immutabilem perfectorum spirituum formationem; ex ipsa enim formantur et deificantur que formantur et deificantur omnia."

immediately taken to mean gifts of grace (*propria gratiarum dona*) or the sacraments, and the holy orders of the Church (“*sacros ordines unicuique proprios assignatos*”).<sup>168</sup> Shortly thereafter Hugh explains the vocabulary: *hostiae* indicates the sacraments offered (*tribuuntur*) for the cleansing and expiation of those beholding them; *misteria* (i.e. *mysteria*) means the sacraments’ hidden *veritas*; taken together, *hostiarum misterium* refers to the administration or *ministeria* of the divine sacraments whereby by saints are made.<sup>169</sup>

A broader sense of sacrifice appears a little later in response to the third definition of hierarchy specifying that hierarchy is a *dispositio*, a personal group, sacrificing the mysteries of its proper illumination. Hugh offers four successive interpretations. First, the *dispositio* sacrifices the mysteries of its proper illumination so that it may emulate its own *principium* by the order of dignity, the knowledge of discretion, and by imitation of works.<sup>170</sup> The second interpretation is broader and representative of Hugh’s personal moral concerns: whoever manifests a good work from the gift of a hidden aspiration sacrifices the mysteries of his proper illumination.<sup>171</sup> Similarly broad, and perhaps personal, is the third, which states that whoever transfuses a received grace to others, sacrifices the mysteries of proper illumination by multiplying the talents given to him.<sup>172</sup> Finally, the fourth sense aligns mostly closely with Hugh’s gubernatorial conception of hierarchy, that he who sacrifices the mysteries is the one who only administers what pertains to his order and office.<sup>173</sup> Four distinct senses of sacrifice emerge out this

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<sup>168</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IV-III, 503.176–181 (995D-996A).

<sup>169</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IV-III, 504.198–222 (996B-D).

<sup>170</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IV-III, 506.257–264 (997C-D).

<sup>171</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IV-III, 506.264–265 (997D).

<sup>172</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IV-III, 506.265–267 (997D).

<sup>173</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IV-III, 506.267–269 (997D).

reflection on Dionysius' third definition of hierarchy: the imitation of God, doing good, sharing the good to others, and performing an office.

To those four, a fifth can be added: to be pleasing to God. In IX-XIII, Hugh explains that in Eriugena's *versio* that the Seraph "sacrifices the purification of the prophet" means that the Seraphim makes the prophet holy, as if offering a pleasing sacrifice to God.<sup>174</sup> In the last sense, the persons made holy are themselves the sacrifice. This notion of sacrifice is found in both Eriugena and Dionysius, and especially in *EH* IV.3.12. In fact, the five senses of sacrifices as an ensemble describe the whole hierarchical system as a sacrifice in turning towards God, in becoming like to God, and serving others in the performance of assigned office, including cult. In this way, Hugh, although he mentions sacrifice more sparingly than Eriugena and the entire content of *E*, provides the resources to see hierarchy as a single grand act of sacrifice. Nevertheless, even in the topos of sacrifice, Hugh's distinctive elements shine through: the individual moral psychology is at play in describing good works as a sacrifice and referring to hierarchical illuminations as discretion. Notably, the explicit language of *deification* never appears while specific acts of church governance, including the celebration of the sacraments, are explicitly characterized as sacrificial.

### II.3.4 Conclusion

Hugh's commentary on the *CH* shows both points of similarity and divergence with Eriugena's. The greatest points of similarity are the identical understanding of the

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<sup>174</sup> Hugh, *Super Hier* IX-XIII, 663.29–30 (1115B): "[Seraphim] sacrificantem purgationem prophetarum, id est facientem et sanctam Deo quasi gratum sacrificium offerentem [...]."

taxonomy of the hierarchical system and the keen awareness that hierarchy is divine imitation, even a divine imitation accomplished through a heavenly and earthly priesthood. Yet it is precisely in terms of this latter point that the two diverge. Whereas Eriugena conceives of priesthood in terms of the transmission of the divinizing light of Jesus through cultic theophanies and symbols that simultaneously condescend to and exceed sense and intelligence, Hugh conceives of the mediation of priesthood as sharing forth the divine light through a cooperation in the divine work of ruling through acts of teaching which elicit love unto contemplation. Moreover, in articulating a psychological relationship between power, knowledge, and love in which love has a privileged place in the return to God, Hugh initiates the basic trope of affective Dionysianism: love surpasses knowledge in the ability to reach out and savor God. Finally, Hugh takes what appears to be one of the first steps in coordinating specific orders of angels with the persons of the Trinity according to their properties, such as domination, love and wisdom.

#### II.4 Thomas Gallus' *Extractio* of the *Corpus Dionysiacum*

Whereas Hugh of St. Victor's and Eriugena's commentaries offer detailed and divergent readings of how hierarchy functions amidst a general agreement about its taxonomy and purpose, Thomas Gallus' *Extractio* of the whole Dionysian Corpus, produced by 1238,<sup>175</sup> provides a summary of Dionysius' work based on John the Saracen's *Nova translatio* of the *CD* with only a few, short explanations of the text. His stated purpose is to make the "kernel" of Dionysius available to those who might

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<sup>175</sup> Dondaine, *Le Corpus Dionysien de l'Université de Paris Au XIII. Siècle*, 111.

otherwise discard it with the “husk” of the difficulty of reading the *CD* in either of its Latin versions.<sup>176</sup> His format is a continuous prose summary of the *CD*, straightforward and clear. In its renditions of the *CH* and *EH*, Dionysius’ foci remain intact: hierarchy is, fundamentally, the imitation of God through communal and divinely-given sacred action.

Since Gallus devotes little space to explanatory comments let alone excurses, the distinctiveness of the *Extractio* depends on its language. Inasmuch as Gallus follows the Saracen’s translation, the more explicitly sacrificial cultic language of Eriugena’s translation and commentary is replaced by more general terms that reflect the appearance of Dionysius’ Greek less than its actual contact. While this dampens the cultic coloring of the *Extractio* of the *CH*, it also results in a plainly cultic interest in the *EH* as no other comments distract from the analysis of the rites. Gallus also uses terms based upon *influre* to describe the distribution of the divine light from superior to inferior with greater frequency than his predecessors.<sup>177</sup>

The *Extractio* thus provides an initial look at Gallus’ use of “influence” to explain the relationship between the various orders of the hierarchies. Otherwise, Gallus’ summary of the *CD*, at least of the *CH* and *EH*, presents the basic lines of the medieval interpretation of the meaning of hierarchy in terms of the general accounts of its taxonomy, purpose, and means of accomplishment.

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<sup>176</sup> Thomas Gallus, “Dionysii Areopagitae Operum Paraphrasis,” in *In Libros S. Dionysii Aerogapitae: De Coelesti Seu Angelica Hierarchia, De Ecclesiastica Hierarchia*, ed. Monachi Sacri Ordinis Cartusienensis, vol. 15, Dionysii Cartusiani Opera Omnia (Tornaci: Typis Cartusiae S. M. de Pratis, n.d.), 29. (From hereon, the *Extractio*.)

<sup>177</sup> Gallus uses terms based on *influre* ten times in his summaries of the *CH* and *EH*, more than in either of the much longer translations and commentaries Eriugena and Hugh of St. Victor (who both use it twice) or than Saracen in his translation (only once). Gallus later commentaries on the *CD* also use *influre* frequently, upwards of sixty times. These figures are based upon searches in the Brepol’s online databases, LLT-A and LLT-B

### II.4.1 Taxonomy

The taxonomy of hierarchy summarized in the *Extractio* agrees with Hugh, Eriugena and Dionysius—to whom he is more faithful than the other two in one way. For while Gallus follows Eriugena and Hugh who recognize that Dionysius divides the hierarchies that belong to the heavenly substances into three while treating the church as one hierarchy, a total of four hierarchies, he does not follow them in declaring the Trinity a hierarchy.<sup>178</sup> Nonetheless, he keeps to the established taxonomy of those earlier medieval interpreters by treating the three orders into which each of the angelic hierarchies as subdivided as further distinguished into three sub-orders.<sup>179</sup> Gallus might have pressed the divisions even further as he presses strongly on the point that the transmission of the divine light received by the superior members poured into the inferiors is a personal activity, explaining that the higher persons pass it on the lower persons, placing little emphasis on communal action.<sup>180</sup> This is not, however, entirely alien to the *CD*. For example, the Seraphim are said to cry out one another to pass on the illuminations but it does stand in tension with the immediacy of the three highest angelic orders before God, which he affirms, when he also explains that the Seraphim, being closest to God, pass their received illuminations on the Cherubim, and so on.<sup>181</sup> The serial transmission of the divine light through personal interactions also ensures that the link between the angelic hierarchies and the ecclesiastical hierarchy is tightly knit in Gallus' reading.

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<sup>178</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 116, 188, 198–9.

<sup>179</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 199.

<sup>180</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 198.

<sup>181</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 116, 506.

Gallus' personal framing of the hierarchical interactions is also borne out in providing a definition of hierarchy that does not regard hierarchy primarily as an activity but as a community of beings. Whereas Eriugena and Hugh attend closely to the distinction between divisions and ranks (*ornatus/dinstinctio* and *ordo*, respectively) and hierarchy as the action and offices that are given to them by grace, Gallus actually calls a hierarchy a "a holy congregation of rational persons, distinguished in an ordered way through grades and offices, with science and operation in accordance with each of them, assimilated as far as possible to conformity with God, and through divinely infused illuminations, and elevated to the imitation of God according their its capacity."<sup>182</sup> This definition is close to the third definition of hierarchy in *CH* III.2, which defines a hierarchy as διακόσμεσις performing its sacred actions but unlike third Dionysius' definition, Gallus does not place stress on the persons-in-action but on the persons as divided and arranged.<sup>183</sup> However much Gallus' definition of hierarchy is a sign of readings yet to come which equate hierarchy with a series of persons over an activity, Gallus' summary of the text is hardly affected by it since he follows the thread of the *CH* and *EH* describing hierarchy as the imitation of God and coordination between heavenly and earthly worshippers of God. Hence many of the other elements of the hierarchical system, most importantly, the explanations that God is active through every hierarchy and present to all through the handing of divine illuminations and that hierarchy is not a means of distancing God but receiving and becoming aware of God's deifying action are preserved and taught in the summary.

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<sup>182</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 79.

<sup>183</sup> Cf. *CH* III.2 165B (18.10–16).

One further Gallusian addition to the taxonomy of hierarchy is the placement of Jesus' humanity and Mary at the height of the hierarchical taxonomy, above the first angelic hierarchy.<sup>184</sup> He establishes that Jesus' human soul alone is truly immediate to God and is therefore the first mediator of the divine, from whose plenitude the angels and humanity receive the divine light.<sup>185</sup> This addition is made in Gallus' summary of *CH VII* but has no direct equivalent in the *CD*. Nevertheless, while this short aside reflects his esteem for the role of persons in the hierarchical system, he does not develop this position elsewhere in the *Extractio*.<sup>186</sup>

#### II.4.2 Purpose

Gallus' understanding of the purpose of hierarchy does not, as noted above, depart from that of his predecessors, although his expression of it in the *Extractio* is more general than is found in the commentaries of Eriugena and Hugh. Faithfully transmitting Dionysius' thought, he casts hierarchy as assimilation and union to God in which God is beheld and contemplated and imitated through cooperation,<sup>187</sup> the conformity of the mortal human ranks to the heavenly hierarchies,<sup>188</sup> and the illumination or *influere* of the divine light, who is no less than Jesus the Word of God,<sup>189</sup> by the persons of the superior ranks to the inferior unto their purification, enlightenment, and perfection.<sup>190</sup> In keeping with the *CD*, the trio of hierarchical activities is both related to advancement in knowing

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<sup>184</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 155.

<sup>185</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 155.

<sup>186</sup> Bonaventure, however, like Gallus, does place Mary ahead of the angels, see Guardini, *Systembildende Elemente in Der Theologie Bonaventuras*, 153.

<sup>187</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 30–31, 80.

<sup>188</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 31, 234, 370, 554

<sup>189</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 30–31, 80.

<sup>190</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 80–81, 533, 554.



God in each participant as purification from ignorance, enlightenment in doctrine, and perfection in the knowing of God's action while understood as including purification from sin (for humanity) and a genuine union with God beyond the intellective powers. Furthermore, as is clear from the *CD*, every hierarchical interaction, or *negotio*, turns on the execution and reception of these activities, which must be principally attributed not to the creatures who perform them by grace, but to God, the principle and principal actor of deifying activity.<sup>191</sup>

Two elements distinguish Gallus' understanding of the purpose of hierarchy from the presentation of hierarchy's purpose in the *Extractio* from the *CD*. First, Gallus, like Hugh, grants that love in addition to the intellect seeks a consummation in God. Affective language appears throughout the *Extractio* but is rarely the focus of extended attention. Rather, while Gallus follows the warp and woof of the *CD*, he also weaves in specific references to the role of love and desire. For example, he characterizes hierarchy as stretching out to God with "assiduous speculation...desiring to be assimilated and united to God" and those who are enlightened as "raised up in intellect and sighs desirous for the divine light"<sup>192</sup> Furthermore, he describes the fiery Seraphim as igniting their inferiors into a fervor like their own through which these inferior ascend through the flame of divine love and falling in love with the God as spouse they enter contemplation.<sup>193</sup> Inasmuch as the Seraphim are first in his strongly serial account of hierarchical activity,

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<sup>191</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 31, 80, 235.

<sup>192</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 79–80: "Intendit autem hierarchia assidua speculatione in Deum, desiderans secundum suam possibilitatem assimiliari et uniri Deo, ipsum habens ducem omnis sancta cognitionis et operationis, indeclinabiliter adspiciens ad divinam pulcritudinem, et eam contemplando, ab ipsa tanquam pulcherrima informat."; "Illuminatos autem oportet adimpleri divino lumine, sursumactos in intellectibus et suspiriis pure et summe divinum lumen desiderantibus, ad plenius obtinendam et firmiter possidendam divinam contemplationem.".

<sup>193</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 154–55.

their love is the ultimate object of conformity for all their angelic and human inferiors. Thus, when the middle angelic hierarchy has been conformed the first, Gallus presents the ranks of the powers, the nearest angelic order above the third angelic hierarchy, leads the latter to divine “cognition, love, and imitation”.<sup>194</sup>

Second, Gallus appends a Trinitarian coda to the end of *CH* III explaining, like Eriugena,<sup>195</sup> that the sequence of intra-Trinitarian procession is the exemplar of all hierarchical transmission of the divine light. The coda explains that the Father, who is the “plenitude of essence, life, wisdom, goodness, power, [and] the fullness of all desire of fullness”, generates the Son and spirates the Spirit by giving his plenitude fully to each, not as if to inferiors, since there are none in the Trinity, but as the “exemplar of superiority and inferiority” that is manifested in the hierarchies.<sup>196</sup> Thus, he envisions hierarchy as the image and imitation of inner divine life in its act of sharing divinity so far as it can. Moreover, although this intratrinitarian framing of hierarchical activity is only used once in the *Extractio*, it is significant for understanding what he intended to teach his audience since it is appended to the most important chapter for the definition of hierarchy (i.e. *CH* III) and constitutes the longest excursus from his text-summarizing between the *CH* and *EH*.

### II.4.3 How

The *Extractio*’s attention to the means by which the hierarchical activities and their ultimate purpose are achieved does not stray far from the *CD*. As noted above,

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<sup>194</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 170B-C.

<sup>195</sup> Cf. Eriugena, *Exp in Hier* I, 19.644–45.

<sup>196</sup> Gallus, *Extractio*, 80–81.

unlike the commentaries based upon Eriugena's translation, the sacrificial-cultic language bound to τελετή and ἱεουργία and their cognates rendered by *hostia* and *sacrificio* and *sanctificatio* has been completely replaced with *perfectio* and *sanctificatio*. The reflections of divine sacrifice found in either Hugh or Eriugena are nowhere to be found. The only references to sacrificial activity come in connection with sacraments expounded upon in the *EH*, notably the Eucharist's consecration is conceived of as a sacrifice in *EH* III and Christ, naturally, is associated with the altar in *EH* IV. While, following the *CD*, the angels are associated with hierarchs and bishops and are even called hierarchs at some point, the loss of the *CD*'s cultic language across the *CH* and *EH* dampens Gallus' presentation of the Dionysian vision of a single cosmic liturgy bounding and binding the entire scope of hierarchical action. Nevertheless, the substance of that vision is still presented by Gallus. He recognizes the analogical parallel between the divine light received with and without veils, inasmuch as through the divine light the angels participate the "glory of the humanity of Jesus", not through veils as humans do under sensible signs but "through the proper *species*" of that Glory.<sup>197</sup>

The repeated trope of the personal transmission of the divine light through influence, the pouring out from one's own plenitude of the reception of God to another's paucity takes the central place in explaining the mode of hierarchy's achievement. Gallus frequently articulates the personal activity alongside through the language of teaching (*docere*) among hierarchical persons, using *docere* over twice as frequently at Eriugena's *versio* but on par with Saracen's translation. Nonetheless, the sacramental understanding

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<sup>197</sup> Gallus, 154.

of the divine light's deifying approach to all intelligent creatures through the incarnation retains a place, if without its full cultic context, in the *Extractio*.

Ultimately, the means and purpose of hierarchy are evidently one in this summary: the imitation of God. On this point the Trinitarian coda provides a helpful cipher: to be conformed to the exemplar of the Trinity means passing on what share in divinity one has is, and the deifying influence received from God is the same that which is passed on, a single descent effective of the ascent to God, and in that, Gallus is thoroughly Dionysian.

#### **II.4.4 Conclusion**

Gallus' *Extractio*, as a precis of the *CD* with few extended explanations and very brief excurses developed out of Dionysius' doctrines, provides a useful contrast to the longer commentaries of Eriugena and Hugh in as much as it repeats many of their interpretations of the hierarchical system: an identical taxonomy is employed (four hierarchies assigned to groups of persons constituted by ranks who are each triply divided and subdivided) to account for the transmission of the divine light, Christ the ray of the Father, through whom God acts at every level in his cooperators. The *Extractio* continues the distinctively medieval feature of involving a Trinitarian coordination within the hierarchical system and expanding and distinguishing the role of love in divine union in contrast with the intellect. Given the text's brevity, that these aspects are not treated as elaborations but simple explanations of the *CD* speaks to the ease with which they can be attributed to Dionysius himself almost a century after Hugh's revival of interest in the *CD*. At the same time, Gallus' less sacerdotal presentation of hierarchy, depending on the

Saracen's translation, signals the stability of the transition of hierarchy from a cultic to gubernatorial principle which, as initiated by Hugh.

## II.5 Conclusion

Varying understandings of Dionysius the Areopagite's original conception of hierarchy developed between the *CD*'s first (successful) translation by John Scotus Eriugena and the thirteenth century. While the diachronic genetic relationships between interpretations spanning four-hundred years is fascinating in its own right, the *CDP*'s collection of so many texts of the *CD* and layers of interpretation (commentaries, annotations, interlinear glosses) offers something even more valuable to ascertaining the reception of the concept of hierarchy by thirteenth century theologians, including Bonaventure: a text describing what amounts to a master list of available interpretations of Dionysian thought. While the *CDP*, even in its fullest form (i.e. BnF Lat. 17341) does not place a limit on other contemporary uses and interpretations of the *CD* and in particular, the doctrine of hierarchy, beyond its limits, it does open to view the world of the medieval theologian as a *reader* of Dionysius. The *CDP* contains both unified and contrasting sets of terminology in its parallel translations, both doctrinal cohesion and contradiction among parallel commentaries. Thus, it provides at once a general standard against which particular accounts of hierarchy can be compared, including a common taxonomy, the use of the Trinity to expand the notion of hierarchy, the elaboration and attention to Christ's role as the light, the goal of deification and deformity, and the conformity of humanity to the work of the angels and cooperation with God as the imitation of God. On the other hand, the diversity of negotiations in the *CDP* of the role

of intellect, love, cult and priesthood, divine mediacy and immediacy, the divine excess of human capacity and other topics associated with hierarchy facilitates tracing the explicitly or implicitly operative constellations of such concepts in theologians associated with the University of Paris in thirteenth century.

### III. BONAVENTURE'S DOCTRINE OF HIERARCHY (1250-1259)

#### III.1 Introduction

This chapter will chart the development of Bonaventure's use of hierarchy from his I-IV *Sent* to the *Itinerarium mentis in deum*, all works that precede the *Legenda maior*, which will be the topic of the next chapter. The development it traces follows his early deployment of hierarchy as a taxonomy of divine and graced entities that furnishes an answer to certain scholastic questions to a central and structural element in his theology. The identification of Jesus Christ, the divine Word incarnate, with the Dionysian figure of the hierarch lies at the heart of the growing importance of hierarchy in Bonaventure's thought. For when Bonaventure identifies Christ as medium in the Trinity and the mediator among the angels and in the earthly Church, this role as cosmic and hypercosmic mediator is intertwined with his kenotic poverty and death on the cross. This meeting buds first in the *Itin* and blossoms in the hierarchical conception of St. Francis of Assisi of the *LMj* and later works.

Chasing the evolution of Bonaventure's use of hierarchy does not only arrive at Bonaventure's final word on the topic, important as that may be, but step by step pinpoints the new roles that hierarchy takes on in the maturation of his conceptual network. Over time, there is little that hierarchy and its related concepts do not touch. From its initial role as an organization of graced persons and as a tool for answering questions about activity in the Church on earth, hierarchy is spread out to interface with accounts of contemplation, numerology symbolism, worship, Christ's mediating priesthood, and intra-Trinitarian life. With each advance, the distinctiveness of

Bonaventure's understanding of hierarchy stands in sharper relief to that in the works of other scholastic theologians and their predominately gubernatorial vision of hierarchy. Though it may seem a bold claim, as Bonaventure pushes and prods the received structures of Dionysian hierarchy, he molds it more and more firmly to the cultic and Christocentric heart of Dionysius' thought. In sum, Bonaventure brings the medieval reception of hierarchy to the foot of the cross.

### **III.2 Hierarchy in Bonaventure's *Sentences Commentary* II-IV**

Bonaventure's consideration and use of hierarchy in II-IV *Sent* is confined to a handful of distinctions primarily in II *Sent* (d. 9, 10, and 11), IV (d. 5, 18, 19, 24), and an important reference to Hugh of St. Victor's *Super hier* in III *Sent* (d. 14). These passages have a two-fold importance. First, they demonstrate Bonaventure's understanding of hierarchy in itself. Second, his chosen quotations, references, and allusions to the *CD* furnish insight into which of the Areopagite's works he had engaged with, in which version or through which commentary he had read them, and how he interpreted them.

#### **III.2.1 Hierarchy in II *Sent***

Bonaventure's treatment of hierarchy in II *Sent*, especially in d. 9, is his most systematic treatment of hierarchy before *Hex* XX-XIII. For in II *Sent* d. 9-10 Bonaventure addresses hierarchy's purpose and mediating role. Indeed, even a comparison between these two early distinctions alone and *Hex* XX-XXIII, apart from his intervening writings would suffice to illustrate both the remarkable continuity and also much of the development in his conception of hierarchy's structures.



### III.2.1.1 The *Praenota* to II *Sent* d. 9

Hierarchy seems to have held a grip on Bonaventure's mind from early on. The long *praenota* on the angels and the angelic hierarchies, which precedes Bonaventure's actual disputations in II *Sent* d. 9, testifies to his concern for the topic.<sup>1</sup> The *praenota* functions as doctrinal throat-clearing before addressing questions about the relationships between angels in terms of their individuality and order. It addresses three questions: what is a hierarchy? What is an angel? What is an angelic order?<sup>2</sup> The first question is not only important on its own, it also serves to introduce hierarchy into the analysis of the ninth distinction of Lombard's chapters, since Lombard never refers to hierarchy himself.<sup>3</sup>

The answer to the first question, "what is a hierarchy?" is conceptually rich. It identifies that to which the term "hierarchy" refers but also identifies the distinct aspects of their function as located within a scheme of divine imitation and the cycle of *exitus-reditus*. It also depends upon a misreading, or *highly* inventive use, of the general definition of hierarchy in *CH* III. In it, Bonaventure isolates three definitions of hierarchy from *CH* III.1-2 and matches each singly to either the uncreated hierarchy, the Trinity, or the two created hierarchies—the angelic and ecclesiastical—which both proceed from God through grace.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, *praenota*, (II, 237A).

<sup>2</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, *praenota*, (II, 237A): "Oportet igitur primo videre, quid sit hierarchia; secundo vero, quid Angelus; tertio, quid sit ordo angelicus."

<sup>3</sup> Cf. II *Sent* d. 9, c.1–7 (II, 235A–237B). Alexander of Hales' *Gloss on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, however, does introduce hierarchy into his treatment of distinction nine, aspects of which Bonaventure both draws upon and leaves behind. See Alexander of Hales's *Glossa* in II *Sent* d. 9, pp. 83–96.

<sup>4</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, *praenota* (II, 237B–238A): "Sciendum est igitur, quod ipsius hierarchiae beatus Dionysius tres ponit definitiones in libro de hierarchia. Angelica Hierarchia [...] Istarum definitionum

He first applies the latter half of Dionysius' first definition of hierarchy to the uncreated hierarchy: "Hierarchy is the divine beauty as simple, as best, as consummated and consummating."<sup>5</sup> Bonaventure terms God a hierarchy insofar as God is both Trinity and unity, or rather, as Trinity through unity and unity through Trinity. His divine hierarchy is not a description of the three Trinitarian hypostases as such. On the contrary, uncreated hierarchy is the actuality of being God precisely as Tri-unity, that is, the divine *pulchritudo*.<sup>6</sup> As simple, the Trinity's unity is not destroyed; as best it is the highest goodness and therefore communicative. As a plurality of persons and as consummated, these two aspects coincide in the same God and coinhere as mutually perfecting.<sup>7</sup> For Bonaventure, the divine hierarchy is not divine a divine act whereby the one essence perdures in spite of the procession of the Son and Spirit from the Father (and the Son) but is one *precisely because* of the procession of Son and Spirit from the Father:

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distinctio et explicatio potest haberi sic: quia prima definitio est hierarchiae uncreateae, duae vero sequentes createae. Differunt autem, quia prima illarum principaliter attenditur penes egressum a Deo, sed ultima penes regressum, licet utrobique tangatur utrumque."

<sup>5</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 237B and 238A): "Hierarchia est divina pulchritudo ut simpla, ut optima, ut *consummata* vel *consummativa*." (cf. CH III.1 164D [17.5–6]). This text reflects the version of Eriugena's translation of the CH received by Hugh of St. Victor received through Anastasius the librarian, which lacks *consummata* (cf. Hugh *Super Hier*, II-III, 367.6–7). In fact, no other Latin version or citation of the CD has that word, and therefore it appears that Bonaventure has added it. Differences here are not unusual, however. The version of this text found in Eriugena's commentary does not have *consummativa* but the transliterated Greek, TELETARCHIKA (Eriugena, *Exp in Hier*, III, 57.50–54). In BnF Lat. 17341, *teletarchica* is written in superscript above *consummativa* on 45fr. If Bonaventure was familiar with *Compellit me* and this superscript were reproduced, it may explain his decision to add another word to round out his understanding of that Greek term.

<sup>6</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 238A): "Prima autem definitio, quae est hierarchiae increatae, exprimit ipsam quantum ad trinitatem et unitatem, ita quod nec trinitas praeiudicat unitati, nec unitas trinitati; sed unitas spectat ad perfectionem trinitatis, et trinitas unitatis. Ut igitur ostendatur ibi esse unitas in trinitate, dicit: Hierarchia est divina pulchritudo."

<sup>7</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 238A): "Pulchritudo enim consistit in pluralitate et aequalitate, sicut dicit Augustinus in libro de Vera Religione. Ut autem ostendat, quod pluralitas non praeiudicat unitati, dicit ut simpla, quia sic est ibi pluralitas, ut tamen non tollatur unitatis simplicitas. Ut etiam ostendat, quod unitas non praeiudicat pluralitati, subiungit ut optima, quia sic est in Deo unitas, ut tamen sit summa bonitas, per quam est perfecta communicatio, et sic personarum pluralitas."

Finally, in order to show that unity pertains to the perfection of plurality, and equally the other way around, he adds as consummated, in which it is signified that the all encompassing and highest perfection consists in trinity and unity.<sup>8</sup>

Dionysius' second and third definitions of hierarchy, which pertain to the created hierarchies, are also characterized as expressing *egressus* and *regressus* out of and into God, respectively. The second definition is applied to the angels and stands for *egressus*: "Hierarchy is a divine order, science, and action, appearing deiform so far as is possible and ascending to the illuminations given to it divinely in proportion to (its) similitude to God."<sup>9</sup> Bonaventure explains that this definition treats the angels as the image and likeness (*similitudo*) of God, "*sicut et homo*", just as humans are.<sup>10</sup> As images of God, the angels in their ordered power represent the Father, in knowledge, the Son, and in action, the Holy Spirit "according to memory, intellect, and will".<sup>11</sup> As similitudes of God, the angels are assimilated to God in *habitus* and in *actus*, and the act "of a similitude or assimilating grace is to lead on high, just as its origin is to descend from above."<sup>12</sup> In this

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<sup>8</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 238A): "Postremo, ut ostendat, quod unitas spectat ad perfectionem pluralitatis, et e converso, subdit ut consummata, in quo significatur, quod in trinitate et unitate consistit omnimoda et summa perfectio."

<sup>9</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 237B): "Hierarchia est ordo divinus, scientia et actio, deiforme quantum possibile similans, et ad inditas ei divinitus illuminationes proportionaliter in Dei similitudinem ascendens"

<sup>10</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 238A). Thus the definition which applies to the angles can also describe humanity.

<sup>11</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 238A): "Egreditur autem a Deo secundum rationem imaginis et similitudinis, sicut et homo; et ideo in illa notificatione primo describit ipsam hierarchiam egredientem - a Deo per modum imaginis, cum dicit: Hierarchia est ordo divinus, scientia et actio: ut ordo, id est ordinate potestas, respondeat Patri, et scientia Filio, et actio Spiritui sancto, secundum memoriam, intelligentiam et voluntatem." Bonaventure does not expound any further the relationship between memory and *ordo* or *ordered* power here. Hugh of St. Victor had treated *ordo* as *officium*, wherein *ordo* meant the power to act that precedes knowing what to do and then accomplishing it, see Hugh, *Super Hier*, IV-III, 497.10–498.45 (992B-993A).

<sup>12</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 238A): "Secundo vero describit quantum ad rationem similitudinis, cum subiungit: *Deiforme, in quantum possibile est, similans* etc.; et tangitur ipsa assimilatio quantum ad habitum, cum dicitur: *Deiforme, in quantum possibile est*, et quantum ad actum, cum subinfertur: *Et ad inditas ei illuminationes* etc. Similitudinis enim sive gratiae assimilantis actus est sursum ducere, sicut eius origo est desursum descendere."

way, Bonaventure identifies the angelic hierarchy as a Trinitarian image expressed by a nature that is deified and returned to its source through grace. Thus, even the first definition of created hierarchy, which is privileges *egressus*, includes *regressus*. Thus, Bonaventure answers the question, “whence do created hierarchies come” with the explanation that they arise in creatures elevated according to and beyond their nature by God’s assimilating grace.

The second definition of created hierarchy (and third overall) describes the angels’ (and humanity’s) *regressus* to God.<sup>13</sup> It states: “Hierarchy is similitude and union to God as far as possible, having him as the leader of holy science and action, and retaining its most divine decor, so far as possible, it reforms [those who worshippers].”<sup>14</sup> Bonaventure parses this definition into four parts each of which correspond to one of four aspects of the angels’ *regressus* to God. First their capacity for return (*habilitas*) and its actuality (*actualitas*), the immutability (*immutabilitas*) of this similitude and union to God, and the rich plenitude (*ubertas plenitudinis*) of charity and grace whereby a hierarchy’s practitioners aid their inferiors’ achievement of a like elevation.<sup>15</sup>

Having defined divine and angelic hierarchy, Bonaventure introduces a common “*definitio magistralis*” (from Prepositinus of Cremona) of hierarchy in general:

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<sup>13</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 238B).

<sup>14</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 237B–238A): “Hierarchia est ad Deum, quantum possibile est, similitudo et unitas, ipsum habens scientiae sanctae et actionis ducem, et ad suum divinissimum decorum immutabiliter definiens; quantum vero possibile est, reformat suos laudatores.”

<sup>15</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota, (II, 238B): “Notatur igitur in praedicta definitione hierarchia regrediens sive regressus eius, primo quantum ad habilitatem, cum dicit: Hierarchia est ad Deum, quantum possibile est, similitudo et unitas. Secundo quantum ad actualitatem, cum dicit: Ipsum habens scientiae sanctae et actionis ducem. Tertio quantum ad immutabilitatem, cum subiungit: Et ad suum divinissimum decorem immutabiliter definiens. Quarto quantum ad plenitudinis ubertatem, cum subinfert: Quantum vero possibile est, reformans suos laudatores, in hoc scilicet, quod non solum sibi sufficit, sed etiam propter plenitudinem caritatis et gratiae potens est alios adiuvere.”

“hierarchy is the ordered power of sacred powers and rational [beings], holding the owed leadership among subordinates.”<sup>16</sup> This definition comes close to the imperfect but reasonable translation of hierarchy as *sacer principatus* used by Eriugena and Hugh. Furthermore, it recognizes that hierarchy is only exercised among intelligent beings and is not, *per se*, a cosmological or cosmogonic act or principle.

Bonaventure’s explanation of these four definitions of divine and created hierarchy establish three fundamental points. First, Bonaventure does not treat hierarchy primarily as a taxonomical unit<sup>17</sup> but as an activity or way of being. Second, created hierarchy corresponds to nature but depends upon grace; indeed, the angels’ union to God is as much a function of grace as it is for humans.<sup>18</sup> Third, created hierarchy describes the action of graced persons as they interact with each other in returning to God but does not in any way describe gradations of kinds persons merely according to nature, nor of the genera and species of creatures, faculties, virtues or anything else that is attributable to creatures (or God!).<sup>19</sup> As for Dionysius, hierarchy is an act, however, unlike Eriugena and Hugh, he does not distinguish a hierarchy from the *ornatus* that performs it, and thus the

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<sup>16</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 238B): “hierarchia est rerum sacrarum et rationabilium ordinata potestas, in subditis debitum retinens principatum.” The editors of the Quaracchi edition attribute this magisterial definition to Prepositinus of Cremona’s *Summa*, p. II, it is also found in Alexander of Hales, *Glossa in II Sent* d. 9, n. 2. par. A.

<sup>17</sup> However, that he does so by metonymy elsewhere is indisputable.

<sup>18</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 238B). Bonaventure uses both Damascene’s and Dionysius’ definitions to describe what an angel is. In Damascene’s definition, the angels minister to God by grace. Bonaventure clarifies that Dionysius’ definition, which among other impressive predicates, says that the angels receive “*totam speciositatem boniformis deiformitatis*”, refers to their *bene esse*. Bonaventure parses Dionysius’ definition of an angel according to the triad of nature (as image), grace (as similitude), and glory (as possessing deiformity). (II *Sent* d. 9, praenota [II.239A].)

<sup>19</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 240A): “Quoniam enim hierarchia non est nisi in subsstantia intellectuali, haec autem triplex est, scilicet divina, angelica et humana; [...]”

distinction between hierarchy and those groups who perform it is less clear in his works.<sup>20</sup>

As Bonaventure proceeds through the two other concerns of the *Praenota*, i.e. on the nature of angels and what an *ordo* of angels is, he continues to employ and expand the categories he had used to explain hierarchy. Bonaventure uses one definition from John Damascene<sup>21</sup> and another from the Areopagite. Damascene's is taken to describe the angelic nature or *esse*, and Dionysius',<sup>22</sup> their *bene esse* as being images of God, likenesses of God, and deiform. Parsing Damascene's definition, Bonaventure describes their substance, virtue, operation and duration, the first three of which categories recall *CH XI*.<sup>23</sup> Their immortal duration is attributed to grace rather than nature, and such grace is not "*aliquis habitus gratis datus*" but the "*gratuita Dei influentia*."<sup>24</sup> Identifying this *influentia*, which term will occur in Bonaventure's later accounts of hierarchy, he segues to his exposition of the Dionysian definition of an angel. Bonaventure understands a triple distinction in Dionysius' definition of an angel: to be an image of God by nature,

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<sup>20</sup> Gallus is similar in this regard, and in his *Explanatio* in *CH IV*, (p. 150ff) he identifies *ornatus*, *ordines*, and *hierarchia* as equivalent.

<sup>21</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 238B): "Angelus est substantia incorporea, intellectualis, semper mobilis, arbitrio libera, Deo ministrans, gratia, non natura immortalitatem suscipiens." Cf. John Damascene, *Liber de fide orthodoxe* II.3.

<sup>22</sup> II *Sent* d.9, praenota (II, 238B): "Angelus est imago Dei, manifestatio occulti luminis, speculum clarum, splendidissimum, immaculatum, incontaminatum, incoinquinatum, suscipiens, sicut conveniens est, totam speciositatem boniformis deiformitatis, et in se resplendere faciens bonitatem silentii, quod est in abditis." Cf. *DN IV.22* 724B (169.20–170.5). The Quaracchi editors point observed that this quotation follows Eriugena's translation except at the end, see II *Sent*, 238, n. 6.

<sup>23</sup> See *CH XII.2* 284D–285A (41.20–42.12). Here Dionysius explains that all the heavenly substances may be called angels, however, their essence, power, and activity must be properly distinguished, lest what is proper to the higher be misattributed to the lower or vice versa.

<sup>24</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 239A). This is one of or the earliest uses of *influentia* in relation to hierarchy and grace in Bonaventure's corpus. I take this distinction between *habitus* and *influentia* to be an affirmation that God has not added some new *thing* to the angels but has given *himself* to them.

a similitude by grace, and to be deiform by glory.<sup>25</sup> These are progressive but nonetheless distinct and integral ways of participating God and the distinction between nature, grace, and glory will recur through his corpus. Each kind of participation has two aspects, that by which it tends upward (*sursum*) and downward (*deorsum*). To be an image of God is to be *capax dei* (*sursum*) and to manifest the divine illuminations which one receives as such to inferiors (*deorsum*).<sup>26</sup> To be a similitude of grace for the angels is the conservation, decoration, and consummation of their nature (*sursum*) and the removal of any *foeditas* that sets them apart from God (*deorsum*). Finally, their deiformity consists in the reception of *totam speciositatem boniformis deiformitatis*, the beauty which belongs to God (*sursum*) and through their refulgence of the divine goodness, they share the divine goodness (*deorsum*).<sup>27</sup>

The third and final question addressed in the *praenota*, “what is an angelic *ordo*?” is answered with a short affirmation of Lombard’s definition of such an *ordo*<sup>28</sup> which segues into a much longer elaboration of the taxonomy of hierarchy in which Bonaventure’s harmonizes earlier accounts of the taxonomy of Dionysian hierarchy, late patristic and medieval. For the first time he focuses on the taxonomical aspect of

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<sup>25</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, *praenota* (II, 239A): “Intellectus autem secundae definitionis sic potest haberi. Definitor namque ibi Angelus non solum quantum ad esse naturae, sed etiam quantum ad bene esse; et ideo notificatur hic Angelus, in quantum habet Dei imaginem per naturam, in quantum habet similitudinem per gratiam, in quantum habet deiformitatem per gloriam.”

<sup>26</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, *praenota* (II, 239A): “Primum tangitur, cum dicit: Angelus est imago Dei; secundum, cum subiungit: occulti luminis. «Imago enim est, in quantum capax Dei est et particeps esse potest»; sed manifestation luminis est, in quantum illuminationes, quas suscipit, inferioribus ostendit.”

<sup>27</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, *praenota* (II, 239B): “Ad id quod sursum est, per hoc quod dicit: Suscipiens, sicut conveniens est, totam speciositatem boniformis deiformitatis. Comparatione enim ad Deum deiformis efficitur, cum speciositatem a Deo suscipit. Comparatio vero ad id quod inferius est, notatur, cum dicitur: Et in se resplendere faciens bonitatem silentii, quod est in abditis; hoc autem est, dum refulgentiam divinae bonitatis, quam ipse habet, ostendit aliis.”

<sup>28</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, *praenota* (II, 239B). Bonaventure even raises that the definitions provided by the Lombard are merely “convenientes definitiones” which do not hold up to the standard of Aristotle’s topics.

hierarchy. First, he distinguishes the supercelestial, celestial, and subcelestial hierarchies, which later in Bonaventure's work will refer to the divine, angelic, and human hierarchies, respectively, but here distinguish the three angelic hierarchies.<sup>29</sup>

Subsequently, he divides the celestial hierarchy into three hierarchies, the superior or the *epiphania*, the middle or *hyperphania*, and the inferior or *hypophania*.<sup>30</sup> Bonaventure recounts the angelic orders which belong to each and observes the differing arrangement of the nine orders of angels. At this point in the *praenota*, Bonaventure simply uses *hierarchia* as a metonym for its performers and participants rather than the activity itself. As noted above, he makes no mention of the term *divisio* or *ornatus* by which Eriugena, Hugh, and Gallus (sometimes) refer to the triad, or διακόσμησις, that performs hierarchy.

Bonaventure analyzes each angelic hierarchy from two perspectives, according those things which pertain to the *essence* of a hierarchy (understood as group of persons) and according the *officium* or *status* of a hierarchy.<sup>31</sup> He applies one of the three distinct elements from Dionysius' definition of a hierarchy as "*ordo, scientia, et actio*", which he

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<sup>29</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 239B–240A): "Post hoc procedendum est ad divisiones. Sunt autem divisiones tres praenotandae ad faciliorem explicationem distinctionis angelicorum ordinum. Prima est haec: hierarchiarum alia supercaelestis, alia caelestis, alia subcaelestis." Cf. *Brev* Prol. 4.

<sup>30</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 240A, n. 1) The Quaracchi editors ascribe this triple distinction using the *-phania* vocabulary to Prepositinus of Cremona's *Summa Theologiae* II, p. II. It is also found in Radulfus Ardens's *Speculum Universale* IV c. 15–21. There Radulfus divides the angels into nine orders in three triads following Gregory the Great's division (Principalities in the middle triad and the powers in the lower triad), (Radulfus, *Universale Speculum*, IV.20–21). Radulfus also identifies the Trinity as a hierarchy, but not on the basis of the interrelations of the Trinitarian persons, but because it exercises rule over its inferiors: "Sane supercelestis gerarchia est sacra et ineffabilis trine ypostaseos monarchia." (Radulfus, IV.16) This comports with his definition of hierarchy: "Gerarchia igitur est legitimum nature rationalis dominium" which therefore excludes the animals and all inferior creatures from hierarchy. (Radulfus, IV.15.) He knows the priestly inflection of the term: "Gerarchia uero dicitur 'sacer principatus' siue pontificatus ab 'archos' quod est principatus, et 'geros' quod sacer interpretatur.", and all the angels exercise *ministeria* towards humanity (Radulfus, IV.19–21) and the subcelestial hierarchy is identified as the dignity of the clergy: "Subcelestis autem gerarchia est prelatorum in ecclesia Dei dignitas ordinata."

<sup>31</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 240A): "Secundae autem divisionis ratio et manifesta est duplex: vel secundum ea quae essentialiter respiciunt hierarchiam, vel secundum ea quae secundum status et officia respiciunt hierarchiam."



applied earlier to the angelic hierarchy in general, to each angelic hierarchy in order to identify its principal attribute. However, he rearranges the order. The highest angelic hierarchy “principally attends to divine science” (essentially) and has the status of contemplators; the middle hierarchy attends to ordered power and has the status of prelates; the lowest hierarchy looks to administrative action and has the status of “the active”.<sup>32</sup>

This two-fold division of the essential and official aspects of the three angelic hierarchies provides the basis for ascribing attributes to the angelic *ordines* which belong to them.<sup>33</sup> As orientated to divine science and contemplation, the Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones are associated with *dilectio*, *cognitio*, and *tentio*, respectively.<sup>34</sup> Regarding the two lower angelic hierarchies, the differing originations of the last six angelic orders by Gregory the Great and Dionysius draw an explanation from Bonaventure, wherein two sets of attributes explain the different denominations, according to the categories of *essential* (from Dionysius) and *official* (from Gregory and Bernard) attributes. In the second hierarchy, the Dionysian model treats the Dominations, Powers, and Virtues as established by *ordered power* to lead, to resist evil, and to be able to act (respectively).<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 240A): “Prima enim hierarchia principahter attenditur penes scientiam divinam, media vero penes potentiam ordinatam, tertia vero penes actionem administrativam. Si vero secundum status et officia, sic similiter oportet esse tres. Nam quidam est status contemplativorum, quidam activorum, quidam praelatorum. Penes statum contemplativorum est hierarchia suprema, penes statum activorum est hierarchia infima, penes statum medium, scilicet praelatorum, assignatur hierarchia media.”

<sup>33</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 240B): “Tertiae autem divisionis ratio et explicatio ex visionis ratione secundae divisionis habet ortum.”

<sup>34</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 249B): “Quia enim suprema hierarchia secundum utrumque modum accipiendi attenditur in scientia et statu contemplationis, quae consistit in conversione ad Deum; ideo cum ad conversionem necessario requiratur triplex actus et triplex donum, scilicet tentio, cognitionis et dilectionis, ideo triplex ordo ibi ponitur. Quantum ad perfectam tentioem est ordo Thronorum: quantum ad perfectam cognitionem, ordo Cherubim; quantum ad perfectam dilectionem, ordo Seraphim.”

<sup>35</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 240B): “Perfectio autem virtutis sive potentiae consistit in tribus, scilicet in praesidendo, et penes hoc attenditur ordo Dominationum; in resistendo, et penes hoc attenditur ordo Potestatum; et in operando, et penes hoc est ordo Virtutum. Et ordinantur hi ordines secundum

From the Gregorian perspective, the second hierarchy can be understood as prelacy exercised over the angels (Dominations), over good men (Principalities), and over demons (Powers).<sup>36</sup> The third hierarchy, understood from the Dionysian perspective as *ministerial action*, describes the angelic guidance of princes (Principalities), of the multitude (Archangels), and of individuals (Angels).<sup>37</sup> In the Gregorian order, the third hierarchy performs works and miracles (Virtues), teaches great things (Archangels), and teaches lesser things (Angels), wherein doing (*facere*) is higher than teaching (*docere*).<sup>38</sup> Between these two orders, the Dionysian *essential* perspective has the greater authority for three reasons: Dionysius received his teaching from Paul, was a source for Gregory's own divisions, and treats that which is intrinsic to the angelic orders. Nevertheless, Bonaventure proposes by way of harmonization that Dionysius speaks of the angels' diversity *in principio*, but Gregory their diversity *in fine*. In other words, Dionysius' organization is right, but Gregory (and Bernard) do not identify order of the offices incorrectly.<sup>39</sup>

The *Praenota*'s treatment of hierarchy lacks many of the features that belong to Bonaventure's mature account of hierarchy, especially the role of Christ the hierarch and the interior hierarchization of souls. What it does offer is a clear presentation of 1) Bonaventure's inclusion of the Trinity as a hierarchy; 2) of his situation of the created hierarchies in the context of a cycle of procession and return; 3) his understanding that

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maiorem dignitatem et minorem, quia plus est praesidere quam repugnare, et repugnare quam per se operari posse. Ideo recte sic ordinantur ordines raediae hierarchiae a Dionysio, ut primo ponantur Dominationes, secundo Potestates et tertio Virtutes."

<sup>36</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 240B).

<sup>37</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 240B).

<sup>38</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 241A-B).

<sup>39</sup> That is, Dionysius names the correct placement of the angelic ranks but Gregory's order of the ranks correctly identifies the office performed by ranks in Dionysian order. E.g., the Dionysian Principality performs the office rightly termed Virtue, see II *Sent* d. 9, praenota (II, 241B).

hierarchies are constituted not as groups of created natures in virtue of their creatureliness but as the cooperative imitation of God by grace and glory; and 4) that hierarchy does not describe only the relationships of persons divine or participating in divinity.

### III.2.1.2 Hierarchy in II *Sent* d. 9, “*De ordinibus angelorum*”

Bonaventure’s disputations on the orders of the angels present several nuances in his understanding of hierarchy. Some of them concern the taxonomy that emerges in hierarchy. First in d., 9, art. unicus, q. 1, on whether angels are of one species, one argument—which Bonaventure does not assume—makes the three angelic hierarchies the genera to which angelic orders belong as separate species, although he concludes that angels are one species.<sup>40</sup> In the second question of II *Sent* d. 9, he concludes that the angelic orders are distinguished by grace rather than nature, by the same grace which establishes the hierarchies.<sup>41</sup> In the seventh question, Bonaventure explains that the triadic divisions of the angelic orders, dependent upon grace, are of numerological significance: all creatures are expressive images of the Trinity, and no number is more expressive of the Trinity a trio of trios.<sup>42</sup> Bonaventure admits humanity as a tenth order

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<sup>40</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, a. unicus, q. 1, resp.: “Una [opinion] est, quod in Angehs est diversitas secundum speciem et etiam secundum genera subalterna, ut hierarchia sit quasi unum genus, et ordines tres faciant species.”

<sup>41</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, a. unicus, q. 2, resp.: “Dicendum, quod sicut patet ex definitione ordinis supra posita, ordo et est a natura et est a gratia; sed a natura tanquam a praeambula dispositione, a gratia tanquam a *completiva perfectione*. Hoc dico de illis ordinibus, secundum quos attenditur dislinctio hierarchiarum in supremis spiritibus, sicut manifeste apparet ex officio et actione et nominatione ipsorum ordinum, inter quos praecipuus ordo est ordo Seraphim, qui denominatur ab ardore dilectionis, quae non est in Angelis consummata et perfecta nisi per gratiam.”

<sup>42</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, a. unicus, q. 7, contra 2 (II, 253B): “Item, Trinitas manifestatur in omnibus creaturis secundum plus et minus, maxime autem manifestari debet in Beatis; sed numerus maxime expressivus Trinitatis est ille qui consistit in trinitate super se reflexa, sicut sunt tres terni”: ergo videtur, quod in tali numero ordines Beatorum habeant a summa Trinitate institui.”; II *Sent* d. 9, a. unicus, q. 7, ad. 2 (II, 254B): “Ad illud quod obiicitur de expressa repraesentatione summae Trinitatis, dicendum, quod sicut unitas

added to the angels and argues that the Trinitarian image in the trio of trios is not destroyed by treating it as such. In identifying humanity as a tenth *gradus* of the saved, he allows it to be called a hierarchy (the ecclesiastical hierarchy) in virtue of its internal gradations of members, and as an *ordo* in comparison to the superior orders of angels.<sup>43</sup>

Questions six and eight nuance the *purpose* of hierarchy. In question six, “Whether the prelacy of the angels will be evacuated after the judgment”, Bonaventure evaluates the persistence of the hierarchical powers of purification, illumination, and perfection. Bonaventure raised an argument in the question’s initial arguments that prelacy consists in the acts of one order purifying, illuminating, and perfecting another, which ought to cease after the judgement.<sup>44</sup> Bonaventure’s reply distinguishes three senses of prelacy, literally *prae-latio*,<sup>45</sup> by which one order of angels may be preferred (*praeferri*) to another: 1) by excess in natural and graced things (*naturalibus et gratuitis*); 2) by influence; and 3) by command.<sup>46</sup> After the judgement, the first mode will remain

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addita novenario novenarium non perimit, sed salvat et ad perfectiorem numerum deducit; sic decimus ordo, ex hominibus constitutus, repraesentationem summae Trinitatis ab angelicis spiritibus non tollit, sed salva illa expressa repraesentatione, facit ad supernae civitatis maiorem perfectionem.”

<sup>43</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, a. unicus, q. 7, ad. 1 (II, 254B): “Ad illud ergo quod obiicitur, quod quilibet ordo est in aliqua hierarchia; dicendum est, quod sicut praeter angelicam hierarchiam est nunc ponere hierarchiam ecclesiasticam; sic praeter illas angelicas hierarchias erit intelligere, in decimo gradu salvari simul rationem ordinis et hierarchiae: hierarchiae inquam, per comparisonem ipsorum ad invicem, quia non habebunt omnimodam aequalitatem; sed ordinis per comparisonem ad ordines superiores.” By distinguishing the tenth *gradus* understood as a hierarchy and as an order on the grounds of internal difference and difference *ad extra*, Bonaventure anticipates the objection that the angelic hierarchies each have three orders operative in them, which would jeopardize the exegetical trope of the *denarius* if humanity had to be considered as three orders. Hierarchy’s use in this context of including persons of on unequal status does not make a genus, since hierarchy includes interactions among persons according to their status, see *ibid.*, q. 6, pro. 4: “Item praelatio ordinis ad ordinem est etc.”, see also II *Sent* d. 9, a. unicus, q. 9 contra 1, wherein Bonaventure points out that if humans had orders just as the angels (recall he teaches that angels are of one species (see II *Sent* d. 9, a. unicus, q. 1, resp. [II, 242B]), they would amount to eighteen orders, not ten.

<sup>44</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, a. unicus, q. 6, pro. 4 (II, 252A): “Item praelatio ordinis ad ordinem est secundum actum illuminandi et purgandi et perficiendi; sed post iudicium erit status in completionem scientiae et gratiae: ergo non erit ultra illuminatio, purgatio et perfectio: ergo nec aliqua in ordinibus praelatio.”

<sup>45</sup> Speaking of angelic prelacy is as close as Bonaventure comes to speaking of angelic priesthood in II *Sent*.

<sup>46</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, a. unicus, q. 6, resp. (II, 252A-B)

but the latter two will cease since the angels (and the ecclesiastical hierarchy) will be perfectly illuminated by resting in God and all *subiectio* and *imperium* will cease.<sup>47</sup> In the eighth question, “Whether Angels in the same order share perfect equality or there is some gradation”, the intra-ordinal equality of the angels is denied on the basis that though equality in the Trinity is its beauty (*pulchritudo*) as the highest hierarchy, in the hierarchies belonging to creatures, order as gradation is beautiful.<sup>48</sup> Drawing on Dionysius’ statement in the *CH* VIII that the members of each angelic triad are equal, Bonaventure interprets this to mean that they share a mode of action or *conversatio*, which defines a hierarchy, but its members do not share an equal accomplishment in that mode.<sup>49</sup>

The ninth and final question of II *Sent* d. 9 asks whether any other substance might be ordered like the angels, such as humans. The ecclesiastical hierarchy’s internal ordering of human beings, as noted in q. 7 above, is raised as an analogue to the nine orders of angels for the affirmative argument, while the negative arguments raise the problem that the distinction among humans includes a diversity of ranks of clerics, of

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<sup>47</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, a. unicus, q. 6, ad. opp. 1 (II, 252A).

<sup>48</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, a. unicus, q. 8, pro. 4 (II, 255A): “Item, hierarchia angelica maxime est repraesentativa supremae hierarchiae; sed in illa ordo non excludit aequalitatem: ergo videtur, quod in hierarchia angelica debeat esse ordo cum aequalitate. Sed non est aequalitas in Angelis diversorum ordinum: ergo in Angelis eiusdem ordinis.”; II *Sent* d. 9, a. unicus, q. 8, resp. (II, 255B): “Respondeo: Dicendum, quod hierarchia propter summam perfectionem reperitur pulchritudo ex perfectissima aequalitate et similitudine parium, sic in angelica hierarchia reperitur pulchritudo perfecta in genere creaturae ex quadam gradatione disparium.”

<sup>49</sup> II *Sent* d. 9, a. unicus, q. 8, pro 1 (II, 255A): “Dicit enim Dionysius, quod illi qui sunt in una hierarchia, aequipotentes sunt; sed qui sunt aequipotentes sunt aequales: ergo in eadem hierarchia Angeli sunt aequales: ergo multo fortius in eodem ordine.” (cf. *CH* VIII.1); “Ad illud quod obiicitur, quod aequipotentes sunt; dicendum, quod aequalitas illius non attenditur vel accipitur secundum conformitatem conversionis, secundum quam attenditur distinctio unius hierarchiae ab aliis; sicut prima hierarchia et ordines, qui sunt in illa, accipiuntur penes actum conversionis in Deum, non quia omnino aequaliter convertantur, sed quia ad hoc indifferenter omnes ordinantur et principaliter ab isto actu omnes denominantur.”

religious, and in the saints—distinctions that anticipate Bonaventure’s complex taxonomy of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in *Hex XXII*.<sup>50</sup> Bonaventure answers negatively: humanity cannot be divided into nine ranks like the angels. For unlike the angels, in whom nature and grace correspond proportionally as order and hierarchy (it seems, respectively<sup>51</sup>), humans may excel in natural terms and yet not in grace, (indeed it is frequently the other way around). Thus, the visible divisions of the Church *in via* are according to authority, office, and state of profession, but neither of grace nor nature. Nonetheless, a distinction like that of the nine ranks of angels may be attributed to humanity in its final perfection.<sup>52</sup>

In his responses, Bonaventure makes an one final critical distinction for his treatment of hierarchy going forwards in his corpus: although grace presupposes nature, the *ordo gratiae* does not presuppose an *ordo naturae*, and hence, although humanity is not defined by an *ordo naturae*, our grace is conformed to that of the angels (*gratia nostra Angelis conformis est*), and furthermore that which will distinguish us (by grace) will correspond to the angelic order.<sup>53</sup> What is not found in *II Sent*, however, is any identification of the Church’s present organization as corresponding one-to-one with the nine orders of the angels, a coordination that will emerge later in his thought.

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<sup>50</sup> *II Sent* d. 9, a. unicus, q. 9, contra. 4 (II, 257A).

<sup>51</sup> *II Sent* d. 9, q. 9, resp. (II, 257B).

<sup>52</sup> *II Sent* d. 9, q. 9, resp. (II, 257B): “Ex his patet responsio ad rationes ad utraque partem. Rationes autem probantes, quod non solum Angelis competit ordo, loquuntur de ordine secundum qualemcumque completionem, sive perfectam, sive semiplenam. Rationes vero ad oppositum ostendentes, quod in hominibus non sit ordo, procedunt alia via. Non enim concludunt, quod nullus sit ibi ordo, sed quod ipsa humana natura non habeat tantam ordinum distinctionem, quantam habet angelica, quia hoc habet solummodo per quandam conformationem ad illam.”

<sup>53</sup> *II Sent* d. 9, q. 9, ad. 2 (II, 257B): “Cum enim, gratiam adaequari naturae, non oportet, ordinem gratiae praesupponere ordinem in natura, quamvis gratia praesupponat naturam, sicut accidens praesupponit subiectum. Et quia gratia nostra conformis est gratiae Angelorum, quamvis natura nostra non sit eiusdem speciei cum eorum natura; ideo, si qua in nobis erit ordinum distinctio, attendetur per conformitatem ad ordines angelicos. Ideo non oportebit, plures et novos ordines ex hominibus esse, nisi fortassis decimum, qui ad perfectionem Angelorum non poterit pervenire.”

### III.2.1.3 Hierarchy in II *Sent* d. 10, “*De Ministerio Angelorum*”

Bonaventure draws hierarchy into the discussions of d. 10’s questions about the angelic activity. In turn, the questions produce several points about hierarchy as an activity as regards the beings to whom it is oriented, how it operates, and what it affects. In the first question of d. 10 a. 1, “Whether the angels are sent to us,” Bonaventure lays down the principle of the angels’ mission: charity. Charity unravels the objection that the angels should love God more than humanity, and hence remain with God (however dubious the objection<sup>54</sup>), for the angels’ charity is joined and conformed to the divine charity, which seeks our salvation, and their charity also coincides with our charity, in as much as they excite it and our love (*amor*) for God.<sup>55</sup> The angelic charity models conformity to God in loving, salvific condescension. Although d. 10, a. 1, q. 1 does not speak of hierarchy directly, its implications for hierarchy are clear, since the angelic charity described in motion belongs to the *exitus* and *reditus* of both angels and humans from God and towards God, in other words, hierarchy as described in d. 9, *praenota*.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> II *Sent* d. 10, a. 1, q. 1, ad. 3–5. Bonaventure explains that this argument fails in two ways. First, in assuming that what moves towards humanity moves away from God, but in truth this motion is towards humanity with respect to God and is thus even more disposed to God. Secondly, although by nature no substance can convert itself towards diverse things at once, by *divine dispensation* or *perfect grace* or *glory* it may.

<sup>55</sup> II *Sent* d. 10, a. 1, q. 1, resp.: “Etsi de hoc possint assignari plurimae rationes, tamen potissima sumitur ex lege caritatis. Haec enim missio concordat caritati divinae et caritati Angelicae. Caritati divinae, quia in hoc manifestatur divina bonitas, quantum nostram salutem diligat, dum nobilissimos spiritus, qui ei intima caritate iunguntur, dirigit et transmittit ad procurandam salutem nostram. — Et competit etiam caritati angelicae. Cum enim caritatis ardentis sit maxime desiderare aliorum salutem, ob quam eliam dicit Domino. sicut dixit Isaias: Ecce ego, Domine, mille me; et Angeli possint nos iuvare, pro eo quod vident, nos suo auxilio indigere, et malos angelos indesinenter nos impugnare: ideo quod ad nos mittantur, lex exigit caritatis angelicae. — Competit etiam hoc caritati humanae, quae, quoniam parvula est, quamdiu sumus in via, indiget foveri et nutriri et excitari. Et quoniam Angeli sunt concives hominibus, cum non sint eis iuncti per similitudinem naturae, quae excitat ad amorem, oportuit iungi per obsequium beneficentiae. — Unde rationes ad hoc inductae sunt concedendae.”

<sup>56</sup> See n. 54 above.

II *Sent d.* 10, a. 1, q. 2 asks whether all or only some of the angels are sent. Bonaventure concludes, after engaging with writings of the Areopagite and the apostle Paul that all angels are sent, the higher interiorly and the lowest exteriorly. The structure of Bonaventure's presentation follows Dionysius second opinion in *CH XIII*, that the Seraphim operate for humanity through their inferiors. In explaining the mediatorial structure of the angelic hierarchy, Bonaventure also elaborates his own explanation of the mode of their ministration. Not only are the angels revealers, they offer our prayers to God "not to instruct God, but so that by their fiery affection they might make our petitions acceptable to God."<sup>57</sup> In IV *Sent d.* 11, p. 1, dub. 4 (IV, 253B), Bonaventure treats their presentation of our prayers as the angels' sacrifice and he will later remark in *LMj IX.2* on a tradition singling out St. Michael as the one presenting souls to God. Hierarchical action, for the angels, is bi-directional.

II *Sent d.* 10, a. 2 raises two questions: whether the angels are sent "for inflaming the *affectus*" and "for illuminating the intellect." These two questions are indispensably important because they show what Bonaventure believed the angelic hierarchies accomplished among humanity in his early understanding of hierarchy.<sup>58</sup> His response is a qualified "yes" to both questions. Yes, the angels serve to inflame the human *affectus* and illuminate of the human intellect but not as efficient causes. Instead, the angels are

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<sup>57</sup> II *Sent d.* 10, q. 2, ad. 4–6: "Ad illud quod obiicitur, quod ordines Angelorum omnes restaurabuntur per homines; dicendum tam ad hoc quam ad duo sequentia, quod revera omnes Angeli sunt nobis in adiutorium, et omnes nos adjuvant vel mediate, vel immediate, sive in ministrandis revelationibus, sive in perferendis et offerendis nostris orationibus. Dum enim agmina suprema quae sunt nobis necessaria inferioribus agminibus revelant; et dum simul cum illis pro nobis ad Deum interpellant et petitiones nostras Deo exponunt, non ut Deum instruant, sed ut petitiones nostras igneis suis affectionibus Deo acceptas faciant, sicut advocati decoris orationibus aliorum causam defendunt et ornant: absque dubio nobis magnum auxilium praestant, et sic faciunt ad ordinem suorum reparationem, et nihilominus sequuntur caritatis sollicitudinem et efficacius nos adjuvant, quam alii impugnent."

<sup>58</sup> II *Sent d.* 10, a. 2 (II, 263A-B).



regarded as “helping” or “exciting” agents in the inflammation of *affectus* which is *effected* by God alone. Attributing efficacy to the angels is deemed heretical insofar as it subverts God’s immediacy to the soul.<sup>59</sup> He contrasts Dionysius to “the Philosophers”, likely Neoplatonists, by aligning Dionysius with the “Catholic understanding” that the angels aid and excite the inflaming of the soul and reads *CH XIII*’s explanation of Isaiah’s purification in that way.<sup>60</sup> On the way to answering this question Bonaventure makes three other points pertinent to hierarchy. First, he associates inflaming with the hierarchical action of purification as the reordering of love.<sup>61</sup> Second, he also associates inflaming *affectus* with goodness in two ways, inasmuch as the angels’ goodness behooves them to make humanity share in God’s goodness by their acts of charity and inasmuch as the *affectus* is ordered towards the good *qua* good, through the reception of which good it is perfected (as in the hierarchical action).<sup>62</sup> Third, he uses the image of that which is actually aflame (the angels) setting flame to that which may be so potentially to describe the angels’ involvement in our reception of the divine fire which they already possess. He qualifies, of course, that the angels excite us unto its reception

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<sup>59</sup> II *Sent* d. 10, a. 2, q. 1, resp. (II, 263B39).

<sup>60</sup> II *Sent* d. 10, a. 2, q. 2, resp. (II, 265B–266B).

<sup>61</sup> II *Sent* d. 10, a. 2, q. 1, pro 2 (II, 263A): “Item, actus hierarchiarum, sicut vult Dionysius, de Angelica Hierarchia, sunt illuminare, purgare, perficere: ergo si purgatio respicit remotionem sordium, et sordidatio respicit affectum quantum ad concupiscentiae vitium; videtur e contrario, quod Angelus mittatur ad inflammandum affectum per amorem sanctum et mundum.” In the conclusion to the question, Bonaventure does not refute this argument, but qualifies that the angels work of purification is not *efficient* but *exciting*.

<sup>62</sup> II *Sent* d. 10, a. 2, q. 1, pro 3 (II, 263A): “Item, hoc videtur ratione. Bonum, secundum quod bonum, est diffusivum sui; sed Angelus beatus est perfecte bonus: ergo potest bonitatem diffundere. Sed bonum ut bonum respicit affectum: ergo videtur, quod cum affectus noster secundum susceptionem bonitatis habeat perfici et inflammari, quod ad hoc possit et debeat Angelus mitti, ut nostrum affectum inflammet et perficiat.”; “Ad illud vero quod obiicitur, quod bonum est diffusivum sui: dicendum, quod diffusio dupliciter potest esse a bono: aut per modum multiplicationis, sicut calor vel lumen dicitur se diffundere; aut per modum utilis operationis, per quem modum dicitur bonus homo bonitatem suam diffundere, dum ad hoc operatur et laborat, ut alii bonitatem non ab ipso, sed a Deo suscipiant. Et per hunc modum intelligenda est diffusio in bonitate vel caritate angelica.”

and that the flame which is divine *amor* is, properly speaking, infused (*infusus*) and poured in (*influire*) by God alone.<sup>63</sup>

Regarding the question of the illumination of the intellect by the angels, Bonaventure identifies it with the illumination or enlightenment, the second of three hierarchical powers, and delineates the scope of its object and its mode of operation. The angels may indeed illuminate, but only the lower part of the intellect not the higher part, which Bonaventure terms the *mens*.<sup>64</sup> Bonaventure rules out any sense that the angels infuse divine wisdom into intelligent beings, for, like divine *amor*, that can must be infused by God alone. Nonetheless, the angels participate in the human's preparation to receive divine wisdom by exciting the intellect through an interior analogue of what a teacher accomplishes by speaking exteriorly, so that by suggestion "[an angel] excites the intellect and prepares it for understanding."<sup>65</sup> Rather than presenting the illuminating angels as *lumina* or as mirrors, he calls them "interior preachers".<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> II *Sent* d. 10, a. 2, q. 1, pro. 4 (II, 263A): "Item, nos videmus in naturalibus, quod illud quod est inflammatum, dum alteri rei inflammabili approximatur, ipsam inflammat: ergo si affectus angelicus est igne divini amoris inflammatus et repletus, et in sua missione nobis approximatur, ergo affectus nostros inflammat."; II *Sent* d. 10, a. 2, q. 1, ad. 4 (II, 264B): "Ad illud quod obiicitur, quod inflammatum coniunctum inflammabili inflammat; dicendum, quod verum est, quando illa inflammatio est per educationem alicuius de materia; ibi enim quod est in actu potest educere aliquid, quod est in potentia. Quando vero aliquid habet inflammari per caloris infusionem, non habet veritatem, quia hoc modo non inflammatur aliquid nisi per coniunctionem sui cum principio caloris, quod calorem natum est infundere. Et per hunc modum est inflammari in spiritualibus ubi flamma est amor divinus, non ex ipsa anima productus, sed potius a Deo infusus; et ideo hunc calorem non potest in nobis angelicus spiritus efficere, quamquam aliquo modo ad eius susceptionem possit nos excitare."

<sup>64</sup> II *Sent* d. 10, a. 2, q. 2, resp. (II, 266A-B): "Animam igitur quoad supremam partem Angelus non potest illuminare, sed quantum ad inferiorem partem rationis posuerunt catholici tractatores animas nostros a beatis angelis per eorum revelationes illuminari. [...] Nam rationes ostendentes, quod Angelus non potest intellectum nostrum illuminare, loquuntur de intellectu quantum ad superiorem portionem, scilicet mentem, et de illuminatione, quae quidem est per luminis infusionem; et hoc solius Dei est proprium, sicut praedictum est; unde rationes illae concedendae sunt."

<sup>65</sup> II *Sent* d. 10, a. 2, q. 2, resp. (II, 266A-B): "sic etiam suo modo intelligendum est, quod Angelus hoc possit facere et sic illuminat, non lumen infundendo nec solum offerendo sicut obiectum vel speculum, sed etiam vivaciter excitando, sicut doctor exterior, et adhuc efficaciori modo."

<sup>66</sup> II *Sent* d. 10, a. 2, q. 2, resp. (II, 266A).

In the same question, Bonaventure also makes two further points about the hierarchical powers as a whole: the hierarchical powers of purification, illumination, and perfection can be understood as the beginning, progress, and termination of the intellect's activity towards God, or they can be understood as the removal of impediments, the cognition of truths, and the dilection of goods.<sup>67</sup> Since these actions can be aided by the exciting power of angels, they can also be attributed to human beings, such as a preacher and a teacher, a position which Bonaventure attributes to the *CH*.<sup>68</sup>

#### III.2.1.4 Summary of Hierarchy in *II Sent*

*II Sent* d. 9 and 10 express the basis of Bonaventure's early understanding of hierarchy and besides these distinctions only a handful of other points or opinions related to hierarchy or the *CD*, such as the *lex divinitatis*, appear in *II Sent*.<sup>69</sup> For him, hierarchy describes God's life as such and the participation in God's life by intelligent creatures, humans and angels. Humans' and angels' participation in God's life corresponds to their natural capacities but is actualized by a grace which assimilates the natures by which they are already images of God. In this sense, hierarchy is not natural; rather, for Bonaventure, hierarchy is the supernatural consummation of nature. Hierarchy, as graced activity, organizes persons according to their proper activity amongst each other relative to God. In this organization there are nine choirs of angels who act serially to cooperate in the

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<sup>67</sup> *II Sent* d. 10, a. 2, q. 2, resp. (II, 267A-B). These two interpretations of the hierarchical powers map on to both Eriugena and Hugh's understanding of the hierarchical powers. See Chapter II.2.2 and II.3.2.

<sup>68</sup> *II Sent* d. 10, a. 2, q. 2, resp. (II, 267A-B). This same claim about human action is initially an objection. Bonaventure accepts it, however in the replies. Curiously, no mention is made of the sacraments, nor is there almost any reference to the *EH*.

<sup>69</sup> The *lex divinitatis* appears in *II Sent* d. 11, a. 1, q. 1 (II, 277A) and d. 29, a.1, q. 1 (II, 695A) .

assimilation and glorification of their inferiors, human and angelic, by the powers of purification, illumination, and perfection. These powers are not efficient causes but dispositive and they cooperate in and prepare their inferiors for the granting of grace that belongs to God alone. In this cooperative action, its attendant taxonomical distinction of multiple triadic structures is disclosed. There are three hierarchies, namely the divine human and angelic, and the angels are divided amongst three serial hierarchies. The repetition of triads represents the Trinitarian source whence hierarchies are an *egressus* and to which they have their *regressus*, which is accomplished in the intellects and wills of those participating in hierarchy. At this point in Bonaventure's thought, Jesus Christ as God incarnate is not yet integrated into the conceptual system of hierarchy explicitly. Christ's prominence in Bonaventure's conception of hierarchy, and of his cross, will appear later, and will mark also an increasing prominence to hierarchy's role in his thought overall.

### III.2.2 Hierarchy in IV *Sent*

In IV *Sent*, written after II *Sent*,<sup>70</sup> Bonaventure does not analyze hierarchy in general as he did in II *Sent* d. 9-10, but, rather, deploys hierarchy and related concepts to answer questions about the Church on earth, especially in regard to baptism, the sacrament of penance, and the sacrament of order. Taken together, Bonaventure's appeal to hierarchy and related concepts sheds light on his understanding of what hierarchy means in the context of the Church. That Bonaventure almost never references

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<sup>70</sup> Balduinus Distelbrink, *Bonaventurae Scripta: Authentica, Dubia Vel Spuria Critice Recensita*, Subsidia Scientifica Franciscalia 5 (Roma: Istituto Storico Cappuccini, 1975), 5.

Dionysius' *EH*, even in his treatment of the Eucharist, raises the question of whether and/or how familiar he was with that text and, moreover, helps to chart his developing understanding of hierarchy in relation to his engagement with the *CD*.

### III.2.3.1 Hierarchy in IV *Sent* on the Sacrament of Baptism

IV *Sent*'s first appeal to hierarchy occurs in the context of discussing Baptism, in a (refuted) argument in IV *Sent.* d. 5, a. 1, q. 1, which asks “[u]trum soli sacerdotes sive clerici habeant potestatem baptizandi.” While Bonaventure concludes that even the laity may baptize, he raises as an argument to the contrary that Baptism is a sacrament of the Church and since there is order (*ordo*) in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, therefore it should only be administered by those who have been ordained (*ordinati*) for that purpose.<sup>71</sup> Appealing to Isadore of Seville, Bonaventure says that the necessity and primacy of Baptism explains why it can be performed by the laity. No further mention of ecclesiastical hierarchy is made besides identifying it with the Church. A little later, IV *Sent.* d. 6, p. 1, art. unicus, q. 1 asks what the character of baptism is “*secundum essentiam*” and Bonaventure introduces a spurious quotation supposedly from Dionysius' *EH* II.2, one previously used by Alexander of Hales in his gloss on the same distinction of Lombard's *Sentences*: “Character is the holy sign of cognition or of the communication of faith and of sacred ordination, given to whom it befalls by the

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<sup>71</sup> IV *Sent* d. 5, a. 1, q. 1, contra 2 (IV, 121A): “Item, baptismus est Sacramentum Ecclesiae; sed ordo est in ecclesiastica hierarchia: ergo ab his solis potest tradi, qui ad hoc in Ecclesia sunt ordinati. Sed illi soli sunt, qui habent ordinis Sacramentum: ergo etc.”

hierarchy.”<sup>72</sup> Bonaventure rejects this definition of character because it fails to describe an assimilation in the baptizand and he settles on calling character a *habitus spiritualis*.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, Bonaventure may have recognized the spurious character of the quotation, however, he does not reject it outright as both Albertus Magnus and Aquinas do.<sup>74</sup>

### III.2.3.2 Hierarchy in IV *Sent* on the Sacrament of Penance

IV *Sent*’s questions about the sacrament of Penance also include references to hierarchy. In IV *Sent* d. 18, p.1, a. 3, q. 2, Bonaventure asks whether the power of discerning and absolving a penitent’s sins are the same. His answer invokes the angelic hierarchy, which both descends from and ascends to God, as a model to explain how the two keys of knowledge and absolution can be both distinguished and related: “Just as some say that there is in the angelic hierarchy a descending and ascending hierarchy, so

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<sup>72</sup> IV *Sent* d. 6, p. 1, a. unicus, q. 1, resp. (IV, 137A): “Et hoc dicunt sensisse Dionysium in libro de Ecclesiastica Hierarchia, ubi dicit: Character est signum sanctum cognitionis vel communicationis fidei et sacrae ordinationis, datum accedenti ab hierarcha.” Cf. Alexander of Hales, *Glossa in II Sent* d. 6, n. 2, par. A; Bougerol, “Saint Bonaventure et Le Pseudo-Denys l’Aréopagite,” 76.

<sup>73</sup> IV *Sent* d. 6, a. unicus, q. 1, resp. (137A, 138A): “Sed illud non potest stare: quia character dicit aliquam assimilationem et configurationem ad Christum, sicut character bestiae ad diabolum, de quo Apocalypsis decimo quarto; sed assimilatio fundatur super qualitatem: [...]. Et ideo dicendum, quod character, cum sit in anima et sit qualitas spiritualis habitus non passio nec potentia.”

<sup>74</sup> Bonaventure’s skepticism about the attributed quote is suggested by his manner of introducing it: “Et hoc dicunt sensisse Dionysium” (IV *Sent* d. 6, a. unicus, q. 1, resp. [IV, 137A]). In other words, some say that Dionysius believed this, surely referring at least to Alexander of Hales, but he does not attribute the position to Dionysius directly. Albert says: Dicunt autem quidam beatum Dionysium in Ecclesiastica hierarchia ita diffinire: “Character est signum sanctum communionis fidei et sacrae ordinationis datum accedenti a hierarchia.” Licet autem ita dicant, tamen in nulla Dionysii translatione invenitur haec diffinitio, nec per verba, nec per sensum: et hoc scit bene quicumque litteram Dionysii inspicit. (Albertus Magnus, IV *Sent* d. 6C, a. 4 [XXIX.123]) He goes on to point out the passage that may have inspired the misquotation. Thomas Aquinas also notes that the definition was never given by Dionysius: “Respondeo dicendum ad primam quaestionem, quod illa definitio nusquam invenitur a Dionysio posita, sed potest accipi ex verbis ejus supra inductis; et acciperetur adhuc convenientius si sic diceretur: ” (Thomas Aquinas *In IV Sent* d. 4, q. 1, art. 2, quaestiuncula, 1, resp.) This raises a number question. If Albert and Thomas were able to reject the definition with ease, why didn’t Bonaventure do likewise? Is Bonaventure unsure about the definition’s textual status or its meaning is it because he is drawing only upon earlier scholastic citations and granting them more credit than is due?

too in the Church militant.”<sup>75</sup> He then goes on to say that ordained power, knowledge, and action belongs to every hierarchy. Returning to the association made in II *Sent* d. 9’s *praenota*, he states that the Thrones represent, the Father in power, the Cherubim the Son in science, and the Seraphim the Holy Spirit in actions or (good) works, and adds here that ordained power, knowledge, and action are also found in the ecclesiastical hierarchy and conferred especially in the Sacrament of Order.<sup>76</sup> Thus, in priests there are the principle of power, the discerning power, and the absolving power. In this way, Bonaventure says, a *perfectissima pulchritudo* appears in the Church so that it represents the Trinity above it, whence its power comes and towards which it leads.<sup>77</sup>

IV *Sent* d. 19, a. 3, q. 1, asks whether one priest can absolve any priest whatsoever, and Bonaventure appeals to hierarchical concepts on both sides of the argument and in his conclusion. This question is noteworthy for its presentation of the principles that govern Bonaventure’s taxonomy of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In favor of the wider right of absolution Bonaventure raises the case of the inferior angel who can be purified, illumined, and perfected by any superior angel and since our hierarchy imitates

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<sup>75</sup> IV *Sent* d. 18, a. 3, q. 2, resp. (IV, 481A): “Dicunt enim, quod sicut in Angelis est hierarchia descendens a hierarchia supercaelesti et ad illam ascendens et rediens; sic est in militante Ecclesia.”

<sup>76</sup> IV *Sent* d. 18, a. 3, q. 2, resp. (IV, 481A): “In Angelis autem hierarchia, sicut dicit Dionysius est ordo, scientia et actio, id est potestas ordinata scientia et actione, ita quod potestas respondet Patri, et haec apparet in Thronis; scientia Filio, et haec apparet in Cherubim; et actio sive opus Spiritui sancto, et haec apparet in Seraphim. Per hunc modum est intelligere in hierarchia ecclesiastica; quae maxime consistit penes Sacramentum ordinis, in quo confertur potestas ordinata scientia et actione; et hanc dicunt potestatem clavium, quae complectitur actum discernendi et solvendi: ita quod potestas respondeat Patri, et scientia Filio, et opus Spiritui sancto. Et secundum hos sunt in sacerdote tres potestates: una principalis et prima, quae est ipse ordo ut potestas conficiendi; secunda est potestas discernendi, et tertia absolvendi; [...]” Cf. II *Sent* d. 9, *praenota* (II, 238A).

<sup>77</sup> IV *Sent* d. 18, a. 3, q. 2 (IV, 481A): “ut sic appareat perfectissima pulchritudo in ordine ecclesiastico secundum repraesentationem illius superioris perfectissimae Trinitatis.” Bonaventure’s identification of *pulchritudo* as the measure of imitating the Trinity recalls his definition of the supercelestial hierarchy as the *divina pulchritudo* in II *Sent* d. 9, *praenota*.

the angels' hierarchy, any priest can absolve any lay person.<sup>78</sup> On the other hand, he puts forth an argument that their reduction only occurs through one intermediate, so that one priest is led through to the Pope's power through an archdeacon, and an archdeacon through bishop, a bishop through a hierarchy is led back to the Pope.<sup>79</sup> Bonaventure explains that the angelic hierarchy in which the inferior angels are ministered to by any of their superiors is not perfectly imitated by the Church on earth because they are not beset by the factionalism and self-interest which must be held at bay by distinguishing and limiting powers in the Church on earth.<sup>80</sup>

Equally important is Bonaventure's conclusion to this question, which stresses that the Church, like all things, is to be rightly ordered—an order described by the Dionysian *lex divinitatis* such that “the middle is led through the first, and the last through the middle to purification, illumination, and perfection.”<sup>81</sup> This principle explains all prelacy and subjection in the Church, but Bonaventure also marries it to another,

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<sup>78</sup> IV *Sent* d. 19, a. 3, q. 1, pro. 5 (IV, 507B): “Item, ita videmus supercaelestibus, quod Angelus ordinis inferioris potest purgari, illuminari et perfici a quolibet Angelo superioris ordinis: ergo si haec hierarchia illam imitatur; cum ordo sacerdotalis sit supra laicos, videtur, quod quilibet laicus a quolibet sacerdote possit absolvi.”

<sup>79</sup> IV *Sent* d. 19, a. 3, q. 1, contra 4 (IV, 508A): “Item, videtur ratione: quia nos videmus in ordinatione praedicamentorum in rationalibus et in ordine causarum in naturalibus, quod reduction fit usque ad supremum per unum immediatum, ita quod non sunt plura immediata respectu unius. Et hoc patet, quia una est species specialissima individui unius, similiter est in causis: ergo si ordo est in Ecclesia secundum gradus descendendo et ascendendo a Summo Pontifice usque ad parochianum; videtur tunc, quod per unam sacerdotem, per unum archidiaconum, per unum episcopum, per unum hierarcham reducat ad Summum Pontificem: ergo non poterunt secundum rectum ordinem plures sacerdotes in unum: non ergo quilibet quemlibet potest absolvere vel ligare.” Bonaventure's location of the hierarchy between the bishop and Pope is puzzling—he does not seem to know what to do with the hierarchy.

<sup>80</sup> In IV *Sent* d. 19, art. 3, q. 1, ad 5 (IV, 509B): “Ad illud quod obiicitur de Angelis superioris ordinis, dicendum, quod non est simile: quia in hierarchia angelica non potest cadere zelus nec controversia, pro eo quod concordia in sublimibus est facta; non sic est in Ecclesia, immo quilibet vult sibi ius alterius vindicare: ideo oportuit potestates distinguere et limitare.”

<sup>81</sup> IV *Sent* d. 19, art. 2, q. 1, resp.: (IV, 508B): “Respondeo: Dicendum, quod, sicut dicit Dionysius «lex divinitatis est media per prima, et ultima per media perducere ad purgationem, illuminationem et perfectionem». Ideo, sicut videmus in omnibus, sive in rationalibus, sive in naturalibus, sive in caelestibus, quod ad hoc, quod sit Concordia et decor, oportet, quod sit *ordo*; sic intelligendum est et in spiritualibus potestatibus in ipsa Ecclesia; unde Cantici sexto legitur, quod terribilis est ut castrorum acies ordinata.”



strikingly neoplatonic, principle, that all ascents are towards unity while all descents are into multiplication and the farther one moves away from the source of unity, the more diminished is one's power and more numerous are ones equals.<sup>82</sup> Thus, the order of the Church is such that the higher can absolve more, so that Pope can absolve anyone, the bishop his own diocese, the priest his own parish, except in necessity when the strictures on who may absolved are loosened.<sup>83</sup>

The next question, *IV Sent*, d. 19, ar. 3, q. 2, raises a related concern: “whether the inferior can absolve the superior”. Bonaventure, once again, looks to the organization of the angelic hierarchy as the model of the Church to suggest a negative response to the question, since the inferior angels do not purify the superior.<sup>84</sup> However, he argues that case is not the same, because prelates become inferiors relatively through sin, and thus a priest, for example, may absolve the Pope.<sup>85</sup> Once again, Bonaventure admits that the

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<sup>82</sup> *IV Sent* d. 19, a. 3, q. 1 (IV, 508B): “Quoniam igitur ordo attenditur secundum praelationem et subiectionem; et praelatio attenditur secundum ascensum et descensum, non secundum aequalitatem; et in ascendendo ad superius est status et reductio ad unum, econtra in descendendo est multiplicatio: ideo secundum rectum ordinem Ecclesiae oportuit, unum esse praelatum primum et supremum, in quo esset status orationis praelationis ecclesiasticae. Et quia in illo status est tanquam in primo et simplicissimo in illo genere; ideo virtus in eo unita est, et solus est inter praelatos, qui habet plenitudinem potestatis—Item, quoniam per recessum ab uno fit multiplicatio, et per hoc virtutis diminutio; ideo, quanto praelati alii inferiores sunt, tanto plures sunt et tanto minorem habent potestatem, ita quod status est in sacerdotibus parochialibus, qui immediate gerunt populi curam; et istorum iurisdictio arctata est ad portiunculam determinatam, et cuilibet commissum est sua portio secundum rectam ordinationem, et illa iudicatur esse messis sua.”

<sup>83</sup> *IV Sent* d. 19, a. 3, q. 1., resp. (IV, 509A): “Et quoniam non licet alii sacerdoti mittere manum vel falcem in alienam messem; ideo alius non habet potestatem eius subditum absolvere, nisi superior, vel vicem habeat superioris, ut poenitentiarum domini Papae et poenitentiarum episcopi, legati et privilegiati, qui faciunt hoc auctoritate superioris, sicut nuntius a principe procedens potest in omnes subditos aliis inferioribus. — Haec autem intelligenda sunt secundum legem communem, quia in articulo necessitatis indulget rectitudo iuris cuilibet sacerdoti quemlibet absolvere, si sit in Ecclesiae unitate.” Cf. *IV Sent* d. 19, a. 3, q. 1, contra 4. (IV, 508A).

<sup>84</sup> *IV Sent* d. 19, ar. 3, q. 2, contra. 4 (IV, 510B): “Item, in hierarchia angelica non recipiunt Angeli superiores illuminationem ab inferioribus ergo similiter videtur, quod in Ecclesia superior ab inferior non absolvatur.”

<sup>85</sup> *IV Sent* d. 19, ar. 3, q. 2, ad 4 (IV, 511B): “Ad illud quod obiicitur de Angelis, quod non descendunt ad inferiores: dicendum, quod non est simile: quia Angeli semper in sua dignitate persistunt, nec cadit in eis obscuratio peccati; et ideo non oportet, eos ad inferiores descendere. Sed in ecclesiastica

angelic hierarchy is imitated by the Church while acknowledging its very different contexts and hence the practical limits of imitation in terms of the Church's practical structures.

### III.2.3.3 Hierarchy in IV *Sent* on the Sacrament of Order

In IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 1, a. 2, q. 2, “whether *ordo* is a sacrament”, hierarchy is used in two objections to the status of Order as a sacrament. First, since there is *ordo* among the angels which does not hold the *rationem Sacramenti* and since the laity partake of *ordo* and even have signs of power (like royal scepters), *ordo* should not be treated as a sacrament.<sup>86</sup> Second, since the Church mirrors the angelic hierarchy, which possesses *ordo*, *scientia*, and *actus* and the latter two are not counted as sacraments themselves, therefore neither should *ordo*.<sup>87</sup> Bonaventure responds to the first that there are two

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hierarchia secus est, quia peccant praelati et subditi; et ideo oportet, quod etiam ipsi subiiciantur inferioribus, quia et ipsi per culpam quodam modo inferiores facti sunt.”

<sup>86</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 1, a. 2, q. 2, contra 3 (IV, 616A): “Item, in Angelis est ordo; et tamen non tenet rationem Sacramenti: ergo pari ratione nec in hierarchia inferiori. Si tu dicas, quod non est simile, quia ibi est totum spirituale; obiicitur de laicis, qui sunt de Ecclesia” et suscipiunt Sacramenta et habent ordinem et potestatem et signa potestatis, ut rex habet sceptrum et purpuram et coronam; et tamen ordo talis non est Sacramentum.”

<sup>87</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 1, a. 2, q. 2, contra 5 (IV, 616A): “Item, in hierarchia caelesti est «ordo, scientia et actio», sicut vult beatus Dionysius: ergo si ei debet Ecclesia respondere, similiter videtur, quod sit in humana. Sed scientia et actio non ponuntur inter Sacramenta: ergo nec ordo.” The argument here relies on the coincidence of *ordo* as a translation for τάξις in the *CD*, which does not have the connotation of sacred ordination in Greek (that falls to τελεῖωσις in the *CD*) and the Latin use of *ordo* to denote sacred ordination to the priesthood and other offices, which is the sole sense used by Lombard in IV *Sent* d. 24: “Si autem quaeritur, quid sit quod hic vocatur ordo; sane dici potest, signaculum quoddam esse, id est sacrum quoddam, quo spiritalis potestas traditur ordinato et officium. Character igitur spiritualis, ubi fit promotio potestatis, ordo vel gradus vocatur. Et dicuntur hi ordines Sacramenta, quia in eorum perceptione res sacra, id est gratia, confertur, quam figurant ea quae ibi geruntur.” Eriugena and Hugh both made the same association before Bonaventure. In all of these readings, *ordo* is understood as that power by which hierarchy functions. This reading of Dionysius is anachronistic, nevertheless, it happily preserves Dionysius’ understanding that hierarchy is principally performative and thereby produces a taxonomy rather treating it as a taxonomy which coordinates already-existing activities. In this objection, Bonaventure’s argument assumes the singular sense of *ordo* to mean holy orders while what is in question is whether or not it is a sacrament, which must negotiate between the integrity of the trio of *ordo*, *scientia*,

meanings of sacrament, a sensible sign and a sacred sign. Both are held together in the Sacrament of Order in the Church, while the first sense is lacking among the angels, and the second lacking in the laity who rule in an earthly way.<sup>88</sup> Bonaventure responds to the second objection that *ordo* is principal and *scientia* and *actus* are annexed to the sacrament (as seen in d. 18 above), and so included in it.<sup>89</sup> Whence three important points about hierarchy can be gathered: 1) the appeal to the angelic hierarchy as the model of the ecclesiastical hierarchy is presumed; 2) the angels have the sacred reality of the Church's sacrament that belongs to hierarchy but without a sensible sign; 3) as with penance, the trio of *ordo/potestas*, *scientia*, and *actus* are used to explain how a sacrament of the Church is performed through her ministers and not used in a structure that describes its members as such—hierarchy remains *performed*.

In IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4, which asks whether there are seven or more or fewer orders that belong to the sacrament of order, Bonaventure provides the most detailed account of the taxonomy of the Church understood as the ecclesiastical hierarchy

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and *actio* and the singular identification of *ordinatio* as a sacrament in the tradition. That Dionysius does not count ordination as a τελέτη does not factor in this discussion in any way.

<sup>88</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 1, a. 2, q. 2, ad. 3 (IV, 616B–617A): “Ad illud quod obiicitur, quod ordo est in Angelis et in laicis; dicendum, quod utrobique deficit ratio Sacramenti: quoniam duo sunt quae integrant Sacramentum, scilicet sensibile signum, et spirituale sive sacrum signatum; ratione primi deficit in Angelis, qui sunt omnino spirituales; ratione vero secundi deficit in laicis, in quibus ordo attenditur quantum ad potestatem terrenam, quae respicit bona naturae vel fortunae specialis personae vel reipublicae; in ecclesiastica vero hierarchia contingit utrumque.” Bonaventure’s explanation that the ecclesiastical hierarchy has both the sacred reality and sensible sign is similar to Dionysius’ statement in *EH* V.1.2 that our hierarchy is the mean between legal and angelic hierarchies, possessing the sensible signs of the former and the spiritual realities of the latter. However, Bonaventure contrasts the visible signs that represent temporal power and spiritual power, whereas Dionysius contrasted the sensible expectation of the law that anticipated their spiritual fulfillment. That Bonaventure echoes Dionysius’ treatment of sacred order in his own treatment of order is interesting, however, in some Latin versions of the *CD EH* V.1.1–3 was included as the conclusion to *EH* IV.3, see Dionysius and Eriugena, *EH 13th Century Textbook*, 179–87.

<sup>89</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 1, a. 2, q. 2, ad. 5 (IV, 617B): “Ad illud quod obiicitur, quod scientia et actio non dicunt Sacramentum; dicendum, quod scientia et actio sunt annexa, et ordo est principale; unde cum ponitur ordo esse Sacramentum, alia duo simul includuntur; et illud superius tactum est, quando agebatur de potestate clavium.”

in IV *Sent.* Here Bonaventure's reliance on Dionysius becomes pronounced as he accommodates the seven orders presented by Hugh of St. Victor and the Lombard to multiple precedents set by Dionysius. Dionysius' *EH* is taken as an argument for fewer than seven orders, namely three: the bishop, priest, and deacon corresponding to the three powers or "*hierarchici actus*": purification, illumination, and perfection.<sup>90</sup> On the other hand, the number of angelic orders is taken as an argument that there should be more than seven orders, for just as Moses saw the plan of the tabernacle in its heavenly precedent, so also the number of orders in the Church should imitate the form of the angelic hierarchies in number or even exceed their number on account of the ecclesiastical hierarchy's greater distance from its source, God.<sup>91</sup> Along with the seven-fold grace of the Holy Spirit as precedent for the seven-fold distinction of orders,<sup>92</sup> these diverse modes of distinguishing orders force the question: what is the principle of division in the sacrament?<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4, contra 1 (IV, 634A): "Sed quod debeant esse tantum tres, videtur: auctoritate Dionysii, de Ecclesiastica Hierarchia ubi non ponit nisi tres gradus, scilicet ministros, sacerdotes et episcopos."; ibid contra 2 (IV, 634A): "Item, hoc videtur ratione: quia distinction graduum debet esse penes actus hierarchicos; isti autem actus sunt tres tantummodo, scilicet «purgare, illuminare et perficere»: ergo videtur, quod sint tantum tres gradus sive ordines." While Bonaventure does not quote Dionysius' here, his reading of the *EH* is correct and corresponds with *EH* V.1.3. Given that in IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 1, a. 2, q. 2, ad. 3 he made a distinction reminiscent of *EH* V.1.2, we can be more certain at this point that he has the text (or perhaps a commentary, such as Gallus' *Extractio* or *Explanatio*) in front of him.

<sup>91</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4, contra 3 (IV, 634A-B): "Sed quod sint plures, videtur: Quoniam Ecclesia militans imitatur triuraphanlem, secundum quod dicitur Exodi vigesimo quinto: Inspice, et fac secundum exemplar, quod tibi monstratum est etc.; sed in illa est distinctio et gradus in Angelis secundum numerum novenarium: ergo etc."; IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4, contra 4 (IV, 634B): "Item, quanto maior est recessus a principio, tanto magis tenditur in multitudinem; sed hierarchia ecclesiastica plus distat a principio omnium, Deo summo, quam angelica: ergo pluribus gradibus et ordinibus debet distingui quam angelica: ergo plures deberent esse ordines quam novem."

<sup>92</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4, pro. 2 (IV, 634A): "Item, ratione videtur: quia signum debet respondere veritati; sed in Sacramento isto septiformis gratia Spiritus sancti datur: ergo videtur, quodsi gradus in ordine assignantur, quod septem esse debent."

<sup>93</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4 (IV, 634A): "Est igitur quaestio: propter quid in hoc Sacramento magis est graduum distinctio quam in alio; et propter quid in numero septenario."

In his conclusion, Bonaventure edges towards nine orders corresponding to a triple division of purification (exterior—porters; interior—acolytes; both—exorcists), illumination (fully—deacons reading the Gospel; subsequent—subdeacons reading the Apostolic writings; antecedent—lectors reading the prophets), and perfection (first consummation—priests through baptism and penance; more excellent consummation by consecrating virgins and abbots-bishops; most excellent consummation by consecrating bishops and archbishops—the *summus pontifex* who has the fullness of authority).<sup>94</sup> In the Pope, the father of fathers, the Church's arrangement or empowerment (*ordinatio*) is consummated in unity and descends through nine steps (*gradus*). Thereby, Bonaventure explains, the Church's order is configured to the heavenly Jerusalem and, furthermore, is reduced to the three hierarchical acts "so that [the Church] may ascend and be configured to the most blessed Trinity: purification [is reduced]<sup>95</sup> unto the good, illumination unto wisdom, and consummation unto power."<sup>96</sup> Bonaventure locates this ascent in the economic activity of the Holy Spirit and the Son, through whom "the kingdom of the Church is given over to God and the Father, until it is reduced to that supreme and paternal unity beyond which thought cannot ascend."<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4: (IV, 635B) "Similiter secundum opus perfectionis sive consummationis triplex est ordo: quia quaedam est consummatio prima, utpote per gratiam baptismi et poenitentiae, haec debetur sacerdotibus; quaedam excellentior, et haec episcopis, quorum est ordinare et consecrare abbates et virgines; quaedam excellentissima, utpote consecrare episcopos et archiepiscopos, et haec pertinet ad Summum Pontificem, quia est "pater patrum", in quo est plenitudo auctoritatis."

<sup>95</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4, resp., n. 8 (IV, 633B). The Quaracchi editors note that some editions supply "*pertinent sive reducitur*" here. Given the context of the Church's reduction to the Father which follows immediately, it is reasonable to supply *reducitur* for the implied verb.

<sup>96</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4, resp. (IV, 633B): "Et sic status istius ordinationis consummatur in unitate et descendit per gradus novem, ut sic conformetur Ierusalem caelesti. Et iste novenarius reducitur ad ternarium actum, ut sic ascendat et configuretur beatissimae Trinitati: nam purgatio ad bonitatem, illuminatio vero ad sapientiam, sed consummatio ad potestatem."

<sup>97</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4, resp. (IV, 633B): "Et sic regnum Ecclesiae per Spiritum sanctum et Filium traditur Deo et Patri, dum ad ipsam supremam et paternam unitatem reducitur, ultra quam non est cogitare ascensum."

Bonaventure takes that answer in favor of the nine-fold order as probable but notes it does not sufficiently distinguish between that which is proper and intrinsic to the orders.<sup>98</sup> He regards the distinction of the seven orders according to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, “*penes gratiam, ad quam ordinat ordo*”, as more secure, beginning with fear, belonging to the porter, and ending with *sapientia*, belonging to the priest who “tastes and administers the very tree of life, the very bread of heaven in which there is every sweetness.”<sup>99</sup> Bonaventure adds another explanation in favor of the seven-fold distinction of orders on the basis that the *sacerdotium* is ordered towards confecting the *corpus Christi verum* for the use of the *corpus Christi mysticum*. He proposes that priests have two sets of subordinates who are likewise, but less proximately, ordered toward the priest’s confection of the Eucharist. Two serve the priest more closely, namely, the deacon and subdeacon in assisting in him in his confection of the *corpus verum*, while the four inferior orders prepare the *corpus Christi mysticum* for the *corpus Christi verum*.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4, resp. (IV, 633B).

<sup>99</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4, resp. (IV, 634A): “Quoniam enim ordinat ad gratiam perfectam, quae septiformis est, ideo ordinum ecclesiasticorum septem competit esse gradus, ut ordo ostiarii respondeat dono timoris, per quod recedit homo a malo; ordo sacerdotii dono sapientiae, quia gustat et administrat ipsum lignum vitae, ipsum panem caelestem, in quo est omnis sapor; ordines intermediarii respondent intermediis donis.” Sweetness “*sapor*” plays on “*sapientia*”.

<sup>100</sup> IV *Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4, resp. (IV, 634A-B): “Licet autem omnes hi modi ex dictis magistrorum tracti sint; nam primus ex dictis Isidori, secundus ex dictis Dionysii, tertius ex dictis Hugonis et Magistri; sed tamen adhuc videtur aliquid rationabilius posse dici, si quantum modum sumendi attendamus, qui est penes id, ad quod ordo ordinatur; et hoc quidem est ad corpus Christi verum dispensandum ad utilitatem corporis Christi mystici. Unde in sacerdotio est status, in quo est consummatio potestatis, et utraque potestas in ipso concurrat, scilicet conficiendi corpus Christi verum et absolvendi mysticum. Hic autem ordo nobilissimus debet habere ordines sibi subministrantes secundum exigentiam huius duplicis potentiae. Unde quidam ministrant quantum; ad corpus Christi verum; et hi sunt ordines ipsi sacerdotio propinquiore. Nam dupliciter est ministrare: aut accipiendo hostias a plebe, et hoc est subdiaconi; aut offerendo sacerdoti, et hoc est diaconi; et illud est principale eorum officium, sicut expresse innuit Isidorus; et hinc est, quod sic denominantur: unde diaconus quasi minister, et subdiaconus quasi subminister. Alii inferiores subministrant sive subserviunt praeparando corpus Christi mysticum ad hoc, quod possit perducere ad verum digne percipiendum; et ad hoc sunt quatuor ordines, secundum quod quadrupliciter potest ad hoc praeparari: primo modo admittendo ad locum sacrum, et hoc est ostiariorum; secundo praebendo documentum, et hoc est lectorum; tertio praestando auxilium, et hoc exorcistarum,

Bonaventure revels in the numerical balance afforded by this reasoning, since the unity of the priesthood is followed by a descent into duality, and then doubled again in a quaternity of orders.<sup>101</sup> Bonaventure rules out a division of the seven ecclesiastical orders according to the three hierarchical powers, since the ecclesiastical orders would have to be multiplied to accommodate the triplicate form.<sup>102</sup> Nonetheless, he concludes that the seven orders that belong to the sacrament of order do imitate the angels, not in their intrinsic ministrations—which number seven and pertain the Eucharist—but the *proper* ministrations of the nine states described above, including the bishop and pope, which are not distinct orders from the priesthood in Bonaventure’s medieval understanding of the episcopate. Thus, the seven orders are counted not in virtue of their distinctions from each other as the angels are (first, middle, and last), but by their principal relationship to the priesthood as their end.

### III.2.3 Hierarchy in *III Sent*

The final reference to hierarchy in the Sentences Commentary is in *III Sent*, the last of the four to be written.<sup>103</sup> In *III Sent*, d. 14, a. 1, q. 3, Bonaventure asks whether the human soul of Christ sees God, “*ipse fons lucis*”, without mediation. This question’s

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quarto monstrando bonum exemplum, et hoc ceteroferariorum sive acolythorum, ad quos pertinet, ut luceat lux eorum coram hominibus, ut videant etc.”

<sup>101</sup> *IV Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4, resp. (IV, 634B): “Et sic patet, quod miro modo procedit ordo a multitudine in unitatem. Nam principalis gradus est unus, cui subservientes debent esse duo - quia enim a primo deficiunt, cadunt in dualitatem et rursus subservientes duobus sunt quatuor, quia deficiunt etiam ab illis. Et sic patet perfectio et consummatio ordinum et distinctio in numero septenario secundum gradus potestatum, quae sunt essentiales ordini; quarum numerus et sufficientia sumitur penes id, ad quod directae sunt.” In responding to the objections, Bonaventure makes the strange claim that Dionysius includes seven orders which assist the priest where one would expect six orders. (*IV Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4, ad. 1 [IV, 634B])

<sup>102</sup> *IV Sent* d. 24, p. 2, a. 2, q. 4, ad. 1 (IV, 634B).

<sup>103</sup> Distelbrink, *Bonaventurae Scripta*, 5.

importance to Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy lies not only in its conceptual content but in Bonaventure's use of a partially paraphrased quotation of Hugh of St. Victor's *Super Hier*, which demonstrates at least some familiarity with that commentary on his part. In terms of conceptual content, Bonaventure's answer is positive: Christ's human soul can know God immediately.<sup>104</sup> Bonaventure turns to Hugh's *Super Hier* in support of Christ's (and other) human knowledge of God's in himself against the ancient and "modern" objections that God can only be known in his light (*claritate*)—distinct from his essence—or by theophanies<sup>105</sup> (distinct from God himself).<sup>106</sup> For Hugh declares that to know God by such theophanies alone cuts humanity off from God because God would never be seen and humanity, thus, could never be satisfied.<sup>107</sup> For Bonaventure, the light

<sup>104</sup> *III Sent* d. 14, a. 1, q. 3, resp. (III, 315A).

<sup>105</sup> In this sense, *theophania* means an image rather than immediate and visible appearance, differing from Dionysius' meaning of *θεοφάνια* in the *CD*, see Jones, "Filled with the Visible Theophany of the Lord: Reading Dionysius East and West."

<sup>106</sup> Bonaventure use of Hugh's *Super Hier* is a paraphrase, raising the question whether he has access to the text itself or through another source—but he certainly knows it is Hugh's work. That Bonaventure uses of the version of the Erigena's *versio* of the *CD* found in *Super Hier* elsewhere in his own corpus strengthens the likelihood that Bonaventure is working at least from those two texts together, which were found together in the *Opus maius* in the *CDP*. Thus, alongside Bonaventure's references to the works of Thomas Gallus in the *Hex*, it is possible to include *Super Hier* as a likely source for Bonaventure's account of hierarchy. Hugh's source text for Bonaventure's paraphrase is a critique of Eriugena's reading of the role of the theophanies as created media for seeing God. Whether Bonaventure knows this and includes Eriugena among the *moderni* is unclear. As an aside, if Bonaventure has read Hugh's *Super Hier* II-I, he has come across a discussion of the Greek word *τελεταρχία*, which is the "principium purgationis", which Gallus also discusses in his *Explanatio* of the *CH*, which entails a discussion of worship, the cross and hierarchy, although word *τελεταρχία* never occurs in Bonaventure, his later association of the cross, hierarchy, and worship in the *LMj* and *Trip via* II.4–7 raise the question if the term and its interpretation sparked, at least in part, Bonaventure's theological trajectory.

<sup>107</sup> *III Sent* d. 14, a. 1, q. 3, resp.: (III, 304A): "Unde etiam ipsum improbat magister Hugo, super Angelicam Hierarchiam: 'Quid est, inquit, theophaniis Deum videri et extra illas non videri, nisi nunquam vere videri? Si enim sola imago semper videtur, veritas nunquam videtur. Tollant ergo phantasias suas, quibus lumen mentium nostrarum obtenebrare nituntur, neque nobis Deum nostrum simulacris exterminationum suarum intersepian; quia nos, sicut nec satiare potest aliquid praeter ipsum, sic nec sistere potest aliquid usque ad ipsum.' Et ideo, his duobus modis tanquam erroneis abiectis, dicendum est tertio modo vere et catholice, quod anima Christi beatissima, et aliae beatae animae vident ipsum luminis fontem, in quo reficiuntur, quiescunt, delectantur et quodam modo a claritate illius luminis absorbentur, ut Deus ab eis undique conspiciatur et videatur etiam in ipsis; et hoc potissime verum est in anima Christi." Cf. Hugh of St. Victor, *Super Hier.*, II-I, 443.892–444.905.



or *claritate* by which God is seen is not other than God's nature, just as the essence of light does not differ from the act of lighting.<sup>108</sup> God's *susstantia* is not seen by humanity's natural power but only, and with much qualification, through a gift of God (*munus Dei*).<sup>109</sup>

Bonaventure explains that Christ's and other human souls are able to see God in himself by being made deiform. The Seraphic Doctor deploys the language of "*influentia*" (here without explicit connection to hierarchy) to express the manner of the soul's deiformity (an integral element of hierarchy, per II *Sent*, d. 9) by God's presence within in it. However, the language of *influentia* serves another purpose: to safeguard the right relationship between God and deiform creatures. For Bonaventure realizes that to speak of knowing (*cognitio*) God may seem to make the finite human soul act upon the infinite God and thus attribute *passio* to God.<sup>110</sup> However, Bonaventure tells his reader, the "eye of the soul" does not act upon God and indeed knowledge of God, as all actions of creatures towards God, is more *receptive* rather than active. For when the soul knows (*intelligit*) God, it does not act on God but God "flows into it" (*influit*).<sup>111</sup> This *influentia*, is not the object of understanding but is God's elevation of the soul to the deiformity

<sup>108</sup> III *Sent* d. 14, a. 1, q. 3, resp.: (III, 303B–304A).

<sup>109</sup> III *Sent* d. 14, a. 1, q. 3, resp.: (III, 3304B). Bonaventure concedes to those who restrict access to the divine essence that it cannot be known *in via*, by full comprehension, and that the *ratio substantiae* and *quid* or *tale* of the Trinity cannot be known.

<sup>110</sup> III *Sent* d. 14, a. 1, q. 3, ad. 6 (III, 305A–B): "Ad illud quod obiicitur, quod finitum non potest supra infinitum; dicendum, quod anima in cognoscendo Deum plus est in suscipiendo quam in agendo, immo omnis potentia animae respect Dei se habet in ratione passivi — nedum potential cognitiva active, quae de sua ratione dicit quodam modo passionem, sicut dicit Philosophus et Priscianus.— Et ideo, cum intelligit Deum, non agit anima in Deum, sed Deus influit in animam, in qua influentia Deus condescendit per gratiam, et anima elevatur et efficitur deiformis. Et ipsa deiformitas est dispositio reddens oculum animae aptum gloriae ad videndum Deum, non quia facit proportionabilem quantitatem, quia semper illud lumen excedit in infinitum, sed quia facit proportionabilem qualitatem, quia datur ipsi animae aliquid, utpote similitudo, quod ipsam animam et intellectum animae, cum Deo facit similem, reddit intelligentem."

<sup>111</sup> III *Sent* d. 14, a. 1, q. 3, ad. 6 (III, 305A–B).

whereby the eye of the soul is made apt to see God through its graced similitude to God. In this way the soul is raised above itself by *influentia* or *divina potentia* so that all vision or judgement about God, which seems active, is passive and effected by God.<sup>112</sup> The passivity of deformity, present here in germ, will be central to Bonaventure's account of ecstasy as it develops in the *Itin* and the *LMj*.

### III.2.4 Conclusion to Hierarchy in II-IV *Sent*

Bonaventure's II-IV *Sent* offers a broad overview of Bonaventure's early understanding of hierarchy. It presents a clear taxonomy related to hierarchy, including the now standard (post-Hugh) inclusion of the Trinity as a hierarchy, the treatment of the angelic hierarchy as both one and three hierarchies, the association of their triads with the Trinity (especially the first angelic triad with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), and the expansion of Dionysius' three clerical ranks in the ecclesiastical hierarchy into nine in order to reflect the angelic hierarchy which it imitates.

Regarding its nature and purpose, Bonaventure clearly describes hierarchy as corresponding to nature but entirely dependent upon grace. Its purpose is the beatitude of intelligent creatures, achieved in their return to God in deformity or glory, by which glory hierarchy is furthered through condescension in the performance of the three hierarchical powers. Bonaventure, to be sure, is careful to attribute hierarchy's efficacy to God's *influentia* as it alone purifies, illumines, and perfects, properly speaking.

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<sup>112</sup> III *Sent* d. 14, a. 1, q. 3, ad. 6 (III, 306A-B): "Quantumcumque enim sive intuitus sive iudicium videatur in se habere naturam actionis; tamen respectu Dei vel divini luminis, a quo causatur, est passio et effectus. Unde quod anima videat Deum in se, hoc non est, quia anima possit supra Deum, sed magis quod Deus possit supra ipsam, adeo ut anima per divinam potentiam et influentiam elevetur supra ipsam."

Nevertheless, angelic aid and the sacraments are integral to the accomplishment of hierarchy, both of which possess a dispositive character. Moreover, Bonaventure also teaches clearly that hierarchy in the Church operates through the performance of the sacraments and other ecclesial acts connected to priestly authority, such as Baptism and penance. Bonaventure's understanding of hierarchy has yet to reach its maturity, however. He does not settle on an order of the angels; the role of the hierarch is unclear, the role of worship as such is not emphasized, and the interior experience of ecstasy is not yet coordinated with hierarchy and the cross. In fact, except towards the end of *II-IV Sent*, Bonaventure shows little interest in the *EH*. Indeed, most importantly, in this early account, Bonaventure has not yet coordinated God the Son and incarnate Word with the concept of hierarchy.

### **III.3 Christ the Hierarch Appears in the *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke***

Bonaventure's *Comm Luke*, likely completed between 1254-7 is remarkable not for a systematic presentation of hierarchy, but, rather, because it contains the developments of several elements of Bonaventure's mature deployment of hierarchy.<sup>113</sup> His commentary on Luke 13:31-35, a passage which anticipates the passion, elicits comments on: 1) Christ as hierarch, the earliest appearance of Bonaventure calling Christ "the hierarch" in his major works;<sup>114</sup> 2) a connection between the hierarchical powers and the spiritual interpretation of scripture; and 3) the identification of ecstatic *affectus* as

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<sup>113</sup> Distelbrink, *Bonaventurae Scripta*, 16.

<sup>114</sup> *Comm Luke*, XIII.64 (VII, 354A-B).

essential to hierarchical ascent, which anticipates Bonaventure's later exploration of the relationship between subjective participation *in* and the objective structures *of* hierarchy.

Bonaventure interprets Luke 13:31-35 to teach that Christ's death was sought in vain by men before his appointed time, accepted voluntarily by Christ at the required time, and "infallibly preordained from eternity".<sup>115</sup> Bonaventure's appeal to hierarchy occurs in his consideration of the latter, the eternal preordination of the passion. He comments principally on Luke 13:33: "*Verumtamen oportet me hodie et cras et sequenti die ambulare: quia non capit prophetam perire extra Jerusalem.*" Bonaventure first employs the three spiritual senses of scripture to explain the meaning of Jesus' three days journey understood in light of the eternally preordained passion. To appreciate hierarchy's place, it must be presented alongside a complex interpretive *tableau*. Bonaventure begins by presenting three ways of reading the days of Jesus' journey allegorically, in the three days represent: 1) the law of nature, the law of Scripture, and the law of grace; 2) the day of the passion, the tomb, and the resurrection; 3) the end of the sixth age, the *quies animarum*, and the resurrection of the body.<sup>116</sup> According to the moral sense: 1) the first day represents compunction, the second, confession, and the third, satisfaction; 2) good thoughts, good speech, and good actions 3) the vows of the religious life, namely, chastity, obedience, and poverty.<sup>117</sup> According to the anagogical sense: 1) the first day represents purification, the second, illumination, and the third, perfection; 2) contemplation of God is his vestiges, in his image, and as he is in

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<sup>115</sup> *Comm Luke*, XIII.64 (VII, 354A-B).

<sup>116</sup> *Comm Luke*, XIII.70 (VII, 356A).

<sup>117</sup> *Comm Luke*, XIII.71 (VII, 356A). In the second interpretation, thought, speech, and works could correspond to the Father, the Son/Word, and the Spirit, but Bonaventure does not state so explicitly.

himself;<sup>118</sup> 3) the contemplation of the subcelestial hierarchy, celestial hierarchy, and supercelestial hierarchy.<sup>119</sup> Having laid out nine interpretative triads according to the spiritual senses Bonaventure points to Luke 13:32 as the summation of these three days ascending through the hierarchies: the ejection of demons, the perfection of health, and the consummation of every good. In this way Luke 13:32 reflects the overall thematic structure of the whole exegetical structure (which will be shown below).<sup>120</sup>

Bonaventure does not draw out systematic correlations among these triads, nonetheless, the nine triads governed by the days understood according to Luke 13:32 fall into discernable patterns of progress or ascent:

	<i>Hodie</i>	<i>Cras</i>	<i>Dies sequens</i>
<b>Luke 13:32</b>	Ejection of demons	Perfection of health	Consum. of all good
Allegorical Sense	Law of nature Passion End of sixth age	Law of scripture Tomb Quies animarum	Law of grace Resurrection Resurrection of body
Moral Sense	Compunction Good thinking Chastity	Confession Good speaking Obedience	Satisfaction Good works Poverty
Anagogical Sense	Purification Cont. of God in vest. Cont. of sub-cel. hier.	Illumination Cont. of God in image Cont. of cel. hier.	Perfection Cont. of God <i>in se</i> Cont. of sup-cel. hier.

Tab. III Bonaventure's Spiritual Reading of Luke 13:30-35

<sup>118</sup> This, of course, anticipates the triad of the *Itin*'s structure before it is doubled.

<sup>119</sup> *Comm Luke*, XIII.21 (VII, 356A). Bonaventure does not indicate whether the triple distinction between the hierarchies regards the triple divisions of the angelic hierarchies as in II *Sent* d. 9 prænota or between the divine, angelic, and ecclesiastical hierarchies, however, that Christ is the hierarch of all hierarchies in *Comm Luke* XIII.72, it seems to anticipate *Brev.* Prol. 3 and 4—especially in terms of the spiritual senses of scripture—, and so, I read the supercelestial, celestial, and subcelestial hierarchies here as the divine, angelic, and ecclesiastical hierarchies.

<sup>120</sup> *Comm Luke*, XIII.72 (VII, 356A-B). That Luke 13:32 applies proximately to the ascent through the hierarchies can be determined by Bonaventure's placement of a corresponding verse of scripture not immediately after the list of the hierarchies, but after the reference to Luke 13:32: "Vel, prima dies sit contemplatio hierarchie subcaelestis; secunda, caelestis, et tertia, supercaelestis. In prima est daemoniorum eiectio; in secunda est sanitatis perfectio, sed in tertia, omnis boni consummatio; et de hoc triduo, losue secundo «Exploratores venerunt ad montana et manserunt ibi per tres dies»."

Moreover, not only does each triad describe the first, middle, and last moment of an ascent, the corresponding terms according to these three moments display compatibility with each other in each triad. For example, the second moment of the moral sense consists of confession which is an act of good speaking and an act of obedience to the Church or Christ. Likewise, of particular importance to tracing Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy, the ascents according to the anagogical interpretation are correlated: purification brings one in contact with God in visible things and the visible church; illumination brings one before God in the spirits; perfection brings one to God who is the supercelestial hierarchy or *pulchritudo* of Trinity through unity.

Thus, by means of the transformation through the hierarchical powers, one comes to know and be conformed to the hierarchies, and then comes to know and be united to God. While Bonaventure does not say that these ascents are accomplished through the days of the triduum explicitly his description of the effects of the triduum do just that. The first day is the ejection of demons, the second is the perfection of health, the third is the consummation of every good. More importantly, the effects of the triduum which are central to the realization of an eternal plan depend upon the Christ who accomplishes them. Hence immediately following his exegesis of Luke 13:33 according to the spiritual senses Bonaventure turns to consider Christ's role in these ascents.

Christ, the actor in this triduum is identified as the *hierarcha hierarchiarum* and *dux* who leads our ascent through the hierarchies (and our descent through them). Christ is identified with the ark that goes before the Israelites in their journey towards the promised land.<sup>121</sup> Bonaventure says:

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<sup>121</sup> Where Bonaventure elsewhere draws on the image of Passover, here he uses the image of the subsequent departure from Mt. Sinai.

This ark is Christ, who is the highest hierarch in any of those hierarchies and our leader, in order that we might come into the promised land promised to us. In which image he says that he walks three days because he makes us always ascend through this triple hierarchy except when we descend to [hierarchical] action.<sup>122</sup>

Because Christ is the hierarch of every hierarchy, he is the way to ascend through the hierarchies. Note furthermore, that Bonaventure introduces a distinction between ascending and descending through hierarchy which he yokes to the image of Jacob's ladder:

As a figure of this it is said in Genesis 28:12 that "Jacob saw the angels of God *ascending* and *descending* on the ladder." No one saw them *standing still*. By this it is signified that persons must always make progress in doing good.<sup>123</sup>

Bonaventure identifies the ascent through hierarchy with the ascent to the supernal Jerusalem, which is not accomplished through bodily steps but through *affectus*: "For this is to approach the heavenly Jerusalem, which we do not approach by movements of our body, but the affections of our heart and mind."<sup>124</sup>

Nor is this the only statement in *Comm Luke XIII* that addresses priority of *affectus* in ascent to God in its connection with the concept of hierarchy. Some paragraphs earlier, in Bonaventure's exegesis of Luke 13:21 he points to the primacy of

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<sup>122</sup> *Comm Luke XIII.72* (VII, 356B): "Haec Arca, arca Christus est, qui in qualibet istarum hierarchiarum est hierarcha altissimus et dux noster, ut veniamus ad terram promissionis nobis repromissam. In cuius figuram dicit, se per triduum ambulare, quia facit nos per hanc triplicem hierarchiam semper sursum ascendere, nisi forte descendamus ad actiones."

<sup>123</sup> *Comm Luke XIII.43* (VII, 356B): "In cuius figuram Genesis vigesimo octavo dicitur, quod vidit « Iacob Angelos Dei ascendentes et descendentes in scala »; nullus vidit eos stantes. In quo signatur, quod semper in bono proficiendum est."

<sup>124</sup> *Comm Luke XIII.43* (VII, 356B): "Hoc enim est appropinquare ad supernam Ierusalem, cui non appropinquamus passibus corporis, sed affectibus cordis et mentis."

ecstatic love in ascent. He interprets the leaven hidden by the woman as charity,<sup>125</sup> the woman as wisdom, the flour in which it is hidden as the faithful, whereby they become *unus panis*, that is the Mystical Body of Christ.<sup>126</sup> While Bonaventure considers ten interpretations of this verse (ancient and medieval), all of which exemplify the multiform wisdom of God brought out of the saints by the Holy Spirit, he concludes by interpreting the hiddenness (*abscondere*) of the leaven in the bread through an explicitly Dionysian register:

For, as Dionysius says, the whole of mystical theology, that is, “which is hidden in a mystery” consists in ecstatic love according to a threefold hierarchical power: purgative, illuminative, and perfective.<sup>127</sup>

While this exegesis is not the first instance of his speaking of the ecstatic knowing and loving, it is (one of) his first explicit connection of *affectus* and the operation of hierarchy in the ascent to God while insisting on the ecclesial character of hierarchy and ascent, as given by the exegesis of the bread as the *corpus mysticum*.<sup>128</sup>

Finally, Bonaventure makes a brief but noteworthy reference to hierarchy when commenting on the angels’ rejoicing of over the return of one sinner.<sup>129</sup> For through

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<sup>125</sup> *Comm Luke XIII.43* (VII, 347B–348A).

<sup>126</sup> *Comm Luke XIII.44* (VII, 348A–B).

<sup>127</sup> *Comm Luke XIII.44* (VII, 349B): “Nam, sicut dicit Dionysius, tota mystica theologia, « scilicet in mysterio abscondita est», ipsa tota consistit in dilectione excessiva secundum triplicem vim hierarchicam: purgativam, illuminativam et perfectivam.”

<sup>128</sup> Cf. *III Sent* d. 24, dub. 4, resp. (III, 531A). On the Gallus affective Dionysianism that lies behind Bonaventure’s thought see Boyd Taylor Coolman, *Knowledge, Love, and Ecstasy in the Theology of Thomas Gallus* (Oxford University Press, 2017), 159–97.

<sup>129</sup> *Comm Luke XV.19–20* (VII, 388B–389B).



penance the supernal Jerusalem is restored and therefore “all who love God, the good, and have the *affectus* of piety” exult.<sup>130</sup> For

out of [penance and conversion] the owed honor is given to the divine majesty, the number of heaven is restored, and the unity of ecclesiastical peace is recovered. And therefore in the conversion and penance of one sinner the supercelestial, celestial, and subcelestial hierarchy rightly exults.<sup>131</sup>

In this brief treatment of conversion, Bonaventure shows that the integrity of worship, heavenly ascent, and unity belong to his understanding hierarchy.

In his commentary on Luke’s Gospel, Bonaventure brings forward a presentation of hierarchy as both the means and object of contemplation explicitly where his earlier works had not. Moreover, Bonaventure’s placement of hierarchy in the commentary suggest its increasing importance in his thought. For he places reference to Dionysius, hierarchy, and the hierarchical powers at the conclusion of two exegetical frameworks, XIII.20 and 46. Indeed, in the latter, hierarchy is discussed at located at the summit of God’s eternal plan, anticipating its intentional, architectural placement in Bonaventure’s later works.

#### **III.4 Hierarchy’s Architectural Development in the *Breviloquium***

Together with and following the use of hierarchy and related concepts in *Comm Luke*, the *Breviloquium* establishes the novelties in Bonaventure’s deployment of

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<sup>130</sup> *Comm Luke* XV.20 (VII, 389B): “Et hac de causa omnes, qui diligunt Deum, qui diligunt bonum et qui habent pietatis affectum, cum Angelis exsultare debent de conversione et poenitentia peccatorum.”

<sup>131</sup> *Comm Luke* XV.20 (VII, 389B): “Et ex his debitus honor redditur divinae maiestati, reparatur numerus caelestis, et recuperatur unitas ecclesiasticae pacis. Et ideo in conversione et poenitentia unius peccatoris merito exsultat hierarchia supercaelestis, caelestis et subcaelestis.”

hierarchy and develops them further. The presentation and use of Dionysian hierarchy in II-IV *Sent* identifies of the Trinity as a hierarchy, reaffirmed the traditional triadic organization of the angelic hierarchies albeit with a Trinitarian accent, adverted to proportionality of the angelic and ecclesiastical hierarchies in making arguments about the structure and operation of the Church's ministers, and appealed to the hierarchical powers to explain the effects of hierarchy upon souls while guarding the primacy of God's agency in those powers by defining the dispositive character of hierarchy's action. The *Breviloquium* follows and, as a doctrinal summary, enshrines three developments found in the exegetical use of hierarchy from *Comm Luke*: 1) the association Christ with the Dionysian figure of the hierarchy; 2) the description the subjective ascent to God with the context of objective structures of hierarchy; 3) the connection of the accomplishment of hierarchy with Christ's passion. These points represent an evolution in Bonaventure's thought while demonstrating an increasing similarity to Dionysius' own thought through the emergent Christological context of hierarchy. That they appear in a doctrinal summary, the *Breviloquium*, presses these three points further: 1) by enshrining the architectural role of Christ as hierarch and *medium* in Bonaventure's thought; 2) by relating grace, hierarchization, and the transformation of the mind; 3) by explicitly casting the effects of the incarnation and passion in hierarchical terminology. Besides these three ways of elaborating the novelties of *Comm Luke*, Bonaventure's treatment of the Eucharist in *Brev VI*, a sacrament hitherto untouched by Dionysian concepts and language, quietly draws upon the *CD*. These four anticipate the blossoming of Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy in its Franciscan mode in the *Itin* and *LMj*. In short, the *Brev* shows hierarchy's shift in its use, from a concept that explains other doctrines to

a central doctrine with an architectural role in Bonaventure's thought. In order to present the *Brev*'s developments in an orderly manner I will present them in the order of appearance, treating the its prologue and *Brev* IV, V and VI one after another.

### III.4.1 *Brev* Prologue: The Hierarch and Hierarchy in Scripture

One of Bonaventure's most striking departures from the other medieval interpreters of Dionysian hierarchy is his identification of Christ as the hierarch. Although Bonaventure does mention the obvious identity of the hierarch as a bishop, or especially as pope, in his earlier works, by the *Brev*, Bonaventure prefers to reserve the term "hierarch" for Christ (as God and incarnate) as the heart and summit of the whole hierarchical system insofar as he is the *medium* in the Trinity and so, by a fitting extension, the *mediator* between God and creation.<sup>132</sup> In this way, terminological differences aside (i.e. calling Christ a hierarch), Bonaventure actually follows Dionysius closely, since he explains that the whole hierarchical system terminates in Christ just as each hierarchy terminates in its hierarch.<sup>133</sup>

What Bonaventure means by calling Christ "the hierarch" and "*medium*" is laid out in the *Brev*'s prologue, but it can only be fully understood in juxtaposition with the prologue's wider use of hierarchy and the *Brev*'s overall septenary structure that the prologue introduces. That prologue is itself an introductory explanation of *theology*, i.e. scripture's, content that includes two considerations of hierarchy as part of that explanation: 1) on Christ' role as the hierarch, the medium through whom one ascends to

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<sup>132</sup> *Brev* Prol. 3; IV.1–2.

<sup>133</sup> Cf. *EH* V.1.5 505A-B505 (107.13–17).

God; 2) on the three hierarchical powers as they relate to the spiritual senses of scripture. Thus, the prologue functions as an overture, offering a perspective on the place of hierarchy in theology generally and in the symbolic, hexaemeral architecture of *Brev I-VII*'s demonstration of Christian doctrine.

In the prologue's explanation of theology, Bonaventure employs St. Paul's fourfold division of the breadth, length, height, and depth of the wisdom of God to explain its content. Before Bonaventure applies the fourfold division, he points out the end of scripture: to instill the fullest knowledge (*plenissima notitia*) and ecstatic love (*excessivum amorem*) of the blessed Trinity, a goal reminiscent of his earlier presentations of hierarchy. Thereafter Bonaventure applies this fourfold distinction to outline scripture's *content*:

Its breadth consists in the multitude of its parts, its length in its description of times and ages, its height in its description of gradually (*gradatim*) ordered hierarchies, and its depth in the multitude of hidden meanings and understandings.<sup>134</sup>

It is in scripture's height and depth that hierarchy are principally considered.

When he comes to describe the hierarchies, he follows the terminology of threefold division used in the *praenota* of II *Sent* d. 9 to denominate the three angelic hierarchies, but applies it differently, terming the Church is the subcelestial hierarchy, the angelic hierarchy is celestial hierarchy, and the Trinity is the supercelestial hierarchy. Furthermore, Bonaventure clarifies that these three hierarchies are "described openly,

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<sup>134</sup> Brev, Prol. 3 (V, 202B): "Consistit autem ipsius latitudo in multitudine suarum partium longitudo vero in descriptione temporum et aetatum altitudo in descriptione hierarchiarum gradatim ordinatarum profunditas in multitudine mysticorum sensuum et intelligentiarum."

somewhat more hiddenly, and still more hiddenly”, respectively, perhaps echoing *CH IX*’s description of the relative hiddenness of the angelic hierarchies.<sup>135</sup> Rather than elaborate its taxonomy, however, Bonaventure chooses his brief treatment of hierarchy as the opportunity to distinguish philosophy from theology. Philosophy knows things as they are in nature or as they are known by natural knowing.<sup>136</sup> Theology, on the other hand, is founded on faith, revealed through the Holy Spirit, and concerns “grace, glory and even eternal wisdom.” In as much as grace, glory, and the enjoyment of eternal wisdom are the actualized in hierarchy, the consideration of hierarchy necessarily belongs to theology and, by extension, to the *Breviloquium* as a theological handbook<sup>137</sup> Indeed, in a certain sense, it would not be wrong to say that, for Bonaventure, hierarchy is the subject of theology and scripture.

That hierarchy should be considered in the *Breviloquium* is not surprising, however, Bonaventure’s inclusion of hierarchy in his distinction of philosophy from theology reveals a permanent development in his doctrine of hierarchy. For Bonaventure concedes that besides being a topic of theology the domain of philosophy can be used a ladder to heaven—but only through Christ the hierarch.<sup>138</sup> In an instant, the place of

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<sup>135</sup> *Brev*, Prol. 3, (V, 204B–205A): “Habet nihilominus sacra scriptura in suo processu sublimitatem quae consistit in descriptione hierarchiarum gradatim ordinatarum quae sunt hierarchia ecclesiastica angelica et divina seu subcaelestis caelestis et supercaelestis ita quod primam describit patenter secundam aliquantulum magis occulte et tertiam adhuc magis occulte. Ex descriptione ecclesiasticae hierarchiae est alta ex descriptione angelicae altior ex descriptione divinae altissima ita ut possimus dicere illud prophetae mirabilis facta est scientia tua ex me confortata est et non potero ad eam.”

<sup>136</sup> *Brev*, Prol. 3 (V, 205A): “Nam cum res habeant esse in materia habeant esse in anima per notitiam acquisitam habeant etiam esse in ea per gratiam habeant esse in ea per gloriam et habeant esse in arte aeterna philosophia quidem agit de rebus ut sunt in natura seu in anima secundum notitiam naturaliter insitam vel etiam acquisitam.”

<sup>137</sup> *Brev*, Prol. 3 (V, 205A): “Sed theologia tanquam scientia supra fidem fundata et per spiritum sanctum revelata agit et de eis quae spectant ad gratiam et gloriam et etiam ad sapientiam aeternam.”

<sup>138</sup> *Brev*, Prol. 3, (V, 205A): “Unde ipsa substernens sibi philosophicam cognitionem et assumens de naturis rerum quantum sibi opus est ad fabricandum speculum per quod fiat repraesentatio divinatorum quasi scalam erigit quae in sui infimo tangit terram sed in suo cacumine tangit caelum et hoc totum per illum unum hierarchiam Iesum Christum [...]”

hierarchy in Bonaventure's thought is reinvented when hierarchy, heretofore a way of describing the effects of grace and the order of the Church, becomes conceived as the structure and means of knowing God because Christ the hierarch, as *medium* in God and *mediator* among creatures cosmically, is also the center of all theology:

[theology sets up a ladder to heaven] through that one hierarch, Jesus Christ, who is not only the hierarch in the ecclesiastical hierarchy because he assumed a human rational nature but is even [the hierarch] in the angelic [hierarchy] and the middle person in the supercelestial hierarchy of the blessed Trinity and so through him the grace of unction does not only flow onto the beard but even on the edge of the vestment (Ps. 132:2) because it does not only descend upon the Supernal Jerusalem but even so far as upon the Church militant<sup>139</sup>

Bonaventure calls Christ the hierarch because he is the mediator between God and creatures in the Church militant, wherein he took flesh, among the angels, and is the hierarch as the *media persona* in the Trinity, the supercelestial hierarchy.<sup>140</sup> Because of his mediating position in every hierarchy Christ descends, anointing creatures with grace by which they might know the divine (through nature) and is also the conceptual link that makes sense of the whole of reality, from God, to spiritual creatures, and finally material creatures.

This is the first instance, besides short discussions of illumination the hierarchical power, where Bonaventure considers how hierarchy supports knowledge of the divine.

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<sup>139</sup> *Brev*, Prol. 3, (V, 205A): "[...] hoc totum per illum unum hierarchiam Iesum Christum qui non tantum ratione naturae humanae assumtae est hierarchia in ecclesiastica hierarchia verum etiam in angelica et media persona in illa supercaelesti hierarchia beatissimae trinitatis ita quod per ipsum a summo capite deo descendit unctionis gratia non solum in barbam verum etiam in oram vestimenti quia non tantum in Ierusalem supernam verum etiam usque in ecclesiam militantem."

<sup>140</sup> As in Dionysius sense, although not word, every hierarchy has Christ for its hierarch, although the Trinity as a hierarchy is a medieval novelty, and moreover, whether the Trinity "terminates" in Christ is debatable. (cf. *EH* V.1.5 505A-B [107.13–17].) Of course, Bonaventure's embrace of the conceptual importance of the middle is also shown here, where termination or culmination is not as important emphasis on the mediating function.

Christ the hierarch contextualizes all knowledge by both illuminating the subjective capacity of the faithful to understand what exceeds their nature and provides the objective conceptual key that correlates the whole of reality. Indeed, hierarchy is not a natural event or a category applicable to natures as such. For Bonaventure, it is quite the opposite: to know the hierarchies is to know that which is beyond nature:

For there is great beauty in the world machine, but much more the Church adorned with the beauty of the chrismated saints, very great beauty in the heavenly Jerusalem, and more-than-great beauty in that highest and most blessed Trinity.<sup>141</sup>

Scripture, so far as it holds access to this beauty, “more and more accustoms by delighting our understanding (*intellectus*) to contuiton and anagogies of divine spectacles.”<sup>142</sup>

Given hierarchy’s foundational role for elevating the understanding, Bonaventure reasonably follows his treatment of hierarchy in the *height* of scripture with a consideration of hierarchy regarding the *depth*, or multiple senses, of scripture. In *Brev Prol.* 4, he pairs purification, illumination, and perfection with the three spiritual senses of scripture: tropology, allegory, and anagogy.<sup>143</sup> The tropological sense teaches what ought to be done, the doing of which purifies; allegory teaches what ought to be believed;

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<sup>141</sup> *Brev Prol.* 3 (V, 205A): “Est enim pulcritudo magna in machina mundana sed longe maior in ecclesia pulcritudine sanctorum charismatum adornata maxima autem in Ierusalem superna supermaxima autem in illa trinitate summa et beatissima”

<sup>142</sup> *Brev Prol.* 3 (V, 206B): “et sic magis ac magis delectando assuefacit ad divinorum spectaculorum contuitus et anagogias.”

<sup>143</sup> *Brev Prol.* 4 (V, 206B): “Et quia homo non dirigitur ad aeterna, nisi cognitiva agnoscat verum credendum, et operativa faciat bonum operandum, et affectiva suspiret ad Deum videndum et amandum et perfruendum: hinc est, quod Scriptura sacra, per Spiritum sanctum data, assumit librum creaturae, referendo in finem secundum triplicem modum intelligentiae; ut sic per tropologiam habeamus notitiam agendorum viriliter; per allegoriam credendorum veraciter; per anagogiam desiderandorum delectabiliter; ut sic purgati per virtuosam operationem, illuminati per radiosam fidem et perfecti per ardentissimam caritatem, perveniamus tandem ad bravium felicitatis aeternae.”

the anagogical sense teaches what must be desired, through which charity is inflamed unto the “prize of eternal happiness”.<sup>144</sup> In this way, scripture itself, or reading scripture, shares in the hierarchical activities.

Scripture, or theology, read through Christ therefore not only produces right *scientia* but also right *operatio* and *ordo* which pertain to the will or *affectus* that should love God.<sup>145</sup> Hence Bonaventure says of scripture that “[...] this doctrine exists so that that we might become good and be saved.”<sup>146</sup> The purpose of the *Brev* is to articulate scripture’s content as ascertained through the hierarch, i.e. according to Jesus Christ, the lens that shows what must be done, known, and loved in the multiple senses of scripture.

The *Brev* presents this scriptural, theological content in two ways of reading scripture’s content: by Bonaventure’s attention to the distinct scriptural modes of discourse and by organizing the doctrinal handbook that unpacks the content intelligently. The first is the *modus procedendi ipsius sacrae scripturae*, which includes nine modes of discourse: the narrative, perceptive, prohibitive, exhortative, preaching, threatening, promising, and praying modes, all of which culminate in the laudative, or praising, mode.<sup>147</sup> The second, the *modus exponendi*, includes the use of the spiritual senses as

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<sup>144</sup> *Brev* Prol. 4 (V, 206B) The order here also corresponds to the distinction between *ordo*, *scientia*, and *operatio*, which belong to Dionysius’ first (and Bonaventure’s second) definition of hierarchy. Bonaventure’s joining of the hierarchical powers and scripture accords with his earlier inclusion of preaching as an act that purifies, illumines, and perfects but his emphasis on scripture and its senses as hierarchizing may, along with the newfound prominence of the hierarch, invites further investigation about whether he drawn more deeply upon the *EH*, which speaks of scripture as the essence of our hierarchy. (*EH* I.4 376B [67.6–7].)

<sup>145</sup> *Brev* Prol. 5 (V, 206B): “Quia enim haec doctrina est, ut boni fiamus et salvemur; et hoc non fit per nudam considerationem, sed potius per inclinationem voluntatis: ideo Scriptura divina eo modo debuit tradi, quo modo magis possemus inclinari.”

<sup>146</sup> *Brev* Prol. 5 (V, 206B): “Quia enim haec doctrina est ut boni fiamus et salvemur et hoc non fit per nudam considerationem sed potius per inclinationem voluntatis ideo scriptura divina eo modo debuit tradi quo modo magis possemus inclinari.”

<sup>147</sup> *Brev*, Prol. 5 (V, 206B): “In tanta igitur multiformitate sapientiae, quae continetur in ipsius sacrae Scripturae latitudine, longitudine, altitudine et profundo, unus est communis modus procedendi



taught by Augustine in *De doctrina christiana*, but the proper use of his rules depends on an understanding of the “beginning, progress, and consummation” of the saved and the damned, whose collective history constitutes the architecture of the *Brev*’s seven books.<sup>148</sup> Taken together, the seven elements of salvation history are the intellectual soil in which scripture’s nine modes of proceeding can bear the fruit of shaping Christian life. Thus, the *Breviloquium*, like scripture, treats of the highest and the lowest, the first and the last, all of which meet in their shared middle to form “an intelligible cross”<sup>149</sup>—in other words, Christ the hierarch to whom all scripture and theology can be reduced. Therefore, hierarchy is both the means and the end of in the *Brev*’s project, not always explicitly, but as set by the initial description of the project in the prologue.

This “intelligible cross” unfolds in the *Breviloquium*’s textual structure in seven chapters, spanning the beginning (God and creation) and the end (the final judgement), the heights of holiness and the pits of the damned: 1) God the *principium*; 2) the creation of the universe; 3) the fall; 4) redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ; 5) reformation through grace; 6) curing through the sacraments; 7) retribution through sempiternal punishment and rewards. Just as the intelligible cross that describes this “world machine” meets in the “*intermedium*”, conveniently, Christ’s incarnation and cross are placed in the *Brev*’s fourth and middle book. In Christ, the hierarch and

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authenticus, videlicet intra quem in uno modo procedendi continetur modus narrativus, praeceptorius, prohibitivus, exhortativus, praedicalivus, comminatorius, promissivus, deprecatorius et laudativus.” Whether these nine modes have symbolic connection to the nine choirs of angels is not stated explicitly by Bonaventure. If narrative is taken to refer to examples (“ut, si quis non movetur ad praecepta et prohibita, saltem moveatur per exempla narrata” [V, 207A]), the first three modes refer to operations, the second three modes inform the mind, and the final three look to God as the object of love, and thus the whole series evokes *operatio*, *scientia*, and *ordo* as conceived by Bonavetnure.

<sup>148</sup> *Brev*, Prol. 6 (V, 208A–209B).

<sup>149</sup> *Brev*, Prol. 6 (V, 208A): “Unde ipsa agit de toto universo quantum ad summum et imum, primum et ultimum, et quantum ad decursum intermedium, sub forma cuiusdara crucis intelligibilis, in qua describi habet et quodam modo videri lumine mentis tota machina universi.”

medium, the logic and unfolding of the intelligible cross is actualized by his passion and resurrection. Narratively, *Brev IV* begins the reversal of the serial decline:

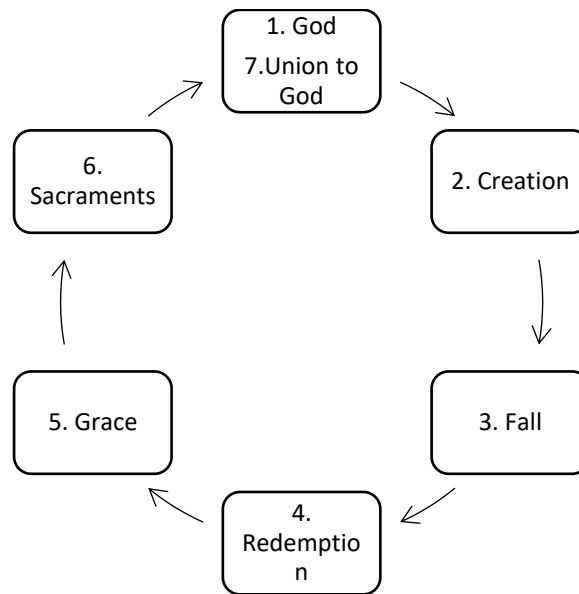


Fig. I The *Exitus-Reditus* Structure of *Brev I-VII*

For aside from the discussion of the angelic hierarchy in *Brev II*, a brief discussion of their hierarchical powers and contemplation, hierarchy and related concepts are only mentioned in and after *Brev IV*.<sup>150</sup> Bonaventure's reservation of such language to the narrative of return to God discloses a textual architecture corresponding to his definition of the celestial and subcelestial hierarchies in II *Sent*, d. 9 as creatures elevated by God's grace in proportion to their natures. Moreover, Bonaventure's reservation of hierarchy until *Brev IV* highlights the integrity of hierarchy, Christ's role as hierarch and medium,

<sup>150</sup> *Brev II.6–8* (V, 224A–226B). *Brev II* discusses the creation of the angels, the apostasy of the evil angels and the confirmation of good angels, all placed prior to the discussion of the creation of humanity. Hence, the whole cycle of the angel's hierarchization seems to be covered in miniature anticipating the structure of salvation history for humanity and, for that reason, I do not think the reservation of hierarchy to *Brev IV* and after is compromised by *Brev II*'s discussion of hierarchy.

and Christ's passion. Bonaventure will go on to employ this structure again in the *Itin*, where its fourth chapter is even more explicitly dedicated to hierarchy and the ecstatic transformation of the mind.

### III.4.2 *Brev IV: Hierarchy, the Cross, and the Church*

*Brev IV*, on the incarnation of the Word, who is the *medium*, mediator, and hierarch, employs hierarchy and related concepts in three ways. First and most explicitly, Bonaventure produces an argument as to why Christ is mediator and characterizes his incarnation as accomplished through and reintegrating all three hierarchies. Second, the narrative of *Brev IV* from beginning to end charts the inauguration of the Church by Christ from out of humanity's dissolute fallenness. Third and connected to hierarchy only through implication, is Bonaventure's explanation of the paschal mystery's efficacy and effects.

Bonaventure's explanation of Christ's mediatory role is set within the discussion of the incarnation in *Brev IV.2–4*. There, Bonaventure articulates a double framework for discussing Christ's mediating incarnation: 1) that the incarnation is a work of the whole Trinity; and 2) that the incarnation's reparative effects of remedying, satisfying, and reconciling also belong to the whole Trinity.<sup>151</sup> Nonetheless, since humanity was assumed by "the person of the Word alone", mediation is proper to the Son of God by

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<sup>151</sup> *Brev. IV.2* (V, 242A–B): "Ratio autem ad intelligentiam praedictorum haec est: quia incarnationis opus non solum est a primo principio, in quantum est ellectivum in producendo, verum etiam, in quantum est reparativum remediando, satisfaciendo et reconciliando. Quoniam ergo incarnatio, in quantum dicit aliquem effectum, est a primo principio, quod omnia facit ratione summae virtutis; et substantia, virtus et operatio unita est et indivisa omnimode in tribus personis: hinc est, quod necesse est, incarnationis operationem a tota Trinitate manare." The triad of substance, power, and operation from *CH XI.2* appears once again.

attribution. For Bonaventure tells us that remediation depends upon the assumption of the whole humanity and satisfaction by the God-man's doing what only God can and only man ought to do. Therefore, reconciliation through incarnation befits the Son of God who is the *media persona* in the Trinity.<sup>152</sup> Bonaventure expresses his argument thus:

It belongs to the mediator to be the medium between God and humanity reducing humanity to divine cognition, divine conformity, and divine filiation. But nothing is more fitting to be the medium than the person who is produced and producing, who is the middle persons of the three persons [of the Trinity]"; there is none more fitting to reduce humanity to divine cognition than the Word through whom Father declares himself, who is unitable to the flesh as word to voice; none is even more fitting to reduce humanity to divine conformity than he who is the image of the Father; none is more fitting to reduce humanity to divine filiation than the natural Son; and because of all this, none is more fitting to become the son of man than the Son of God himself.<sup>153</sup>

The elaboration of Christ the *medium* and *mediator* recalls the prologue's identification of Christ's role as hierarch in the ecclesiastical and angelic hierarchy with his place as the *media persona* in the supercelestial hierarchy.<sup>154</sup> He is not, however, three hierarchs at once but one that binds all three hierarchies together, not abstractly, but by his incarnation. Indeed, *Brev* IV.3 explains that the incarnation is not only redemptive but "most common". It is common because the actors in the incarnation, the angel, Mary, and

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<sup>152</sup> *Brev* IV.2 (V, 242B–243A): "Postremo, quia est a primo principio, ut est parativum reconciliando; et reconcilians est mediator, mediatio autem proprie convenit Dei Filio: ideo et incarnatio."

<sup>153</sup> *Brev* IV.2 (V, 243A): "Mediatoris namque est esse medium inter hominem et Deum ad reducendum hominem ad divinam cognitionem, ad divinam conformitatem et ad divinam filiationem. Nullum autem magis decet esse medium quam personam, quae producit et producit, quae est media trium personarum; nullumque magis decet reducere hominem ad divinam cognitionem quam Verbum, quo se Pater declarat, quod est unibile carni, sicut et verbum voci; nullum etiam magis decet reducere ad divinam conformitatem, quam eum qui est imago Patris; nullum magis decet ad filiationem adoptivam reducere quam Filium naturalem: ac per hoc nullum magis decet fieri filium hominis quam ipsum Filium Dei."

<sup>154</sup> Cf. *Brev.*, Prol. 3 (V, 205A). Bonaventure does not call Christ the hierarch in the supercelestial hierarchy. His role as head in the lower two hierarchies depends upon his status as the *medium* in the Trinity, whereas calling him hierarch in the Trinity may seem to elevate him above the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Jesus represent the actors of the fall, an angel, a woman and a man. Furthermore, these actors in the incarnation even symbolize the Trinity's action inasmuch as the angel is the *nuntio* of the Father, Mary is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and the child conceived is the person of the Word. Thus, in the incarnation, there is a concurrence of the "triple hierarchy", as Bonaventure terms the three hierarchies.<sup>155</sup>

The second aspect of *Brev IV* that relates to hierarchy develops out of this concurrence of hierarchies. Since all three hierarchies are active in the incarnation, it is not as a unique concurrence in a single act but rather in anticipation of the formation of the Church and its unending union to the heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>156</sup> The narrative about the formation of the Church or ecclesiastical hierarchy—although Bonaventure does not refer to it by that name in *Brev IV*—begins with a discussion the hierarchical powers, albeit negatively. *Brev IV.1* introduces the state of fallen humanity as mired in infirmity, ignorance, and malice which impede imitating divine *virtus*, knowing (*cogitare*) light (*lux*), and loving (*diligere*) goodness.<sup>157</sup> These three weaknesses and the acts which they

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<sup>155</sup> *Brev IV.3* (V, 243B): "Rursus quia incarnatio est a primo principio reparante modo communissimo nam per verbum incarnatum reparatur lapsus hominum et angelorum utpote caelestium et terrestrium et hominum lapsus reparatur secundum utrumque sexum ut medicamentum sit commune omnibus decentissimum fuit quod ad incarnationis mysterium fieret concursus angeli mulieris et viri angeli ut denuntiantis mulieris virginis ut concipientis viri vero ut conceptae proles ut sic angelus Gabriel esset nuntius patris aeterni virgo immaculata esset templum spiritus sancti proles concepta esset ipsa persona verbi ac per hoc in communi reparatione omnium communis fieret concursus trium de triplici hierarchia scilicet divina angelica et humana ad insinuandam non solum trinitatem dei verum etiam generalitatem beneficii et liberalitatem reparatoris summi." This *concursus* insinuates not only the Trinity of God but the universality of its benefit and the liberality of the redeemer. This liberality leads the conception of the Word incarnate to be appropriated to the Holy Spirit, although it is a work of the whole Trinity.

<sup>156</sup> That Christ's paschal mystery forms the Church and joins it to the angels is obviously not unique to Bonaventure's or Dionysius' conception of hierarchy. Nonetheless, contextually, the *Brev*'s prologue and *Brev IV* frame the mediator and medium as the hierarch and the whole "world machine" that he reintegrates as the three hierarchies or the "triple hierarchy." Inasmuch as the formation of the Church, the ecclesiastical hierarchy, is crucial to that reintegration, any treatment of the Church, at least in general, is situated within Bonaventure's use and conception of hierarchy.

<sup>157</sup> *Brev IV.1* (V, 241B): "Rursus, quia homo, cadens in culpam, avererat se et recesserat a principio potentissimo, sapientissimo et benevolentissimo; ideo corruerat in infirmitatem, ignorantiam et malignitatem, ac per hoc de spirituali effectus est carnalis, animalis et sensualis; et ideo ineptus erat ad

impede correspond to the three hierarchical powers and to the theological virtues.<sup>158</sup> In response to these weaknesses, Christ's passion, resurrection, ascension, and sending of the Holy Spirit not only infuses the theological virtues into humans but also consummates Christ's own mystical body, the Church.<sup>159</sup> Thus *Brev IV*, which begins by considering Christ's assumption of humanity concludes with the inception of his mystical body, whose formation is cosmic in scope, for it draws in not only the living the but souls in limbo by Christ's death and resurrection and joins all these to the celestial Jerusalem by his ascension.<sup>160</sup> The earthly Church gathered and elevated is consummated by the mission of the Holy Spirit, who, as had through charity, orders it with diverse offices and accordant charisms.<sup>161</sup>

Hence, it is evident that the historical incarnation and cross (and the whole paschal mystery) are critical to Bonaventure's description of the Church on earth and in heaven, however, their meaning must also be understood together with Bonaventure's concepts of the intelligible cross and intelligible circle, the patterns that describe the whole course of creation's consummation and also the pattern for the reformed human soul. The Word incarnate's death on the cross is the foundation of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Thus, it is symbolically appropriate that *Brev IV*, the middle of the *Brev*—the

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divinam virtutem imitandam, ad lucem cognoscendam, ad bonitatem diligendam. Ad hoc igitur, quod homo ab isto statu repararetur, congruentissimum fuit, ut ei condescenderet primum principium, reddendo se illi noscibile, amabile et imitabile. Et quia homo carnalis, animalis et sensualis non noverat nec amabat nec sequebatur nisi sibi proportionalia et consimilia; ideo ad eripiendum hominem de hoc statu Verbum caro factum est, ut ab nomine, qui caro erat, et cognosci posset et amari et imitati ac per hoc et homo Deum cognoscens et amans et imitans remediaretur morbo peccati."

<sup>158</sup> Recall that in *Brev Prol. 4* (V, 206B), Bonaventure coordinated the theological virtues, the with triad of doing/knowing/loving, and the three hierarchical powers. Between *Brev Prol. 4* and IV, multiple words are used for love (amare, diligere, caritate) but they are used similarly.

<sup>159</sup> *Brev IV.10* (V, 252A-B).

<sup>160</sup> *Brev IV.10* (V, 251B–252A.).

<sup>161</sup> *Brev IV.10* (V, 252A-B).

whole narrative of which follows the “intelligible cross” fixed on its *intermedium*, Christ—should address the incarnation and cross of Christ the hierarch as *medium* and *mediator in and between* all three hierarchies. Indeed, the *Brev IV* even addresses not only the unification of the hierarchies, but the unification of individuals to the collective and cosmic orders. For throughout *Brev IV*, although not said explicitly, Bonaventure shows how Christ’s cross brings the hierarchical powers to humanity and inaugurates the Church, his body made of members, and thereby reintegrates the “triple hierarchy” of God, the angels, and graced humanity.

Besides these effects, two further points relevant to Bonaventure’s doctrine of hierarchy can be drawn from his treatment of the cross in *Brev IV*, that Bonaventure conceives of the cross: 1) as the object of imitation; 2) as the means of perfect worship. *Brev IV.9*, “*De passione Christi quantum ad modum patiendi.*”, demonstrates that Christ’s passion: 1) saves human free will through giving an efficacious example; 2) saves God’s honor by offering *obsequium satisfactorium*; 3) and saves the cosmic order by reconciling opposites (which was treated above).<sup>162</sup> The example given by Christ’s death inculcates virtue and benignity and, furthermore, invites us to love Christ and to imitate the Christ who is loved.<sup>163</sup> Christ’s offering of *obsequium satisfactorium* through his passion follows the logic of Anselm’s *Cur Deus homo*<sup>164</sup>—the God-Man alone can

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<sup>162</sup> *Brev IV.9* (V, 249B–250A), esp.: “Sic igitur reparare debet, ut salva sit libertas arbitrii, salvus sit nihilominus honor Dei, salvus sit etiam ordo regiminis universi.”

<sup>163</sup> *Brev IV.9* (V, 250A): “Nihil autem magis informat hominem ad virtutem quam exemplum tolerandi mortem propter iustitiam et obedientiam divinam, mortem, inquam, non quamcumque, sed poenalissimam. Nihil vero magis incitai quam tanta benignitas, qua pro nobis altissimus Dei Filius absque nostris meritis, immo cum multis nostris demeritis posuit animam suam; quae benignitas tanto maior ostenditur, quanto pro nobis graviora et abiectiora sustinuit vel pati voluit. Deus mini proprio Filio suo non pepercit, sed pro nobis omnibus tradidit illum; quomodo non etiam cum illo omnia nobis donavit? Ex quo invitamur ad ipsum a mandimi et amatimi imitandum.”

<sup>164</sup> *Brev IV.9* (V, 250A); cf. Anselm, *Cur deus homo*, I.11 and 20.

restore the honor owed to God by humans—but Bonaventure emphasizes the gratuity and positive pleasingness of his saving act of worship: “[...] he returned to God what he did not steal the through the service of perfect satisfaction and offered the sacrifice of the highest sweetness for the perfect placation of God.”<sup>165</sup> Therefore, Christ the *medium*, mediator, and hierarch reintegrates the hierarchies through worship and by leaving his mode of worship as the model of right action for those who partake of a reintegrated cosmos.<sup>166</sup>

Finally, it must be noted that Bonaventure also employed concepts from his earlier account of hierarchy: deiformity and influence, which both appear in *Brev* IV.4. Deiformity is set within the cycle of procession and return:

[...] because reparation is the operation of the first principle, so that [reparation] flows from [the first principle] according to liberality and returns to [the first principle] according to conformity; and so, it is necessary that [reparation] occurs through grace and deiformity. For grace liberally flows from and God and returns man to God deiform.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> *Brev* IV.9 (V, 250A): “Quoniam ergo Christus Jesus in quantum Deus aequalis erat Patri in forma Dei; in quantum homo innocens nullatenus erat debitor mortis; dum semetipsum exinanivit et factus est obediens usque ad mortem, exsolvit Deo quae non rapuit per obsequium satisfactionis perfectae, et obtulit sacrificium suavitatis summae pro perfecta Dei placatione.” I have rendered *placatione* simply as placation because the sweetness of the sacrifice seemed inapposite to “appeasement”, since, in contrast to the satisfactory character of the cross, Bonaventure stresses that it is also perfectly pleasing.

<sup>166</sup> *Brev* IV.5 (V, 245B–256A) explicitly correlates Christ’s role as reconciling medium to being both worshipped and the worshipper: “Rursus, quoniam medium ad reconciliandum conveniens non est, nisi habeat in se utramque naturam, superiorem scilicet et inferiore, adorabilem et adorantem; et hoc nullo modo fieri potest nisi per summam dignativam et gratuitam unionem; ideo necesse est in Christo ponere gratiam super omnem gratiam et omninoda reverentia venerandam, quam vocamus gratiam unionis, ratione cuius Christus homo est super omnia benedictus Deus, et ideo cultu latriae venerandus.” To reconcile the world Christ must be both highest and lowest, ardor and adored. What is not explored here is how being a worshipper is also intrinsic to God. This doctrine will only appear clearly in *Hex* XXI.7. Here, Bonaventure’s definition of *latria* is identical to its formulation in III *Sent* d. 9 a. 1 q. 1, but it will develop in the direction of being explained by the cross as simultaneously dying for the world and the “intercourse between God and the soul” in *Trip* via II.4–7.

<sup>167</sup> *Brev* IV.5 (V, 245B): “Ratio autem ad intelligentiam praedictorum haec est: quia reparatio est operatio primi principii, ita quod ab ipso manat secundum liberalitatem et ad ipsum reducit secundum conformitatem; ideo oportet, quod fiat per gratiam et deiformitatem. Gratia enim et manat a Deo liberaliter et reddit hominem deiformem.”



Christ is the source of this deiform-ing grace. The mediation of this grace is explained by Christ's capacity to influence the *sensus* and *motus* of those who are joined to him as members of the body of which he is the head.<sup>168</sup> In this way, those who accede to him in faith—and through the sacraments of faith—are, through his superabundance and influence, made members of his mystical body, temples of the Holy Spirit, and sons of God the Father.<sup>169</sup>

Overall, *Brev IV* stands out for its coordination of Christology and hierarchical conceptualities. Given the overall context of the *Brev*, it highlights the acts and the effects of Christ the hierarch, who is *medium*, *mediator*, and the *triplex verbum*—the Word in the Trinity, incarnate in humanity, and inspired in souls, who stands at the head of the Church on earth and in heaven.

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<sup>168</sup> *Brev IV.5* (V, 246B): “Per gratiam vero capitis influit motum et sensum in universos, qui ad eum accedunt vel per fidem rectam, vel per fidei Sacramenta, sive adventum eius praecesserint, sive fuerint subsequuti.”; *Brev IV.5* (V, 246A): “Et propter hoc vocatur haec gratia gratia capitis, pro eo quod, sicut caput habet in se sensuum plenitudinem et ceteris membris est conforme ceterisque praesidet ac ceteris beneficium praestat influentiae, quae ipsi capiti connectuntur: sic Christus, habens in se gratiae superabundantiam et nobis consimilis in natura, prae ceteris sanctus et iustus, ceteris, qui ad ipsum accedunt, praestat beneficium gratiae et spiritus, per quae fit sensus et motus in spiritualibus.”

<sup>169</sup> *Brev IV.5* (V, 246A): “Et quoniam ad ipsum accedere est per fidem vel per fidei sacramentum et fides Christi eadem est in praeteritis praesentibus et futuris ideo ratio influendi in Christo ponitur respectu omnium tam praeteritorum quam praesentium quam etiam futurorum in Christum credentium et in Christo renatorum qui per fidem copulantur Christo et per gratiam influentem fiunt membra Christi et templa spiritus sancti ac per hoc filii dei patris connexi ad invicem per indivisibile vinculum caritatis. Quod sicut distantia locorum non dividitur sic nec diuturnitate temporum separatur ac per hoc omnes iusti ubicumque sint et quandocumque fuerint unum efficiunt corpus Christi mysticum sensum et motum suscipiendo ab uno capite influente secundum fontalem radicalem et originalem plenitudinem omnis gratiae in Christo habitantis sicut in fonte.”

### III.4.3 *Brev V*: Hierarchy, Grace and Subjective Ascent

While *Brev IV* underscores the ecclesiological significance of Christ the hierarch in which the ecclesiastical hierarchy, as such, depends on Christ's death, resurrection, ascension and sending of the Spirit, *Brev V* considers the personal effects of the grace thus gained through a hierarchical lens. Four topics in particular relating to hierarchy are touched upon by *Brev V*: 1) Bonaventure identifies grace with the three hierarchical powers and elaborates their role in deiformity; 2) he further clarifies what *influentia* means in the context of grace; 3) he elaborates upon the nature of contemplation in those souls reformed by the hierarchical powers; 4) he concludes with a consideration of the effects of grace leading into prayer.

*Brev V* is devoted to the topic of grace and from its first chapter, the effects of three hierarchical powers of purification, illumination, and perfection are strictly identified with grace.<sup>170</sup> Bonaventure's teaching on the nature of grace gives the context for his reader to understand these powers. Grace is identified as the *donum divinitus datum* with and in which the Holy Spirit is given as the *donum increatum* "*optimum et perfectum, quod descendit a Patre luminum*".<sup>171</sup> Grace gives the Holy Spirit to be possessed by intelligent creatures, which results in a transformation making the soul pleasing to God:

[Grace] is nevertheless the gift through which the soul is perfected and made the spouse of Christ, the daughter of the eternal Father, and the temple of the Holy Spirit, which [gift] does not come to be apart from the estimable condescension and condescending esteem of the eternal Majesty through the gift of his grace.—

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<sup>170</sup> That Bonaventure only hinted towards these powers in *Brev IV* allows *Brev V* to stand out as the treatment of the effects brought about by the *Verbum incarnatum*.

<sup>171</sup> *Brev V.1* (V, 252A).

[Grace], finally, is the gift that purifies, illumines, and perfects the soul; that vivifies, reforms, and stabilizes the soul; that elevates, assimilates, and joins it to God, and through this makes [the soul] acceptable [to God]. Accordingly, this sort of grace is and ought to be called *gratia gratum faciens*.<sup>172</sup>

Here Bonaventure describes grace as the reception of God and the corresponding deification, intoned in both Trinitarian and Dionysian keys. Not only does the soul who has received the divinely given *donum* acquire a new relationship to each person of the Trinity, it also undergoes a transformation described by two triads drawn from the *CD*: the hierarchical powers, and the triad of elevation (corresponding to anagogy), assimilation, and union (ἔνωσις).<sup>173</sup> Bonaventure goes on to outline how these three triads are simultaneous and that the effects they contain are actualized by another triad, *virtus/veritas/caritas* (which maps on to the Dionysian hierarchical triad, in reverse order, of *operatio/scientia/ordo*):

Finally, because our *mens* is not conformed to the blessed Trinity according to the rectitude of election except by the vigor of virtue, the splendor of the truth, and the fervor of charity. And the vigor of virtue purges, stabilizes, and elevates the soul; the splendor of truth illumines, reforms, and assimilates the soul to God; the fervor of charity perfect, vivifies, and joins the soul to God, and from all these a man exists as pleasing to and accepted by God.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> *Brev* V.1 (V, 252A-B): “Ipsa nihilominus est donum, per quod anima perficitur et efficitur sponsa Christi, filia Patris aeterni et templum Spiritus sancti; quod nullo modo fit nisi ex dignativa condescension et condescensiva dignatione Maiestatis aeternae per donum gratiae suae.—Ipsa denique est donum, quod animam purgat, illuminat et perficit; vivificat, reformat et stabilizat; elevat, assimilatur et Deo iungit, ac per hoc acceptabilem facit; propter quod donum huiusmodi gratia gratum faciens recte dicitur et debuit appellari.”

<sup>173</sup> The second triad, *vivificat, reformat, stabilizat* is not taken from Dionysian terms. The three triads divided among virtue, truth, and charity do not need necessarily need to be read as progressive series (e.g. purification, to stabilization, to elevation) that simply expands the hierarchical powers from three to nine, but may be modalities for describing the effects of grace and the implications of those powers. On the other hand, a progressive reading is not untenable, since, e.g., stabilization and elevation seem to be genuine developments upon purification.

<sup>174</sup> *Brev* V.1 (V, 253A): “Postremo, quia mens nostra non efficitur conformis beatissimae Trinitati secundum rectitudinem electionis nisi per vigorem virtutis, splendorem veritatis et fervorem caritatis; et vigor virtutis animam purgat, stabilizat et elevat; splendor veritatis animam illuminat, reformat, et Deo assimilatur; fervor caritatis animam perficit, vivificat et Deo iungit, et ex his omnibus homo Deo placens et

Expressed as a chart, this description of the graced soul appears so:

The Soul...		
...conformed by <i>virtus/operatio</i> is...	...conformed by <i>veritas/scientia</i> is...	...conformed by <i>caritas/ordo</i> is...
purified	illuminated	perfected
stabilized	reformed	vivified
elevated	assimilated	joined to God

Tab. IV The Effects of Grace on the Soul in *Brev* V.1

This coordination offers another opportunity to assess Bonaventure's understanding of the effects and role of the three hierarchical powers at this point of his career.

Purification is both a good movement from the inferior (elevation) and a cessation of bad movement (stabilization). Illumination does not only affect knowledge but effects a reconfiguration (reformation and assimilation) of the soul to God's plan.

Perfection achieves the fullness of life by being joined to God. Furthermore,

Bonaventure also applies the hierarchical powers as the structure of interior life or

"hierarchical life" with its fruit of contemplation, wherein Bonaventure associates

the hierarchical powers with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.<sup>175</sup> Thus the hierarchical

powers, understood as *received* rather than performed, describe no less than the

effects of grace. Indeed, narratively, Bonaventure's thought has developed in such a

way that terminology relating to hierarchy is embedded within his account of

sanctifying grace.

Next to the integration of the hierarchical powers into understanding sanctifying

grace, a second development in *Brev* V relevant to hierarchy is the precision of what

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acceptus existit: hinc est, quod illa influentia deiformis dicitur habere omnes decem actus praedictos, ita tamen, quod denominatur ab ultimo sicut a completissimo."

<sup>175</sup> *Brev* V.5 (V, 258A).

Bonaventure means by *influentia*. God created creatures capable of eternal beatitude, but no creature is capable of acquiring such beatitude by its own powers; it is elevated by God above itself through God's condescension. *Influentia*, as in earlier works, is the term that names this condescension. Here Bonaventure includes two important clarifications: "God does not condescend through his communicable essence but through a flowing-in (*influentia*) emanating from himself" and "and the spirit is not raised above itself through space but through a deiform habit."<sup>176</sup> The first clarifies that God does not communicate his *essenence* to creatures but rather his—the Trinity's—*influentia*.<sup>177</sup> The second coordinates the reception of God's condescension through his *influentia* with the creaturely ascent through the *deiformis habitus* granted to it by the God's *influentia*.<sup>178</sup> Much like the paternal light of the *CD*, *influentia* is the presence of God in a creature that the whole system of hierarchy transmits or receives through Christ.

Although *influentia*'s role in Bonaventure's account of hierarchy and grace is relatively straightforward, just what this *influentia* that flows (*manare*) from God is in itself must be expressed with caution and circumspection, especially as to the question of whether it is an action or thing, and how or to what extent it is distinct from both God and creatures. Bonaventure, indeed, explicitly identifies *influentia* with grace, not as the *donum increatum*, which is the Holy Spirit, but as *donum divinitus datum*, which gives the Holy Spirit, as *gratia gratum faciens*, which, because it comes from, is according, and

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<sup>176</sup> *Brev* V.1 (V, 252B): "Deus autem non condescendit per sui essentiam incommutabilem, sed per influentiam ab ipso manantem"; "nec spiritus elevatur supra se per situm localem, sed per habitum deiformem."

<sup>177</sup> Bonaventure's *Sunday Sermon* 16 refers to the "communicable *influentia*."

<sup>178</sup> In *III Sent*, the *influentia* received through hierarchy was explicitly distinguished from *habitus*. That distinction appears to hold in the *Brev* V as well. The *deiformis influentia* emanating from God is participated by humans who in response acquire a *deiformis habitus*.

for the sake of God, makes the soul that receives it deiform. Thus Bonaventure calls *influentia* “deiform” and says that it is “participated” and “divinely given.”<sup>179</sup> *Influentia*, thus is not God yet gives God. Furthermore, Bonaventure never calls this *influentia* a creature or a thing. Helpfully, the term *influentia*, however, is used in other contexts besides giving grace where. Indeed, in those cases it is not a thing but a relationship. Bonaventure applies the language of *influentia* or *influere* (the verbal form) to the relationship between the rational soul and the body into which it pours (*influere*) life, even perpetual life, or in the case of the damned, perpetual punishment.<sup>180</sup> *Influere* is used also Bonaventure’s account of matrimony, insofar as the union of marriage signifies the union of the *agens et influens* with the *patiens et suscipiens*, coordinating influence and reception.<sup>181</sup> In each of these examples of an *influentia* communicated the order is the same: there is no influence of the lower upon the higher nor is there any communication of beings separated from each other, as when the Church cannot aid the damned through its proper *influentia*.<sup>182</sup> Added to these instances there is the description of how Christ, through his saving passion, influences the *motus* and *sensus* of Christians.

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<sup>179</sup> *Brev* V.1 (252A–253B).

<sup>180</sup> *Brev* VII.2 (V, 382B): “ut, sicut secundum ordinem naturae anima unitur corpori, ut influat vitam, sic uniatur igni materiali secundum ordinem iustitiae ut punibile punienti, a quo suscipiat poenam”; *Brev* VII.5 (287A): “Requirit etiam natura animae rationalis et immortalis, quod sicut habet esse perpetuum, sic corpus habeat, cui perpetuo influat vitam; [...]”; *Brev* VII.6 (V, 288A): “Et quoniam spiritus, qui per naturam praepositur corpori et in corpus habet influere et ipsum movere, [...]”; *Brev* VII.6 (V, 288B): “[...] ut tam peccator spiritus quam homo igni corporeo alligetur, non ut in illuni influat vitam, sed ut divino decreto suscipiat poenam.”

<sup>181</sup> *Brev* VI.13 (V, 279B–280A).

<sup>182</sup> *Brev* VII.3 (V, 284A): “Amplius, quoniam debet ibi servari iustitia conservativa ordinis et regiminis universi; et haec exigit, ut in communicatione influenliarum salvetur ordo et symbolum inter ea, a quibus et in quae influentiae illae manant; ac per hoc inferius non debeat influere in id quod est supra, neque in id quod est per omnimodam distantiam elongatum: hinc est, quod suffragia Ecclesiae non possunt valere his qui sunt in inferno, quia sunt a corpore Christi mystic penitus separati; unde nulla spiritualis influentia ad eos pervenit nec eis prodest, sicut nec influentia capitis prodest membris a corpore amputatis.”

In all these instances, *influentia* is a communication whereby the principle conforms that which it principates to itself (or to what is proper to the principle), as when the soul gives life to body and fire heats an object. Hence, in applying the language of *influentia* to grace, Bonaventure speaks to the way God flows forth into intelligent creatures, giving what is proper to God and even giving God himself (especially the *donum divinum*) to those creatures, such that they really do share in divine life (they acquire a *deiformis habitus*) but not at the cost of their essence because the divine *essentia* is not (and cannot be) communicated.<sup>183</sup> Indeed, to be deiform by influence is to enjoy (*frui*) and possess (*habere*) God.<sup>184</sup> The possession of God, however, is also a transformation of the possessor, such that the *influentia* takes hold of those whom it flows into and hence it purifies, illumines, and perfects them, uniting them to God. Thus, *influentia* does not only flow from God but reverts to God “in the mode of an intelligible circle”, in which circle “consists the fulfilment of every rational creature.”<sup>185</sup>

*Brev V* also relates hierarchy to contemplation amid Bonaventure’s consideration of the ramifications of the seven virtues, gifts of the Holy Spirit, and beatitudes upon the human soul. While grace reforms the soul through virtues and the beatitudes are grace’s

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<sup>183</sup> *Brev V.1* (V, 252B): “Haec autem influentia deiformis, quia est a Deo et secundum Deum et propter Deum, ideoreddat imaginem nostrae mentis conformem beatissimae. Trinitati non tantum secundum ordinem originis verum etiam secundum reclinatitudinem electionis et secundum quietudinem fruitionis. Et quoniam qui hoc habet immediate ad Deum reducitur, sicut immediate ei conformatur; ideo donum illud immediate donatur a Deo tanquam a principio influxivo; [...]” The *influentia* renders one conformed to the Trinity because it proceeds from (*a Deo*), is defined by God (*secundum Deum*), and ordered towards God (*propter Deum*). As such it exemplifies the Neoplatonic triad of procession, remanence, and return. It also follows the pattern of Beginning-Form-Ecstasy.

<sup>184</sup> *Brev V.1* (V, 253A): “Rursus, quoniam qui fruatur Deo Deum habet; ideo cum gratia, quae sua deiformitate disponit ad Dei fruitionem, datur donum increatum, quod est Spiritus sanctus, quod qui habet habet et Deum.”

<sup>185</sup> *Brev V.1* (V, 253A): “Dicitur enim gratia gratum faciens, quia habentem facit Deo gratum, cum non solum gratis detur a Deo, rerum etiam sit secundum Deum et propter Deum; cum ad hoc sit, ut per ipsam opus manans a Deo revertatur in Deum, in quo ad modum circuli intelligibilis consistit omnium spirituum rationalium complementum.”

fruit, the gifts of the Holy Spirit intervene as powers expediting the reformed soul's achievement of its end.<sup>186</sup> Bonaventure's treatment of the gifts of the Holy Spirit represents their progressive role by presenting them in seven successive modalities that correspond to the creation week and the *Brev*'s septenary structure.<sup>187</sup> It is in this context, in the sixth mode of the gifts expediency, that Bonaventure places a brief discussion not only of the hierarchical powers but also of the "hierarchic life":

Sixth, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, are expedient for contemplation. For it is necessary to the hierarchic and contemplative life that the soul be purified, illumined, and perfected.<sup>188</sup>

The hierarchic life (*vita hierarchica*) is the contemplative life, acquired through the effects of the hierarchical powers upon the soul. Purification frees the soul from the wounds of sin, illumination establishes right actions, and perfection consists in access to God, that is, *sapientia*. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are the means by which these powers have their effect. Through them, the hierarchical powers "construct" the *arcanum contemplationis*, the locus of contemplation.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> *Brev* V.5 (V, 257A–258B).

<sup>187</sup> *Brev* V.5 (V, 257B–258A). The most transparent correspondences are found between the gifts' second (aiding the natural powers), third (assisting the seven virtues), and fourth (expediting conformity to the cross) modes and the topics of *Brev* II (creation) III (fall sin and seven capital sins) and IV (Incarnation and Cross). In this pattern, the fifth mode (aiding active life) would correspond to *Brev* V's topic of graced life and the sixth mode (aiding contemplating or the hierarchical life) would thus correspond to the sacraments, the first (repelling vice) and seventh (aiding the active and contemplative life) modes reflect the beginning and end like *Brev* I and VII but further correspondences are tenuous. If these correspondences are intended by Bonaventure, he finds himself in agreement with Dionysius by connecting the sacraments to contemplation.

<sup>188</sup> *Brev* V.5 (V, 258A): "Sexto, ad expeditionem in contemplando dona Spiritus sancti sunt in septenario numero. Nam ad vitam hierarchicam et contemplativam necessarium est animam purgari, illuminari et perfeci."

<sup>189</sup> *Brev* V.5 (V, 258A): "Purgari autem oportet a concupiscentia, a malitia, ab ignorantia, ab infirmitate seu impotentia; primum facit timor, secundum pietas, tertium scientia, quartum fortitudo. Illuminari autem indigemus in operibus reparationis et primariae conditionis; primum dat consilium,



Contemplation itself, however, is not described along with the sixth mode of the gifts but elsewhere. In the seventh and final mode of the gifts, which are expedient to both *action* and *contemplation*, contemplation is conversion to the Trinity in revering majesty, understanding truth, and tasting the good.<sup>190</sup> *Brev* V.6's treatment of the beatitudes includes contemplation within the ultimate *dilectatio spiritualis*, where God is experienced through the post-rational spiritual senses and the *mens* makes its ecstatic *transitus* to the Father.<sup>191</sup> Such an anticipation of the *Itin* is not a singular occurrence, indeed shortly afterwards, Bonaventure returns to describe the multiple levels of contemplation, which are nearly identical to the seven stages of ascent in *Itin* I–VII.<sup>192</sup> Bonaventure characterizes this ascent as the contemplation of truth, which is connected in *Brev* V to intellect but also to *affectus* by *sapientia*, and as in *Brev* II.12, contemplation is distinct from the senses and reason because in it the *mens* looks above to God and is purified, illumined, and perfected through grace, faith, and the understanding (*intellectus*) of scripture.<sup>193</sup>

Finally, *Brev* V concludes with a consideration of prayer which fittingly segue to *Brev* VI's consideration of the sacraments in their rites, purpose, and effect, much as the conclusion of *Brev* IV considered the mystical body of Christ in anticipation of *Brev* V's

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secundum intellectus. Perfici autem habemus per accessum ad summum, quod consistit in uno, et hoc per donum sapientiae; et sic arcanum contemplationis a lato consummatur quasi in cubito."

<sup>190</sup> *Brev* V.5 (V, 258A).

<sup>191</sup> *Brev* V.6 (V, 259B–260A).

<sup>192</sup> *Brev* V.6 (V, 260A): "Quae quidem contemplatio in prophetis fuit per revelationem quantum ad triplicem visionem scilicet corporalem imaginativam et intellectualem in aliis vero iustis reperitur per speculationem quae incipit a sensu et pervenit ad imaginationem et de imaginatione ad rationem de ratione ad intellectum de intellectu ad intelligentiam de intelligentia vero ad sapientiam sive notitiam excessivam quae hic in via incipit sed consummatur in gloria sempiterna."

<sup>193</sup> By coordinating the hierarchical powers with grace, faith, and understanding scripture, in this instance, Bonaventure's understanding of the powers appears similar to their intellectual-reading in Eriugena and Hugh. The association of the understanding of scripture with perfection need not be understood as a lapse of perfection frequent association with love and union in Bonaventure's writings since, as *Brev* Prol. 1 indicates, the scriptures read rightly inflame ecstatic love.

analysis of grace. The treatment of prayer is centered on the Our Father's seven petitions, which reflect many of the septenary structures touched upon in *Brev* V and beyond. The *septenarium* of the capital vices, the sacraments, and of heavenly glory show the fallen beginning, the remedy and the goal while the *septenarium* of the seven virtues, gifts of the Holy Spirit, and beatitudes describe the personal transformation between the sacraments and the eschaton. Thus, Bonaventure describes the process of the ascent or the reduction side of the intelligible circle of divine *influentia* or grace, whereby souls are purified, illuminated, and perfected. It is not only the Our Father but prayer in general, the seven offices of the day, which summarize and beg and cooperate the transformation of the soul:

[...] and thus, praising the name of the Lord and praying seven times a day, we obtain the seven-fold grace of the virtues, the gifts and the beatitudes, by which we win in the battle against the sevenfold capital vices and come to the sevenfold crown of glorious dowries, and of course not without the help of the sevenfold medicine of the sacraments divinely given for restoring the state of the human race.<sup>194</sup>

The Church formed through the grace given by Christ the hierarch is a praying Church. The graced life, the hierarchic life, is not the mechanical infusion of deiform qualities to human nature, but the elevation of humanity through grace received and expressed in worship. Bonaventure not only situates grace within the conceptual world of hierarchy in the *Brev* but also explicitly casts grace as received in prayer and the sacraments—in cult. Whether by serendipity or textual influence, establishing worship

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<sup>194</sup> *Brev* V.10 (V, 264B): “[...] ut sic, septies in die laudantes nomen Domini et orantes, impetremus gratiam septiformem virtutum, donorum et beatitudinum, qua vincamus septiformem pugnam vitiorum capitalium et perveniamus ad septiformem coronam dotum gloriosarum, adiuvante nihilominus septiformi medicina Sacramentorum divinitus ad reparationem humani generis statutorum.”

and prayer as the locus of grace (and not the just the sacraments as efficacious) strengthens the similarity of his thought to Dionysian hierarchy.

### III.4.4 *Brev VI: Hierarchy and the Sacraments*

*Brev VI.9*'s discussion of the Eucharist displays Bonaventure's most explicitly Dionysian treatment of the sacraments up to this point in his career. Even so, it is the exception that proves the rule, namely, that Bonaventure's did not draw upon Dionysius' liturgical commentary, the *EH*, to discuss the sacraments, at least not directly. For besides a brief reference to hierarchy in his treatment of matrimony, the Eucharist alone involves characteristically Dionysian language and themes.<sup>195</sup> Strikingly, as one who is eager to apply the hierarchical powers in diverse uses in neither *IV Sent* nor in the *Brev* does Bonaventure associate hierarchical powers with the celebration of the sacraments in the Dionysian order. However, unlike *IV Sent*, which makes no connection between the sacraments and the hierarchical powers, *Brev VI* associates all the hierarchical powers with the Eucharist. Moreover, there are other Dionysian resonances in his treatment of the Eucharist, lexical, thematic, and structural.

The lexical and thematic similarities to the *EH* are found together toward the end of Bonaventure's description of the Eucharist, where he addresses the symbolic character of the Eucharist. The lexical similarity is found in the following passage:

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<sup>195</sup> Baptism is called a purification (*purificantem*) in *Brev IV.7*, but the Latin translation of κάθαρσις from *CD* are use *purgare* and its relatives. Furthermore, even if *purificantem* had a Dionysian sense, unlike Dionysius, Bonaventure makes no remark about Baptism's illuminative character, at least, using the language that is discernably reflective of *EH II* or the *CD* more broadly.

Again, because seeing Christ openly does not comport to the state of [this] life, on account of the veil of the enigma and the merit of faith; nor is it fitting to violate the flesh of Christ with teeth both on account of the horror of its indigestibility and because of the immortality of his body; and therefore it was necessary that his body should be given over veiled by the most sacred symbols, fitting and clear.<sup>196</sup>

The phrase “*velamen aenigamatis*” reflects the Saracen’s *Nova translatio* of the *EH*,

which Thomas Gallus also follows in his *Extractio* and *Explanatio*, rather than

Eriugena’s *versio*, while the language of the *sacratissimis symbolis* also reflects Dionysius’

language translated in Eriugena’s *versio* (and Grosseteste’s translation).<sup>197</sup> These phrases

<sup>196</sup> *Brev.* VI.9 (V, 274B): “Rursus, quia statui viae non competit Christum aperte videre, propter velamen aenigmati et propter meritum fidei; nec convenit Christi carnem dentibus attrahere et propter horrorem crudelitatis et immortalitatem ipsius corporis: ideo necesse fuit, corpus et sanguinem Christi tradi velatum sacratissimis symbolis et similitudinibus congruis et expressis.”

<sup>197</sup> Cf. *EH* III.3.2 428C (82.9–12): “Ἄλλ’ ὃ θειοτάτη καὶ ἱερὰ τελετή, τὰ περικείμενα σοι συμβολικῶς ἀμφιέσματῶν αἰνιγμάτων ἀποκαλυφθέντι τηλαυγῶς ἡμῖν ἀναδείχθῃ καὶ τὰς νοερὰς ἡμῶν ὄψεις ἐναιῶν καὶ ἀπερικαλύπτου φωτὸς ἀποπλήρωσον.”; cf. Dionysius and Ioannes Saracenus, “*Dionysius Areopagita secundum translationem quam fecit Iohannes Saracenus: De Ecclesiastica Hierarchia*”, in *Dionysiaca*, ed. Philippe Chavalier, 1180, col. 4: “Sed, o diuinissima et sancta perfectio, circumpositis tibi significatiue uelaminibus aenigmatum discooperta, splendide nobis demonstrare et intellectuales nostras uisiones unitiuo et discooperto lumine adimple.”; Thomas Gallus, *Explanatio in EH*, III.D (812.320–331): “SED O, inuocat diuinam illuminationem, O DIVINISSIMA ET SANCTA PERFECTIO, id est diuine sapientie plenitudo que est Christus, in quo habitat omnis plenitudo diuinitatis (Col. 2c) et in quo sunt omnes thesauri sapientie et scientie (Col. 2a), DEMONSTRARE (passiui generis, imperatiui modi), id est oro ut demonstreris NOBIS SPLENDIDE, tu dico DISCOOPERTA VELAMINIBVS ENIGMATVM CIRCVMPPOSITIS TIBI in celebratione eucharistie SIGNIFICATIVE, id est congruis proprietatibus significantibus te et tua inuisibilia mysteria, ET ADIMPLE NOSTRAS INTELLECTVALES VISIONES, id est nostras intelligentias quibus mysteria inuisibilia intuemur, tuo (uel de) LVMINE VNITIVO, quo tibi unimur, quantum ad affectum, ET DISCOOPERTO, id est puro, sine figurarum obuolutione, quantum ad intellectum.” These passages are from (or comment upon) Dionysius’ *θεωρία* on the Eucharist in which he addresses to the rite (τελετή) of the Eucharist itself, praying that although it is veiled with symbols that it might fill our eyes with its light. Saracenus has translated τελετή as “*perfectio*” and Gallus following him is, perhaps, not aware that the rite itself is being addressed and simply takes the *perfectio* to be Christ who is the fullness of wisdom, although Christ may be addressed in the Eucharist. Although Bonaventure’s use of *velamen* in the singular shows that he is not copying the above texts verbatim, he only ever uses *velamen* together with *aenigma* once before this, in II *Sent.* d. 3’s discussion of the angels’ vision of God. That Bonaventure uses the words together in the context of the Eucharist, the sole place they appear together in the translation of and commentary on the *EH*, suggests a real possibility that their collocation is not accidental, especially since it is found together with the Dionysian language of the “*sacratissima symbola*”, which phrase is found in Eriugena’s and Robert Grosseteste’s translations of the *EH* at V.1.6 505D (108.12), VI.3.5 538C (118.23), VII.3.9 565B (130.3), and VII.3.11 565D (130.14). In every case Dionysius and his translators are referring to the reception of the sacrament of the altar. Note, neither *ἱερώτατα σύμβολα* or its translation, *sacratissima symbola*, appear in *EH* III, however, “*velatus*” and “*tradere*”, which do appear in appear in *Brev.* VI.9 (V, 274B) “[...] corpus et sanguinem Christi tradi velatum sacratissimis symbolis [...]”, also appear in Eriugena’s and Saracenus’s translations of the reference

are very rare in medieval discourse on the Eucharist and therefore I believe that it is probable that Bonaventure had *EH* III in mind and even before his eyes when he wrote this, be it from multiple translations or commentaries.<sup>198</sup> Moreover, the content that follows immediately reinforces the Dionysian tenor of the preceding passage by its thematic concern: the unity achieved by the Eucharist, one of the primary themes of *EH* III.3's interpretation of the Eucharist, and a predominate theme of the *CH* and *EH* overall. Unity or ἑνωσις is expressed in *EH* III most clearly when the Eucharist, which Dionysius calls the "synaxis" and "communion", is said to "collect our divided lives into uniform deification, and gives communion and union with the One, by the Godlike folding together of our diversities."<sup>199</sup> Bonaventure explains the unity of Eucharist in terms Christ's true and mystical body, an explanation that certainly borrows from Augustine's image of the bread formed from many grains, nevertheless echoes of *EH* III.3.12 appear too:

And so nothing is more suited to feeding than a meal of bread and a drink of wine, and nothing is even more suited to signify the unity of the Christ's true and mystical body than bread made from finest grain and wine pressed from the purest grapes gathered into one. [...] Because truly the blessed and glorious body of Christ is not able to be divided into its parts nor separated from the highest divinity; and therefore, under either species Christ is one and whole and undivided precisely as

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to the Eucharist at *EH* I.4 376C (67.12–14: "οὐδὲ ταῦτα τῶν ἐνθέων ἱεραρχῶν εἰς τὸ τῆς ἱερουργίας κοινὸν ἀπαρακαλύπτως νοήσεσιν ἄλλ' ἐν συμβόλοις ἱεροῖς ἀραδεδωκότων."), while "ἐν συμβόλοις ἱεροῖς" is translated as "*in symbolis sacris*" by Eriurgena ("Neque haec diuini summi sacerdotes in sacrificii commune non uelatis inuisibilibus sed in symbolis sacris tradiderunt" [*Dionysiaca*, 1097, col. 1]) and "*in signis sacris*" by Saracen ("Neque ista diuini hierarchae ad sanctificationis commune non uelatis intelligibilibus sed in signis sanctis tradiderunt." [*Dionysiaca*, 1097, col. 1]). My search in Brepols LLT-A and B showed, aside from Robert Grosseteste, no near-contemporary of Bonaventure that applies this Dionysian language to the Eucharist, including Alexander of Hales, Thomas Aquinas, and Albertus Magnus. While this search is not exhaustive, it increases the likelihood that Bonaventure's language use of "*velamen aenigmatis*" and "*sacratissimis symbolis*" demonstrates his own interreaction with Dionysius' *EH* or a commentary thereupon.

<sup>198</sup> See the note above.

<sup>199</sup> *EH* III.1 424B (79.7–12).

body, soul, and God; and through this in both there is one and most simple sacrament containing the whole Christ.<sup>200</sup>

Similarly, *EH* III.3.12 describes how the σύμβολα of the Eucharist, the bread and wine consecrated (“hierurgized”) on the altar, are distributed to and received by the clergy and the faithful, explaining that when the veiled bread and chalice are unveiled, divided, and shared without sundering its unity because the “simple and hidden One of Jesus” became incarnate and established the unifying communion to be partaken so that we may be joined to Him as members to a body.<sup>201</sup> The unity of the Church symbolized by bread and wine’s origin in many grains and grapes comes from Augustine but Bonaventure’s point that the unity of the sacrament depends on Christ’s own unity as the divine Word seems to be drawn from *EH* III.3.12, which addresses together Christ’s unifying power, the unifying power of the sacrament, and union to Christ as members to a body. Indeed, Bonaventure’s reference to the body of Christ veiled under the most sacred symbols echoes *EH* III.3.12’s description of the division of the veiled bread.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Brev. VI.9 (V, 274B): “Et quoniam nihil magis est idoneum ad refectionem quam cibus panis et potus vini; nihil est etiam magis idoneum ad significationem unitatis corporis Christi veri et mystici, quam panis factus de mundissimis granis et vinum expressum de purissimis acinis in unum collectis. [...] Quia vero corpus Christi beatum et gloriosum non potest dividi in partes suas nec separari ab anima neque a Divinitate summa; ideo sub utraque specie est unus Christus et totus et indivisus, scilicet corpus et anima et Deus; ac per hoc utrobique est unum et simplicissimum Sacramentum continens totum Christum.”

<sup>201</sup> *EH* III.3.13 444A-B (92.18–93.6): “Τὸν γὰρ ἐγκεκαλυμμένον καὶ ἀδιαίρετον ἄρτον ἀνακαλύψας καὶ εἰς πολλὰ διελὼν καὶ τὸ ἐνιαῖον τοῦ ποτηρίου πᾶσι καταμερίσας συμβολικῶς τὴν ἐνότητα πληθύνει καὶ διανέμει παναγεστάτην ἐν τούτοις ἱερουργίαν τελῶν. Τὸ γὰρ ἐν καὶ ἀπλοῦν καὶ κρύφιον Ἰησοῦ τοῦ θεαρχικωτάτου λόγου τῇ καθ’ ἡμᾶς ἐνανθρωπήσει πρὸς τὸ σύνθετόν τε καὶ ὁρατὸν ἀναλλοιώτως ἀγαθότητι καὶ φιланθρωπία προελήλυθε καὶ τὴν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμῶν ἐνοποιὸν κοινωνίαν ἀγαθουργῶς διεπραγματεύσατο τὰ καθ’ ἡμᾶς ταπεινὰ τοῖς θειοτάτοις αὐτοῦ κατ’ ἄκρον ἐνώσας, εἴπερ καὶ ἡμεῖς ὡς μέλη σώματι συναρμολογηθῶμεν αὐτῷ κατὰ τὸ ταῦτόν τῆς ἀλωβήτου καὶ θείας ζωῆς καὶ μὴ τοῖς φθοροποιοῖς πάθεσι κατανεκρωθέντες ἀνάρμοστοι καὶ ἀκόλλητα καὶ ἀσύζωοι γενώμεθα πρὸς τὰ θεῖα μέλη καὶ ὑγιέστατα.”

<sup>202</sup> *EH* III.3.12 444A-B (92.21–93.6).

Furthermore, even the structure of *Brev* VI.9 shows an alignment with *EH* III. Bonaventure's description of the Eucharistic sacrament as "one, most simple, and containing Christ" corresponds to the "unity and simplicity and hiddenness of Jesus" even in word order.<sup>203</sup> In sum, there is a convergence of uniquely Dionysian language that Bonaventure is using the *EH* III as a source for his account of the Eucharist. While this Dionysian language and themes in Bonaventure's examination of the relationship between the symbol and reality in the Eucharist appear after he defined the Eucharist as a pleasing sacrifice, unifying communion, and nourishing viaticum, nevertheless even those three aspects of the Eucharist are treated in the order in which they appear in *EH* III.3.12. For Dionysius first discusses the worship in surrounding and occurring in the consecration of the bread and wine on the altar (*EH* III.3.12 444A [92.2-18]), then the power of communion to unify the Church (*EH* III.3.12 441C [92.18-3.6]), and finally the necessity of a personal transformation into a life conformed to Christ's incarnate life (*EH* III.3.12 444B [93.6-10]).<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> *EH* III.3.12 444A-B (92.21-93.6).

<sup>204</sup> In terms of the first aspect, Bonaventure explains that Christ's very own sacrifice is offered by the Church to preserve our devotion to God: "Primo igitur, quoniam tempus gratiae revelatae requirit, quod iam non offeratur oblatio qualiscumque, sed pura, placida et plenaria; et nulla alia est talis, nisi illa quae fuit in cruce oblata, scilicet Christi corpus et sanguis: hinc est, quod necessario oportet in hoc Sacramento non tantum figurative, verum etiam veraciter corpus Christi tanquam oblationem huic tempori debitam contineri." (*Brev* VI.9 [V, 274A]) *EH* III.3.12 Begins with a discussion of the worship before the altar and by praising the saving actions of Christ, which actions are brought into sight in the consecration, (which the Eriugena's and the Saracen's translations both call a sacrifice). In terms of the second aspect, the *sacramentum communionis*, Bonaventure focus on the distribution of communion, the our union to each other and and our transformation into Christ through one and the same Charity in which he gave and offered himself to us: "[...] hinc est, quod in hoc Sacramento continetur verum Christi corpus et caro immaculata ut se nobis diffundens et nos invicem uniens et in se transformans per ardentissimam caritatem, per quam se nobis dedit, se pro nobis obtulit et se nobis redditit et nobiscum existit usque ad finem mundi [...]." (*Brev* VI.9 [V, 274A-B]) Dionysius in *EH* III.3.12 also described the diffusion of the unity of the symbols (the sacramental Body and Blood), and the unifying power of Christ in his incarnation that he undertook out of his goodness and love for humanity whereby we many are joined to Him. In terms of the last aspect, the *viaticum refectiois*, Bonaventure focuses on the saving power of the *Verbum incarnatum* and the flesh of the Word, in whom we have communion and salvation: "Refectio autem spiritus est verbum vitae, ac per hoc refectio spiritualis spiritus in carne est Verbum incarnatum seu caro Verbi, quae

Finally, *Brev* VI.9 concludes by affirming the fittingness of the liturgy to the rites celebrated and attributing the hierarchical powers the celebration of the Eucharist:

Accordingly, it is taught that this sacrament is to be celebrated with particular solemnity in regard to place, time, words, prayers, and vestments in the celebration of masses, so that both the consecrating priests and even those receiving should participate the gift of grace through which they are purified, illumined, perfected, fed, vivified, and borne most burningly through excessive love into Christ himself.<sup>205</sup>

Once again, the hierarchical powers are explained as the effects of grace, but they are presented with an expansion through a second triad, in which being fed is followed by being made alive, and this life then passes into Christ. This additional triad bears some similarity to the effects coordinated to the hierarchical powers at *Brev* V.1:

The Soul is...		
purified	illumined	perfected
by <i>gratia gratum faciens</i> and so...		
stabilized	reformed	vivified
elevated	assimilated	joined to God
and also by the Eucharist and so...		
fed	vivified	borne to God by <i>excessivus amor</i>

Tab. V The Effects of Grace and the Eucharist Compared<sup>206</sup>

cibus est communis et salutaris, quia, licet sit una, omnes tamen salvantur per ipsam. Quia ergo non est dare alium cibum spirituale, communem et salutiferum nisi ipsum verum Christi corpus.” (*Brev* VI.9 (V, 274B)). Dionysius, likewise, focuses on communion with Christ and conformity to Christ’s incarnate life in order that we may be assimilated to it.

<sup>205</sup> *Brev*. VI.9 (V, 275A): “Propter quod etiam hoc Sacramentum praeceptum est celebrari cum solemnitate praecipua tam quantum ad locum quam etiam quantum ad tempus et quantum ad verba et orationes et quantum ad vestimenta in celebratione Missarum; ut tam ipsi sacerdotes conficientes quam etiam suscipientes percipiant gratiae donum, per quam purgentur, illuminentur, perficiantur, reficiantur, vivificentur et in ipsum Christum per excessivum amorem ardentissime transferantur.”

<sup>206</sup> In comparing these two sets of triads there are two plausible ways to coordinate them. First, each triad could be read as a strict expansion of some aspect of either purification, illumination, or perfection. However, to be vivified would be doubled and placed in differing associations, with both perfection, in *Brev* V.1, and with illumination, in *Brev* VI.9. However, since the final terms of second and third triads from *Brev* V.1, to be vivified and joined to God, appear in the second triad of *Brev* VI.9, they



Unlike Dionysius, who attributed solely the power of perfection to the Eucharist, Bonaventure attributes all three powers to the Eucharist. Bonaventure does not explicitly coordinate the three hierarchical powers and being fed, vivified, and borne into Christ. Nor does he coordinate either of those triads with the three aspects of the Eucharist as sacrifice, communion, and viaticum, however tempting that coordination may be, especially since perfection and ecstatic love were coordinated the *Brev*. What matters more is that Bonaventure has finally tied the sacrament of Christ's cross to hierarchy, which is so central to the *CD* as to merit, really, *two* chapters (*EH* III and IV), strikingly absent in Bonaventure's earlier writings. Moreover, this linkage, along with the connection of hierarchy to the incarnation and cross in *Brev* IV, anticipates Bonaventure's conceptual link between the cross, hierarchy, and elevation to God—really assimilation or union to God, even deification—in his later works. Indeed, Bonaventure spoke transformation into Christ earlier in *Brev* VI.9 and at the end has added being transferred into Christ as the effect of the Eucharist expressed by the hierarchical powers. Transformation and transferal are found together *Itin* VII, wherein the soul is transferred and transformed into God by ecstatic *amor*, and also the *LMj*, which narrates St. Francis' transformation and transferal into Christ—even in connection with Francis' devotion to the Eucharist.<sup>207</sup>

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might be read there as a shorthand for a whole triad. Thus, if hierarchical powers are associated with being fed the following coordination, compatible with *Brev* V.1 would result:

<i>Brev</i> VI.9	<i>Brev</i> V.1		
Fed	Purified	Illumined	Perfected
Vivified	Stabilized	Reformed	Vivified
Borne to God	Elevated	Assimilated	Joined to God

Tab. VI The Effects of Grace and the Eucharist Coordinated

<sup>207</sup> *Itin* VII.4; *LMj* VIII.1, IX.4.

Ultimately, *Brev* VI.9's treatment of the Eucharist with Dionysian subtleties threads the saving cross of *Brev* IV and the deifying grace of *Brev* V together, anticipating later developments in Bonaventure's use of hierarchy and, effectively, weaving the intelligible cross—the form of Christ's *cosmically, historically, and hierarchically significant* life—and the intelligible circle—the course of creation's origin and end through grace—together.<sup>208</sup>

### III.4.5 Conclusion to Hierarchy in the *Breviloquium*

The *Brev* shows a sea change in Bonaventure's use of hierarchy and related concepts. Whereas hierarchy was used in Bonaventure's earlier work to address specific question about the angels, reduction to God, mediation between within the Church or between angels and humanity, in the *Brev*, hierarchy is used as a framework through which salvation history is to be understood. Thus, while compared to the extended treatment of hierarchy in *II Sent*, the *Brev*'s use of hierarchy is far more diffuse, its contextualizing role in the prologue and integration into Bonaventure's theology of the incarnation, grace, and the Eucharist make it much more central. Indeed, inasmuch as Bonaventure looks to Christ as the hierarch as the *medium* in the Trinity and *mediator* among the angels and in humanity, the whole of theology and scripture can be reduced to hierarchy's accomplishment on heaven and earth. Furthermore, hierarchy, in its newfound architectural significance is yoked to the cross through Bonaventure's

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<sup>208</sup> In *Hex* I.24 (V, 333B), Bonaventure will join the image of the cross and the circle in its initial discussion of the meaning of the crucifixion in comparison to the liberal arts, explaining "For the center, when it lost within a circle, cannot be found except by two lines intersecting each other at right angles." (Translation from Bonaventure, *Collations on the Six Days*, Works of St. Bonaventure 18, trans. Jay M. Hammond [St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2018] p. 88).

identification of Christ as the hierarch and so grace, too, is conceived through the lens of hierarchy, whereas hierarchy had formerly been treated by Bonaventure as an effect of grace. Alongside the rising importance of hierarchy in Bonaventure's thought, one finds an increased engagement with the *EH* and the appearance of the internal subjective aspects of the hierarchy into sight, the hierarchic life of contemplation. Finally, the ecstatic elements of Bonaventure's thought, which have a precedent in Dionysian ecstasy but also in the new affective reading of Dionysius, are connected explicitly to the Eucharist and the hierarchal powers. In short, in the *Brev*, Bonaventure exhibits a conceptual preference for the Franciscan centrality of Christ, especially the crucified Christ, together with Dionysian hierarchy and, in particular, the figure of the hierarch, quietly drawing these conceptualities together and integrating the intelligible cross (Christ's mediation) with the intelligible circle (the creatures' deification through grace).<sup>209</sup>

### III.5 Hierarchy and the Franciscan Moment: *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*

If the *Brev* stands on the threshold of an unprecedented integration of Dionysian hierarchy and Franciscan spirituality, the *Itinerarium* opens the doors and strides through and takes hold of it. Beginning with its prologue's presentation of the Seraph and both St. Paul and Francis' ecstasies, the *Itin* constitutes a remarkable continuation of the development of Bonaventure's understanding of hierarchy manifested in the *Brev*—the architectural use of hierarchy, the more explicit connection of the cross to hierarchy, and the interior ascent unto deification—explicitly integrating them with the figure of St.

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<sup>209</sup> In *Hex* I.24 the cross will be the means of rediscovering the lost center of the circle.

Francis and the mode of poor, humble, Christoform life he represents. Of course, as an speculative text on both how the mind (or *mens*—it is more than simply intellect) ascends to God and how it symbolizes and reflects God’s life as mirror reflects light, the *Itin*’s use of hierarchy has its own novelties. Indeed, for the first time, Bonaventure takes Francis as model of the soul restored through hierarchy. Additionally, he works out an explicit coordination between the distinct functions of the human mind reformed by grace and the functions of the angels in the angelic hierarchy. Finally, Bonaventure also makes a clear connection between the supra-intellectual character of divine union, the hierarchization of the soul, and the cross. Through these developments, the *Itin* prepares the ground on which Bonaventure’s presentation of Francis as the model of the spiritual life will be built up in the *LMj*.

### III.5.1 The *Itin*’s Prologue and Structure

The *Itin*’s prologue’s incipital invocation of the “Father of lights” (James 1:17) and its invocation of Jesus Christ immediately afterward echoes the first words of the *CH* and casts its prologue in an unmistakably Dionysian key. Its Franciscan distinctiveness, however, does not waste any time in appearing when Mary the Mother of God and Francis are besought for prayer

Because of Bonaventure’s deliberate allusion to the *CH*, his description of Francis’ vision of the Seraph, of incomparable importance to his experience on Mt. Laverna and the reception of the stigmata, recalls both *CH* XIII’s account of mediation

and also the climax of Areopagite's first two works, *EH* IV.<sup>210</sup> For both Bonaventure and Dionysius, Jesus Christ and the Seraph are linked symbolically and in fact, and the former through the latter lead to whom he has been revealed to become mystical holocausts with access to the Father. That Bonaventure's spiritual theology affirms their inseparability will be even discussed at length in the next chapter's consideration of the *LMj*.

The *Itin*'s prologue introduces Francis, the Seraph, the cross, and Francis' ecstatic experience as the goal of the mind's journey to God while the seventh and final chapter returns to the cross and medium of the spiritual *transitus* to the Father in Christ. In between, six chapters, each representing a progressively higher way of knowing (sense, imagination, reason, intellect reformed by grace, intelligence, and *synderesis*) represent the six wings of the Seraph that surrounded the Crucified One seen by Francis on Mt. Laverna. So organized, Francis' ecstatic experience of the cross, including being impressed with the stigmata, forms a literary bracket around the six middle chapters which ascend the through the stages of human consciousness. At the same time, *Itin* IV stands as the midpoint of the all seven chapters. Like *Brev* IV, the significance of *Itin* IV is highlighted by this structure that places it in the middle of the *Itin*'s structure. Whereas

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<sup>210</sup> Bonaventure quotes the *CH*'s introductory invocation on multiple occasions. Lesser knows examples include 1254/1255's *Sermo* 3 in Bonaventure and Jacques-Guy Bougerol, *Sermons "de tempore": reportations du manuscrit Milan, Ambrosienne, A 11 sup.* (Paris: Éd. franciscaines, 1990), 1, line 9–12, p. 47: "Eapropter invocamus Dominum Iesum Christum in principio, qui est origo omnis verae illuminationis ad scientiam, qui est origo omnis rectae informationis ad gratiam, qui est origo omnis fructuosae locutionis ad doctrinam, [...]." He does so more explicitly in 1256's (disputed) *Sermo* 12 in Bonaventure, *Sermons "de tempore"*, p. 65: "Dicite filiae Sion: Ecce rex tuus venit tibi mansuetus, Matth. 21. Cum secundum Augustinum, in libro De spiritu et anima, c. 12, nihil intelligere valeat intellectus noster nisi mediante influenza lucis aeternae, et quoniam quidquid scimus, hoc est per participationem sapientiae increatae secundum quod dicit Hugo, *De sapientia Christi*, et sapientia Christi est; ideo invocabimus Dominum Iesum Christum, paternum lumen, secundum Dionysium in principio *Angelicarum Hierarchiarum*, ut ipse qui est fontale principium omnis verae illuminationis ad scientiam, fontale principium omnis rectae informationis ad gratiam, fontale principium <omnis> fructuosae elocutionis ad doctrinam, ut per viscera pietatis et per intercessionem gloriosissimae Matris suae etc."

in the *Brev* hierarchy governed the whole structure and the cross was found in the middle, the inverse occurs in the *Itinerarium*, wherein hierarchy appears in the midpoint of a structure determined overall by ecstatic cruciformity and a new beginning unto that ecstasy.

### III.5.2 *Itin* IV: Hierarchy and the Intellect Reformed by Grace

*Itin* IV is the crux point of the *Itin*, at which, since the meaning of the natural powers of human consciousness have been exhausted, only the modes of knowing afforded through grace, through Christ, “the tree of life”, remain to be examined.<sup>211</sup> *Itin* IV, however, does not look at those modes of knowing (and loving) granted and supported by grace but focuses instead on how the mind reformed by grace as such, that is, in a soul reformed through hierarchy, is itself an image of God.

*Itin* IV’s compact presentation of hierarchy and related concepts reflects a solidification of the developments in the *Brev.*, their integration with his earlier treatment of hierarchy’s taxonomy, and the appearance of novelties, especially the coordination between individuals and the angelic hierarchies. First, Jesus Christ mediating role as hierarch is central to *Itin* IV. In it, Bonaventure presents Christ as the mediator through whom one already illuminated by the “natural light and acquired science” will delight in the Lord, be saved, and find pasture (*pascua*).<sup>212</sup> He calls Christ explicitly the highest hierarch (*summus hierarcha*) “purifying and illuminating and perfecting his bride, that is

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<sup>211</sup> *Itin* IV.2 (V, 306A-B).

<sup>212</sup> *Itin* IV.2 (V, 306A-B). “*Pascua*” indicates food and for that reason may have an intentional Eucharistic tenor but even more so because of its consonance with a *pascha*.

the whole church and every holy soul.”<sup>213</sup> His role as hierarch tops a list of dual roles in which Christ is the object of both great commandments: he is neighbor and God, brother and Lord, friend and king. His dual status also obtains on the cosmic scale: he is uncreated Word and incarnate Word, former and reformer of the world, and so also *Alpha* and *Omega*. In *Itin* IV, to be the highest hierarch is not only to be the medium of grace but to hold together all the polarities mentioned above and to enable humans (and, presumably, angels) to live in accordance with the two great commandments and all the other polarities.

According to *Itin* IV, to fulfill the two great commandments is to be purified, illumined, and perfected by Christ.<sup>214</sup> Hence these hierarchical powers appear throughout *Itin* IV. There, Bonaventure connects the powers to the theological virtues even more clearly than in his teaching on grace in *Brev* V: “Therefore the image of our mind is adorned with the three theological virtues, by which it is purified, illumined, and perfected [...]”<sup>215</sup> Such a soul, purified, illumined, and perfected is called *hierarchicus*, as in *Brev* V which identifies one reformed by the hierarchic powers as living a *vita hierarchica*—the life of contemplation. In *Itin* IV.4, the meaning of “*hierarchicus*” is defined as meaning to be made “to ascend above in conformity with the heavenly Jerusalem, into which no one enters unless it (the heavenly Jerusalem) descends in his heart through grace first”.<sup>216</sup> That one statement summarizes a core facet of Bonaventure’s doctrine of hierarchy—in accord with the substance of Dionysian

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<sup>213</sup> *Itin* IV.5 (V, 307B).

<sup>214</sup> *Itin* IV.5 (V, 307B).

<sup>215</sup> *Itin* IV.3 (V, 306B).

<sup>216</sup> *Itin* IV.4 (V, 307A): “Quibus adeptis, efficitur spiritus noster hierarchicus ad conscedendum sursum secundum conformitatem ad illam Ierusalem supernam, in quam nemo intrat, nisi prius per gratiam ipsa in cor descendat”

hierarchy in general: the descent of God through *influentia* with the cooperation of the angelic hierarchies upon the human soul precedes human ascent to ecstatic union with God. Moreover, while this heavenly descent enters the heart, this descent is only the beginning of a spiritual transformation—a first actuality<sup>217</sup>—from which ascent and conformity to the angelic hierarchies and God becomes possible.

The human mind's conformity to the heavenly Jerusalem thus begins in the reforming theological virtues but progresses through the spiritual senses and is consummated in the ecstatic (*excessivae*) ascents. These three aspects of the hierarchization of the human spirit form three progressive triads. Through the three theological virtues, the soul recovers the spiritual senses of sight and hearing by believing in the Uncreated Word (*fides*), the spiritual sense of smell by sighing after the Inspired Word with desire and *affectus* (*spes*), and finally the spiritual sense of taste and touch by embracing the Incarnate Word through charity “as receiving delight from Him and as passing (*transire*) into him by ecstatic love (*amor*).”<sup>218</sup> As in the *Brev* V, these spiritual senses, especially their climaxing in ecstatic love, are the door to contemplation, more a matter of affective experience than rational consideration and likened to the Song of Songs spousal intimacy.<sup>219</sup> This contemplation consists in three *excessus mentales*: through 1) the abundance of devotion; 2) excellence of admiration; and 3)

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<sup>217</sup> To borrow Aristotle's definition of the soul in *De Anima* II (412a27).

<sup>218</sup> *Itin* IV.3 (V, 306B): “Anima igitur credens, sperans et amans Iesum Christum, qui est Verbum incarnatum, increatum et inspiratum, scilicet via, veritas, et vita; dum per fidem credit in Christum tanquam in Verbum increatum, quod est Verbum et splendor Patris, recuperat spiritualem auditum et visum, auditum ad suscipiendum Christi sermones, visum ad considerandum illius lucis splendores. Dum autem spe suspirat ad suscipiendum Verbum inspiratum, per desiderium et affectum recuperat spiritualem olfactum. Dum cantate complectitur Verbum incarnatum, ut suscipiens ab ipso delectationem et ut transiens in illud per ecstaticum amorem, recuperate gustum et tactum.”

<sup>219</sup> *Itin* IV.3 (V, 306B).



superabundance of exultation.<sup>220</sup> Through these *excessus mentales*, the soul: 1) becomes worship rising like the scent of myrrh and smoke of incense; 2) becomes shining with brightness in admiring Christ the spouse; and 3) becomes overflowing with sweetness and rests united completely upon its beloved.<sup>221</sup> Such is a *hierarchicus spiritus* reformed by grace and conformed to the heavenly Jerusalem, that is, to the angelic hierarchy.<sup>222</sup>

Although Bonaventure's earliest treatment of hierarchy in *II-IV Sent* presumes a likeness between the angelic and ecclesiastical hierarchies since they share the same definitions of hierarchy and pattern of mediation, *Itin IV* identifies hierarchization as conformity to the angels explicitly. Furthermore, it presents human conformity to the angels both corporately and individually, just as Christ purifies, illumines, and perfects both the ecclesiastical hierarchy and individual souls. The corporate conformity to the angels is indeed indicated when Bonaventure calls the church militant the offspring

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<sup>220</sup> *Itin IV.3* (V, 306B–307A).

<sup>221</sup> *Itin IV.3* (V, 306B–307A). Cf. Dionysius and Eriugena, *MT 13th Century Textbook*, 51. The trio of fire, light, and warmth or Worship, Vision, and Union is found in Eriugena *Periphyseon IV* and is included as a comment on Eriugena's *versio* of the *MT I*, in BnF Lat. 17341, 281fv. Its order differs from Bonaventure's, treating first light then fire and heat. This excerpt of the *PP IV*, versions I and II.2–70 (pp. 174–176), appears with a lemma "*Trinitas*", the first word of the *MT*. It is a description of the Trinity explaining that the Father, Son, and Spirit each illuminate, burn, and warm souls. Illuminating the Trinity gives all science and wisdom. By burning, the Trinity purifies the human of its faults and receives the soul as a holocaust through *θέωσις*. By warming, which Eriugena identifies with charity, with nutrition and perfection in Christ. Since Bonaventure quotes *MT I* from Eriugena's *versio* in *Itin VII.5*, it increases the likelihood that he did indeed have known this excerpt of *Periphyseon IV*. Furthermore, if Bonaventure has followed Eriugena, he has placed burning first because it is associated with purification. Indeed, while the image of fire, light and heat is used elsewhere, Bonaventure's identification of the mental ascent in devotion as the rising smoke of burning incense appears uniquely suited to Eriugenian image of purification and deifying ascent in a holocaust sacrifice. However, this is not the first time that Bonaventure has used the triad of worship, knowledge, and love or the corresponding triad of majesty, truth, and goodness, which is used elsewhere in his corpus prior to the *Itinerarium*. Notably, Bonaventure connects it to the angels, in *Brev II.8* (V, 226A), Bonaventure associates the Thrones, Cherubim, and Seraphim with veneration of the divine majesty, understanding of the divine truth, and desire of goodness. Again in *Brev V.5*, the seventh and last mode in which the gifts of the Holy Spirit operate is in contemplation, wherein a triple conversion to the Trinity occurs through reverence of its majesty through fear, understanding of its truth through understanding, and the savoring of its wisdom through goodness (*Brev V.5* [V, 258A].)

<sup>222</sup> *Itin IV.4* (V, 307A): "Quibus adeptis, efficitur spiritus noster hierarchicus ad conscendendum sursum secundum conformitatem ad illam Ierusalem supernam, in quam nemo intrat, nisi prius per gratiam ipsa in cor descendat, sicut vidit Ioannes in Apocalypsi sua."

(*proles*) of the heavenly Jerusalem. Bonaventure, however, is more concerned in *Itin* IV with the individual mind's conformity to the angels. The *hierarchicus spiritus* is conformed to the angels when nine acts, which accord with nine orders of angels,<sup>223</sup> are arranged in an orderly manner in its mind: "announcing, dictating, leading, ordaining, strengthening, commanding, receiving, revealing, and anointing."<sup>224</sup> These nine acts are borrowed from Thomas Gallus' *Explanatio* of the *CH*, and like Gallus, Bonaventure distinguishes these acts of and within the human mind as either supporting its own nature (by announcing, dictating, leading,) its activity or "industry" (by ordaining, strengthening, commanding), or its ecstatic experience of God (by receiving, revealing, and anointing) which Bonaventure simply calls grace.<sup>225</sup> In other words, when actions that are both performed and represented by the angelic hierarchies' ranks are found in and active upon a human mind, that mind has been hierarchized.

To be conformed to the angels is to be affected by these acts in mind but Bonaventure's account of angeloformity does not end there, instead, he follows Dionysius by explaining that conformity to the angels in activity accompanies an ascent to the spiritual vision of the angels. For the mind of a hierarchic soul is able to reflect

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<sup>223</sup> These same powers will be attributed to the angels in the *Hex* XXII.25–27.

<sup>224</sup> Bonaventure does not say whether or not these nine powers act upon the soul from an external agent or are accomplished by the soul upon itself when hierarchized. The answer, of course, could be *both*.

<sup>225</sup> *Itin* IV.4 (V, 307A): "[...] ita quod primi trium praedictorum gradus respiciunt in mente humana naturavi, tres sequentes industriam, et tres postremi gratiam." Cf. Thomas Gallus *Explanatio in CH* (X.196–301). Gallus only names the first six powers and assigns them to the first six orders of the angels but does describe the Thrones', Cherubim's, and Serpahim's reception of God. Gallus treats the human mind as a rising temple representing *intellectus* and *affectus*. Its lowest stage represents nature (i.e. intellect and affectus aided) illuminated by grace, its second represents human effort or industry or cooperating with illuminating and aiding grace in virtue, and the third stage of this temple is illuminated and carried by pure grace—the divine ray. (Gallus, *Explanatio in CH*, X.180–195.) That Gallus uses the language of pure grace to refer the final fruition of grace explains why Bonaventure only identifies last of the three operations (reception, revelation, unction) with grace when the other six are clearly also an effect of grace in the soul which has been reformed by the theological virtues, recovered the spiritual senses, and risen in mental excessus.

upon or “enter into” itself and when it does, it sees the operations of grace within its soul and the angels to which they correspond and who even co-operate them with God:

Which [operations] being possessed, the soul, by entering into itself enters into the heavenly Jerusalem where considering the orders of angels it sees God in them, who dwells in [the orders of angels] and operates [the angels’] operations.<sup>226</sup>

Indeed, the inner life of the hierarchic soul is the heavenly Jerusalem—the Jerusalem above. For Bonaventure account of ascent in the *Itin*, inward is upward.

Seeing that heavenly Jerusalem within, the soul observes that the operations of the angelic hierarchy within it are also and more primarily the operations of God. The angelic hierarchy undergirds the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and God—the divine hierarchy—supports the whole process of hierarchy at every level but without eliding the place of the angels between humanity and God as Bonaventure’s loose quotation of St. Bernard shows:

God loves in the Seraphim as charity, knows in the Seraphim as truth, sits in the thrones as equity, dominates in the Dominations as majesty, rules as a principle in the Principalities, guards as safety in the Powers, works as strength in the Virtues, reveals as light in the Archangels, and helps as piety in the Angels.<sup>227</sup>

Ascent to and through the angelic hierarchies belongs to the fulfillment of the hierarchical soul. Such assimilation to and vision of the angels is entirely consonant with the concept of hierarchy as the extension and bodying forth of the theurgies in both the

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<sup>226</sup> *Itin* IV.4 (V, 307A): “Quibus habitis, anima intrando in se ipsam, intrat in supernam Ierusalem, ubi ordines Angelorum considerans, videt in eis Deum, qui habitans in eis omnes eorum operatur operationes.”

<sup>227</sup> *Itin* IV.4 (V, 307): “Deus in Seraphim amat ut caritas, in Cherubim novit ut veritas, in Thronis sedet ut aequitas, in Dominationibus dominatur ut maiestas, in Principatibus regit ut principium, in Potestatibus tuetur ut salus, in Virtutibus operatur ut virtus, in Archangelis revelat ut lux, in Angelis assistit ut pietas.”

*CH* and *EH*. More so than in his earlier works does Bonaventure show his close following of the Areopagite in this regard. It is not, however, the sole way in which Bonaventure approximates the Dionysian account of hierarchy vis-à-vis the angels. For *Itin* IV.5-7 focuses on the role of the scriptures in the hierarchization of the human soul and *Itin* IV.7 attributes the transmission of the scriptures to the angelic hierarchies. Although this not an uncommon doctrine in the middle ages, it was of great importance to Dionysius, who devoted much of *CH* IV to the angelic transmission of the scriptures and who described both Christ and the scriptures as the “essence” of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. For Bonaventure in *Itin* IV, the scriptures, the Law, the Prophets, and the New Testament are revealed through the angels and in their entirety concern Christ the hierarch and the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Indeed, the story of salvation is the story of hierarchy. Therefore, hierarchy teaches how one is to be purified, illuminated, and perfected through either: the triple distinctions of 1) the law of nature scripture and grace; or 2) the purifying Mosaic law, illuminating prophetic revelation, and perfective Gospel teaching; or 3) as in *Brev* Prol 4, the tropological sense purifying unto an upright life, the allegorical sense illuminating unto the clarity of understanding, and the anagogical sense perfecting unto *excessus mentales* in wisdom.<sup>228</sup> The scriptures which Dionysius had called the “essence of our hierarchy” teach both how the Church and its individual members ought to act, know, and love—the very premise of the *Brev* and almost every other work of medieval theology that assumed all the Church professed was to be found in scripture, if read correctly. The scriptures provide an external law, they provide

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<sup>228</sup> *Itin* IV.6 (V, 307B).

teaching, and they even have hidden spiritual senses.<sup>229</sup> Thus it is clear why the Church is the offspring (*proles*) of the supernal Jerusalem for Bonaventure: the angels have revealed the scriptures that teach the Church outwardly and assist her members inwardly to be conformed and ascend to the Jerusalem above.

Consequently, although Bonaventure does not call Christ the hierarch of the angelic hierarchies as he did in the prologue of the *Breviloquium*, it is clear in *Itin IV* that the angels' ministry depends upon, serves, and leads humanity to Christ. While in *Itin IV* the angelic hierarchies assist in the purification, illumination, and perfection of humanity by both revelation and anagogy,<sup>230</sup> they are, nevertheless, subordinate to Christ the highest hierarch. For it is Christ as mediator and the tree of life who principally and ultimately purifies, illumines, and perfects. Furthermore, the scriptures by which the angels reveal Christ the hierarch saving work and that towards which the angels are an anagogy is the God who acts in them.

At the end of *Itin IV*, Bonaventure summarizes the hierarchization of the soul. We are led to contemplate God and divine things by the reformation of the soul through the virtues given by grace, the spiritual senses, and the *excessus mentales*. Bonaventure describes this trio in another way:

Just the same, we are led through the hierarchical operations, that is, of the purification, illumination, and perfection of human minds. We are led through the hierarchical revelations of the sacred scriptures given by the angels, according the word of the Apostle, that the Law was given through the angels in the hand of the

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<sup>229</sup> These three sets of scripture also follow a triadic form of the laws, teaching, and interior transformation and ecstasy, or, in other words, comport with the three hierarchical powers.

<sup>230</sup> Indeed, the angels' interior anagogy is also an element of what they have revealed outwardly since the spiritual senses of scripture depict the angels' cooperation in the hierarchization of the human soul.

Mediator. Finally, we are led through hierarchies and hierarchical orders, which have been disposed in our mind unto the image of the heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>231</sup>

This spiritual development through grace may be mapped so:

The soul given grace...	
...is reformed by gratuitous (theological) virtues...	...and led through hierarchical powers: purification/illumination/perfection
...is reformed by the spiritual senses...	...and led through the hierarchic revelation of scripture
...reformed by <i>excessus mentales</i> ...	...and led through hierarchies and hierarchical orders (of angels)

Tab. VII The Effects of Grace on the *Mens* in *Itin* IV.6

The whole narrative course of *Itin* IV, which places the discussion of angelic conformity after the discussion of the theological virtues, spiritual senses, and *excessus mentis*, is not strictly a descriptive set of serial steps of spiritual transformation. If it were, the angelic conformity would be *subsequent to* rather than *constitutive of* the *excessus mentales*. However, since the reforming theological virtues are identified as purifying, illuminating, and perfecting earlier in *Itin* IV.3, the identification between the two columns is plausible. Moreover, Bonaventure explains in *Itin* IV.4 that no one can enter the heavenly Jerusalem unless it descends into the heart by grace, and that it does so through the theological virtues, the delight (*oblectio*) of the spiritual senses, and the *suspensions* of the *excessus mentales*—all of which render the soul purified, illumined,

<sup>231</sup> *Itin* IV.7 (V, 308A): “Manuducimur nihilominus per hierarchicas operationes, silicet purgationis, illuminationis et perfectionis mentium humanarum, per hierarchicas revelationes sacrarum Scripturarum nobis per Angeles datarum, secundum illud Apostoli, quod Lex data est per Angelos in manu Mediatoris. Et tandem manuducimur per hierarchias et hierarchicos ordines, qui in mente nostra disponi habent ad instar supernae Ierusalem.”

and perfected.<sup>232</sup> The description of the angelic conformity which follows is not, therefore, an additional or subsequent aspect *added to* but an *elaboration of* the hierarchized soul: “*Sic etiam novem ordinum [hierarchicus spiritus] insignitur [...]*.”<sup>233</sup> Furthermore, when discussing the anagogical sense of scripture, which perfects, Bonaventure indicates that it perfects through the *excessus mentales* and the “sweetest perceptions of wisdom”, which accord not only to the virtues and the spiritual senses but even the hierarchical acts.<sup>234</sup> Thus, through being read in the their anagogical sense, the purpose of the scriptures comes to fruition in the human experience of *excessus mentales* when the *mens* enters into the heavenly Jerusalem that has descended into its heart, where it finds not only the angelic hierarchies and their orders but even God. The hierarchical powers, therefore, are not merely the first stage of graces reformation, but affect the soul through all its stages of union to God.

*Itin* IV represents a deeply Dionysian moment in Bonaventure’s thought, in which, under the power of Christ the highest hierarch and mediator, the whole Church and her members are led above by both the descent of the angels in revealing the scriptures and angelic aid in their own minds’ graced ascent—an ascent into charity.<sup>235</sup> Hierarchy in *Itin* IV is not a mere organizing principle of the souls faculties and

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<sup>232</sup> *Itin* IV.4 (V, 307A).

<sup>233</sup> *Itin* IV.4 (V, 307A). Bonaventure does not indicate that the nine hierarchical acts correspond to the theological virtues, spiritual senses, and the three *excessus mentales*, but the identification of grace and the reception of God and the acts of reception, revelation, and unction do fit with ascent in worship, admiration, and union, especially since in *Trip via* III.9 and in *Hex* XXII.20–22, 27, Bonaventure will associate the Thrones with with worship, the Cherubim with understanding, and the Seraphim with union to God.

<sup>234</sup> *Itin* IV.6 (V, 307B).

<sup>235</sup> *Itin* IV.5 (V, 307B): “Et Salvator noster asserit, totam Legem Prophetasque pendere in duobus praeceptis eiusdem, scilicet dilectione Dei et proximi; quae duo innuuntur in uno sponso Ecclesiae Iesu Christo, qui simul est proximus et Deus, simul frater et dominus, simul etiam rex et amicus, simul Verbum increatum et incarnatum, formator noster et reformat, ut Alpha et Omega; qui etiam summus hierarcha est, purgans et illuminans et perficiens sponsam, scilicet totam Ecclesiam et quamlibet animam sanctam.”

capacities, on the contrary, it is the cooperative descent with and ascent to Christ, and, in Christ, to the Trinity. The human minds of the Church ascend through the hierarchical operations which begin through the hierarchical revelation of the scriptures and finally rise to the vision of and conformity to the angelic hierarchies and the coordinate hierarchical orders of the angelic ranks in whom these hierarchies operate. In this way, *Itin IV* shares Dionysius' vision of hierarchy, although for Bonaventure the sacraments, liturgy, and the clerical ranks have no explicit place here besides their implication in the external law. Indeed, given what Bonaventure says about the Eucharist in *Brev VI.9* one could assume that the sacraments are presupposed as the source of the initial hierarchical operations and because they belong to the law of grace, which was taught by the angels. Nonetheless, Bonaventure's concern in *Itin IV* is not the practical means of the individual soul's ascent but, rather, nature of the soul or *mens* transformed and elevated by grace.

Nevertheless, it is certain that in Bonaventure's account of the hierarchization of the human mind, Christ is the beginning and end of the whole sweep of hierarchical activity concluded by the *excessus mentales*. After the consideration of God *per se* in *Itin V–VI*, Bonaventure will return to these *excessus mentales* in *Itin VII*. In that final chapter, the angeloformity of the hierarchic spirit described in *Itin IV* passes over into the ecstatic *cruciformity*, which is Bonaventure's vision of deformity or even deification. It is not surprising, then, that *Itin IV* concludes with a reappearance of the intelligible cross, echoing the of the *Brev*'s prologue, wherein, through Christ's charity, one comprehends



the length of eternity, breadth of liberality, sublimity of majesty, and depth of his judging wisdom.<sup>236</sup>

### III.5.3: *Itin VII: Excessus Mentis*

The rapturous ascent through Christ crucified experienced by Paul and Francis telegraphed by the *Itinerarium*'s prologue and the perfecting *excessus mentales* discussed in *Itin IV* come to their fruition in *Itin VII*. Indeed, *Itin VII* is not a step beyond the movement of hierarchy described in *Itin IV* but its culmination.<sup>237</sup> This can be determined from (at least) three textual points: 1) the title and topic of *Itin VII*; 2) Bonaventure's use of terminology associated with the *excessus mentales*; 3) and his use of the Gallusian language of nature, industry and grace to describe stages of spiritual progress. Together with his inclusion of Francis, his quotation of Dionysius' *MT*, and his coordination of deification and the cross, *Itin VII* and the *Itin* as a whole represent the watershed moment in which Bonaventure's increasing proximity to Dionysius' thought and his increasingly cruciform Francis-mysticism coalesce.

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<sup>236</sup> *Itin IV.8* (308A): "Quod totum facit sincerissima caritas Christi quae diffunditur in cordibus nostris per Spiritum Sanctum qui datus est nobis sine quo spiritu non possumus scire secreta dei. Sicut enim quae sunt hominis nemo potest scire nisi spiritus hominis qui est in illo ita et quae sunt dei nemo scit nisi spiritus dei. In caritate igitur radicemur et fundemur ut possimus comprehendere cum omnibus sanctis quae sit longitudo aeternitatis quae latitudo liberalitatis quae sublimitas maiestatis et quod profundum sapientiae iudicantis."

<sup>237</sup> *Itin I.4*, however, does distinguish between the *mens* in general, the *spiritus* which is human interiority, and the *mens* proper which ascends into God. The hierarchic *spirit* comes to fruition in the ascent of the *mens*.

### III.5.3.1 Mental *Excessus* Redux

The title of *Itin* VII, attested in multiple manuscripts, is “*de excessu mentali et mystico, in quo requies datur intellectui, affectu in Deum per excessum totaliter transeunte*.”<sup>238</sup> Here again we find the *excessus mentalis*, now referred to in the singular, which was treated earlier in *Itin* IV as the three *excessus mentales*.<sup>239</sup> The identity of this one *excessus mentalis* with *Itin* IV’s three *excessus mentales* can be corroborated. First, the *excessus mentalis* and the *excessus mentales* are consistently connected to prayer. *Itin* I yokes the enjoyment of the *summum bonum* to the *excessus mentales* and locates their origin in prayer, a doctrine which Bonaventure sees expressed in Dionysius’ *MT* I: “Prayer, therefore, is the mother and origin of ascent (*sursum actio*). Therefore Dionysius, in the *MT*, wishing to draw us towards *excessus mentales*, places prayer in the first place.”<sup>240</sup> Accordingly, Bonaventure quotes Dionysius’ own prayer in *Itin* VII.5: “Trinity superessential etc.” Thus, the *excessus mentalis*’ appearance in *Itin* VII is anticipated by the *excessus mentales* in *Itin* I.<sup>241</sup> Secondly the *excessus mentalis* and *mentales* are both connected to *affectus*. Indeed, it is through touching and tasting in ecstatic love in *Itin* IV, the last of the spiritual senses, that the *excessus mentales* are attained while *Itin* VII privileges *affectus* over *intellectus* in the ecstatic ascent to God.

<sup>238</sup> *Itin* Capitula (V, 296B); VII (V, 312A).

<sup>239</sup> *Itin* IV.3–6 (V, 306B–307B).

<sup>240</sup> *Itin* I.1 (V, 296B–297A): “Oratio igitur est mater et origo sursum-actionis. Ideo Dionysius in libro de Mystica Theologia, volens nos instruere ad excessus mentales, primo praemittit orationem”

<sup>241</sup> *Itin* I.7 (V, 298A) also mentions again the *supermentales* excessus as the result of mystical theology: “scientiam veritatis edocuit secundum triplicem modum theologiae, scilicet symbolicae, propriae et mysticae, ut per symbolicam recte utamur sensibilibus, per propriam recte utamur intelligibilibus, per mysticam rapiamur ad supermentales excessus.” Bonaventure is not referring to the text, the *MT*, as some uniquely effect book but the mode of theology that it represents. Notice that the mystical theology results in the passive “*rapiamur*” rather than the active “*utamur*”, for it is the ascent through pure grace, cf. *Itin* IV.4 and VII.5.

Third and finally, since no distinction is introduced between the *excessus mentalis* and *mentales*, it is patent that the *excessus mentales* that summit hierarchy's reformation of the soul and the *excessus mentalis* (or *excessus mentis*) of *Itin VII* are one and the same. *Itin VII* is does not transcend the hierarchical system *Itin IV* but brings it to fruition.

### III.5.3.2 *Suspensiones*

*Itin VII* does not describe an unqualified ecstatic experience of God, but an ecstasy that revels in the cross. In that final chapter, Christ's mediating role in the three *excessus mentales*, as in *Itin IV*, comes to the fore. However, whereas *Itin IV* considered Christ's role as the purifying, illuminating, and perfecting center of hierarchy through whom ecstasy was made possible, *Itin VII* shows that Christ is also the destination or term of that same ecstasy. Shortly before, in *Itin VI.4-7*, the end of the symbolic ascent through the wings of the Seraph, Bonaventure turns to a direct meditation on Christ the mediator under the symbol of approaching the Mercy Seat (*propitiatorium*) which sat upon the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies in the tabernacle (and temple) and was central the rite of the Day of Atonement. He treats the Mercy Seat as an anticipatory image of Christ the mediator and high priest.<sup>242</sup> Bonaventure, however, reserves completing the approach to Christ, symbolized by the Mercy Seat set between the cherubim, for the meditation on mental ecstasy in *Itin VII*. There, the Christ so accessed is Christ "hanging on the cross" (*in cruce suspensum*), which access occurs through nine powers or acts: faith, hope, charity, devotion, admiration, exultation, appreciation, praise,

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<sup>242</sup> The biblical imagery is rich here, see Ex. 25:20; Lev. 16:14; Num. 7:89; Heb. 9:5. Bonaventure may also be developing Gallus image of the soul as a temple, see Gallus, *Explanatio in CH X*.118–180.

and jubilation. The first three are the theological virtues which, by restoring the spiritual senses, give rise to devotion, admiration, and exultation through which in turn the *excessus mentales* arise. Which *excessus* Bonaventure also calls the *suspensiones excessuum*, the “hangings of the ecstasies.”<sup>243</sup> Bonaventure brings that language forward into *Itin* VII.2 in describing those who approach Christ hanging (*suspensus*) on the cross as themselves hanging in the *suspensiones* of their own ecstasy. Their “suspended” approach to the hanging Christ culminates in the last three acts of appreciation (evaluation), praise, and jubilation. In their mental ecstasy, those valuing, praising and finally rejoicing in the cross are crucified with the crucified Christ in the highest joy possible of this life:

[whoever looks upon the Mercy Seat] celebrates the pasch, that is the passover (transitus), with [Christ] so that he crosses the Red Sea through the rod of the cross, from out of Egypt entering the desert where he might taste the hidden manna, and rests with Christ in the tomb as if exteriorly dead, but nevertheless perceiving, so far as it possible according to the state of this life, what was said on the cross to the thief cleaving to Christ: “Today you will be with me in paradise.”<sup>244</sup>

In this way the *excessus mentales* belong to the completion of the initial goal of the *Itinerarium* presented in *Itin* I.9, that is, to pass out of this world with Christ to the Father as true Hebrews, language which appears at the end in *Itin* VII.6.<sup>245</sup> It is also at this point, *Itin* VII.2, that Francis and the crucified Seraph on Mt. Laverna reappear at the height of the mind’s ascent and as a model of hierarchy’s fruition when its human

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<sup>243</sup> *Itin* IV.4 (V, 307A).

<sup>244</sup> *Itin* VII.2 (V, 312B): “[...] pascha, hoc est transitum, cum eo facit, ut per virgam crucis transeat mare rubrum, ab Aegypto intrans desertum, ubi gustet manna absconditum, et cum Christo requiescat in tumulto quasi exteriorius mortuus, sentiens tamen, quantum est possibile est secundum statum viae, quod in cruce distum est latroni cohaerenti Christo: *Hodie mecum eris in paradiso.*”

<sup>245</sup> *Itin* I.9 (V, 298A-B).

participants pass over—even in this life—from earth, through the angels, to God, the creator and redeemer.

### III.5.3.3 *Transitus* and the Gallusian Triad

Bonaventure's use of the *suspensiones* unto *transitus* with Christ crucified links deification, the *excessus mentales*, which are associated with hierarchy in *Itin* IV, and the cross, but he uses the Gallusian distinction between nature, industry, and grace (which subdivided the nine hierarchical acts of the angels and in the mind in *Itin* IV.4) to explain *how* this *transitus* with Christ comes about, and thereby draws another link between ecstasy into God and hierarchy. The *transitus* described in *Itin* VII.4 is the strongest expression of deification in the whole *Itin*, and perhaps in Bonaventure's whole corpus, wherein Bonaventure teaches that the *transitus* with Christ is perfect when "all intellectual operations are relinquished and *apex affectus* is entirely transferred and transformed into God".<sup>246</sup> This *transitus* unto assimilation and union (the twin aspects of Dionysian deification, intentionally or not) is entirely the gift of the Holy Spirit and only those who desire and accept it, through the inflammation of the Holy Spirit, will know (*noscere*) this hidden *sapientia*, wisdom, or rather, *tasting*. Bonaventure draws upon an expansion of the Gallusian triad to underline such a deification's utter dependence upon the Holy Spirit. He explains that 1) nature avails nothing towards this *transitus*, and 2) industry (and inquiry and speech) only little, while 3) unction and internal joy avail much, and 4) ultimately, the Gift of God—the Holy Spirit—and the creative essence

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<sup>246</sup> *Itin* VII.4 (V, 312B): "In hoc autem transitu, si sit perfectus, oportet quod relinquantur omnes intellectuales operationes, et apex affectus totus *transferatur* et transformetur in Deum."

(God) avail for everything in that *transitus*, and therefore prayer must cry out to God for this ecstasy. Indeed, Bonaventure deploys the prayer from *MT* I for just this purpose in *Itin* VII. In other words, grace avails where nature and industry (in the various modes of human effort) do not, at least, not by themselves. Here, grace—the *donum increatum* of *Brev.* V.1—is set even above the human power *synderesis*, the subject of *Itin* VI, as in Gallus’ interior temple,<sup>247</sup> and completes what no human power can accomplish, bringing the final hierarchical acts of reception, revelation, unction, to their completion.

### III.5.3.4 Ecstatic Ascent is the Culmination of Hierarchy

The ecstasy of the *mens*, the human soul turned above itself,<sup>248</sup> is not a step beyond the ascent through hierarchy—the graced mediation of participation in divine life through and to the earthly Church and the angels by Christ—but the culmination of hierarchy itself. As I have shown above, the language used to describe this culmination is found within *Itin* IV’s treatment of hierarchy and the hierarchic spirit and in earlier passages which corroborate the continuity of the hierarchical ascent and the final *excessus mentis*. Hence, since *Itin* VII describes the culmination of hierarchy, it is necessary to take into account the conceptual and symbolic elements that compose this culmination to fully appreciate Bonaventure’s use and vision of hierarchy in *Itin* VII and in the *Itin* as a whole.

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<sup>247</sup> Gallus, *Explanatio*, CH X.118–180.

<sup>248</sup> The doctrine of the consubstantiality of the soul in Bonaventure that means this *mens* is not separable from the “rest” of the soul. It is, rather, the soul as it relates to God, see *Itin* III.5 and II *Sent* d. 10, a. 2, q. 2, resp. (II, 266A-B).

These elements draws from Dionysian thought, especially its affective interpretation, and from Bonaventure's understanding of Francis include the following. First, the Dionysian element is represented in 1) the use of *mens* for νοῦς; 2) the soul's union (*transferatur*) to and assimilation (*transformetur*), and through the verbatim<sup>249</sup> use of the *MT*'s opening prayer and salutation; 3) the description of divine union with the image of superluminous darkness and silence; 4) the conceptual location of divine union beyond all sense and intellectual operations. That 5) *affectus* is brought where *intellectus* cannot go belongs to the affective Dionysian tradition, but Bonaventure states it more radically here than either Hugh or Thomas Gallus by locating the *transitus* in the *apex affectus*. The Francis-inspired elements include the 6) the prominence of peace; 7) Bonaventure's identification of this peace as the *excessus mentis* which Francis experienced on Mt. Laverna; 8) the use of the crucified Seraph as the symbol of the ascent to this ecstasy; 9) that Christ's crucified *transitus* is the archetypal form of this ecstasy. Finally, beyond the strict lines of categorization, there is 10) the priority of prayer and its inextricability from *excessus*; 11) the unique privileging of fire and darkness over light; and finally, 12) the prophetic identification of God with a fire and Jerusalem as his furnace and Christ's burning passion as that which ignites it. In Bonaventure's hands, these ideas and images become mutually reinforcing in his description of the culminating *excessus* of the hierarchic soul, as it ascends through the power of Christ the hierarch in the Church, through the angels, to the Trinity, the divine hierarchy. Many of these concepts and symbols were amenable to each other without

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<sup>249</sup> Nearly verbatim because Bonaventure drops Dionysius recipient, Timothy, from the quotation.

Bonaventure's assemblage. Indeed, for example, the fiery Seraph's intimacy with Christ belongs to both the *CD* and the Franciscan tradition.<sup>250</sup> But it was Bonaventure wove these threads together through his own ingenuity to express the subjective summit of hierarchy as it can be experienced *in via* and most of all as experienced Francis' himself.

Accordingly, this Franciscan-Dionysian synthesis of divine fire, union and assimilation in darkness, and the cross and Seraph exemplified in Bonaventure's Francis belongs to the larger apparatus of hierarchy. This *transitus* in darkness is founded upon Christ the hierarch and the subordinate cooperation of the angelic hierarchies in his mediation. This ecstasy is the fulfillment of the saving grace which purifies, illumines and perfects. This ascent in rapturous love and hidden darkness is the *telos* of the Church and scripture received from the angels, which taught about Christ the hierarch or high priest and the Church, the ecclesiastical hierarchy. This ascent into God through the cross is the culmination of devotion, admiration, and exultation—the *excessus mentales* and *suspensiones*. The passage beyond this world to the Father through and in Christ crucified, the Mercy Seat, is even the summit of worship, experience, and sabbath-union exemplified in the cross which is, as the *Breviloquium* shows in its treatment of the incarnation and the Eucharist, the pleasing sacrifice, deepest communion, and font of sanctity. It is a spiritual journey that begins and ends in prayer.

*Itin* VII together with the symbolic approach to the Mercy Seat *Itin* VI demonstrates that, for Bonaventure, hierarchy is matter of ascent to divine likeness, and

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<sup>250</sup> Luke Togni, "The Hierarchical Center in the Thought of St. Bonaventure," *Franciscan Studies* 76 (2018): 137–57. That Fiery Seraphim in *EH* IV.3.11 were particularly aware of Christ Crucified and Dionysius deification goes beyond intellect finds complementarity the Franciscan emphasis on peace and Francis' experience on Mt. Laverna. Undoubtedly the affective reading of Dionysius expedited their combination, see Coolman, "The Medieval Affective Dionysian Tradition."; Coolman, *Knowledge, Love, and Ecstasy in the Theology of Thomas Gallus*, 1–27.



union, and worship through Christ and the heavenly host. Hierarchy is not first a matter of top to bottom organization but of mediating minds to God through ecstatic love in worship. Hierarchy is priesthood, although unlike Eriugena and Hugh of St. Victor, Bonaventure never refers to it by the Latin term *sacerdotium*. By foregrounding Francis' experiences as the most outstanding example of hierarchy's fruition among humanity, Bonaventure also casts hierarchy as the ecstatic of love of Christ and the angels for humanity and our commensurate ecstasy love for God. The foremost members of this hierarchy among humanity are not, however, the bishops and the clerics, however important they may be. Instead that honor belongs to Francis the wretched, ailing, even grotesquely stigmatized pauper who passes over with Christ as a "true Hebrew". There is no equivalent image of hierarchy realized in Dionysius or his medieval reception prior to Bonaventure writing.

For all the novelty of Bonaventure's choice of Francis as the window into the efficacy of Christ the hierarch, Bonaventure shows that his treatment of hierarchy has drawn remarkably close the Areopagite's. For Bonaventure, it is Christ the mediator who enkindles the divine, consuming fire on the cross and who underlies the ecclesiastical and angelic hierarchies through which one gains a *hierarchicus spiritus*. There is no ascent for the *mens* to God except by grace and through the angelic hierarchies who support both the Church as a whole, the *proles* of the heavenly Jerusalem, and the individual soul. Though Dionysius never predicates the title "Hierarch" of Christ, he does identify Christ as the essence of every hierarchy (and theurgy) and explains that as every hierarchy terminates in its hierarchy, the whole hierarchical system terminates in Christ.

### III.5.4 Crossing the Circle in Darkness and Fire

The *Itinerarium* ends very much where it begins, with the figure of the cross, as it was shown to Francis in vision of the Seraph, the summit of the Dionysian order of the angels, crucified like the crucified Christ. Just as it began with a prayer echoing the beginning of the *CD*, i.e. the *CH*, “In the beginning I call upon the *Principium* from whom every illumination descent as from the Father of Lights [...]”,<sup>251</sup> so it ends with a prayer from the last book of the *CD*, the *MT*.<sup>252</sup> These prayers and descriptions, rooted in Bonaventure’s understanding of Francis’ experience on Mt. Laverna, speak of the divine light and darkness, peace and fire which he entered and which Bonaventure would have his reader enter. In a word, Bonaventure urges his readers to death—the living death, a death most ecstatically alive:

My soul chooses hanging and my bones death. Whoever loves this death is able to see God, as it is without a doubt true that “no one will see me and live. Therefore let us die and enter the darkness, let us impose silence upon our cares, desires, and imaginings, and let us pass with Christ crucified out of this world and to the Father.”<sup>253</sup>

Bonaventure’s simultaneous embrace of Dionysian thought, mysticism and structures coheres with the profound impact of St. Francis upon his thought, which will be explored at length in the next chapter. At the end of the *Itinerarium*, Bonaventure fits Francis’ living death with the Areopagite’s expectation of the suprainlectual

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<sup>251</sup> *Itin* Prol. 1 (V, 297A).

<sup>252</sup> Excluding the letters

<sup>253</sup> *Itin* VII.6 (V, 313B): “Suspendium elegit anima mea, et mortem ossa mea. Quam mortem qui diligit videre potest Deum, quia indubitanter verum est: Non videbit me homo et vivet. — Moriamur igitur et ingrediamur in caliginem, imponamus silentium sollicitudinibus, concupiscentiis et phantasmatis; transeamus cum Christo crucifixo ex hoc mundo ad Patrem [...]”

divinization and enjoyment of God and also with the tradition of affective Dionysianism inherited through the Victorines. This is not, however, a solitary fortuitous convergence of spiritual theologies. On the contrary, the whole structure of hierarchy is assumed throughout the *Itinerarium*.

### III.6 Conclusion

This survey of Bonaventure's writings in the decade beginning with I-IV *Sent* and concluding with the *Itinerarium* has demonstrated both stability and development in his doctrine and deployment of hierarchy and related concepts. Regarding the stability of his understanding of hierarchy, first and foremost it must be noted that Bonaventure only ever considers hierarchy as belonging to persons, as either the divine hierarchy of the Trinity, the hierarchies of angels, and human ecclesiastical hierarchy. Bonaventure never mentions of the hierarchy of any organization of species, genera, powers, virtues, or anything else. For Bonaventure, a hierarchy is either divine life or participation in divine life through grace and glory by human or angelic persons. Moreover, although hierarchies—especially the three hierarchies of angels—correspond to nature, no (created) hierarchy is a product of nature. Nor is hierarchy simply identical with order or organization, although every hierarchy, by definition, includes order. Wherefore, whatever is called *hierarchicus* is not “hierarchically ordered” as some have translated it, meaning ordered serially, but meaning belonging to hierarchy—the shared life of grace and glory and conformity to God in the ecclesiastical and angelic hierarchies. This share in divine life through hierarchy entails cooperation in leading others to the same by performing ministries proper to the angels or the clerics of the Church, either by the

enkindling of love or the illumination of knowledge operated by the angelic hierarchies or by the sacramental and ecclesiastical administration of the pope, bishops, priests and other clerics. Furthermore, Bonaventure, like earlier readers of the *CD*, recognizes that the taxonomy of the created hierarchies consists of three hierarchies of angels, each ministered by a triad of angelic ranks, while the ecclesiastical hierarchy is placed as fourth hierarchy under the care of the care of the angels. This basic understanding of hierarchy is operative from Bonaventure's definitions of hierarchy in the *praenota* of II *Sent* d. 9 all the way to the *Itin* and beyond, even to the *Hex*.

Despite the significant stability in Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy, within a decade, the manner in which Bonaventure uses hierarchy, the topics to which he connects it, and the other elements of the Dionysian tradition he draws into it show a remarkable development. In II-IV *Sent*, Bonaventure addresses hierarchy through the taxonomy of the angels in their graced mode of life, their ministry towards humanity, and their serving as a model of the *lex divinitatis* for functions, especially of authority, in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the Church. In his early writings, Bonaventure shows his familiarity with earlier receptions of Dionysius (at least those of Alexander of Hales and Hugh of St. Victor) and the *CH* but lacks definitive signs of close interaction with *EH*—indeed there is even some contraindication in his bizarre placemen of the hierarch between bishops and the pope! His shifting evaluation of the hierarch's role, however, points to his grappling with the *CD*'s meaning. By the *DEP* Bonaventure has identified the hierarch with the pope and by the *Comm Luke* he has come to identify Christ as the hierarch or at least hierarch *par excellence*.

Identifying Christ as the hierarchy is a watershed moment in Bonaventure's thought that signals a demonstrable change in the way Bonaventure employs hierarchy and related concepts. Bonaventure's identification of Christ as the hierarchy appears more or less contemporaneously with at least seven developments in his doctrine of hierarchy: 1) he treats Christ the hierarchy as the axis on which every hierarchy turns; 2) he describes the spiritual senses of scripture as effective of the three hierarchical powers; 3) he attends to the subjective side of hierarchy by a) explicitly identifying contemplation as the fruit of hierarchy in b) coordinating aspects of human interiority with the angelic ranks and c) places the consummation of hierarchy above intellect; 4) similarly, he identifies hierarchy as effecting the conformation of the Church and its individual members to the angelic hierarchies;<sup>254</sup> 5) he makes explicit the cooperation of the divine, angelic, and human hierarchies; 6) he uses Christocentrically conceived hierarchy as an organizing principle for major works; 7) whereas his earlier application of hierarchy as a lens to the sacraments focused on the role of authority and personal mediation, he latterly identifies of the accomplishment of hierarchy in the Eucharist with the three hierarchical powers and privileges spiritual unction above all the hierarchical acts.<sup>255</sup> Many, if not all of these

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<sup>254</sup> See also *Sermo* 70 in Bonaventure, *Sermons "de tempore"*, 3–5, line 17–39, p. 123–124. This sermon from December 24<sup>th</sup> 1262, written not long after the *Itinerarium*, explicitly compares the active, the prelates, and the contemplatives as ministering to God (and neighbor) in conformity with the three the angelic hierarchies much as will be done in the *Collationes in Hexaemeron* eleven years later. Another, 1265's *Sermo* 71 in Bonaventure, *Sermons "de tempore"*, 1, line 1–24, p. 125, expresses another pattern of conformity between the ministers of Christ and the nine angelic orders but he assigns different attributes as measures of conformity.

<sup>255</sup> That Bonaventure follows the *EH*'s association of oil and unction with Jesus from *EH* IV demonstrated by *Sermo* 3 in Bonaventure, *Sermons "de tempore"*, 1, line 9–15, p. 47: "Eapropter invocamus Dominum Iesum Christum in principio, qui est origo omnis verae illuminationis ad scientiam, qui est origo omnis rectae informationis ad gratiam, qui est origo omnis fructuosae locutionis ad doctrinam, ut ipse qui est divinissima virtus et divinissimus animus, qui solus cor humanum ut superessentialiter suave olens delectatione complet, secundum eundem in Ecclesiastica Hierarchia, ipse det mihi aliquid dicere et aliquid audire etc." This sermon is dated to late 1254 or late 1255. (Bougerol, *Sermons "de tempore"*, p. 49.) Bonaventure is loosely quoting Eriugena's *versio* of the *EH*: "Credimus autem esse diuinissimum

developments in Bonaventure's doctrine and theological use of hierarchy resemble the Christocentricity of Dionysius' account of hierarchy in the *CH* but especially in the *EH*, which suggests that an increased familiarity with the *EH* may lie behind these developments, although other reasons cannot be excluded. Nonetheless, when compared to other medieval readings of the *CD* and his own earlier writings Bonaventure's Christocentric turn in hierarchy, whether through intentionality or by a happy accident, renders his own developed doctrine of hierarchy closer to Dionysius' Christocentricity in the *CH* and *EH*, however differently expressed. For although Bonaventure's regard for the Trinity as hierarchy, his elaboration of interior hierarchized power, and his treatment of scripture as effective, and his more explicitly historical reading of hierarchy's consummation distinguish him from Dionysius' original articulation of hierarchy, Bonaventure's recognition that Christ is the chief actor and foremost object of all hierarchy and hierarchic order, knowledge, and action sets him apart as faithful to the heart of Dionysius' vision of hierarchy—not the power to rule but the power to become, through active and passive cooperation with God, a “mystical holocaust” upon Christ our altar.<sup>256</sup>

Simultaneous with Christocentricity's emergence in Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy is the appearance of explicit and implicit Franciscan themes in the works that employ hierarchy. Indeed, Bonaventure binds hierarchy to these Franciscan emphases. For the Christ at the center of Bonaventure's thought is Christ crucified who is imitated

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Iesum superessentialiter suaueolentem, inuisibilibus distributionibus intellectuale nostrum replentem diuina delectatione.” (Dionysius Areopagita sec. Iohannem Scotum seu Eriugenam – “De ecclesiastica hierarchia”(LLA 696) in Phillipe Chevallier et al., *Dionysiaca. Recueil donnant l'ensemble des trad. latines des ouvrages attribués au Denys de l'Aréopage* etc., 1937–1951, pag.: 1283, colon 4; cf. *EH* IV.3.4 477C [98.25–99.1]).

<sup>256</sup> *EH* IV.3.12 484D (103.4–9).

and imaged by St. Francis of Assisi. The crucified, ardent Christ symbolized by the burning Seraphim for both Dionysius and Bonaventure, who passes out of this world to the Father in the fire of love is the prototype of St. Francis' ascent to God and will be, therefore, the model of hierarchical ascent of which Francis, the *vir hierarchicus*, is the proximate exemplar for the imitation of Christ. Accordingly, Christocentric hierarchy and Franciscan Christocentricity are not two unrelated phenomena of Bonaventure's thought arising in the latter half of the 1250s, but by their near simultaneous appearance and deliberate combination, represent a single, *singular*, spiritual insight in Bonaventure's hands, however much religious life and hierarchy may otherwise be discussed independently. Given their proximity, which of these two lines of thought, the Dionysian and the Franciscan exerts greater influence on the other is almost impossible to tell. Indeed, the figure of the Seraph, so emblematic of the distinct Dionysian and Franciscan traditions, invites the integration of these two traditions. What is clear, is that as Bonaventure develops his doctrine of hierarchy it becomes increasingly centered on Christ and Franciscan in its emphases, in virtue of the emphasis on Christ's cross and ecstatic love. Indeed, Bonaventure will deliberately construe Francis to be the exemplar of the hierarchized soul, and even of the living (and sainted) icon of Christ the hierarch in the *LMj*, surpassing the even the integration of Franciscan and Dionysian themes in the *Itin*, albeit in a hagiographical and much subtler key.

In Bonaventure's exploration of Francis in the *Itin* and especially in the *LMj*, therefore, what emerges is not only a Franciscanized account of hierarchy, but a hierarchically oriented account of Franciscanism in which ascent to God through hierarchy and the passage (*transitus*) to the Father through Christ crucified become

mutually interpretive. To be sure, Bonaventure's integration of these two conceptual lines transforms each, but neither neutralizes the other: neither is the stigmatic realism of the cross softened through an angelic ascent nor are the mediatory structures of hierarchy simply upended by the experiences of lowly pauper. On the contrary, Bonaventure's Franciscanism and Dionysianism deepen and expand each other.



## IV. THE HIERARCHICAL FRANCIS

### IV.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I traced Bonaventure's doctrine and use of hierarchy (and related concepts) between II-IV *Sent* and the *Itin*, demonstrating that his concept of hierarchy became increasingly and explicitly Christocentric while also complementary to his Franciscanism. In this fourth and final main chapter of this dissertation, I will show how Bonaventure's concept of hierarchy, which had already been molded by his Franciscanism, was, in turn, foundational for his presentation of St. Francis of Assisi in the *LMj*. I will advance an argument that Bonaventure's assimilation of hierarchy to Franciscanism and the expression of Franciscanism through hierarchy has three results. First, it departs from aspects Dionysius' original articulation of hierarchy. For by framing Francis' unique importance and exemplary imitation of Christ through the concept of hierarchy and the hierarchical powers, Bonaventure breaks with Dionysius and his medieval commentators by displacing the privileged position of the clerics in the hierarchical system in favor of the poor contemplative. Second, simultaneously and paradoxically, it galvanizes original elements of Dionysian hierarchy in Bonaventure's articulation of hierarchy. Indeed, Bonaventure's application of hierarchy to Francis as an imitator of Christ and cooperator with God does not dilute the fundamentals of Dionysian hierarchy, instead, his presentation of hierarchy emerges *more transparent* to the pillars of Dionysian hierarchy: anagogy, θέωσις as union and assimilation, and, most of all, θεομίμησις, the worshipful imitation of God. Third and finally, it innovates within the tradition of understanding and employing the concept of hierarchy. For Bonaventure's

application of hierarchy to Francis through textual triads in the *LMj* introduces a numerological aspect to hierarchy, which Dionysius eschewed, that symbolizes Francis' conformity not only to the hierarchies of the angelic triads but even to the Triune life of the divine hierarchy, as he will state explicitly just over a decade later in *Hex XX-XXIII*. Thus, Bonaventure exceeds even the Trinitarian novelties in Eriugena's and Hugh of St. Victor's accounts of hierarchy by identifying Francis, the *vir hierarchicus*, as the imitator of Christ crucified—the *Verbum incarnatum* expressing the Father—who by imitation participates and embodies Trinitarian life. Bonaventure's departure from, faithfulness to, and innovation within Dionysian hierarchy may also be appraised in other details of his work as shall be seen below. Thus, I will show that Francis is the vehicle of both Bonaventure's innovation and faithfulness in understanding and employing Dionysian hierarchy.

I will demonstrate these three results of Bonaventure's application of hierarchy to Francis by attending to two questions throughout this chapter's consideration of the *LMj*'s structure and thematic content. First, "what does the *LMj*'s textual structure imply for Bonaventure's concept of hierarchy?" and second, "what does the *LMj*'s Franciscan content and context say about Bonaventure's concept hierarchy?". Since Bonaventure structured the *LMj*'s episodes around the hierarchical powers,<sup>1</sup> its complex textual structure and Franciscan concern, both independently and taken together, frame and reveal Bonaventure's overall conception of hierarchy underlying his narration of Franciscan history and virtues, a narrative carefully organized to depict a form of hierarchic life that has the imitation of Christ's poverty and cross for its essential pattern.

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<sup>1</sup> See "Status Questionis: Reading the *LMj* According to Hierarchy" for this history of this interpretation, pp. 22-30.

In response to the first question, I will demonstrate how the *LMj*'s triadic divisions nested at multiple levels (its various narrative triads) are patterned according to a triad of complementary concepts from across Bonaventure's *corpus* (the conceptual triad)—most notably, but not only, the hierarchical powers—that repeat at every level of the *LMj*, thereby constructing an intelligently crafted theory of spiritual development that accounts for both cyclicity and progress in the hierarchic life's conformity to the angelic hierarchies and even the eternal life of the Trinity.

In response to the second question, I will demonstrate that the interface between the triadic structures of the *LMj* and the episodes of St. Francis' life and virtues illustrates a conception of hierarchy that is not merely a ladder or metric of ascent but both the reception and performance the hierarchical powers and activities, imitating the angels, Christ, and ultimately expressing the Trinity through pillars of Franciscan life: penance, poverty, prayer, and preaching. Furthermore, depicting the hierarchical θεομίμησις through Francis' life, a marriage of Dionysian perfection and Franciscan poverty, presents a hierarchic—a *seraphic*—life open to imitation, not reserved for the highest clerics but available to the humblest Christian.

Thus, by attending to these two questions, I will show that Bonaventure's structural creativity *with* and Franciscan recontextualization *of* hierarchy retains and even recovers aspects of Dionysius' conceptual architecture of hierarchy that were not emphasized in Bonaventure's earlier writings. At the same time, I will explain how Bonaventure also assimilates aspects of the Dionysian hierarch to Francis, the exemplary imitator of the crucified Word, without impugning or undermining the liturgy, sacraments, and apostolic order by establishing some alternative path to holiness in a

Franciscan life divorced from the wider Church.<sup>2</sup> For, as the organization of the *LMj* shows, as both the founder of the Franciscan Orders(s) and in his own virtues, Francis (and those who would imitate him) are purified, illuminated, and perfected yet also purify, illumine, and perfect without *but not apart from* the sacraments and authority of the Church. He and they present an ideal, deified, and Christoform life that is neither essentially clerical and, although religious, not monastic, and open to both the learned and simple. This life Francis instantiates and represents manifests the tropes of Dionysian hierarchy: ascending from the sensible to the spiritual, from the earthly to the celestial ranks of angels, in union with God and neighbor, assimilated to Christ's saving descent, and participating Christ in the saving work of the Trinity by becoming a living sacrifice with him that manifests and conducts others to this same anagogy and its fruits.

Bonaventure's *vir hierarchicus* is thus subversive while traditional, just as the mendicants themselves. In the *LMj*, Bonaventure's understanding of hierarchy and its relationship to Christocentric Franciscanism produce a synthesis, consonant with but beyond Dionysius' thought, in which imitating the kenotic Christ through practical self-renunciation is also the mimetic extension and participation of triune life by becoming a living sacrifice as a member of the Jerusalem above. In his way of life, Francis seems to have come from heaven and so exceeds any cleric, but he is not, therefore, an anti-sacramental figure. On the contrary, Francis' devotion to the sacramental life of the Church, especially the Eucharist, belongs to the burning love by which he merited to bear

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<sup>2</sup> Anderson discusses the concerns that anti-mendicant polemicist had, including the undermining of the Church, see Anderson, *A Call to Piety*, 156–78, 186–88.

the stigmata as the sacraments of the Lord. Indeed, the perspicuity of Christ through Francis makes Francis himself a living sacrament of the Lord.<sup>3</sup>

#### IV.1.1 Methodological Consideration: Textual Scope

Before proceeding, I will address my own approach and the limitations I have placed on this study of the hierarchy in the *LMj*. Since so much has been written about Francis and the history of the Franciscans and their theology and spirituality, I will address, primarily, only the question of hierarchy as it has been read into the *LMj* except when other investigation prove useful. Likewise, given the breadth and depth of the intellectual and religious history upon which Francis and Bonaventure both stand, especially on the topic of “imitation” and the cross, compiling the spiritual and textual

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<sup>3</sup> Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 29, 122, 128, 158, 238–39, 242–43, 254–56, 262. Muscat interprets Bonaventure as presenting Francis himself as sacrament in the technical sense of an efficacious sign of an invisible grace. Muscat also acknowledges Bonaventure’s descriptions of the scriptures as sacramental, in broad sense, insofar as they manifest a spiritual reality in a sensible way, and in a similar vein but with an even closer approximation of the technical sense of a sacrament, Muscat does not shy away from describing Bonaventures’ understanding of Francis’ Christiform life as a sacrificial participation in the Paschal mystery and an extension of the Eucharist that has an effect upon the whole Church: “Bonaventure presents the episode of the stigmatization as a sacramental celebration. [...] The result is that Francis is transformed into a living likeness of Christ Crucified. His body becomes the sacramental presence of Christ in his suffering and glorification” and thus “The point of arrival of this bonaventurian approach is that of showing how the stigmatized Poverello reveals the Word of salvation, by becoming God’s gift of grace to all those who would be saved by the sign of the Cross.” (Muscat, 238–40.) Muscat even emphasizes the cultic sense of reading Francis as a sacrament by identifying the *transitus* in *LMj* XIV–XV, which follows from Francis’ stigmatization, with the Eucharist, saying that “Francis’ death is presented as a Paschal celebration.” (Muscat, 240) and “We shall see it even more clearly in the description of Francis’ dead body, in which the signs of the Resurrection are sacramentally present in the stigmata.” (Muscat, 242) and “The Poverello’s passing over from the abyss of death to the *abyssum divinae claritatis* is a sacramental celebration.” (Muscat, 254). While the effects of this sacramentally conceived Francis do include miracles that refer to the four elements, which Muscat sees as image Christ’s role as cosmic savior (Muscat, 249), he focuses Francis’ ecclesial role a proof of the form of life that leads to salvation. (Muscat, 249.) Although he does not show particular concern for the issue, conceiving of Francis’ effect as collective (raising an order and showing a path to many) avoids the setting Francis against the seven sacraments as the locus of sanctifying grace. Francis’ life, instead, leads sanctifying grace to bear fruit rather than imparting grace. Nevertheless, in light of Bonaventure’s account of the sacraments’ dispositive causality (see IV *Sent* d. 1, q. 4 [IV.19A–24B]) a future study between Francis’ role and the sacraments may judge more accurately the degree to which Francis conceived as a sacramental figure in both his life and death must be seen as analogical or qualified.

genealogies behind the *LMj* is beyond the scope of my textual analysis. Whatever these exclusions forfeit in terms of accuracy and comprehensiveness, I hope to reclaim in the clarity of argument about the *LMj*'s structure. At any rate, that approach—focusing on the *LMj* and, secondarily, the other *vitae* of Francis—follows in the footsteps of the other investigations of Bonaventure's application of the concept of hierarchy to St. Francis' life over the last half-century. I even apply this focus to Bonaventure's own corpus, for although the *LMj* is not the only text in which Bonaventure relates hierarchy and Francis or Franciscan life, it is both the first to do so explicitly rather than by implication (as in the *Itin*) and the longest sustained treatment of St. Francis by Bonaventure.

Nonetheless, occasional attention must be given to Bonaventure's other writings, especially on hierarchy or Francis and Franciscanism, and I will not exclude references to Bonaventure's later works based upon a *terminus ad quem*. While the structure of episodes in the *LMj* bespeaks developments in Bonaventure's conception of hierarchy, his sparing use of technical terminology begs corroboration of these developments in contemporary and later works that confirm such a development. The works that predate the *LMj* offer nuance on some points, especially the *Itin* and *Brev*. Furthermore, so do the *Legenda minor* (*LMn*) and Bonaventure's sermons, especially those on Francis that corroborate hierarchy's application to Francis. Similarly, *DEP* and *Apol paup* offer balance in judging the spiritual implications of poverty in the *LMj*. Finally, as the themes of ascent, spiritual sacrifice, and angelic likeness are applied to Francis before Bonaventure did, it is necessary to attend to the hagiographical writings of Thomas of Celano (*1C*, *2C*, *3C*) and Julian of Speyer (*LJS*), and of St. Francis himself as counterweight to any overeager claims of Bonaventurian novelties introduced in the *LMj*.

#### IV.1.2 Conceptual Clarification: Defining “Imitation” and “Hierarchical Powers”

Francis’ own imitation of Christ and the imitation of Francis unto imitating Christ are frequent topics in the *LMj* and can be found elsewhere in Bonaventure’s corpus.<sup>4</sup> Since the imitation of God and Christ, θεομίμησις, is also fundamental to Dionysian hierarchy, it is tempting to conflate both kinds of imitation, especially when the *LMj* is framed by hierarchy. However, they are not identical, although they are extensively compatible, and Dionysian θεομίμησις and therefore the Franciscan imitation of Christ through poverty, humility, and obedience cannot be simply collapsed into identity. Dionysian θεομίμησις is to become a mirror of the descent of the divine gift of light, the divine Jesus, to creatures, angelic and human, and so takes the divine condescension as its primary referent and is pointed out most frequently in the ministrations of angels and clergy. Bonaventure’s imitation of Christ begins by embracing the kind of practical life Christ showed in the Gospels. Christ’s life of humility, poverty, and obedience establishes the norm and ideal Christian life, of which Francis is the proximate and preeminent model for a Christ-like life.<sup>5</sup> However, Bonaventure’s sense of the imitation of Christ is not merely an external adoption of lowliness enacted as seen in Christ and his servant Francis. Such exterior acts are good but they are not necessarily, in their external performance, the proof of true charity that constitutes interior Christoformity. External

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<sup>4</sup> The focus on imitation is a distinctive focus of the *LMj* compared to the earlier hagiographies and even the *LMn*, see Hammond, “Bonaventure’s *Legenda Maior*,” 462–66. As early as 1255, Bonaventure says God imprinted to the stigmata as a seal on Francis because he made him “the leader of those who imitate Christ perfectly” (“Morning Sermon on St. Francis , October 4, 1255” in FA:ED II, 508–516: 515.) Bonaventure’s debate with Gerard of Abbeville over the nature of imitation of Christ would be a concern in the later *Apologia pauperum* in 1269 (see *Apop paup* II.11–13 [VIII, 242A–243B]).

<sup>5</sup> Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 67.

imitation may lead into the imitation of Christ in truth, and it is the latter, as I read the *LMj*, that coincides with θεομίμησις or, as the Latin tradition calls it, filiation.<sup>6</sup> The porousness of Bonaventure's gospel-oriented sense of *imitatio* or *sequela Christi* to the θεομίμησις of Dionysian hierarchy is exemplified in that even before the *LMj*, *Comm Luke* deployed three hierarchical powers to describe the *sequela Christi*.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, a distinctive feature of Bonaventure's understanding of imitating Christ in the *LMj* is its conclusion in a personal transformation into Christ, a model of deification and divine cooperation that is consonant with the structure of Dionysian θεομίμησις yet without an exact precedent in the *CD*'s terminology and rhetoric.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> See Timothy Johnson, *Iste pauper clamavit: Saint Bonaventure's mendicant theology of prayer*, European university studies : Ser. 23, Theology, Vol. 390 (Frankfurt am Main Bern New York Paris: Lang, 1990), 78–79. Johnson explains that imitation of Christ is rooted in spiritual adoption or filiation and necessitates conformity to Christ, which is not only made possible by the incarnation's salutary efficacy but is given a model to followed in Christ's life. Such imitaiton of his life, Johnson qualifies according to Bonaventure in *III Sent*, is neither strictly univocal, since we are not filiated by nature eternally or necessarily, nor equivocal "because by the mediation of that filiation and through conformity to it, we are rendered adoptive son." (*III Sent* d. 10, dub. 5; cf. *Brev. IV.2 Brev IV.2* [V, 243A]; *Apol paup* II.12, [VIII, 242B].) As the *LMj*'s narrative unfolds Francis' as model for Christian life in its fullness makes few prescriptions of particular actions to be undertaken for individual lives according to their state. The polemical *Apol paup*, on the other hand, makes clear distinction as to which of Christ's actions are to be imitated and by whom. (*Apol paup* II.13 [VIII, 243A-B].)

<sup>7</sup> Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 67–107, see esp. 70–79.

<sup>8</sup> *LMj* II.8; XIII.10; Haase, "Bonaventure's 'Legenda Maior.'", 370–9. Haase also explains that Bonaventure has shifted the emphases in *IC* and *2C* on imitating Francis' life in detail to the new environment in which Franciscans inhabited clerical and scholastic roles. (Haase, 218–242.) It must also be noted that Bonaventure distinguishes those actions of Christ which can and cannot be imitated in his earlier writings and sermons (see Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 70, n. 14.) and also distinguished those acts which can be imitated by all and those pertaining to evangelical perfection in his later works, including *Apol paup* especially II.12–13. Bonaventure even describes seeking perfection as Luciferian if it one does not have the gift for it: "Nam in his quae sunt excellentiae singularis, est impium et luciferianum nisi fuerit alicui privilegii specialis dono concessum." (*Apol paup* II.13 [VIII, 243B].) Besides assigning some of Christ's actions as belonging to prelates, Bonaventure also singles out three alone as constitutive of the life of Christian perfection: "sicut paupertatem servare, virginitatem custodire, Deo et hominibus se ipsum subiicere, noctes in oratione pervigiles ducere, pro crucifixoribus exorare et morti se summa caritate etiam pro inimicis offerre." (*Apol paup* II.13 [VIII, 243B].) While Bonaventure does assign Christ's condescension to weakness as imitable by the weak, he does not specify a pattern of imitation for the imperfect as such. The *LMj*, on the other hand does present a pattern of life to follow under the image of Francis, and while it certainly depicts the *singular excellence* of Christian perfection, it is recommended to all. I do not think that Bonaventure has changed his mind in the later *Apol paup* about the universal significance of Francis' life in the face of narrow definition of Christian perfection. Rather, while the later work calls for a polemic clarity to defend the legitimacy religious poverty without making it obligatory.



Further, since I follow Hammond's approach in taking the hierarchical powers of purification, illumination, and perfection as the conceptual skeleton of the *LMj* on the basis of the content of all the narrative triads, it necessitates that those powers have a determinate meaning whereby they might provide such a structure. I will not strictly define their meanings here lest I oversimplify the richness with which the *LMj* endows them, save in two ways. First, most simply, purification, in the *LMj* involves turning to God, illumination attaining to Christlikeness, and perfection the enjoyment of God for oneself or others. Second, the hierarchical powers in the *LMj* are not solely stages of ascent to God, but actions undergone and performed, the original Dionysian sense which his medieval readers understood.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, *LMj* XI-XIII especially depict Francis rescuing, reforming, and raising others to union with God—acts of the perfected one purifying, illuminating, and perfecting.

#### IV.1.3 An Itinerary: Chapter Structure

Before this very long chapter begins in earnest, I will offer a short map of how my analysis of the *LMj* will proceed. I will begin by explaining how the *LMj*'s prologue initiates the combination of Franciscan and hierarchical themes and concerns (IV.2). Thereafter, before proceeding to an analysis of the *LMj*, I will detail my understanding of the *LMj*'s structure and its conceptual significance (IV.3) and then I will highlight the most prominent themes relating to hierarchy, Franciscan spirituality, or both recurrent in

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*LMj*, however, shows how the cruciform life belongs to all Christians on account of their adoption in Christ and is visible clearly in its perfection in Francis, an exemplar derived from the Exemplar, and, following the logic of exemplarity, the subsequent imitation of the exemplar differ from each other (as do forms of Christians life) while being reduced to one and the same exemplar.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. "The Evening Sermon on St. Francis, 1267" in FA:ED II 759–765: 763–765.

the *LMj* (IV.4). With these crucial elements of the *LMj* identified, I will analyze how they appear at every level of the *LMj*'s narrative triads (IV.5) and then I will summarize the numerology that appears therein (IV.6). Finally, I will conclude by highlighting the salient developments in Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy seen in the *LMj* (IV.7).

## IV.2 The Prologue of the *LMj*: Fusing Hierarchy, Prophecy, and the Cross

The *LMj*'s prologue is a rich, original composition by Bonaventure that serves the literary construction of the hierarchical Francis. Unlike the rest of the *LMj*, it does not follow a triadic pattern, although it does introduce two facets of the conceptual triad. Its importance, for this chapter, rests in its naming (and qualifying) of Francis as a *vir hierarchicus* and in anticipating the fusion of the hierarchical and prophetic-apocalyptic characteristics that limn his particular holiness for Bonaventure.<sup>10</sup>

Bonaventure's description of Francis as "*sursum vectus sicut vir hierarchicus*" is the only appearance of a term etymologically related to "*hierarchia*" in the whole *LMj*. Its single appearance does not diminish the importance of hierarchy in Bonaventure's framing of Francis in the *LMj*.<sup>11</sup> On the contrary, his description as "*sicut vir*

<sup>10</sup> *LMj* Prol. 1: "[...] *et ut vir hierarchicus curru igneo sursum vectus* [...]."

<sup>11</sup> In his "Evening Sermon on St. Francis, 1267" (*Sermo de Patre Nostro Francisco II, Collatio* [IX, 580–582]) Bonaventure will explain that Francis possesses the hierarchical Spirit of purification, illumination, and perfection because he has been purified, illumined, and perfected in charity. This sermon, along with its paired first half, "Morning Sermon on St. Francis, 1267" (*Sermo de Patre Nostro Francisco II* [IX, 575–580]), analyzes the root, loftiness, and diffusion of Francis' holiness. The diffusion of holiness is explained through hierarchy, although the structures used there do not reflect the exact conceptual structure that is developed in the *LMj*. Nonetheless the root/loftiness/diffusion triad maps, generally, on the conversion/conformity/thirst triad inasmuch as the ecstatic moment of the last looks towards the neighbor's good as ascent to God as much as his own. On the other hand, these sermons' treatment of Francis follow a series of triads too. Conversion consists in the worship of God is the beginning of humility, followed by care for neighbor and finally self-contempt ("Morning Sermon, 1267" [XI, 576–578]). The life of virtue grows through a purifying poverty, zeal for the faith through many virtues, and a transforming delight of God. ("Morning Sermon" and "Evening Sermon, 1267" [IX, 579–81]) Finally, so purified, illumined, and

*hierarchicus*” is an intentional and prominently placed interpretive key that because it is entirely of Bonaventure’s own composition, which makes it all the more significant an indicator of the theological work that underlies this hagiography. Like an overture, the prologue surveys a condensed view of Francis’ importance to the Church and the character of his life. In a work such as the *LMj*, which borrows heavily from earlier *vitae*, the prologue contextualizes Bonaventure’s reconstruction of the earlier hagiographies alongside his organization of and additions to the received texts.<sup>12</sup> Clearly, calling Francis the *vir hierarchicus* has a part to the play in the coming narrative, but precisely in what way is given precision by the constellation of further attributions in which that particular description of Francis’ holiness is set in the prologue. Some of these attributions are recognizably compatible with Dionysian hierarchy—to be an imitator of Christ, an angelomorphic man, a man already having ascended to heaven. Nonetheless, the prologue also betokens a novel trajectory in the *LMj*, merging a vertical anagogy with a pressing eschatology in which Bonaventure, boldly, points to Francis as the angel of the sixth seal (cf. Rev. 6:12-17). In the *LMj*, angeloformity, so central to Dionysian hierarchy, looks both *up* and *ahead*.

First, regarding the term *vir hierarchicus* and its immediate context’s implications for hierarchy in the *LMj*, Bonaventure shows Francis’ activity as one in which a man is conformed, specifically, to the angels’ cooperation with God:

First endowed with the gifts of divine grace, he was then enriched by the merit of unshakeable virtue; and *filled* with the spirit of prophecy he was also assigned an

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perfected, Francis possesses the power of inciting a like development in others through his exemplary life, predictions, and miracles. (“Evening Sermon, 1267” I.3 [IX, 581–582].)

<sup>12</sup> That is, primarily *1C*, *2C* *3C*, and *LJS*.

angelic ministry [*angelic officium*] and was totally aflame with a Seraphic fire [and just as] a hierarchic man he was carried up in a fiery chariot, as will be seen quite clearly in the course of his life; therefore it can be reasonably proved that he came *in the spirit and power of Elijah*.<sup>13</sup>

Not only is Francis moved by the gifts of grace and “enriched” by the merits of virtue he is filled with a prophetic spirit is assigned an “angelic ministry”, a prominent term in earlier Latin commentaries on the *CH*.<sup>14</sup> He also burns like the Seraphim, who stand at the height of the angelic hierarchies around Christ crucified.<sup>15</sup> Bonaventure’s description of Francis’ ascending into heaven “as a hierarchic man” concludes the series of assimilations to the angels, an essential element of Dionysian hierarchy that was already taught regarding the hierarchic soul by Bonaventure in the *Itin*.<sup>16</sup>

Francis’ conformation to the angels does not only describe his heavenly ascent but also infers the hierarchical character of his role as Christ’s herald in the world. Francis preaches first and foremost by example, shining with the light of his actions and, especially, passions.<sup>17</sup> The transmission of Christ the light is essential in both Dionysius’

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<sup>13</sup> *LMj* Prol. 1: “Primum supernae gratiae praeventus donis, dehinc virtutis invictae adauctus meritis, prophetali quoque repletus spiritu nec non et angelico deputatus officio incendioque seraphico totus ignites et ut vir hierarchicus curru igneo sursum vectus, sicut ex ipsius vitae decursu luculenter apparet, rationabiliter comprobatur venisse in spiritu et virtute Eliae.” Muscat connects the identification of Elijah and the fiery chariot represents *sursumactio*, the hierarchical ascent into God, see Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 177.

<sup>14</sup> “Angelic office” and “angelic ministry” are central to Hugh of St. Victor’s explanation of hierarchy, see Chapter II.3.1–2 above.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *EH* IV.3.6–11 480D–484C (100.6–102.22).

<sup>16</sup> *Itin* IV.4 (V, 307A): “Quibus adeptis, efficitur spiritus noster hierarchicus ad concedendum sursum secundum conformitatem ad illam Ierusalem supernam, in quam nemo intrat, nisi prius per gratiam ispa in cor descendat, sicut vidit Ioannes in Apocalypsi sua.” The order in this passage of *Itin* IV.4 matches that in *LMj* Prol. 1: the soul is called hierarchical once it is conformed to the angels. Moreover, in the *LMj*’s prologue, the mentions of the angels, if read as referring to the lowest spirits, and the Seraph comprehend the breadth of the all three angelic hierarchies to which Francis is conformed.

<sup>17</sup> *LMj* Prol. 1 (VIII, 504A): “[...] ut, viam parans in deserto altissimae paupertatis, tam exemplo quam verbo poenitentiam praedicaret. [...]”; *LMj* VI.1 (VIII, 519B): “Dicebat propter hoc filium dei de altitudine sinus paterni ad nostra despicabilia descendisse ut tam exemplo quam verbo dominus et magister humilitatem doceret.” Cf. *IC* II.53: “Verus sui contemptor omnes seipsos contemnere verbo et exemplo

and other medieval accounts of hierarchy.<sup>18</sup> In the *LMj*, Christoformity is both seen in and instilled by encountering Francis as an imitator and image of Christ in his concrete life of penance, poverty, prayer, and preaching and more wondrously in his stigmatization born out of his supernatural charity, wherein his interior Christlikeness spills over into his body and in turn confirms his way of life and that of the Order as worthy of following.

Second, the angelic framing of Francis's life and mission takes on apocalyptic orientation but not as a second or separate concern besides hierarchy. For, indeed, not every appearance of the angels or angelic imagery can be referred to Bonaventure's appropriation of Dionysian thought. Bonaventure's identification of Francis with the angel of the sixth seal reflects his interaction with Franciscan appeals to Francis as fulfilling the apocalyptic predictions based off the writings of Joachim of Fiore.<sup>19</sup> In fact, the larger context of the first section of the *LMj*'s prologue is dedicated to affirming that Francis is such an apocalyptic figure and the herald and exemplar of a more perfect form of Christian life in the midst of both condemnation of the new mendicant orders for, among other things, suspected and insufficient Joachimism.<sup>20</sup> Nonetheless, the

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utiliter instruebat." In comparison to Celano's discussion of humility in *IC*, Bonaventure elevates example above the word situates the prototype of humility in Christ himself, see also *IC* II.51–54.

<sup>18</sup> See Chapter II.2.2, II.3.2, and II.4.2 above.

<sup>19</sup> Armstrong, "Spiritual Theology," 25–32.

<sup>20</sup> Hammond, "Bonaventure's *Legenda Maior*," 470–73. Hammond points out that the apocalyptic language used in the prologue of the *LMj* is borrowed from the joint encyclical of the Franciscan Minister General, John of Parma, and the Dominican Master General, Humbert of Romans, *Salvator saeculi* (1255), which defended against both William of St. Amour's anti-Joachimite *De periculis* and Gerard of Borgo San Donnino's *Introductorius in evanadium aeternum*: "By presenting the *Legenda maior* within an apocalyptic framework, Bonaventure intentionally responds to the radical apocalypticism threatening the order from two fronts. On one side, he had to address the attacks found in William's *De periculis*, which denied that the mendicants' "new order" (*novus ordo*) was legitimate. On the other side, he had to address apocalyptic ideas that threatened the order from within. While the seculars thought that evangelical perfection was impossible, Joachimite elements within the Franciscan order believed that the Eternal Gospel would soon replace the Old Testament (Father) and the New Testament (Son) with the dawning of

dispensationalist thrust of Joachimite apocalyptic thought is tempered with the placement of hierarchy at its core in the *LMj*'s prologue.<sup>21</sup>

In *LMj* Prol. 2 these two aspects, the hierarchical ministry and apocalyptic prophecy, coalesce in Bonaventure's description of Francis' mission, a description which brings the cross, the conceptual and thematic cornerstone of the *LMj*, into view:

If we attend to the height of [Francis'] extraordinary sanctity by which he, living among man, was an imitator of angelic purity and, by which was also placed as an example for the perfect followers of Christ, we deduce that Francis was the herald of God [...]. Francis's ministry, which he held, of calling to weep and mourn, to shave one's head and wear sackcloth, and to sign the Tau on the foreheads of those moaning and grieving with a sign of a penitential cross, of a habit conformed to the cross, does not alone exhibit that [Francis] should be known [as God's herald]; even more, the seal of the likeness of the living God, that is, of Christ crucified confirms [that he was God's herald] with the irrefutable testimony of truth, [which seal] was imprinted on his body, not by natural forces or human skill, but by the wondrous power of the Spirit of the living God.<sup>22</sup>

Here the prologue presents Francis as a simultaneously exceptional and imitable figure but also a living admonition; the mode and measure imitation admonition is the cross. Before anything else, this hierarchic man, lofty in his ascent, is the messenger or herald of God and the God he announces is the God of the cross. His mission is to call all to union with that God, and, first of all, through imploring and performatively demonstrating penance. In this way, Bonaventure situates the cross, both as preached by Francis and as received in the stigmata, as an interpretive key for the rest of the text while

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the Holy Spirit's "third status" (*tertius status*) in 1260. In short, the "new dispensation" (*nova dispositio*) brought with it a "new order" (*novus ordo*) led by mendicants, that is, the "spiritual men" (*viri spirituales*)." (Hammond, 471.)

<sup>21</sup> Hammond, 470.

<sup>22</sup> *LMj* Prol. 2. I have rephrased FA:ED II's translation of the *LMj* in order to reflect the Latin of (see VIII, 504A-B), which present the Francis' sanctity as the source of his angelic imitation and exemplary status, and in which Francis' ministry (*officium*) and seal (*signaculum*) are better treated as nominative rather than accusative because they are the proof of Francis' status as God's herald.

also specifying that the cross symbolizes Francis' mission, while the stigmata both mark him with prophetic seal and attest to his heavenly ascent. His mission will be accomplished in those who live Gospel perfection and daily embrace penance, embrace the cross.

The prologue, however, does not render the cross and Francis' mission, although dire, a *grim* reality. For the prologue shows that the one who heralds God through the cross is also the man who ascends to God *because* the cross is at once the way of mystical ascent and the conduit of condescension. The prologue, in its first two sections, identifies Francis as the hierarchic man who is lifted up to God and poured out to neighbor—the fundamental motions of Dionysian hierarchy. Thus, from the beginning of the *LMj*, hierarchy, which at once implies ascent and sacerdotal ministry, is fused with the cross and its demands of a converted life. While the cross was not absent from Dionysius' hierarchical thought nor absent in hierarchy's earlier medieval receptions, Bonaventure sets the cross at the very visible center of hierarchy, the deifying cooperation with God. In the *LMj* as contextualized by its prologue Bonaventure will show that hierarchical deformity is Christoformity and Christoformity is cruciformity. The interpretation of Francis' historical life and progress of virtue in this hierarchic key was anticipated in the prologue of the earlier *Itin*, whose account of mental ascent to God is mirrored by Bonaventure's narration of Francis' spiritual development:

For those six wings can well be understood as symbols of six uplifting illuminations through which the soul is prepared, as it were by certain stages of steps, to pass over to peace through the ecstatic rapture of Christian wisdom. There is no other way but through the most burning love of the Crucified. It was that sort of love which lifted Paul into the third heaven and transformed him into Christ to such a degree that he could say: *With Christ I am nailed to the cross. It is no longer I who lives, but Christ lives in me.* This sort of love so absorbed the mind of Francis that

his spirit became apparent in the Flesh; and for two years prior to his death, he carried the holy marks of the passion in his body.<sup>23</sup>

The Pauline vision of spiritual death in Christ as true life, is common to both the *LMj* and the *Itin*, and appears also in *Trip via*'s account of prayer and worship.<sup>24</sup>

The final piece of Bonaventure's framing of Francis as God's herald is the affirmation of his power. Bonaventure recalls how Francis' prayers at his mother's behest saved him as a child and exclaims that "he has felt [Francis'] power in his person" and that God saved the life of his body and soul through him.<sup>25</sup> The *LMj*, is therefore, for Bonaventure, a work of thanksgiving and devotion to God *and* Francis but it is not only a thanksgiving for the preservation of his own earthly life. Bonaventure states that he means together up the "fragments" of Francis' "virtues, actions, and words" because of the good that Francis worked in his own life, a good which, as one having embraced Franciscan life, is more than the bodily good of Bonaventure's own healing. For as Francis' own virtues, actions, and words attest, all bodily goods must to be oriented to the spiritual good. In this regard, the *LMj*'s prologue exhibits the hierarchical and apocalyptic herald of God as an *effective* man, a man—to speak in a qualified way—of saving power.

Finally, besides introducing Bonaventure understanding of Francis, the *LMj*'s prologue announces a few points pertinent to the text's organization. Bonaventure explains that he primarily followed a thematic order albeit not to the exclusion of chronology.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, this thematic order is present within a chapter structure that

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<sup>23</sup> *Itin* Prol. 3

<sup>24</sup> *Trip via* II.1–9.

<sup>25</sup> *LMj* Prol. 3.

<sup>26</sup> *LMj* Prol. 4.



narrates the “*initium*”, “*progressus*”, and “*consummatio*” of his life.<sup>27</sup> Unlike the prologue of the *Itin*, however, Bonaventure does not directly explain the symbolism in the chapters. Second, it is noteworthy that the prologue refers to Francis’ hierarchic life by linking it to the stigmata in Francis’ body, which prove his hierarchization, and that the only other occurrence of explicitly hierarchical terminology, the hierarchical powers, make their appearance in *LMj* XIII’s account of the stigmata. These two pairs of the cross and hierarchized life form an *inclusio* (*LMj* Prol. and XIII<sup>28</sup>) that invites hierarchy to be read throughout the *LMj*, not as an act of eisegesis but as integral to Bonaventure’s understanding of the fabric of Francis’ life.<sup>29</sup>

### IV.3 The Textual Structure of the *LMj*: Wheels Within Wheels

The *LMj*’s prologue shows that Bonaventure intends to explain how Francis was and is God’s herald by applying a fusion Dionysian hierarchy and apocalyptic symbolism

<sup>27</sup> *LMj* Prol. 5.

<sup>28</sup> While *LMj* XIII is not the last chapter, XIV and XV are the denouement that follow from Francis’ elevation into Christ’s death by the stigmata. In this way, XIII anticipates the chapters that follow it and so hierarchy may be read into the whole work. Alternatively, the prologue may simply be read as telescoping the preeminent moment of Francis life manifesting its hierarchical character, the Seraph vision on Mt. Laverna. On Bonaventure’s emphasizing the stigmata, see Hammond, “Bonaventure’s *Legenda Maior*,” 463, n. 55.

<sup>29</sup> Muscat points out that the reference to Francis as angel of the sixth seal are also found in only in the *LMj*’s prologue and XIII, where “Bonaventure recapitulates the whole process of spiritual growth of Francis along six visions of the cross leading to the experience of La Verna.” (Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 181.) This inclusion, set alongside the other triads introduced in the prologue can be visualized as below:

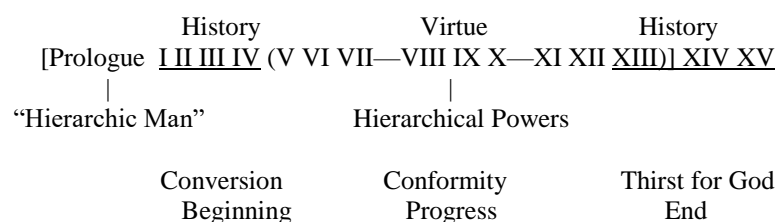


Fig. II A Preliminary Organization of the *LMj*

to him, but it lays out few principles for interpreting the text itself on the basis of structure. Therefore, before proceeding to analyze the body of the *LMj* I-XV, I will first (here in IV.3) provide a speculative account of the structures used in the *LMj* and, afterward, a review of the dominant tropes that recur throughout the text (IV.4).

Following Hammond's division, the *LMj* consists of both sequential and nested triads. These layered triadic divisions may be understood in two ways, narratively and conceptually. Narratively, the subsequence of triads at every level of division (macro, intermediate, and micro) drives Francis' story forward because each triad presents a new step in Francis' progress. I propose, however, that in every different narrative triad at each level of the text (micro, intermediate, or macro) the *same* triad of concepts (with multiple facets including the hierarchical powers) appears and provides the principle of organization for the distinct divisions of narrative triads. The resultant combination of narrative progress and conceptual repetition embodies a sophisticated vision of spiritual development on Bonaventure's part. I will outline below the theoretical underpinning of this vision in order to apply it as a lens for analyzing the meaning of *LMj*'s episodes and their ordering by Bonaventure's hand.

#### **IV.3.1 The Narrative Triads**

The narrative triads are as follows. The macro-level divides *LMj* I-IV, V-XIII, and XIII-XV (I follow Cousins on the dual status of XIII as belonging to history and virtue for Muscat's reasons).<sup>30</sup> The intermediate level juxtaposes two triads and nests the latter between divisions of the former: Francis' historical progress, *LMj* I-II, III-IV, and XIV-

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<sup>30</sup> See the "Introduction", pp. 25-26 above.

XV; Francis' spiritual progress, *LMj* V-VII, VIII-X, and XI-XIII. Since the virtue-intermediate triad consists of three units consisting of three chapters each, it is possible to treat each unit as a triad unto itself. Finally, at the micro-level, each chapter may be divided along the conceptual division.

#### IV.3.2 The Conceptual Triad and Recursive Progress

The assumed rationale behind the division of the *LMj*'s narrative into discernable triads on multiple levels of the text is that Bonaventure charts Francis' spiritual development through three stages that have been identified with the effects of the three hierarchical powers: purification, illumination, and perfection.<sup>31</sup> The meaning of these three moments represented by the hierarchical powers includes multiple facets to be discussed below, but even so, there is only one conceptual triad operative in and underlying every single narrative triad at every level of division.

In the repetition of the conceptual triad through all the nested narrative triads a key structural point of the *LMj* comes into focus: all three moments of the conceptual triad are present in each of its moments individually. For, since each of the three divisions in any one textual triad 1) is aligned with one moment of the conceptual triad and 2) is itself divided into a subordinate textual triad or triads according to the same conceptual triad it follows 3) that the *whole* conceptual triad is nested in *each* moment of the conceptual triad.<sup>32</sup> See Tab. VIII:

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<sup>31</sup> Hammond, "Bonaventure's *Legenda Maior*," 480–83.

<sup>32</sup> See Armstrong, *Spiritual Theology*, 160–161. In describing Bonaventure's understanding of purification, illumination, and perfection, Armstrong notes that these names denote the *dominant* activity at each stage of the spiritual life, not the sole activity. While it is problematic to think of the triple way as

I-IV				V-XIII						XIV-XV		
Purification				Illumination						Perfection		
I-II		III-IV								XIV-XV		
Purification		Illumination								Perfection		
I	II	III	IV							XIV	XV	
Pur.	Pur.	Pur.	Pur.							Pur.		
Ill.	Ill.	Ill.	Ill.							Ill.		
Per.	Per.	Perf.	Per.							Perf.		
				V-VII			VIII-X			XI-XIII		
				Purification			Illumination			Perfection		
				V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	XIII
				Pu	Il.	Pf	Pu.	Il.	Pf	Pu	Il.	Pf.
				Pg.	Pg.	Pg.	Pg.	Pg.	Pg.	Pg.	Pg.	Pg.
				Il.	Il.	Il.	Il.	Il.	Il.	Il.	Il.	Il.
				Pf.	Pf.	Pf.	Pf.	Pf.	Pf.	Pf.	Pf.	Pf.

Tab. VIII The Nested Triads of the *LMj*

As a result, the structure of the *LMj* shows fractal-like progress through recursion that points to a significant development in Bonaventure's handling of the hierarchical powers. In this recursive progress, purification, illumination, and perfection are never exhausted or reach a stasis. Moreover, because the nested structure of the *LMj* nests all three moments of the conceptual triad in each one of its own moments, neither purification nor illumination are simply superseded as steps of spiritual development or even sublated by higher levels. While neither did Dionysius originally treat these hierarchical powers as a mere series of steps, Bonaventure complexifies them in such a way that order is maintained among them while leveling out their relative superiority, so that purification always includes illumination and perfection/union, not merely in anticipation but in the

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stages of activity, since in the *CD* they are primarily activities performed collectively by the clergy and experienced by clerics and non-clerics alike and, Armstrong identifies the powers as simultaneously active at every level: "The practice of these hierarchical acts is required simultaneously at all stages of the spiritual life so that, far from being guilty of a rigid objective schematization, Bonaventure teaches that even in the preliminary struggle to obtain mastery over the lower self, the soul may enjoy passing moments of union with God, though even in those moments of perfect union with God, the soul is still in need of purgative activities which liberate it from sin." (Ibid.) What I have proposed further is that these activities are not only simultaneous but mutually implied in and integral to each other.

integrity of their distinctive operations and, conversely, perfection likewise involves genuine purification and illumination, and so on. In each division, one of the three conceptual moments controls the overall orientation of any moment of a narrative triad, forestalling the indistinctiveness that could arise from the mutual interpenetration of the hierarchical powers or moments of the conceptual triad. Moreover, Bonaventure unfolds the richness of these three powers by coordinating them explicitly and by allusion to several other triadic patterns that describe Francis' spiritual progress and the spiritual life in general. Thus, not only does the conceptual triad recur in the manner of a fractal, it also carries multiple facets of meaning in all of these recurrences.

#### IV.3.3 The Three Major Facets of the Conceptual Triad

Three of these facets of the conceptual triad are referred to explicitly in the text of the *LMj*, one in the prologue describing Francis' state of life, and two in *LMj* XIII describing his temporal and hierarchical progress:<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> *LMj* Prol.1 (VIII, 504A) begins with the description of how Francis is an exemplary imitator of Christ: "Apparuit gratia Dei Salvatoris nostri in servo suo Francisco omnibus vere humilibus et sanctae paupertatis amicis, qui superaffluentem in eo Dei misericordiam venerantes ipsius erudiuntur exemplo, impietatem et saecularia desideria funditus abnegare, Christo conformiter vivere et ad beatam spem desiderio indefesso sitire." *LMj* XIII.10 uses the temporal triad in summarizing Francis' spiritual life twice: "Iam in principio tuae conversionis [...]. Iam in conversationis progressus [...]. Iam denique circa finem [...]." (VIII, 343A) and "Christi namque crux in tuae conversionis primordio [...] et dehinc in conversationis progressu per vitam probatissimam baiulata in te ipso continue et in exemplum aliis demonstrata tanta certitudinis claritate ostendit evangelicae perfectionis apicem te finaliter conclusisse [...]." (VIII, 343B) *LMj* XIII.7 attributes to Christ (or God generally) the power of purification, illumination and inflaming, in a divergence from the typical list of the powers by replacing perfection, but the sense is the same as elsewhere in Bonaventure: burning love transforms the lover in the beloved, as perfection unites the Christian to God. (Cf. *LMj* XIII.3, 5.)

<b>Triad</b>	<b>Moments</b>		
<b>Temporal</b>	Beginning	Progress	End
<b>Way of Life</b>	Conversion	Conformity to Christ	Thirst for God
<b>Hierarchical</b>	Purification	Illumination	Inflammation/ Perfection

Tab. IX Facets of the Explicit Conceptual Triad in the *LMj*

In the prologue, the “way of life” facet is presented from two sides, the change in Francis’ form of life and God’s corresponding accomplishment of great works through him:<sup>34</sup>

	<b>Conversion</b>	<b>Conformity to Christ</b>	<b>Thirst for God</b>
<b>Francis is led... (Mode of life)</b>	...to completely reject impiety and worldly delights	...to live conformed to Christ	...to thirst in inexhaustible desire for blessed hope
<b>God... (Divine acts)</b>	...raises Francis the destitute one from the dust of worldly life	...makes Francis the true professor of Gospel perfection	...makes Francis a leader & herald of the faithful into the light

Tab. X Facets of the “Way of Life” Triad in *LMj* prol. 1

These three major facets—the triads of the “way of life”, the temporal, and the hierarchical powers—are not alternative sets used one at a time depending upon context but are, rather, complementary perspectives shedding light on each other in each and every narrative triad. Conversion is the root and beginning of the spiritual life and consists in purification, which Bonaventure associated with right action taught by the tropological sense of scripture in *Brev Prol.* 4. Progress in the spiritual life is the blossoming of conversion into conformity to Christ and adoption of the virtues of Gospel

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<sup>34</sup> *LMj* Prol. 1.

perfection so that one becomes like incarnate Word who is known through illumination, which power Bonaventure had associated with the allegorical sense of scripture. However, by being linked with conformity,<sup>35</sup> illumination is drawn towards the original Dionysian sense of φωτίσμος: the transformative reception of Christ, the light of the Father rather than a reductively epistemological sense.<sup>36</sup> Perfection, the end and summit of the spiritual life, possesses a twofold direction, namely, union in thirst for God, which corresponds the anagogical sense of scripture, but also leading others to the same union. Thus expanded, Bonaventure's sense of perfection in the *LMj* better approximates Dionysius' τελειῶσις, which is not only ἔνωσις with God but also ἀφομοιώσις insofar as one cooperates with God in the deification of others. These three facets together describe the progressive interior states and effective powers of the spiritual life.

#### IV.3.4 The Echoes of Bonaventure's Earlier Triads in the *LMj*

Besides the three facets of the conceptual triad mentioned explicitly in the *LMj*, the narrative structures of the *LMj* reflect other triads presented explicitly elsewhere in Bonaventure's writings. Two such triads stand out: the "mental" triad of the mind's journey through the exterior world, into the interior life, and, finally, being lifted to the superior realities and the "metaphysical" triad of emanation, exemplarity, and reduction. Besides these, comparison with trinitarian triads, which in turn appropriate so many other

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<sup>35</sup> This is not the first instance of linking illumination and a renewed form of life for in *Brev* V.1, Bonaventure identifies the "*splendor vertutatis*" as illuminating, reforming, and assimilating the *mens*.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. *EH* II.3.4 400B–401A (75.10–76.7), 8 404C–D (78.11–21).

triads elsewhere in Bonaventure's corpus, will also be treated below.<sup>37</sup> Altogether, these triads annunciated outside the *LMj* clarify Bonaventure's vision of spiritual development.

#### IV.3.4.1 The Mental Triad

The conceptual triad articulates the progress from beginning to end as an ascent towards perfection in union with God, and ascent "passing out this world to the Father." The grades of this ascent in the *LMj* are not merely altitude markers but display a shifting focal point in the manner of the mind's ascent in the *Itin*.<sup>38</sup> As noted in the last chapter, in the *Itin*, Bonaventure outlines the stages in which one knows God in the exterior world without (*Itin* I-II), by turning within (III-IV), and from within by looking above (V-VI), a pattern with its roots in Augustine's *Confessions*.<sup>39</sup> In the *Itin*, that triad is complemented by the Gallusian triad of grace assisting nature (*Itin* I-III: God seen in the natural powers), grace assisting effort (IV-VI: God is seen through the study of revelation<sup>40</sup>), and pure grace which in which the passive soul is overwhelmed and passes over into God (VII: the

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<sup>37</sup> For the extent of triadic appropriated to the Trinity see Justin S. Coyle, "Appropriating Apocalypse in Bonaventure's Breviloquium," *Franciscan Studies* 76 (2018): 99–134.

<sup>38</sup> The seven (plus a prologue) chapters of the *Itin* is not a one-to-one equivalent of the *LMj*'s structure, although the seven cross visions in the *LMj* and the seven chapters of the *Itinerarium* conclude in the mystical crucifixion of the soul that passes over with Christ. I will consider that similarity further below.

<sup>39</sup> Christopher M. Cullen, *Bonaventure* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 30, 87. A similar division is found in the *De Red*, which divides the illuminations of the mind into four sciences: exterior, inferior, interior, superior, or the sciences of mechanics, sense knowledge, philosophy, and theology respectively. For a summary of the *De Red*'s structure, see J. Isaac Goff, *Caritas in Primo: A Study of Bonaventure's Disputed Questions on the Mystery of the Trinity* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2015), 157–59.

<sup>40</sup> It is a distinctive point of Bonaventure's thought that revelation is not excluded from philosophy and restricted to theology, hence the metaphysical focus on God as one in *Itin* V is not secluded from the aid of revelation. See Cullen, *Bonaventure*, 23–35.



intellect rests and the *apex affectus* is transformed and transferred into God).<sup>41</sup> Taken together, these two facets show that the mind's journey inward and upward is not an act of self-actualization. Rather, although it stands partly on human effort, turning above is fulfilled in ecstatic surrender to the divine.

The *Itin*, having Francis' as the chief example of the mind's ascent to God,<sup>42</sup> sets a precedential pattern for Francis' ascent. This same pattern of spiritual ascent also applies to his historical life told according the *LMj*. For the *LMj*'s triads typically first relate Francis' relation to the exterior world, then his interior Christiformity or how Christiformity is impressed upon others through him, and finally Francis' ecstasy into God and, unlike *Itin*, toward his neighbor—even through passivity.<sup>43</sup>

That Francis' final ecstasy is directed towards God and neighbor is especially important to understanding Bonaventure's application of hierarchy to Francis. While Bonaventure's use of hierarchical concepts describes subjective ascent to God, as in the

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<sup>41</sup> The Gallusian triad of nature, industry and pure grace are alluded to in *LMj* Prol. 2, where Bonaventure explains that Francis received the stigmata not by the power of nature (*virtus natuae*) nor by the ingenuity of the arts (*ingenium atrium*) but by power of the Spirit of the living God.

<sup>42</sup> E. Randolph Daniel, in , "Symbol or Model? St. Bonaventure's Use of St. Francis," in *Bonaventuriana. Miscellanea in Onore Di Jacques Guy Bougerol OFM.*, ed. Francisco de Asís Chavero Blanco, vol. 1, Bibliotheca Pontificii Athenaei Antoniani 27 (Roma: Edizioni Antonianum, 1988), 55–62 argues that the *Itin* does not use St. Francis' and the cross as a symbolic introduction and epilogue to the stages of interior ascent to God but, on the contrary, takes Francis as the very model of the ascent it details. (Daniel, 56.) Central to Daniel's argument is Bonaventure's use of the seven cross visions in the *LMj*, in what he takes to be an obvious reference to the *Itin*'s six stages followed by rest, with the implication that the cruciform ascent was already in Bonaventure's mind in the earlier text: "The peace which Bonaventure sought on Mount Laverna could only be found by being transformed into *Christ*, a *transitus* which Francis in the *Legenda* perfectly exemplifies." (Daniel, 59.) Daniel, further, suggests that the transformations described in *Itin* and the *LMj* and *transitus* with Christ are rooted in the *pietas* that binds one God, neighbors, and creatures. (Daniel, 59–62.)

<sup>43</sup> Armstrong recognized this pattern of exterior, interior Christiformity, and ecstasy in the ordering of the triads of virtue-chapters in the *LMj*: "The practice of austerity, humility-obedience and poverty form the purgative virtues of man faced with the external world. Piety, charity, and prayer constitute the illuminative virtues which are exercised in light of the mystery of Christ. Devotion to scripture, the efficacy of preaching and the ecstatic state of union with the mystery of Christ Crucified comprise the unitive or perfective virtues which are indicative of a profound love of God." (Armstrong, "Spiritual Theology," 149.)

description of three hierarchical powers in *Trip via*, he never loses sight of the *ecclesial* character of hierarchy, even in the *LMj*.<sup>44</sup> For Bonaventure, ascent to God cannot be divorced from the descent to neighbor, to which his use of the image of Jacob's ladder testifies.<sup>45</sup> Francis' union with God has an ecclesial purpose: to lead the faithful to pass over to the Father with Christ.<sup>46</sup> As the prologues declares, his hierarchical, prophetic, and apocalyptic status serves the Friars Minor and the whole Church.<sup>47</sup> In this way, the *LMj* adapts the progressive ascensive structure of the mental triad to historical and social context.

#### IV.3.4.2 The Metaphysical Triad

Bonaventure's triadic description of the "whole of his metaphysics" as consisting in "emanation, exemplarity, and consummation" in *Hex. I.17* has become a tagline for, *reduction*, a pillar of his thought.<sup>48</sup> While that formulation of the metaphysical triad

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<sup>44</sup> Haase argues that Bonaventure's redactions and additions to the Celanese *vitae* intensify Francis' role for the Church and thus take him outside of the hagiographical traditions typical depictions of holiness and instead situate as figure within salvation history: "By relegating the comparisons between Francis and the monastic saints to secondary, implicit references, the Seraphic Doctor has set in relief his explicit comparisons between Francis and some great biblical figures. As we shall see in the final chapter of our dissertation, Bonaventure has done this in order to situate Francis within the more important tradition of salvation history. Through this literary technique, Francis emerges in the *Legenda maior* as a figure of apocalyptic proportions." (Haase, *Bonaventure's Legenda Maior*, 197)

<sup>45</sup> *LMj* XIII.1. Cf. *Brev* V.6; *Itin* I.9.

<sup>46</sup> The image of Jacob's ladder describes the double motion of hierarchy and appears in *LMj* XIII.1: "It was a custom of the angelic man Francis never to rest from the good, rather, like the heavenly spirits on Jacob's ladder, he either ascended into God or descended to his neighbor." It appears with a similar meaning throughout his corpus. This reading of ascent and implying a descent is not unprecedented. The *De tribus diebus* of Hugh of St. Victor, a text similar to the *Itin*, follows the pattern of conversion, ascent, and descent for its three days. (Hugo de Sancto Victore, *De Tribus Diebus*, CCCM 177 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002).) Furthermore, the concluding chapters of the *LMj* confirm the inseparability of saving compassion towards one's neighbor inasmuch as *LMj* XII sees Francis reject a departure from the active life, and in his stigmata, dying, and from eternal life Francis is all the more a benefit to the Church

<sup>47</sup> *LMj* Prol. 1.

<sup>48</sup> For overviews of this triad see: Ilia Delio, *Simply Bonaventure* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2001), 11–15.; Cullen, *Bonaventure*, 60–90.

comes late in his career, it efficiently describes the cyclicalality found in inherent in every aspect of the world which leads human knowers to God. This intelligent circle is expressed much earlier and quite succinctly in his *De reductione atrium ad theologiam*, dating to 1254,<sup>49</sup> which presents that intelligible circle as observable in every form of knowledge.<sup>50</sup> Bonaventure depicts the operation of sense, artifice, and every science as depending upon, *mutatis mutandis*, three principles: a source, a way of being, and a purpose.<sup>51</sup> In every case these three principles, recall what is revealed in scripture: the eternal generation and historical incarnation of the Word through which all things are made and redeemed; the *ordo vivendi*, right way of living; and the union of God and the soul.<sup>52</sup> Every kind of knowledge leads to seeing emanation in and from God, every form to the divine exemplar of life, and every purpose accomplished to life's consummation in union to God.<sup>53</sup> Besides the explanatory power of the metaphysical triad for the *LMj*'s narrative, *De red*'s repetition of one conceptual triad through the triadic subdivisions of five distinct way of knowing strengthens the plausibility that Bonaventure's took a similar approach to repetitive triads across diverse contexts in the *LMj*.

In its explanatory power, however, the metaphysical triad that begins and returns above lays out a markedly different pattern than mental triad's ascent from the lower to the higher. The metaphysical triad corresponds to the recursive character the *LMj*'s

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<sup>49</sup> Jay M. Hammond, "Dating Bonaventure's Inception as Regent Master," *Franciscan Studies* 67, no. 1 (2009): 224.

<sup>50</sup> Zachary Hayes, "Introduction," in *St. Bonaventure's on the Reduction of the Arts to Theology*, Works of Saint Bonaventure 1 (St. Bonaventure, N.Y: Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University, 1996), 6–8. The distinct fields of knowledge are: sense knowledge, the mechanical arts, rational philosophy, natural philosophy, moral philosophy, and theology or scripture.

<sup>51</sup> These three reflect the Aristotle's efficient, formal, and final cause, although Bonaventure only applies those terms in the *De red* 4.

<sup>52</sup> *De red* 8–26 (V, 322A–325B).

<sup>53</sup> As in the conceptual triad of the *LMj*, this triad is repeated through several different contexts.

progression, wherein the completion of one triad leads to the next on the same or higher-level. From this perspective, the three grades of ascent come to fulfillment and rest yet without exhausting progress. For as the sections of the *LMj*'s narrative build upon each other, every return to the source is also sets out anew, just as the *LMj* says of Francis: "although he had already reached the height of perfection was always beginning."<sup>54</sup>

### IV.3.5 Triads and the Divine Persons

Alongside the multiple facets of the conceptual triad underlying the narrative triads, the structure of the triads also suggests another signification: of the divine persons, God incarnate in Christ and the Trinity both *ad extra* and *ad intra*.

#### IV.3.5.1 Christ the Medium in the Middle

Although the *LMj* speaks of Christ throughout, it regularly highlights conformity to Christ crucified in the middle moment its triads. Focusing on Christ in the center of the conceptual triad in its multiple facets embodies Bonaventure's identification of Christ as the *medium* and *mediator*, as in the central sections of the *Brev* and *Itin*.<sup>55</sup> In the *LMj*, this Christocentricity is explicit in the "way of life" triad, in which conformity to Christ stands between conversion and "thirsting for God."<sup>56</sup> It is also suggested in the metaphysical triad because Christ is the exemplar to which all creation, especially human

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<sup>54</sup> *LMj* V.1 (VIII, 516A): "[...] licetque iam perfectionis culmen attingeret, tanquam semper incipiens [...]."

<sup>55</sup> I discuss the relationship between hierarchy and the its central location in several works in Togni, "The Hierarchical Center in the Thought of St. Bonaventure."

<sup>56</sup> *LMj* Prol. 1.

life, must be conformed.<sup>57</sup> Francis, having been conformed to Christ preeminently, is the proximate exemplar of such a Christoform life.<sup>58</sup> Besides conformity and exemplarity, illumination's central placement among the hierarchical powers bespeaks a Christological resonance in Bonaventure's hands, since he had long identified Christ as the Truth that both teaches and informs the world.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, his alignment of illumination with interior reformation and assimilation in *Brev* VI.9 is embodied in Francis as he is presented in the *LMj*. Furthermore, Christ the hierarch and his work of illumination stand out in *LMj*'s middle chapters, V-XIII, which outline Francis progress in imitating Christ in his virtues. Moreover, it is in these middle chapters own central chapter, *LMj* IX, which depicts Francis' charity, that one first finds Francis interiorly crucified with Christ by his burning love, even before his body followed suit, as recounted in the stigmatization of *LMj* XIII and, ultimately, Francis death in *LMj* XIV.<sup>60</sup> Thus, even in virtue of the chapter structure, Christ and Christoformity are literally found in the middle of the *LMj*.

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<sup>57</sup> *Brev* IV.1; Bonaventure identifies the Son as the exemplar of creation in II *Sent* d. 1, p. 1, dub. 2 and in *De red* 12 by comparing the *exemplar* in the mechanical arts to the generation and incarnation of the Son, through whom all things were made. The relationship between the Son as proceeding from the Father in the mode of exemplarity and the Son's role as the exemplar of creation are explained in Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order in Bonaventure's Theology*, 62–72.

<sup>58</sup> Francis is called the exemplar of gospel perfection once, (*LMj* XV.1 [VIII, 547A]: “totius evangelicae perfectionis exemplar”) and Bonaventure has Francis teach the brothers Christ's “most holy life” is the “expressed exemplar of perfection” (*LMj* V.7 [VIII, 514B]: “cuius sacratissimam vitam expressum constat esse perfectionis exemplar”).

<sup>59</sup> In *Brev* IV, it is the cross that offers pleasing worship, opens the door to grace, and brings forth the Church. In *Itin* IV, the mind is hierarchized by Christ is conformed by grace to God's action in the angels and made capable of knowing God *in se*. *Trip* via II, in its central section, treats the kenotic, latreutic, and ecstatic joy of the cross. Similarly *Hex* XX-XXIII treats hierarchy in its fourth of seven planned visions, which describes the communal and individual conformation of creatures to the Trinity. Across the corpus, truth, associated with Christ, is placed between majesty and goodness, and wisdom between power and goodness.

<sup>60</sup> *LMj* IX.3–5. Cf. *LMj* VIII.1 speaks of piety as transforming Francis into Christ inasmuch it has the form of compassion for the Crucified one. However, that theme is fully developed in *LMj* IX, which describes the excessive devotion which carried him into God (*ferebat eum in Deum*). (*LMj* IX.4 [VIII, 531A].)

#### IV.3.5.2 Trinitarian Triads

The appearance of exemplarity and Christoformity in the middle of the triads described above does not only symbolize Christ's role as the mediator between God and creation. Reading Christ in the recursive co-inherence of the hierarchical powers, along with other textual evidence, suggests that the Trinity is also alluded to by the triadic patterns of the *LMj*. By taking conformity to Christ, the hierarch, to be the center of the conceptual triad, the imitation of Christ through the beginning, progress, and consummation of the spiritual life as effected by and performed through the hierarchical powers can be understood to point to a further imaging or even imitation of the trinitarian triads both *ad extra* and *in se*. As Christ is elsewhere in Bonaventure's corpus the *medium* of the inner Trinitarian life as the expression of the Father and thereby the exemplar of the creation which is reduced to God and the Father as *primum principium*, so does conformity to Christ the exemplar, the light of the Father, invite the extension of the conceptual triad that describes the spiritual life to include trinitarian aspects, because its spiritual journey begins and ends in the Trinity. Indeed, years before the *LMj*, Bonaventure concluded his *DMT* along a similar line of thought:

[...] eternal life consists in this alone, that the rational spirit, which emanates from the most blessed Trinity and is a likeness of the Trinity, should return after the manner of a certain intelligible circle—through memory, intelligence, and will—to the most blessed Trinity by a [deiformity of] glory.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Bonaventure, *DMT*, Q. 8, ad. 7 (V, 115B): "Hinc est, quod vita aeterna haec sola est, ut spiritus rationalis qui manat a beatissima Trinitate et est imago Trinitatis, per modum cuiusdam circuli intelligibilis redeat per memoriam, intelligentiam et voluntatem, per deiformitatem gloriae in beatissimam Trinitatem." The translation here comes from Bonaventure, *Saint Bonaventure's Disputed Questions on the Mystery of the Trinity*, ed. and trans. Zachary Hayes, Works of Saint Bonaventure: 3 (St. Bonaventure, N.Y. : Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, 1979), 266.

#### IV.3.5.2.1 Returning to the Trinity: Triads and the Trinity *ad Extra*

The forward and upward movement of the “way of life triad” and the “mental triad”, respectively is represents the trajectory of Holy Spirit-Christ-Father as Francis is converted from the exterior world, interior reformed interiorly, and so reformed passes over to God the Father above. For the *LMj* presents Francis’ journey through purification to illumination to perfection as an ongoing conversion to a new form of life spurred by Holy Spirit toward the experience of and conformation to Christ and then, having been transformed into Christ, Francis, thirsting for God, passes over to the Father with Christ—his *transitus* through Christ’s *transitus*.<sup>62</sup> In the narrative, at the macro level, Francis’ historical life is interrupted by the Spirit, thereafter he labors to imitate Christ’s virtues, and overwhelmed by grace he finally returns to the Father in the stigmata and his death. A similar patten obtains at the other levels of the *LMj*, as shall be seen below. If this trinitarian pattern is considered in terms of order of beginning, progress, and consummation, that order of that cannot imitate the trinitarian missions *in se* (Father→Son/incarnation→Spirit/Pentecost), which has their origin in the Father, but instead, accord with God’s work in the human soul that has received the Holy Spirit as the beginning of the spiritual lie, progressed having been initiated into Christ, and therefore has access to the Father (cf. Ephesians 2:18) as its end.

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<sup>62</sup> Wayne Hellmann presents the order of the divine persons in the order of *salvation* as beginning with the Holy Spirit, the last person in the order of precessions, who leads souls to the incarnate Son to pass over to the Father, see Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order in Bonaventure’s Theology*, 80–81. That the Holy Spirit has this role in the *LMj* can be seen in the initial chapters. Francis is led out of his complacency through the Holy Spirit. *LMj* I.2 identifies Francis life-changing sickness as the hand of God that joins him to the unction of the Holy Spirit. In II.1, Francis is instigated by the Spirit to enter the Church of San Damiano. In III.2, by divine prompting, Francis is “made a model of evangelical perfection” and his words a filled with the Spirit. *LMj* XIII.1 has Bonaventure led up Mt. Laverna by divine providence. While in these these last two the Holy Spirit is not named explicitly, it would be unusual to attribute such prompting to the Son or the Father.

#### IV.2.5.2.2 Like the Trinity: Triads and the Trinity *ad Intra*

While Francis' spiritual progress represents the Holy Spirit as beginning as and the Father as end, that reversal does not exclude the reverse order's presence, the order of Father→Son→Holy Spirit, from the *LMj*. Indeed, both orders are present and complement each other, and, as Wayne Hellmann and Zachary Hayes point out, for Bonaventure, the Father's very primacy and innascibility also makes him the end of all things.<sup>63</sup> For inasmuch as the Trinitarian missions into the world are grounded in the processions, Francis' progressive ascent out of this world is founded upon, proportionally, a substructure analogical to the intratrinitarian processions recapitulated in every step upwards.

The intra-Trinitarian dimension of the *LMj*'s conceptual triad is brought forward from the comparison of the upward motion of the mental triad(s) and the cyclicity of the metaphysical triad. While both triads look towards consummation, the former describes a progressive ascent that aligns with the way of life triad's initial conversion. In the latter, the first term, emanation, refers to God the Father as ultimate origin or *primum* and seems unlike conversion, which is not strictly origin but a turn away from sin

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<sup>63</sup> Bonaventure, *Saint Bonaventure's Disputed Questions on the Mystery of the Trinity*, ed. and trans. Zachary Hayes, Works of Saint Bonaventure: 3 (St. Bonaventure, N.Y. : Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, 1979), 41–66, esp. 41–3. Hayes' explains that innascibility is not only a negative descriptor but implies primary and fontal plenitude, a notion drawn from the *Liber de Causis*, an Arab extract of doctrines from Proclus Diadochus' *Elements of Theology*. Hayes' overview of the Trinitarian persons, however, does not explore further the notion of Father as end. He reviews the names appropriated to each, which emphasize the Father as source, the Son as pattern, and the Spirit as consummation. (Hayes, *The Hidden Center*, 66.) See also Hellmann's explanation that God as *primum* is thereby *ultimum* and so too with the first person of the Trinity, who is *primum* and therefore *ultimum* within the Trinity in Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order in Bonaventure's Theology*, 36–40.



towards God. The *LMj*'s structure, however, resolves the apparent incompatibility between the "way of life triad" and the metaphysical triad. For if the same conceptual triad recurs in each chapter or major division at every level, each conversion to Christoformity and its proper thirsting after God end in a new beginning that must run into a higher conversion, Christoformity and yearning and so on until Francis dies.<sup>64</sup> Accordingly, since there is continuity between each division within, between, and above chapter, conversion and purification cannot be simply the rejection of evil but also describe the climb from holiness to greater holiness. Every ascent is return to the source and a setting out. The conceptual triad's linear ascension structure is not swallowed up by the metaphysical triad's cyclic *exitus-reditus* structure nor are the linear ascent and the circle simply opposed; the *LMj*'s structure includes both.<sup>65</sup>

Thus, the ascent structure in the conceptual triad allows *LMj*'s narrative to progress while the recursive structure in the conceptual triad allows for the narrative triads in subsequence to start from a *positive* position, representing the Father as beginning. Moreover, since the nested levels of narrative triads locate all three moments of the conceptual triad within any one of the same set of three, I propose that this nine-fold structure anticipated the mutual interrelation of the three divine persons that will be explicitly developed in the in *Hex* XX-XXI. For there, Bonaventure will attribute to the Trinity, as the first hierarchy, nine relationships between the divine persons that are the

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<sup>64</sup> This is to say, the pure positiveness of emanation seems to contrast with the negativity implied in conversion from some insufficiency, be it evil or a lesser good. Insofar, however, as Bonaventure carefully links chapters by newly composed transitions in their last and first sections, Bonaventure really does make each chapter's positive, perfective completion a new origin for the development of the next chapter, which inevitably includes a conversion. Thus, in terms of its formal structure, each chapter both entails a reduction to its beginning and an ascent beginning with conversion.

<sup>65</sup> In this way the *LMj* is closer to the *Itin*, see Gregory F LaNave, "Bonaventure's Theological Method," in *A Companion to Bonaventure*, by Jared Goff, J.A. Wayne Hellmann, and Jay M. Hammond, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Boston: Brill, 2013), 98.

basis of the hierarchical powers among the angels and the ranks of the Church. These are the relationships of the Father in se, in the Son, and in the Spirit, the Son in se, in the Father, and in the Spirit, and so on. Unlike the still to come *Hex*, however, in the *LMj*, the transformation of the soul, which is the focus of the nine chapters of *LMj* V-XIII, is not expressed systematically in relationship to the angels and the Church, nonetheless, the enneadic structure of those nine chapters on the virtues combined with the trinitarian tendencies in the conceptual triad render them amenable to being read according the nine-fold intratrinitarian relationships.<sup>66</sup>

So converted by the Spirit, conformed to Christ, and united to the Father, Francis manifests the Father as his origin, the Son as exemplar, and burns with love of the Holy Spirit for his neighbor.

#### **IV.3.6: Structural Summary: Broadening the Hierarchical Powers**

Francis' progress in the *LMj* is defined at every level through the hierarchical powers of purification, illumination and perfection, which Francis' both undergoes and performs. This conceptual triad of powers repeated in multiple narrative triads and gathers under its wings several other triadic processes which unfold the meaning of purification, illumination, and perfection understood as the imitation of Christ and even of the Trinity. When, besides the mental and metaphysical triads, the triads associated with the Eucharist and the hierarchical powers from the *Brev* VI are added, a thick but

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<sup>66</sup> In *Hex* XXII.18–23, the hierarchical ordering of the Church according to states of life begins with by associating the laity with the angels, who represent the Father in the Spirit, and ends with Francis who is associated the Holy Spirit.

consistent pattern of spiritual development of in Bonaventure's thought can be ascertained:

Textual Source	1 <sup>st</sup> Moment	2 <sup>nd</sup> Moment	3 <sup>rd</sup> Moment
Explicit in <i>LMj</i>	<b>Purification</b>	<b>Illumination</b>	<b>Perfection/ Inflammation</b>
	Conversion	Conforming	Yearning
	Elevation from Earth	Preaching	Leading
	Beginning	Progress	End
<i>De Red (per Hex)</i>	Emanation	Exemplarity	Consummation
<i>Breviloquium</i>	Stabilized	Reformed	Vivified
	Elevated	Assimilated	United
	Fed	Vivified	Transf. by exc. love.
<i>Itinerarium</i>	Exterior	Interior	Superior
	Graced nature	Graced effort	Pure grace
<i>Reduction to Trin.</i>	Holy Spirit	Son	Father
<i>Trinitarian Process.</i>	Father	Son	Holy Spirit

Tab. XI The Facets of the Conceptual Triad

These various layers of meaning appear through the various contexts of the *LMj*'s narrative as Francis experiences his own conversion to poverty, founds the order, grows in virtue, and passes out of this world, as shall be seen in analysis of the main text below.

All these facets of the conceptual triad, taken together, do not only frame the hagiography of Francis' remarkable life but, insofar as he is an exemplar worthy of imitation, describe the contours of the spiritual life as understood by Bonaventure in so far as he is worthy of imitation.<sup>67</sup> The *LMj*'s multifaceted conceptual triad offers a window into, to borrow Regis Armstrong's term, Bonaventure's spiritual theology. For the narrative of Francis life and the distinct-yet-interlocked triadic patterns that recur and concur through it are a concretization and subtly-systematic unfolding of what the

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<sup>67</sup> *LMj*, Prol. 2.

Dionysian triad of purification, illumination, and perfection mean for Bonaventure. Of course, these many facets are not addressed openly, but I have provided them so that, like a prism, the conceptual amplitude of the acts and reception of purification, illumination, and perfection might be more easily seen in the *LMj* both in its variety of aspects but also in the unity of the fundamental dynamism of ascent to God.

Moreover, in addition to the unity in conceptual breath that marks Bonaventure's application of the hierarchical powers, the nested triadic structure in which Bonaventure dramatizes these powers quietly underlines his vision of spiritual progress through recursion in which every moment is always already present in each moment. In Bonaventure's understanding, for Francis, as for every Christian, there is no conversion in which conformity and thirst for God are not incipient, nor conformity to Christ that is not also a thirst for God and continued conversion, nor a thirst for God which not Christoform and a turning away from the world. As noted above, this recursion amounts to an echo of the circumincession of the eternal Trinity, which the soul in ascent has as its source and end.

In this way, the *LMj* shows how Bonaventure adopts, adapts, and develops beyond the terms and structures of the Dionysian tradition. While Dionysius certainly never reduced the hierarchical powers (performed or undergone) to stepping stones—indeed his angelic hierarchies continually undergo and exercise all three—Bonaventure assumes more than their concurrence and illustrates their mutual interiorization even across the breadth of meaning. In the *LMj* there is no purification that is not incipiently conformation to Christ by illumination and perfection in union to God, and likewise for the other three. Indeed, there is no moment of spiritual development does not bear the

mark of the Trinity's saving work *ad extra* or its eternal glory *ad intra*. Indeed, the historical and personal development described of Francis in the *LMj* laden with triads is a progress—a spiral—drenched with eternity. Francis does not become holier by adding novelties so much as by both intensifying the cruciform poverty he undertook at his conversion and more fully manifesting the Trinity which enables him to do so in each iteration of the conceptual triad.

#### **IV.4 Dominant Tropes and Themes in the *LMj***

In addition to the conceptual triad, several tropes and themes that recur throughout the *LMj* without being directly tied to the triadic structure also shed light on Bonaventure's spiritual theology and by extension, his understanding of hierarchy accented by his Franciscan convictions. I will draw attention to four of the most prevalent themes illustrative of his Franciscan spirituality: poverty, the integrity of poverty and piety, the centrality of the cross, and the ascent from the sensible to the intelligible.

##### **IV.4.1 Trope 1: The Priority of Poverty**

Since freely-undertaken poverty is the defining feature of Franciscan life, and the *bête noir* of the Order of Friars Minors' critics, its prominence in the *LMj* is unsurprising.<sup>68</sup> What is of importance for understanding the spiritual theology of the *LMj*

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<sup>68</sup> Poverty is treated in its own chapter, *LMj* VII, but it is also suffused through every single chapter. Hammond counts 167 uses of *pauper*, *pauperculus*, and *paupertas* (198 if *mendicitas*, its relatives, and *eleemosyna* are included) more than any other terminological family describing Franciscan life, including humility (which has 101 uses), see Hammond, "*Legenda Maior*", 475.

is poverty's prominence and preeminence as "queen of the virtues"<sup>69</sup> (*LMj* VII.1) over humility, which order of eminence does not obtain in all his presentations of Francis or Franciscan life and is even reversed in other texts.<sup>70</sup> It is noteworthy, therefore, that

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<sup>69</sup> Poverty in the *LMj* has an exclusively positive connotation as a desirable virtue, exemplified by Francis' dear "Lady Poverty" (*LMj* VII.6). The voluntary poverty of the mendicant is not identical to the "poverty of being", creaturely dependence on God, and the "poverty of sin", the want of sanctifying grace and wounding of human nature, see Johnson, *Iste Pauper*, 43; *Brev* V.2 (V, 253B); see also *Sermo Dom. XVIII post Pent*, 2 (IX, 425B). Johnson had identified Bonaventure use of poverty language in regards to human weakness and his coordinate understanding of prayer as petitioning mercy from the one who alone can fulfill the indigence of human poverty of being and the consequences of sin: "The poor cry out in prayer for mercy in the midst of misery. In the final analysis, their supplication is the only alternative to spiritual death; it is the only road leading out of the desert of misery and back to union with God." (Johnson, *Iste Pauper*, 44, 48–51.) In this sense, poverty is an infirmity to be overcome. Francis' poverty, on the other hand, is not to be overcome but embraced and desired as if it were gold (*LMj* VII.1), because poverty renounces temporal goods to better possess—or be possessed by—the eternal Good. The latter *Apol paup* IX.14–23 will outline four benefits (each with three modalities): it purifies (destroying iniquity, minimizes occasions of sin, cuts the root of sin), it exercises perfect virtue (by testing it, preserving it, and leads to its goal), it brings internal joy (by freedom from anxiety, receipt of reward, granting consolation), and it supports evangelical preaching (by making it more credible, more efficacious, and more acceptable to God). What is not adverted to in the *Apol paup*, however, is the explicitly cruciform character of the poverty that makes one like "true Hebrews" and partakers of Christ's Passover. *Apol paup* carefully delineates what belongs to the proper imitation of Christ, its polemical context, setting it apart from the mystical outlook of the centrality of the cross as in the *Itinerarium* and *LMj* before it and the *Hexaemeron* after it.

<sup>70</sup> Across Bonaventure's corpus, Francis is sometimes understood to be Christlike most of all because of his humility whereas at other times poverty is identified with perfection exemplified and taught by Christ. The emphases do not follow a chronological development. While humility is invariably the connected to poverty at one time or another one of these virtues is considered more impressive or fundamental than the other. Together with austerity, poverty and humility form a complex of ideas that are differently related on different occasions. In *DEP* Bonaventure says that humility is the root of all evangelical perfection and that the "*summa totius christianae perfectionis*" or "*evangelicae perfectionis*" consists in humility because humility is the "*habituaculum gratiae*." (*DEP* incip. [V, 117]; q. 1, resp. [V, 120, 121].) Nonetheless, Bonaventure there also calls poverty the "principal counsel" of evangelical perfection because it prepares for mortification of the flesh (chastity) and abnegation of the will (obedience) and is the root of perfection because it frees love from the cupidity of temporal things. (*DEP*, q. 2, a. 1, resp. [V, 129].) In the morning and evening sermons on St. Francis in 1255, humility is again identified as the summit of Christian perfection as that which assuages divine anger, finds grace, perfects righteousness as the summit of evangelical perfection, and leads to eternal glory. ("Evening Sermon on St. Francis, 1255" in FA:ED II: 519–521 [IX, 595–596].) While poverty as detachment from early goods and relationships that enables discipleship to Christ is taught in the morning sermon, ("Morning Sermon 1255" in FA:ED II: 509–511 [IX, 591]) the evening sermon's description of how humility is acquired and preserved includes no explicit reference to poverty. ("Evening Sermon on St. Francis, 1255" in FA:ED II: 521–524 [IX, 596–597].) The evening sermon on St. Francis of 1262 regards poverty as that which makes its possessor share in heavenly life: "St. Francis was like the heavens [...] because of his exalted poverty" and so he was imprinted with the cross, which, because Christ hung naked upon it, is the sign of poverty". ("Evening Sermon on St. Francis, 1262" in FA:ED II: 722 [IX, 587].) Humility is associated with the stability of heavenly life because of its self-abnegating obedience, and the cross, which exemplifies such humility is foremost the sign of humility. (ibid, 725–6 [IX, 588–589].) This sermon, which is contemporaneous with the composition of and borrows directly from the *LMj*, shares the latter's association

Bonaventure even strengthens Francis' praise of poverty taken from 2C as "the special way to salvation" and "known only to a few"<sup>71</sup> by appending to his description that it is the stimulus of humility, the root of perfection, and the treasure to be sought above all.<sup>72</sup>

In the *LMj*, poverty is the most frequent descriptor of St. Francis, the poor man (*pauper*) or *povorello* (*pauperculus*).<sup>73</sup> His poverty is not only a special detachment from the world that spurs humility and the other virtues.<sup>74</sup> Poverty is much more than that in in the *LMj*; it is the way to pass out of this world through the Holy Spirit, with Christ, to Father as a "true Hebrew."<sup>75</sup> The anagogic character of poverty is further expressed in the *LMj*'s casting of mendicancy, the correlate of poverty, as an angelomorphic act in as

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of poverty with heavenly life, see Ignatius Brady, "The Writings of St. Francis on the Franciscan Order", 101–102 and "St. Bonaventure's Sermons on St. Francis". The *LMn*, also contemporary with and partially sourced from the *LMj*, identifies humility as the "embellishment and guard of all the virtues" while "sublime" poverty is "the companion of humility" that leads to simplicity so that, although he possessed nothing, like God he possessed all things. (*LMn* III.4–6.) In his 1266 sermon on St. Francis, four virtues make Francis pleasing to God: humility, mortification of the flesh, poverty, and obedience—the four topics treated in *DEP*, but with poverty and mortification switched. ("Sermon on St. Francis, 1266" in FA:ED II: 731–734 [IX, 573–574].) In this sermon humility lifted Francis to the "divine mysteries" while poverty "raises Francis to regal honors.", playing with the reversal of height through lowliness, riches through poverty (*Ibid.*) In his Morning and Evening Sermons on St. Francis in 1267, Bonaventure presents a threefold account of the root, loftiness, and radiance of Francis' perfect holiness. (Morning Sermon on St. Francis, 1267" in FA:ED II: 748 [IX, 576].) Humility is the root of perfect holiness here and Bonaventure declares it more admirable than all his other virtues while poverty is purifying power that leads elevates is possessor to further virtues (*ibid.* 756–7). Finally, in the *Apol paup* (1269), which responds to the Gerard d'Abbeville's condemnation of poverty and mendicancy, poverty is given preeminence over humility. There, Bonaventure calls *poverty* the root of evangelical perfection (VII.3), Christ reveals his perfection through poverty (VII.9), poverty is an adorns Christ our high priest like the *ephod* on the priests of old (IX.23), and humility depends upon poverty as the spurning of goods including honors (IX.11–12), humility stands with poverty and virginity in perfection in Mary (XI.17), and poverty even raises soul to heaven (XII.20).

<sup>71</sup> 2C II.200.

<sup>72</sup> *LMj* VII.1; Haase, *Bonaventure's Legenda Major*, 251–2, 278–80. Haase shows that Bonaventure has emphasized the priority of poverty in his redaction of the 2C.

<sup>73</sup> He is called *pauperculus* on 23 separate occasions throughout the *LMj*, while together with *pauper* and *paupertas*, poverty is referenced by these terms 167 times in the *LMj*. (Hammond, "Bonaventure's Legenda Maior," 475.)

<sup>74</sup> Quoting 2C II.200, Francis, *LMj* VII.1, teaches his companions that poverty is the special way to salvation, but adds that is the *stimulus humilitatis* and *radix perfectionis*. This understanding of poverty as the *radix* of the virtues is taught in his Sermon St. Francis, 1267, which again places it *after* humility, as in *LMj* VI and VII, a reminder that the simple chronology or even order of dependence does not determine his organization of the virtues in every work.

<sup>75</sup> *LMj* VII.8.

much as begging waits upon the Lord alone for all goods.<sup>76</sup> Moreover, Francis' poverty expresses his relationships, especially his love (both *caritas* and *amor*), towards God and neighbor. Thus, poverty is not only self-discipline and renunciation but the ground and form of his holy action. It is fitting, therefore, that Bonaventure begins the narrative of Francis' conversion with his encounter with a begging pauper, inciting his conversion by the experience in another of the very form his life would take.<sup>77</sup>

#### IV.4.2 Trope 2: The Integrity of Piety and Poverty

Poverty is not only at the root of Francis' form holy action but is frequently tied to *pietas* as a mutually implicated virtue. *Pietas*, piety, does not only denote care or loving generosity but frequently has a cultic meaning in Bonaventure's thought, too, denoting, even at once, the worship owed to God and mercy to the needy who bear the image of God.<sup>78</sup> While these two senses of poverty were initially distinguished by Bonaventure earlier in his career as referring to cult and the supernatural virtue of mercy separately, in the *LMj* these two meanings are explicitly integrated take a center stage with poverty.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> *LMj* VII.8.

<sup>77</sup> *LMj* I.1.

<sup>78</sup> See FA:ED I, 531, n. A.

<sup>79</sup> Bonaventure address the nature of *pietas* in several distinctions of his I–IV *Sent*. *Pietas* is first treated as cultic and identified as the highest form of *sapientia* and *theosebia* (of which it is a direct translation) in I *Sent* d. 46 dub. 5 (I, 835): “quarto modo sapientia non dicit aliam cognitionem quam religionem divinam sive cultum, secundum quod dicitur, quod pietas ipsa est sapientia sive theosebia; et haec consistit, ut dicit Augustinus, in fide, spe et caritate [...]” Bonaventure works out the multiple senses and relationships of the word *pietas* and other cultic terms in III *Sent* d. 9. His discussion is based on the sole chapter of Peter Lombard's *Lib Sent* III d. 9, “De adoratione exhibenda humanitati Christi.”, in which Lombard identifies *latria* with *adoratio* and defines *latria* as the *cultus* that is owed to divinity alone and then defines such *cultus* with a definition borrowed from Augustine's *De civ*. X.1: “qui cultus in dilectione et sacrificii exhibitione atque reverentia consistit, qui Latine dicitur pietas, Graece autem theosebia, id est Dei cultus, vel eusebia, id est bonus cultus.” Lombard, or Augustine via Lombard, situates *pietas* within the cultic sphere and supplies the vocabulary (*cultus*, *latria*, *reverentia*, *dilectio*, *pietas*, *theosebia*, *eusebia*) for Bonaventure's own definition of the nature of *latria*. Once Bonaventure has affirmed that Christ's



The pairing of piety and poverty is introduced in and pervades *LMj* I. In his encounter with the beggar, the poor knight, and his care for poor priests, Bonaventure

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humanity ought to receive *latria* because of its hypostatic union to the divine person of the Word (III *Sent* d. 9 a. 1 q.1–6), he proceeds investigate the nature of *latria* in d. 9 a. 2. In the course of this investigation he demarcates *pietas* as belonging to cultus but as distinct from *latria*. The first question determines that *latria* is a *habitus virtutis* (III *Sent* d. 9 a. 1 q. 1, resp.), and the replies to the objection establish that *pietas* can be the same (*idem*) as *latria* or *theosebia*, following Augustine, but it can also be distinguished if it refers to the honor owe to God but also to works of mercy, so that *pietas*, the gift of Holy Spirit which does these works, is not the same as *pietas* the *virtus* by which God is worshipped. (III *Sent* d. 9 a. 1 q. 1, ad. 3; cf. Augustine *De civ.* X.1) However, Bonaventure adds a qualifying precis of *De civ.* X.1, stating that *pietas* understood diversely is united by analogy “quia in omnibus est cultus Dei; principaliter tamen dicitur de cultu divino,” but not therefore also in other ways (III *Sent* d. 9 a. 1 q. 1, ad. 3). The multiplicity inherent in *pietas* and *cultus* is subject to further definition in the subsequent questions. III *Sent* d. 9 a. 1 q. 2, *cultus* and *sacrificium* are subject to three meanings insofar as in some acts God is end (all good works), end and object (theological virtues and sacrifice of prayer), and end and object and honored (*latria* or sacrifice of immolation). Here Bonaventure qualifies that *cultus* is not *stricte* the theological virtues. This qualification, however, finds Bonaventure in an unacknowledged difficulty. (III *Sent* d. 9 a. 1 q. 2, ad. 2–1). In q. 3, “*Utrum latria sit virtus cardinalis, vel theologica*”, he distinguishes *pietas* from *latria* as interior and exterior cult, respectively because he associates interior cult with the theological virtues. (III *Sent* d. 9 a. 1, q. 3, resp.) According to q. 2, such interior cult is not cult strictly in light of Bonaventure’s clarification that the theological virtues do not look to God as *honorabilis* and thus are not *cultus magis proprie*. Were that so then interior cultus would not honor God directly, a troublesome position which Bonaventure does not to intend to hold. For in q. 3 ad. 3, Bonaventure explains that there is interior and exterior adoration, and that interior adoration through charity and especially faith command exterior adoration. Nonetheless, in q. 3 ad. 6, Bonaventure still aligns adoratio more closely the exterior *latria*: “Haec autem dicta sunt de latria, secundum quod proprie accipitur pro habitu dirigente ad cultum proprie exteriorem, qui proprie dicitur servitus Dei et adoratio. Et hoc modo non est idem latria et theosebia, ut a principio dictum est.” (III *Sent* d. 9 a. 1, q. 3 ad. 6.) Bonaventure retains the tension over the place of interior cult the d. 9 dub. 1, in which he considers whether interior cult confirmed to be *dilectio Dei* through the theological virtues as distinguished from exterior sacrifice (both of which are forms of reverence) or considers interior cult as the motive principle of the act of sacrifice. (III *Sent* d. 9, dub. 1. resp.) The final word on the question in III *Sent* comes at d. 35, a. unic. q. 6, “*Utrum actus principalis pietatis consistat in religione respectu Dei, vel in compassione respectu proximi.*” Bonaventure determines that *peitas-donum*, the gift of the holy spirit, should be distinguished from *pietas* understood as interior cultus, as he determined in d. 9, because it makes one benevolent towards neighbor. (III *Sent* d. 35, a. unic., q. 6, resp.) The qualifications Bonaventure adds here, however, highlight the inextricably cultic character of *pietas* even conceived as *donum*. *Pietas* is not just mercy, which attends to needs in the one who has the image of God, rather it is benevolence towards to the image of God in the needy. (III *Sent* d. 35, a. unic., q. 6, resp.) Such divinely motivated benevolence stands upon the principles of the faith, that is, the knowledge (*Scientia* as *donum*) whereby sacred scripture and the passion of Christ as exemplar of life are both esteemed and followed. (III *Sent* d. 35, a. unic., q. 6, resp.) Moreover, in deference to those authors, mainly Augustine, who primarily identify *pietas* and *theosebia*, Bonaventure explains that the multiple senses of *pietas* are, as he noted in d. 9, related analogously. One ought to be *benevolus Deo* through worship before all because God created all and honor parents who bear a likeness to God on earth. Bonaventure thus ties the multiple sensed of *pietas* together with the common thread of benevolence. (ibid d. 35, a. unic. q. 6, ad. 1–4) In his answers to these questions, especially III *Sent* d. 35, q. 6, Bonaventure anticipates the integrated account of *pietas* in the *LMj* and later works, especially *Trip via* II, which identifies that highest worship as charity by dying for another so that they may share in God in imitation of Christ crucified, thus passing over high (God) and the needy (souls) at once and *De donis* I, which shows a major development in Bonaventure’s thought in the integration of the *pietas* which worships God, strives for holiness, and cares for neighbor as one and the same theological virtue.

demonstrates how Francis's poverty does not only succor others but serves God's glory.<sup>80</sup> When Francis meets the *pauper* and supplies him with alms, he promises God that he will always do likewise and indeed does so with *indifessa pietate*.<sup>81</sup> When Francis encounters the impoverished knight he is moved by a *pious affectus* to supply him with his own clothes.<sup>82</sup> He thereby serves the man according to the twofold direction of piety: mercy for the needy while honoring him as a noble deserving of proper dress.<sup>83</sup> The encounters with the beggar's and (more so) the knight's poverty elicits *acts* of piety through poverty. Thus, Bonaventure identifies the spirit of poverty and the *affectus* of piety (along with the sense of humility) as Francis' new vesture.<sup>84</sup> Indeed, the conclusion of *LMj* I shows piety-poverty as inherently worshipful, reframing a text from *2C* I.8 in the context of piety: Francis supplies poor priests with liturgical needs so that he is piously filling their poverty through his own poverty and thereby becomes cooperator in divine cult—again fulfilling the double direction of piety.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Haase, *Bonaventure's Life of Francis*, 199–200. In *LMj* I, Bonaventure introduces *piety* to some passages about the young Francis' compassion and love of poverty from *1C* 16–17.

<sup>81</sup> *LMj* I.1 (VIII, 504A): "Cum autem semel, [...] pauperem quendam pro amore Dei petentem eleemosynam praeter moremsolitum vacuum repulisset; statim adcor reversus, cucurrit post ipsum, et eleemosyna illi clementer impensa, promisit Domino Deo, [...], petentibus pro amore Domini se negaret; quod usque ad mortem indefessa pietate observans, copiosa in Deum dilectionis et gratiae incremeuta promeruit." This passage includes elements of *2C* I.5 and II.196 but Bonaventure gives a single new periscope which highlights Francis' conversion to piety.

<sup>82</sup> *LMj* I.2: "[...] obvium habuit militem quendam generosum quidem, sed pauperem et male vestitum, cuius pauperiem pio miseratus affectu, illum protinus, se exuto, vestivit, ut simul in uno geminum implemet pietatis officium, quo et nobilis militis verecundiam tegetet et pauperis hominis penuriam relevaret." This story comes from *2C* I.5 including piety's admonition, but Bonaventure adds the reference to the double *officium* of piety.

<sup>83</sup> *LMj* I.2.

<sup>84</sup> *LMj* I.6: "Induit ex tunc spiritum paupertatis, humiliatis sensum et affectum intimae pietatis." This addition is entirely Bonaventure. While the FA:ED II's translatio takes these as objective genitives, this seems insufficiently active. Rather, since Francis is now being converted, it seems better to say that he now has a perception (*sensus*) formed by humility and an *affectus* (a faculty of love, motion, and union) formed by piety. In other words, a reformed essence (*poverty*), understanding (*sensus*), and desire/action. These line up with the Dionysian distinction of ὁυσία, δύναμις, and ἐνέργεια. (Cf. *CH* XI.1)

<sup>85</sup> *LMj* I.6: "Sacerdotibus quoque pauperibus reverenter subveniebat et pie, praecipue in ornamentis altaris, quo et cultus divini particeps fieret et cultorum inopiae supplementa praeberet [...]." At

This same dialectic between poverty and piety is shown in the cases of the beggar and the knight too: Francis, seeing the poverty of another is moved *by* piety to make an act piety through his own poverty. His poverty is an act of self-emptying to God and neighbor. This double orientation to God and neighbor of piety through poverty forms the core of his ecstatic movement and recurs in many later episodes.

#### IV.4.3 Trope 3: Ascent through the Cross

References to the cross, the crucified Christ, or Christ's passion are found in almost every chapter, but the cross is much more than a necessary and recurrent topic. The cross is the event, motif, and even eternal form expressing who Christ is as *medium* in the Triune God, and mediator in human history, and the soul.<sup>86</sup> Hence the stigmata is the definitive sign of Francis's acceptability to God, his Christoformity, and union to God. The valent meanings of the cross are shown through the pericopes of Francis' life that describe his actions, ecstatic experiences, and the general narrative trajectories of Francis' imitation of and service to Christ. The seven visions of the cross, including the reception of the stigmata, raise Francis or other Franciscans to heavenly revelations or consolations.<sup>87</sup> Other references to the cross characterize of Francis' life as cruciform.<sup>88</sup>

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the beginning of his conversion, Francis is already associated with the altar even as a non-cleric. This comports with Francis' progression in both his historial life and virtues, in which he will become increasingly a sacrificed *alter Christus* who at the end of his life bears the sacrament of the Lord's wounds on his body in the stigmata and in his mind in the special revelations given to him. (*LMj* VIII.1; IX.3–5; XIII.4–5.) The same piety-poverty through which he was associated with the altar will culminate in transforming him into a living sacrifice.

<sup>86</sup> Armstrong, *Spiritual Theology*, 152–157.

<sup>87</sup> The visions are found at *LMj* I.3, 5; II.1; III.5; IV.9–10.

<sup>88</sup> *LMj* Prol 2; V.1; IX.3–5 XIII.5; XIV.1. *LMj* II.4 links Francis poverty seen in his literal stripping naked to the cross when it describes him leaving the world seminude through the cross “ut animam suam lingo salutis committeret, per quod de mundi naufragio salvus exiret”. (VIII, 509A.)

The cross is held out again and again sometimes as a sign of penance, other times as an object of admiration, but most often as a positive form of life and anagogic symbol of heavenly hope and *transitus*.

In the *LMj*, the cross is in view from the beginning. The prologue identifies the Tau as an eschatological sign and the first chapter has two visions of the cross. The first cross vision, in *LMj* I, shows Francis the coming Friars Minor and relates them to the cross. The second vision of Christ crucified, from the same chapters, imprints the cross internally upon Francis heart. The final lines of *LMj* I recapitulate both visions: “He was more attentively vigilant to mortifying his flesh so that he might carry externally in his body the cross of Christ which he carried internally in his heart.”<sup>89</sup> Ultimately, the austere mendicant life and the interior cruciform life will become so harmonized for Francis that the cross will shine through his body when he receives the stigmata in *LMj* XIII.

#### IV.4.4 Trope 4: Rising from the Sensible to Invisible

A final trope recurrent through the *LMj* is Francis’ (or his associates’) ascent from the sensible experiences to the invisible realities. In *LMj* I.2, Francis does not yet know how to contemplate celestial things or taste the divine.<sup>90</sup> After the first cross vision of *LMj* I.3, Francis cannot understand what this visions means because he has yet rouse his

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<sup>89</sup> *LMj* I.6: “Mortificationi carnis invigilabat attentius, ut Christi crucem, quam interius ferebat in corde, exterius etiam circumferret in corpore.” (VIII, 507B) This anticipates the description of the stigmata addressed to Francis in *LMj* XIII.10: “Iam denique circa finem quod simul tibi ostenditur et sublimis similitudo seraph et humilis effigies crucifixi interius te incendens et exterius te consignans tamquam alterum angelum ascendentem ab ortu solis [...]” (VIII, 545B.)

<sup>90</sup> *LMj* I.2: “nondum didicerat contemplari caelestia nec assueverat degustare divina.” (VIII, 506A.)

soul to passing over through the visible to the contuition of invisible truth.<sup>91</sup> He finally understand the invisible when, in *LMj* I.5, after caring for a leper's needs and kissing him, he turns back to look for the man but cannot see him and Bonaventure implies that Francis realizes that he had in fact been visited by Christ. Throughout the remainder of the *LMj*, the turn from the exterior and sensible to the invisible will work its way into individual episodes and the overall trajectory of the *LMj*, such as the movement from externally oriented piety in *LMj* VIII to the sweetness of prayer in *LMj* X or Francis' approach to God in conversion, reformation, and death that organizes the whole *LMj*.

#### IV.4.5 Conclusion to Tropes and Themes

These four tropes, self-emptying poverty, poverty as piety (worship), the vision of the invisible, and the absorbing cross of Christ, run through the entire structure of the *LMj* but already structure the first chapter as a seed to be unfolded. The development of Francis through the conceptual triad and the use of these tropes from the beginning, *LMj* I, is evidence that Bonaventure's deliberate construction of the *LMj* along well-determined conceptual lines frames central concerns of hierarchy (worship, ascent, deification) in the explicitly Franciscan context that underscores the importance of the cross and the and the practice of poverty.

The structural elements and recurring configure the hierarchical powers, hierarchy, and the related concepts to Bonaventure's particular Franciscan vision. The constellation of concepts which constitute Dionysian hierarchy (imitation of

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<sup>91</sup> *LMj* I.3: "[...] cum nondum haberet exercitatum animum ad divina perscrutanda mysteria nesciretque per visibilibus species transire ad contuendam invisibilium veritatem." (VIII, 506B.)

God/incarnate Christ, angeloformity, cult, ecstasy, salvation, knowledge, communication of grace) are joined in Bonaventure's own conceptual structures of exemplarity, ascent, and Trinitarian reduction (*in se* and *ad extra*) and renegotiated through the centrality of poverty and the cross. In what follows I will show how these structures themes function through the multiple levels of the narrative and construct Francis as the hierarchic man worthy of imitation.

#### **IV.5 Francis, Franciscanism and Hierarchy in the *LMj*'s Narrative Triads**

When the narrative of the *LMj* is read according to the multiple levels of the triadic narrative divisions and with attention to the recursion of the conceptual triad through them, the full image of the hierarchical Francis as in imitator of the God and the crucified Christ emerges. I will analyze each level one-by-one, micro, intermediate, and macro. Since the various levels of the *LMj*'s literary triads are largely determined by the content of the chapters and the narrative of Francis' exemplary life and spiritual life they draw, I will first present a general overview of the ternary division in the individual chapters, i.e., the micro-level. Approaching the text from the bottom up shows how the attributes, experiences, and actions that Bonaventure applies to Francis in each chapter are coordinated to construct a conceptual meaning that founds the broader architectonic divisions of the text. Second, I will then show how these individual chapters are integrated at the intermediate level in two patterns, the first of Francis' significance as founder of the Franciscan Order and, second, of his interiorly held personal virtues that animated it. Finally, I will explain how the macro-structure reduces all of these chapters

into a triadic division that defines the entire course of Francis' life, from the origin of his holiness, to his way of life, and, finally, his *transitus*.

#### **IV.5.1 Microstructure: Triads in Each Chapter**

The narrative of each chapter of the *LMj*, except XV, is divided into three moments, representing the three hierarchical powers and conversion, conformity to Christ, and thirsting after God.<sup>92</sup> These moments are composed of each chapter's subdivisions. While the number of subdivisions dedicated to each of the three moments in any given chapter varies, their order does not. The themes of purification, illumination, and perfection and the associated moments of the other facets of the conceptual triad occur one after another without fail.<sup>93</sup> The specific emphasis within each thematic moment also varies from chapter to chapter but the themes remain consistent. These themes are crafted by the arrangement of historical episodes introduced and punctuated by Bonaventure's interpretive comments, introductions, and conclusions, which shape the narrative of each chapter, and contribute to the higher-level organization of the text.

##### **IV.5.1.1 Purification/Conversion/Beginning in Each Chapter**

The initial thematic triadic divisions (or in some cases, consisting of single subdivision) in each chapter typically involve Francis making a new beginning in his spiritual development. These new-beginning narratives are based either around a reversal

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<sup>92</sup> Hammond, "Bonaventure's *Legenda Maior*," 481.

<sup>93</sup> Note, the subdivisions are not evenly distributed among the fifteen chapters, but most chapters have around ten.

and subversion of normal situations,<sup>94</sup> a new asceticism or affliction,<sup>95</sup> or a relocation apart from the world or self-desire that indicates or symbolizes a new stage in his spiritual development.<sup>96</sup> These episodes in the beginning of each chapter share the common trajectory of attaining gospel perfection. Whether by attaining a new orientation or an intensification of his praxis, Francis is found at first in every chapter, as *LMj V* says, already having already attained the height of perfection “nevertheless always beginning.”<sup>97</sup>

Through all but the last chapter, *LMj XV*, every aspect of Francis’ life which has not yet been given over to God in perfection is gradually consumed. Thus, the beginning moment of the conceptual triad is not only an ethical conversion away from fallenness but also purification in the Dionysian sense of one being prepared for transformation by receiving the God’s gift of himself in illumination.<sup>98</sup> In some chapters, this impulse for purification is attributed directly to the Holy Spirit.<sup>99</sup> Furthermore, in a number of chapters, the subject of the initial moment of conversion or purification is not (or not

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<sup>94</sup> Reversals include Francis’ return to the beggar he avoids (*LMj I.1*), his learning to love scorn and hate praise (*LMj VI.2–3*), or his coveting of poverty as if it were gold (*LMj VII.1*).

<sup>95</sup> Prominent asceticisms and afflictions include Francis’ purifying sickness (*LMj I.2*), his rejection of his already spare form of dress (*LMj II.1*), his rejection of creature comforts (*LMj V.1–4*), and his perplexity over whether to pray or to preach (*LMj XII.1–2*), and his physical incapacity in his wasted and moribund body (*LMj XIV.1*).

<sup>96</sup> Prominent relocations include Francis’ flight to San Damiano (*LMj II.1*), his relinquishing solitude from the sake of the brothers (*LMj IV.1*), his being apart from God because of his body and seeking solitude (*LMj X.1–3*), his retreat to the mountain top of Mt. La Verna (*LMj XIII.1*).

<sup>97</sup> This description appears within the narrative in *LMj V.1*, the section immediately after *LMj IV*’s concluding anticipation of the seal of the stigmata, and so, in a narrative sense, by *LMj IV*, Francis has reached Gospel perfection. Nonetheless, Francis was already an upright, pious, and generous young man in *LMj I*. He had no conversion from wretchedness to righteousness but from the good to better. What grace has accomplished in Francis is continually being intensified in every chapter save for the last, wherein he is fixed in heaven.

<sup>98</sup> See Chapter I.3.2.2.2. For Dionysius, purification is, not only from sin or worldliness but from any lack of perfection and confirmation in what is good.

<sup>99</sup> In *LMj I.2*, Francis’ illness prepares him for the coming of the Holy Spirit. In *LMj II.1*, Holy Spirit drives Francis to San Damiano, i.e. to hear Christ; *LMj X.2–3*, the Holy Spirit visits Francis and raises him to ecstasies. In *LMj XII.1*, he is prodded by the Holy Spirit to enact those virtues that pleased God more. The Holy Spirit is the motive force driving Francis to conformity to Christ.



only) Francis but those whom he leads to purification by word or example or even identifies as needing purification, especially in *LMj* III, IV, VIII, and XI. For the reader of the *LMj* seeking guidance in the spiritual life, the particular subject of the purification is, to a degree, unimportant and the message simple: be converted and purified.

Every occasion of purification and conversion is, of course, not strictly confined to the initial moments of each chapter. After all, I am contending that, for Bonaventure, all three moments of the conceptual triad inhere in each other. It is not only the preponderance of conversions and purifications in the first section of any chapters that gives the first moment its character, but their framing how Francis comes to manifest and teach Christiformity in the subsequent thematic division. Ultimately purification and conversion in *LMj* must be understood as the approach to becoming like Christ.

#### **IV.5.1.2 Illumination/Conformity/Progress in Each Chapter**

The middle moment of each chapter shows how Francis either lives in conformity to Christ or inculcated such Christiformity in others, typically, by word or example. The conformity to Christ consists in his possession of Christ's virtues,<sup>100</sup> his teaching of those same virtues,<sup>101</sup> his re-enactment of the events of Christ's life including his passion-like

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<sup>100</sup> The imitations of Christ's virtues include Francis' exemplary obedience (*LMj* I.3), Francis' interior life is described as inflamed by prayer and devotion with desire for heaven (*LMj* I.4; *LMj* IX.4), his love of humility (*LMj* VI.6), his total devotion to the evangelical counsels and especially poverty (*LMj* VII.6; XIV.4), his yearning for the salvation of souls and delight in the brothers who lead others to Christ through charity (VIII.3–4; *LMj* IX.4), his caring affection for the poor as a mirror of Christ (VIII.5), his experience of ecstatic wisdom intimacy with God through prayer (*LMj* X.4), his untaught understanding of souls and scripture on account of his perfect imitation of Christ through his activity (*LMj* XI.2; XII.2), and his total transformation into to Christ crucified (XIII.3).

<sup>101</sup> Francis exhorts the brothers to pray constantly and revere the cross (*LMj* IV.3), to embrace well-discerned mortification in the pattern of Christ (*LMj* V.6–7), his teaching in the "school of Christ" to bar brothers from prelacy and embrace poverty (*LMj* VI.5; VII.3–6), and gives his example in how nothing

experiences,<sup>102</sup> and the experiences of mystical visions by or of Francis.<sup>103</sup> In this way, Francis' life is presented as the model for progress in the spiritual life.

These middle sections of each chapter express the hierarchical power of illumination by including visionary experiences alongside examples of lived Christoformity. This set of data, seemingly disparate, coheres when understood as different aspect of illumination—or enlightenment, as I called it to distinguish it from ἐλλάμψις in Ch. I. Illumination, understood as Dionysian φωτίσμος, is the personal reception and transmission of Christ the light unto both θεομίμησις, imitative action, and θεωρία, the vision of Christ who has so descended for our deification.<sup>104</sup> Hence, there is an inner unity to the lived virtues or their inculcation and knowledge of Christ and heavenly realities: Christ is the form of them all, and moreover, what is seen in Francis's life and taught by him without words is Christ. It is Christ, after all, who is the Exemplar and the Wisdom of God, and wisdom, as Bonaventure followed from Augustine, is not

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in common with the world by dying naked like Christ praying that Christ might teach all do to their duty (*LMj* XIV.3).

<sup>102</sup> Re-enactments of Christ's life include his being stripped naked by his earthly father to follow the Crucified to his heavenly Father (*LMj* II.3–4), gathering his early disciples whom he sends out two by two (*LMj* III.2–7), Francis preaches to people of all dignity and even the animals and shows Christ like power over nature (*LMj* XII.2–8), Francis receives the wounds of Christ manifesting his total conformity to and imitation Christ in his life and death (*LMj* XIII.2–4), finally Francis dies naked on the ground as an expressed likeness of the naked Christ with whom he passes out of this world to the Father through his perfect poverty (*LMj* XIV.3–4).

<sup>103</sup> Visions in the middle chapters include Francis' vision of the cross-signed weapons (*LMj* I.3), brother Sylvester's vision of Francis defeating a dragon over Assisi, his appearance to the brothers as a fiery chariot revealing heavenly mysteries and authenticating his teaching (*LMj* IV.4), his levitation and visible illumination while praying in the form of the cross (*LMj* X.4), Francis' vision of the Seraphim in the form of Christ crucified (*LMj* XIII.3).

<sup>104</sup> See description in I.3.2.2.2. The *LMj* has no equivalent to the *CH-EH* duology's identification of φωτίσμος as transmitted through the angels and the sacraments. Nor does Bonaventure employ the language of Christ as the “*claritas*” in the *LMj*, although he does refer to the divine *claritas* absorbing Francis soul upon death, but does uses nominal and verbal forms of *illuminatio*, the Latinised form of Dionysius doctrine of ἐλλάμψις and, the procession Christ as the light of the Father that founds the three hierarchical powers.

only discursive knowledge but, in a higher way, worship.<sup>105</sup> Francis, by extension, is an exemplar of Christ his exterior life because he is interiorly conformed to Christ. As the proximate exemplar of Christ, Francis both manifests Christ (and God's love in Christ) and inculcates the Christlike way of life to be lived *for the whole Church*, albeit in different degrees.<sup>106</sup>

Thus, in these middle sections, those characters who have eyes to see and we the readers, see Christ through Francis, who functions not unlike a sacrament.<sup>107</sup> This is no more evident than in the middle section of *LMj* XIII. There, Bonaventure, like Celano,<sup>108</sup> calls the stigmata a sacrament but also puts that attribution in the mouth of Brother

<sup>105</sup> Cf. I *Sent* d. 46, dub. 5 (I, 835B): "Dicendum, quod sapientia uno modo dicit cognitionem veram; alio modo dicit cognitionem veram et nobilissimam, quia per causas altissimas; tertio modo dicit cognitionem veram, nobilem et sapientiam; quarto modo sapientia non dicit aliam cognitionem quam religionem divinam sive cultum, secundum quod dicitur, quod pietas ipsa est sapientia sive theosebia; et haec consistit, ut dicit Augustinus, in fide, spe et caritate, et hoc modo claudit in se virtutem, et ita opponitur culpae." See also III *Sent* d. 9, a. 2, q. 3, concl. (III, 218A) and III *Sent* d. 35, a. unic, q. 1, concl. (III, 774A).

<sup>106</sup> Cf. *LMn* I.9 (VIII, 565A): "Igitur cum iam esset in Christi humilitate fundatus ac paupertate dives effectus quamquam nil prorsus haberet reparationi tamen ecclesiae iuxta datum sibi e cruce mandatum [...]. Nam instar reparatae triplicis fabricae ipsius sancti viri ducatu secundum datam ab eo formam regulam et doctrinam Christi triformiter renovanda erat ecclesia [...]." Once Francis is conformed to Christ in poverty and humility, he renews the Church precisely by giving a form to follow, a rule to obey, and doctrine to heed over the course of his life.

<sup>107</sup> See Regis J. Armstrong et al., eds., "Major Legend of St. Francis," in *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, vol. 2: The Founder (Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 2000), 248, n. a; 633, n. a. Bonaventure's six uses of *sacramentum* in the *LMj* and *LMn* refer to the blessed sacrament (*LMj* VIII.7; *LMj* IX.2), the stigmata and the associated vision (*LMj* XIII.4–5; cf. *LMn* VI.4) and even Christ's wounds which "brought forth in our Redeemer the [sacrament] of redemption and regeneration of the human race". Thus, every instance of *sacramentum* in the *LMj* looks to the saving cross. Thomas of Celano uses *sacramentum* fourteen times in *1C*, *2C*, and *3C* and use the term a little more broadly to refer not only to stigmata (*1C* II.90, 114; *2C* 203) and the blessed sacrament (*2C* II 185, 201) but other signs and miracles surrounding Francis (*2C* II.9, 68, 126). Muscat attends to the frequency of visual language which he links with the cross and the conception of Francis as a living sacrament. Muscat, however, largely identifies Francis' sacramental status with his stigmatization and subsequent life and death. (Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 238, 241–42, 238, 241–2). Francis, however, is living a cruciform life earlier, when he resolves to give up his life to save souls and although, as Muscat points out (Muscat, 241), Francis initially did not understand how he was to give up his life, cruciform self-renunciation was already found in the very first of his virtues. I contend, therefore, that if Francis is regarded as a kind of sacrament by Bonaventure, it is already incipient in his conversion and comes to be most fully manifested in his stigmata and the ensuing events of his *transitus*.

<sup>108</sup> See above.

Illuminato, who perceiving that Francis is hiding his vision of the Seraph and the stigmata warns that he may be burying a talent (cf. Mt 25:25). For Francis shows the way to and through Christ by becoming a living—and *dying*—manifestation of the ladder of the cross, which Cross is the only way to heaven. For in being totally conformed to Christ crucified, Francis models conversion from the exterior world unto interior spiritual transformation and, finally, vision of the divine mysteries and passing over into (sweet-tasting) union with God by becoming utterly dispossessed of himself through ecstatic love.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> *Itin* Prol. 3–4; I.9. Cf. *LMj*. VII.9; XIII.1. In Bonaventure’s corpus, the spiritual passage to God is often denoted by *transitus* and its related verbal forms. In the prologue of the *Itinerarium*, Bonaventure terms Francis’ death “his *transitus*” twice, thus identifying his death with spiritual rest in God. (*Itin* Prol. 2) The association of spiritual ascent and death in the prologue is confirmed by Bonaventure’s use of the St. Paul’s ecstatic cruciformity: “Via autem non est nisi per ardentissimum amorem crucifixi qui adeo Paulum ad tertium caelum raptum transformavit in Christum ut diceret: Christo confixus sum cruci vivo autem iam non ego. Vivit vero in me Christus.” (*Itin* Prol. 3) The *Itin*’s prologue also presents the blood of Christ as the sole way to be purified. The *transitus* is further developed in *Itin* I.9, which identifies ascending Jacob’s ladder to pass over (*transeo*) God the *opifex summus* with the paschal *transitus* of the “true Hebrews” from Egypt to the lands promised to the Fathers and further or Christians passing out (*transeuntes*) of this world with Christ to the Father. *Itin* IV.2 identified the door to salvation and the ladder reconciling earth and heaven as Christ, and, implicitly, Christ crucified, see Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 120. The *Itin*’s concluding seventh chapter fixes upon Christ and the cross as the medium of ascent into and even (so far as possible): “In quo transitu Christus est via et ostium Christus est scala et vehiculum tanquam propitiatorium super arcam dei collocatum et sacramentum a saeculis absconditum.” (*Itin* VII.1, [V, 312B]) Thus whoever looks upon the propitiatory of the Ark sees Christ suspended on the cross “per fidem spem et caritatem devotionem admirationem exultationem appetitionem laudem et iubilationem”. (*Itin* VII.2, [V, 312B]) In so seeing the Christ the vehicle of the *transitus* on the cross, Bonaventure returns to the association of *transitus* and the “true Hebrews”: “Pascha hoc est transitum cum eo facit ut per virgam crucis transeat mare rubrum ab Aegypto intrans desertum ubi gustet manna absconditum et cum Christo requiescat in tumultu quasi exterius mortuus [...]” (*Itin* VII.1, [V, 312B]). This Paschal *transitus* belongs only to those inflamed by Christ, by fire (*Itin* VII.4) which is in fact God, and whose furnace Christ enkindles in Jerusalem “in fervore suae ardentissimae passionis” (*Itin* VII.6 [V, 313B]) and only those whose “soul and bones” choose “suspension” on the cross and “death” can know this fire. Bonaventure’s spiritual vision is then summed up with a final exhortation: “Transeamus cum Christo crucifixo ex hoc mundo ad patrem ut ostenso nobis patre dicamus cum Philippo: sufficit nobis.” (*Itin* VII.6, [V, 313B]) The *LMj* carries over the mystical *transitus* exemplified in Francis and explicitly draws his Gospel poverty in the ambit of the spiritual cross. In *LMj* VII.9, Bonaventure presents poverty as the means of passing over to Father, employing once again the image of “true Hebrew” as the subject of the *transitus*: “Quam cum accepisset humiliter sacris eos informavit eloquiis quod transeuntes per mundi desertum tamquam peregrini et advenae veri que Hebraei Pascha domini hoc est transitum ex hoc mundo ad patrem in paupertate spiritus continue celebrarent.” (*LMj* VII.9 [VIII, 525A]). *LMj* XIII deploys Jacob’s ladder to frame Francis’ angelic ascent to God and descent to neighbor to signal his readiness to undergo an interior and exterior imitation of the passion. For Francis was already conformed to Christ within (see *LMj* IX.2–3), and his own *transitus* will be completed

#### IV.5.1.3 Perfection/Thirsting/End in Each Chapter

Interiority Christoformity through illumination is the condition and way to the ecstasy of perfection, which perfection is to share in Christ's own ecstasies.<sup>110</sup> This third moment in each chapter, characterized as "thirsting unto blessed hope", follows three

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not only with his individual death (also called a *transitus*) but by a unique manifestation of Christ's death: "intellexit vir deo plenus quod sicut Christum fuerat imitatus in actibus vitae sic conformis ei esse deberet in afflictionibus et doloribus passionis antequam ex hoc mundo transiret." (*LMj* XIII.2 [VIII, 542B]) Throughout *LMj* XIV, Francis' dying and poverty are as one, as he passes out of this world over the course of two years with no power over himself, overwhelmed with divine power, finally coming to his earthly end "naked on the naked ground." (*LMj* XIV.3 [VIII, 546A]) Note also that *Itin* VII's chapter heading links *transitus* and *excessus mentis*: "De excessu mentali et mystico in quo requies datur intellectui affectu totaliter in deum per excessum transeunte." (*Itin* VII, [V, 312]) On the integrity of the *transitus* in the *Itinerarium* and the *LMj*, see Muscat, 137–145, 249ff.

<sup>110</sup> Words describing ecstatic experiences or acts occur several times in the *LMj*. Although *ecstasis* only occurs once in the *LMj* as a quotation from 2C II.123 about a brother's vision of Francis' throne in heaven. (*LMj* VI.6) Bonaventure's preferred term is *excessus* or *excessus mentis* which is a synonym for ecstasy immediately after the appearance of *ecstasis* ("Reversus demum frater ad se ab orationis excessu" (*LMj* VI.6 [VIII, 651B]) and appears other times: "mentis alienatur excessu" (II.1 [VIII, 508A]), "Igitur excessiva quadam laetitia" (II.2 [VIII, 508A]); "Nam per multa curricula temporum sursumactionibus incessanter intentus adeo crebris in deum rapiebatur excessibus[...]" (III.4 [VIII, 510B]); "Hoc et fratres sibi familiares non latuit qui per certa frequenter conspiciebant indicia eum tam excessivis et crebris consolationibus a domino visitari" (V.11 [VIII, 519B]); "in quem optabat per excessivi amoris incendium totaliter transformari." (IX.2 [VIII, 530A]); "quasi spiritu ebrius in mentis ut plurimum rapiebatur excessum." (IX.2 [VIII, 530A]); "Sic autem eum caritatis excessiva devotio sursum in divina ferebat" (IX.4 [VIII, 531]); "Hinc sibi in oratione luctamen in praedicatione discursus et in exemplis dandis excessus." (IX.4 [VIII, 531A]); "Suspendebatur multoties tanto contemplationis excessu ut supra semetipsum raptus et ultra humanum sensum aliquid sentiens quid ageretur circa se exterius ignoraret" (X.2 [VIII, 533B]); "ita quod in excessu mentis effectus totus a se ipso in deum defecit." (X.5 [VIII, 534B]); "ut aliud proximorum lucris laboriosis impenderet aliud contemplationis tranquillis excessibus dedicaret." (XIII.1 [VIII, 542A]). These instances of the nominal form, *excessus* denote an experience of God or heavenly matters that exceed human powers (or at least their regular course) while the adjectival uses qualify states that not only lead to experience but actions and even transformation: excessive joy leads to Francis' preaching against idleness against Assisi (II.2), seized with frequent excessive consolations so that his companions would see it (V.11), transformed by ecstatic love (*amor*) into Christ crucified (IX.2), and borne into *divina* by excessive devotion of charity (IX.4). These excesses, literally stepping outside of oneself, are not therefore, just subjective experiences but lead Francis to work for the salvation of others inasmuch as he is transformed into Christ on account of his love, not only for God, but *like Christ*, for other creatures and especially human souls in need of salvation. Thus, although the bulk of *excessive* moments in the text refer to mystical experiences and the inebriating "encounter between bride and bridegroom" (see Johnson, *Iste Pauper*, 226, n. 168) the vertical elevation cannot be separated from its horizontal implications: Francis' stepping outside himself to God places him at the disposal and benefit of humanity. That Francis at the end of his life balances both the active and contemplative life underlines their complementarity (see *LMj* XII.1–2; XIII.1; cf. *Apol paup* III.6.)

main tropes: ascent to union with God (the *excessus mentis* or *transitus*)<sup>111</sup> or the condensation to neighbor<sup>112</sup>—in some chapters, both at once—and finally, miraculous occurrences through or about Francis.<sup>113</sup> While these numerous examples of perfection lack the more easily discerned foci of conversion or Christoformity, the term perfection appears much more frequently in the *LMj* than either purification or illumination.<sup>114</sup> To be sure, “perfection” often refers explicitly to gospel perfection as the substance of Franciscan life, but Bonaventure does not set up a sharp distinction between observing the evangelical counsels and union to God. The porousness of the *vir hierarhicus*’ gospel perfection, the embodiment of his thirst for God, with the perfection of hierarchical ascent and condensation serves the construction of the hierarchical Francis.

In perfection and “thirsting after blessed hope” of his supremely mendicant life, Francis passes over to union with God, descends to creatures for their salvation in body and soul, like God, and manifests God’s power and goodness in many wonderful ways.

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<sup>111</sup> The moments of perfection through ascent include Francis’ absorbing vision of God, Christ, and divine things or being included in such visions (*LMj* I.5; *LMj* IV.9), experiences of ecstasy or *excessus mentis* through his lowliness (*LMj* VII.7–10; *LMj* XIV.6), he desires to give his life away as a sacrifice to God for the salvation of the non-believing Saracens (*LMj* IX.5–9; *LMj* X.6), he raises others to the *excessus mentis* (*LMj* X.5), he penetrates into the eternal wisdom (*LMj* XI.14). See Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 250–51.

<sup>112</sup> The moments of perfection through descent include Francis’ effusive care for the lepers (*LMj* I.5–6), and his care of priests and their liturgical office (*LMj* I.6), his establishment of the rule and his inspiration to others to take up seek after Gospel perfection as the herald of the Gospel (*LMj* III.8–9; *LMj* IV.5–7), he seeks the salvation of leading many to repentance and drives away demons (*LMj* VI.10–11; *LMj* IX.5–10; *LMj* XI.3–9, 11, 13; *LMj* XII.10–11), provides for the need and comfort of the impoverished, materially or spiritually (*LMj* VII.10, 12; *LMj* XIV.5), he heals the sick (*LMj* XII.9–10; *LMj* XIII.6).

<sup>113</sup> One other set of moments of perfection are those that show miraculous events occurring around Francis, including all nature’s condensation to his desires or commands (*LMj* V.8–12; *LMj* VI.7–8; *LMj* VII; *LMj* VIII.10; *LMj* XIII.5–6), the animals respond to prayer and preaching by showing piety in their own mode (*LMj* VIII.6–10), he is also the object of miraculous appearances (*LMj* X.7; *LMj* XIV.6), and transformed into the image Christ through stigmata like a new tablet of Law (*LMj* XIII.5–10). “Evening Sermon, 1267” (IX, 582A) also describes the “Spirit of perfection” perfection as the perfection of Charity, which both condenses to the deeds of virtue and desires to pass out of this world to Christ.

<sup>114</sup> *Perfectus* and *perficere* and related forms appear forty-six times in the *LMj*. *Illuminat* and *purgat* appear once each, although *lumen*, *lux*, and *claritas* appear 49 times all together, but not all instances describe an act of illumination.

At face value, this last moment might appear to be a return to the external world which he departed through conversion and purification in each chapter. It is, however, nothing of the sort because in the third triad of each chapter, Francis does not act as man in need of purification but as a cooperator with God, and in particular, with Christ to whom he attests. The perspective of perfection is, thus, always ecstatic, either passing over to God or condescending to creatures in imitation of and cooperation with God, in the same manner of the double direction of piety.<sup>115</sup> Perfection is, in fact, of the integrity of poverty and piety. This dynamic is comparable, almost identical in its form to the Dionysian doctrine of *θεομίμησις*, in which ascent and condescension mutually implied. Hence when Francis is already dead and “reigning with Christ” in *LMj* XV, his stigmata are finally revealed to all, his example flowers with many followers, and miracles of all sorts are worked in his name, not near his physical remains but all over the world.

The model of perfection can be summed up as *LMj* I.5, quoting the Gospel, describes the plan of perfection: “take up your cross and follow me.”<sup>116</sup> Perfection is found only through the cross, not only receiving Christ’s historic instrument of salvation

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<sup>115</sup> The stigmata are most representative of this double motion because they integrate both directions at once, expressing the intensity of Francis’ own intimacy to God while sealing with divine proof the way to evangelical perfection.

<sup>116</sup> *LMj* I.5: “Intellexit per hoc nempe vir Dei, illud evangelicum sibi dici: Si vis venire post me, abnega te ipsum et tolle crucem tuam et sequaris me.” This sentence follows concludes an important structural redaction of *2C* by Bonaventure. *2C* I.10–11 recounts Francis’ San Damiano vision, in which Christ on the painted cross commands Francis to rebuild his Church. In that text, Francis is stunned and so filled with compassion that his soul melts. Bonaventure reverses the orders of these events. In *LMj* I.5, Francis has a dream of the Crucified which results in the same heart-melting compassion but Bonaventure then adds the admonition to take up this cross which has just filled him with wonder. I.6 then follows with his embrace of poverty and pious generosity in that very spirit. The San Damiano material comes in the next section, *LMj* II.1 and serves as the introduction to Francis’ “perfect conversion” wherein he becomes prepared to found the Order. Bonaventure’s division and reversal of the Celanese material suggests multiple structural purposes. By dividing the event in *2C*, Bonaventure has stretched one cross vision into two, filling out his needed seven visions. Furthermore, separating the elements of Celano’s account of the San Damiano vision allows the description of Francis’ inner experience of love for Christ crucified to serve in the perfection-section of *LMj* I and provides a segue into his life of poverty while Christ’s command to rebuild the Church, which would lead awkwardly into a general review of Francis’ poverty, serves as an introduction to *LMj* II which ends with Francis’ at a church, the *Portiuncula*.

by grace, but especially as embracing it as the permanent model of self-renunciation and self-gift and also the ladder of ascent. Thus, Christ's cross is the model of simultaneous ascent and condescension through a love of God which relinquishes oneself to God and those whom God loves. In sum, the cross is a way of life exercising piety through poverty and poverty through piety, or, in other words, it gospel perfection.

#### **IV.5.1.4 Conclusion: Summary of Micro-level Triads**

The three moments of the conceptual triad are present in each chapter, often with one facet more prominent than the next. Chapter by chapter, the pattern becomes clear along with the amplitude of meaning each moment of this conceptual embraces. Suffering and penance, teaching and virtue, ascent and condescension through the rhythm of the chapters are shown in their inner unity by Bonaventure. The meaning of the hierarchical powers and their correlates in his understanding unfolds through these individual chapters of the *LMj*, not by a deduction of scholastic precision but by the very regular repetition of themes and tropes. This understated, dramatic, and inductive approach to describing a spiritual theology is not, however, simply unsystematic and unreliable. At the intermediate level, the three moments in each chapter are reduced to one dominant moment of the three hierarchical powers and the coherent *gestalt* of a life of gospel perfection, already present in each chapter, emerges through the organization between chapters according to the central concern of each.



#### IV.5.2 The Two Intermediate-Level Triads

Whereas on the micro-level each chapter can be divided according to the conceptual triad individually (except XV), at the intermediate level, the chapters are grouped together and appropriated as a unit to one single moment of the conceptual triad. At this intermediate level, the chapter headings summarize each chapter's central concern and so become interpretive keys for distinguishing the two intermediate-level triads, aside from the signpost of *LMj* IV.11. The first intermediate-level triad narrates the historical, *chronological*, progress of Francis' life as founder of the three orders (primarily the Order of Friars Minor but also the Poor Clares and the Brothers of Penance) and consists of *LMj* I-II/III-IV/XIII-XV. The second triad narrates Francis' various virtues in their logical, rather than chronological, order, and consists of *LMj* V-VII/VIII-X/XI-XIII.<sup>117</sup> Whereas the macro-structure presents Francis' *personal* development as he converts to a mendicant life, progresses spiritually, and finally passes over to God in the *transitus* of his death (*LMj* I-IV/V-XIII/XIV-XIV), the two intermediate-level triads attend to the life of Francis and of the Franciscan Order from two complementary perspectives, the Order's historical founding and development through Francis' actions in the Church and the virtues—really the imitation of Christ—that animate the Order as represented and instantiated in Francis' private manner of life. Thus, the two triads of the intermediate level reflect the outer and interior world of Francis as the spiritual *forma minorum* who gives the Order a “form, rule, and teaching” in his example of ecstatic, hierarchical, poverty.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> *LMj* Prol. 4.

<sup>118</sup> *LMj* II.8.

The inherent thematic relationship between the two intermediate triads can best be approached through their structural divergence: a set of seven and nine chapters, respectively. The seven chapters of the historical-intermediate triad present Francis as the germ of poverty from which the Friars Minor are formed (*LMj* I-II), the leader who established Order's rules and also founded the Poor Clares and the Brothers and Sisters of Penance (*LMj* III-IV), and whose visible sanctity sealed the Order with divine approval and taught the way to rest in God (*LMj* XIII-XV).<sup>119</sup> The nine chapters of the spiritual-intermediate triad are organized into a triad of triads that recounts Francis' virtues of self-abnegation (V-VII), prayerful love (VIII-X), and wonderworking (XI-XIII). Compared to the neatness of the nine-fold spiritual-intermediate triad, the historical-intermediate triad cannot be evenly divided into sub-triads and so appears lopsided because, by including *LMj* XIII, it consists of two pairs and a trio of chapters. In its lopsided division, however, the historical-intermediate triad resembles the organization of the *Itin*, so that, akin to the *Itin*'s narrative of the soul's ascent, Francis' historical life is actually told through three pairs of chapters and an ecstatic coda (*Itin* I-VI: *Itin* VII::*LMj* I-IV, XIII-XIV:XV). Since the 6+1 shape of the *Itin* deliberately symbolizes the six wings of a Seraph, it is entirely plausible and even likely, given the subject matter, that Bonaventure applies the same pattern to the seven historical chapters of the *LMj*. So understood, the organization of the *LMj* would place the six-wings of the historical life of Francis (I-IV, XIII-XIV) surrounding the distinct virtue-narrative, to which *LMj* IV adverts<sup>120</sup> and which

<sup>119</sup> Armstrong, "Spiritual Theology," 108; Haase, "Bonaventure's 'Legenda Maior,'" 218–19.

<sup>120</sup> As discussed in the previous chapter, in *Itin* IV, Bonaventure lays out the hierarchization of the human soul through which it is possible to approach God above itself. This hierarchization included a coordination of the powers of the soul to the nine orders of angels. *LMj* IV, the middle of the seven historical chapters, explicitly segues to the nine chapters on Francis' virtues, culminating in Francis' vision

culminates in the Seraph vision of *LMj* XIII, shared by both intermediate triads.

Bonaventure himself distinguishes the three pairs of wings in the Seraph vision of *LMj* XIII from the image of the crucified man which appeared “*inter alas*”, between the wings. Correspondingly, if the first six chapters of the historical-intermediate level represent the six wings of the Seraph, then the nine chapters of the spiritual-intermediate level should represent Francis in his assimilation to Christ crucified.

Thus, however porous their content, two distinct but complementary narratives of Francis’ development stand out: Francis the friar and Francis the imitator of Christ. These aspects of Francis are ultimately inseparable, but nonetheless they represent two distinct foci in Bonaventure’s narrative. Like the two cherubim gazing upon the on the Mercy Seat, both intermediate-level triads look upon Francis’s Seraph vision and stigmatization, the one chapter shared by both triads, however, from distinct perspectives, as the seal of the order and the summit of virtue. The experience and performance of purification, illumination, and perfection are represented in each triad but with distinct emphases that, taken together, frame Bonaventure complex vision of hierarchy, the mediation of divine life, and the consequent hierarchization of the soul.

#### **IV.5.2.1 Intermediate Triad I: The Historical development of Order**

The essential events of the historical-intermediate triad can be compressed into the following series. *LMj* I-II narrate the beginning of both Francis’ personal sanctity and

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is an assimilation to the fiery Seraphim, as *LMj* Prol. 1 and all of IX anticipate. The historical narrative resumes only at the conclusion of the virtues, *LMj* XIII, thus assimilating his developed Franciscan life of *LMj* IV with the virtues of *LMj* V–XIII.

the Franciscan Order.<sup>121</sup> In these chapters, Francis, a well-intentioned merchant, is converted by promptings of the Holy Spirit (which include sickness and visions) and the experience poverty and sickness (leprosy) in others so that he takes up poverty and the prototypical Franciscan habit himself in striving after Christ. He adopts the form of life (penance, poverty, prayer, and service) that will provide the basis of the Friars Minor's manner of living.<sup>122</sup> By the end of *LMj* II, Francis has been purified and converted to a new way of life having embraced—and joined—the poor and outcast and has been set aflame with love of Christ and his cross.<sup>123</sup> Thus, having chosen to dress in his simple habit, he finds himself at the church of St. Mary of Portiuncula on the cusp of the Order's birth, a moment of *ecclesial* significance.<sup>124</sup>

*LMj* III-IV narrate the formation and development of the Franciscan order under Francis' leadership.<sup>125</sup> In *LMj* III, hearing and reading the Gospel provide Francis with

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<sup>121</sup> *LMj* XIII.9 distinguishes the visions seen in the historical chapters according to the moments of conversion, progress, and climax: "Now the first vision you saw is truly fulfilled [...] Now the vision you saw at the outset of your conversion must undoubtedly be believed to be true, that is, of the Crucified piercing your soul with compassionate sorrow, but also the sound of the voice from the Cross." These are events in *LMj* I-II.

<sup>122</sup> His embrace of poverty and donning of the habit, his dwelling among beggars and lepers, and his restoration of the three churches at the (misunderstood) behest of Christ reaches its conclusion at the *Portiuncula* in *LMj* II, all in preparation for the founding of the Order in *LMj* III.

<sup>123</sup> His purification thus involved recantation, reformation, and yearning for God. Haase notes that Bonaventure carefully redacts the *Portiuncula* material from *2C* by dividing that it makes it the climax of Francis' conversion and also supplies narration of the formation of the rule for the order in the next two chapters, *LMj* III-IV (Haase, *Bonaventure's Life of Francis*, 211). In this way, the particular episode concluding *LMj* II transitions the reader into a new topic.

<sup>124</sup> Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 197: "It is significant that Bonaventure notes the importance of the Portiuncula chapel at the very beginning of chapter three. This is not just a thematic continuation of chapter two, but a deliberate choice to present the initial drive of Francis' radical option of the Gospel life. It is precisely in this ecclesiological dimension that Francis becomes fully aware of his call to follow Christ by bearing his Cross through a life of self-denial and through the apostolic preaching of the Incarnate and Crucified Word."

<sup>125</sup> *LMj* XIII.9: "Now in the unfolding of your conversion, the cross brother Sylveser saw [...] and the sword the holy Pacifico saw piercing your body in the form of a cross; and the figure of you lifted up in the air in the form of the cross the angelic man Monaldo saw [...]." These are the cross visions of *LMj* III-IV, set distinctly apart from those in I-II and XIII as presenting Francis' spiritual progress.

the elements of the Order's *First Rule*, which rule he embraces and in turn earns his first seven followers, who join him in imitating Christ and following his word.<sup>126</sup> The *First Rule* is given papal approval at the end of *LMj* III and thereafter Francis and the brothers are commissioned as preachers, a mission for the whole Church and beyond.<sup>127</sup> *LMj* IV recounts the Franciscan Order's rapid expansion, the emergence of the Poor Clares and the lay penitents, and the need for a second rule accordant with the Order's progress, the rule in force in Bonaventure's day.<sup>128</sup> Furthermore, *LMj* IV depicts Francis' personal effect upon the Order as the teacher and guide for its prayer life and governance and how he illuminated the world with the light of his Christoform life, leading many towards heaven by his example of offering himself for the sake of others' souls.<sup>129</sup>

Finally, through his stigmatization, death, and canonization when he "reigns with Christ" in *LMj* XIII to XV, Francis shows the power and worth of the highest poverty together with its fruition: rest in God. Francis' vision of the crucified Seraph in XIII renders himself, in turn, a visible image of the crucified Christ. His own weakness and passion-like death in XIV work wonders well-beyond the capacities of Francis' human

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<sup>126</sup> *LMj* III.1–3. Bernard, the first to join, actually joins after Francis hears Matt. 10:9 but before the second reading of the Gospel through *sortes*, after which the other six initial brothers join.

<sup>127</sup> *LMj* III.9–10.

<sup>128</sup> These three orders, the Friars Minor, the Poor Clare (IV.6) and the "Order of the Brothers of Penance" (IV.6) are represented earlier by the three churches repaired by Francis (II.8). Haase observes that Bonaventure, who redacted Thomas of Celano's vitae to emphasize the Francis was taught by Christ alone (Haase, *Life of Francis*, 208) also shifted the material about the Rule from 2C that was associated with the *Portiuncula*, the subject of *LMj* II.8 to *LMj* III.1 and IV.5 (Haase, 211). This redaction exemplifies Bonaventure use of narrative structure to define conceptual patterns, in this case, for example, placing the rule and form of life in the middle historical chapters, *LMj* III–IV represent illumination's teaching and life-inculcating characteristics.

<sup>129</sup> *LMj* IV.2: "Ideoque magis omnibus quam sibi soli vivere praelegit, illius provocatus exemplo, qui unuspro omnibus mori dignatus est" (VIII, 513A); Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 199: "The life of the primitive fraternity is built upon the conviction that its mission is apostolic Bonaventure bases Francis' apostolic option on the fact that it is simply the actualization of Christ's own option, consisting in His self-offering unto death for the Redemption of all."

effort and show the divine seal upon the Order which Francis embodies. At last, his body succumbs to his soul's thirst for God. However, *LMj* XV presents Francis' death not as a loss but, rather, as his going ahead of his spiritual sons and daughters in the perfect imitation of Christ—who died, rose, and passed out of this world to the Father. Moreover, in death, his soul inflames devotion to Christ by the abundance of miracles he works from heaven. Even his body shares in the power of his death by revealing the stigmata to all and anticipating the good things to come in the resurrection through its tenderness.<sup>130</sup> Together, the miracles of his body on earth and soul in heaven, which “reflects the face of God”, mark the seal upon the Franciscan way of life as a path of salvation and glorification in Christ.<sup>131</sup>

These seven chapters follow the triad of conversion, Christoformity, and thirst for God and the triad of beginning, progress, and consummation patently as Francis converts to poverty before the Order, establishes the Order in gospel perfection, and follows Christ beyond this world. These three moments of the historical-intermediate triad also depict Francis undergoing and performing the three hierarchical powers through his life *as a friar* serving God and the Church. Indeed, the historical-intermediate level of the *LMj* presents the hierarchical powers (and the whole conceptual triad) as actualized in concrete Franciscan life. To better articulate Bonaventure's sophisticated and subtle presentation of the hierarchical character of the Franciscan Order, it is necessary to attend to the structure which these seven chapters borrow from the *Itin*.

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<sup>130</sup> *LMj* XV.2–3.

<sup>131</sup> *LMj* XV.1–3, 6.

#### IV.5.2.1.1 Itinerarium Redux: Structure and Hierarchical Powers in the Historical-Intermediate Level

*Itin* I outlines the whole *Itinerarium*'s chapter structure as two ternary structures of ascent: the progress from the exterior world apprehended by sense and imagination, to the interior world of reason and intellect restored by grace, and finally to the superior realities (as noted above) as approached by intelligence and synderesis (the fundamental desire for the Good).<sup>132</sup> This threefold progression is also identified as vision through twilight, dawn, and noonday.<sup>133</sup> Each of these three stages is conceived as mirror in which God is seen, but since God is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, each mirror can conceive of God as origin and as end. In this way, God can be seen *through* a mirror God insofar as the mirror points to God as its source or, alternatively, *in* a mirror insofar as God is seen as present as that mirror's fulfillment.<sup>134</sup> Therefore, the three stages are doubled into six, which are the six human powers of human subjectivity and represent the six wings of the Seraph, with a seventh step above these describing the union with God exceeding these six capacities, even though the last two that approach God directly.<sup>135</sup>

Although the *LMj* does not share the *Itin*'s focus upon the human mind, a like structure obtains in its presentation of the progress of Francis's life and the Franciscan Order. For *LMj* I-II show Francis *outside* the Order and living in relative darkness regarding heavenly realities; III-IV place Francis *inside* the Order and attentive to the mediating light of scripture and ecclesial structures; finally, XIII-XV, inaugurated by the

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<sup>132</sup> *Itin* I.6.

<sup>133</sup> *Itin* I.3.

<sup>134</sup> *Itin* I.5.

<sup>135</sup> *Itin* I.5.

Seraph vision, place Francis *above*, going both ahead of and becoming a divine seal upon the Order and as beholding God with a clarity that scarcely leaves his body behind. For in death, as *LMj* XV shows, he stands truly beyond the Order, one with God in beatitude equal if not greater than the super-luminous darkness of *Itin* VII while yet anticipating the resurrection. This shared structure of movement from the exterior world, through the interior reformation, to taste the sweetness of superior realities and from darkness to light in perceiving God by and in Francis are sufficiently clear that no more be said of them.

On the other hand, comparing the division of the historical chapters of the *LMj* to that of the *Itin*'s first six chapters divided according to *Alpha* and *Omega* brings the hierarchical powers role in the *LMJ* into greater relief but demands a more detailed engagement. In the *Itin*, the subjects of the three pairs of chapters are presented to the reader as a series of mirrors in which God was seen *through* or *in* but in the *LMj*, the chapters are not so labelled, at least not explicitly. However, a construction similar to the *Alpha-and-Omega* or *per-and-in* structure obtains in the ebb and flow of the dominant narratives in each chapter at the historical-intermediate level. In *LMj* I, Francis is led consistently to see and follow God in conversion *through* the poverty or weakness of others while in II Francis serves God and neighbor, and churches literally, *in* poverty. Likewise, in *LMj* III, Francis learns, together with the first brothers, how to see and follow God in life *through* hearing the Gospel—the primitive Rule—but in IV, Francis, living *in* that *First Rule*, serves the brothers by instructing and guiding them and securing the second, permanent rule. In *LMj* XIII Francis is led to see and follow God in death by looking upon Christ crucified through the Seraph vision and the miraculous wounds impressed upon his body and then in XIV, he serves brothers one last time in this world



by offering his final example and teaching (and *earthly* miracles) *in* dying and death. In XV, the opposition ceases, when in beatitude Francis, as a mirror, sees the face of God and reflects that light in miracles that confirm the Order's way as the path to life everlasting.

<b>Francis is led through...</b>	I: Sees Christ through poverty and lowliness	III: Sees Christ through the Gospel	V: Sees Christ in the Seraph vision and the stigmata	VII: Serves and Sees God in beatitude.
<b>Francis serves in...</b>	II: Francis serves like Christ through poverty	IV: Serves like Christ in the Gospel life	VI: Serves like Christ in death	

Tab. XII The *Per*-and-*In* Structure of the Historical-Intermediate Triad

The duality of these six paired chapters (and the unity of the seventh) can also be explained under the modes of *receiving* or *giving*, of which one or the other predominates in each chapter. For in *LMj* I, Francis receives the intervention of the Holy Spirit and visions which prompt him to change his life while in II gives what goods he has to poor churches, sets aside his money, clothing, reputation and family, and entrusts himself to his heavenly Father (through the Bishop) and even to Mary at the Portiuncula. In *LMj* III, Francis receives, through the Gospel read at mass and miraculous biblical *sortes*, his vocation to mendicant life of the Order along with seven brothers and papal approval, in other words, a form of life beyond *private* poverty while in IV he gives instruction in how to best live this life in person, miraculously, and the successful advocates for the *Second Rule*. In *LMj* XIII, Francis receives the Seraph vision and the stigmata, but in XIV Francis gives, or rather due to his passivity, is given to the order and the world as an

example Christlike suffering, death, love of God and man, and union to God through his own joyful suffering, teaching and miracles. Ultimately in XV, passing beyond this world, Francis receives God and yet, by both his canonization and the miracles which follow death, also continues to give succor and a practical, imitable path to holiness in the memorialization and honor received in his own life and through the Order which he founded, informed, and sealed (as God's seal upon it):

<b>Francis Receives...</b>	I. Promptings of the Holy Spirit and visions	III. The Rule of gospel perfection	V. The Seraph vision and the stigmata	VII. Receives God & Proves the way to God
<b>Francis Gives...</b>	II. His possessions and person away	IV. Instruction in gospel perfection and Rule II	VI. His death as an exemplar and seal upon order	

Tab. XIII Francis' Receiving and Giving in the Historical-Intermediate Level

Thus, these two patterns of *seeing through-and-serving in* and of *receiving-and-giving* across a triadic ascent in the manner of the *Itin* to God from the exterior, to the interior, and to the superior or from twilight, to dawn, to noonday light map onto the triad of hierarchical powers in both its passive and active aspects as follows.

First, those chapters that focus on Francis' *seeing-through* and *receiving* present the passive reception of the hierarchical powers, in which Francis is purified, illumined, and perfected from an agent(s) exterior to himself. Through the promptings of the Holy Spirit and the poverty of others (material and otherwise, e.g. the lepers) Francis is converted to poverty himself and his eyes are opened to God and Christ's love, and as such is purified in his actions or way of life (*conversatio*). Through the call of the Gospel,

Francis is led to see and understand the form of the Lord's missionary way of life, which he adopts unto conformity with Christ, even so far as gaining seven (again, number with multiple symbolic valances) then twelve followers (like the tribes of Israel and the Apostles), and even the security of papal approval. Thus is Francis illuminated both as to his knowledge and the reformation of his life by adherence to Gospel perfection. Through his reception of the Seraph vision and the stigmata, Francis is drawn up to an even more intense vision and yearning for the God who was crucified for him and so is said to be set aflame and transformed into the likeness of Christ's passover from this world to the Father for love of God and of man in his eternal salvation, and so is perfected by being wrested from his control over himself as God's grace overflows through Francis.

Second, on the other hand, those chapters that focus on Francis *serving-in* and *giving* present the performance of the hierarchical powers, in which Francis cooperates in purifying, illuminating, and perfecting not only the members of the three Orders but even the whole Church. First, he purifies the Church. For having been converted to poverty and compelled by the talking cross of San Damiano, Francis restores three physical churches, gives the example of poverty before God the Father, heals the lepers by effort and miracles, all of which prefigure exteriorly the internal renewal he will effect upon the *whole* Church through founding the Friars Minor with a form, rule, and teaching.<sup>136</sup>

Francis also illuminates the Church. Having been conformed to Christ through embracing Gospel perfection as enshrined in the *First Rule*, Francis in turn, enlightened by God to live for saving souls, instructs the members of the Order in how to live that life through a poverty confident in God and how to pray and believe rightly.<sup>137</sup> Furthermore, miraculous

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<sup>136</sup> *LMj* II.1–2, 8.

<sup>137</sup> *LMj* IV.1.

enlightenments and healings occur by his own prayers, by preaching Francis converts many to Christ and the way of poverty, and at last he secures a new *Rule* streamlined to preserve the Christoform life of the Order as it grows. Thus, Francis illuminates his brothers and the wider Church through the Order's mission of poverty and preaching by *showing forth* Christ and *reforming souls* to conformity with Christ, leading them from the visible world to the invisible light of the Son of God.<sup>138</sup> Finally, Francis cooperates in perfecting the Church. For "fixed with Christ to the cross in body and spirit" he "burned with Seraphic love of God and thirsted with the Crucified for the salvation of men"<sup>139</sup> and joyfully embraces his sufferings as the suffering of Christ and the height of poverty, giving the brothers the model for the *transitus* beyond the world, proclaiming to the brothers "I have done my duty; may God teach you yours".<sup>140</sup> As an immediate testament to his perfective power, Francis' soul is seen hastening to heaven shining with "sublime sanctity and wisdom full of the abundance of heavenly wisdom and grace" which merited his eternal place with Christ and in its brightness it leads the soul of another dying friar to heaven with him.<sup>141</sup> *LMj* XV rounds out the perfective character of Francis' historical life by attesting to the divine affirmation of Order, a life rooted in poverty, penance, and striving after Christ as the sure way to union with God.

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<sup>138</sup> Cf. *LMj* I.3; II.8. The theme of ascent from the sensible to the intelligible or heavenly realities, which is spoken of proleptically comes to fruition in *LMj* IV.4 when Francis becomes an enlightener.

<sup>139</sup> *LMj* XIV.1

<sup>140</sup> *LMj* XIV.3–4.

<sup>141</sup> *LMj* XIV.6.

<b>As passive Francis is...</b>	Purified in <i>LMj</i> I	Illuminated in <i>LMj</i> III	Perfected in <i>LMj</i> XII	Francis fully perfected and perfects in <i>LMj</i> XV
<b>As active Francis...</b>	Purifies in <i>LMj</i> II	Illumines in <i>LMj</i> IV	Perfects in <i>LMj</i> XII	

Tab. XIV The Passive and Active Aspects of the Hierarchical Powers in the Intermediate Historical Level

These two aspects of the hierarchical powers, the passive and active are strung together in a narrative order that sets them in a dialectical relationship that has implications for understanding the function of the hierarchical powers themselves. Of course, unlike Dionysius and those who received and transmitted his works, Bonaventure allows a non-ordained cleric,<sup>142</sup> Francis, to not only undergo *but also* perform the hierarchical powers—even all three of them—much like the Dionysian hierarch. Furthermore, as noted above, Bonaventure has modified the order in which the powers occur. While the overall structure of the *LMj* intimates the recursive progression of the hierarchical powers, *LMj* I-IV and XIII-XV progress chronologically through the passive and active aspects of each power rather than, as in the *CD*, identifying having-been-perfected (or ordained) as the precondition, along with ordination, of performing all three hierarchical powers. In this manner, *LMj* I highlights Francis' purification and *LMj* II his purifying power, but then it turns to his being illuminated in *LMj* III and so on. Narratively, his being purified leads him to purify and his purifying acts bring him to be

<sup>142</sup>It is necessary to note that the Friars are tonsured, and, hence, are clerics, although not ordained. (*LMj* III.10) This status is not referenced again. Furthermore, while Francis is made a deacon according to the *LMj* and its sources, he is never so called in the historical chapters, which detail Francis' place in the Church. Francis' eventual or even late clerical status, associated with the first nativity scene at Greccio, does not factor in to Bonaventure's attribution of the hierarchical powers to Francis in any overarching manner.

illuminated, and so on, so that not only is there a mutual interiority among the three hierarchical powers, passion and action also return upon each other rather than existing in the relationship of the unidirectional subsequence of higher and lower.<sup>143</sup> Indeed, Francis, in these seven chapters, is most active—most perfective—when at his most passive. When stigmatized, debilitated, and aflame for God and men in his imitation of Christ's passion and *transitus* in this world and literally dead to the world in XV, he serves it most fully, especially from heaven.<sup>144</sup> If this structure should be taken not as an exceptional application to Francis but as novel interpretation of the hierarchical powers generally by Bonaventure, it has at least one significant implication: the Friars Minor and all who take up penance or poverty, as the second and third Orders did, have an effect upon the Church are not just as expressions the power of the ordained clerics working upon them.<sup>145</sup> Bonaventure by no means eliminates the unique of role of the ordained clerics, especially the priesthood and episcopacy in the Church, nonetheless, he does expand the

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<sup>143</sup> The transitions between the chapters of historical-intermediate level are pronounced. At the end of *LMj* I, Francis has chosen to dwell among the poverty he embraces in *LMj* II. In turn, *LMj* II begins with one last cross vision to Francis (as in *LMj* I) and concludes at the *Portiuncula*, where the Order will be founded in *LMj* III. *LMj* III ends with the first Rule's confirmation and *LMj* IV begins with a reference to the *First Rule* and concludes by anticipating the *stigmata* of *LMj* XIII. *LMj* XIII looks back upon the previous four historical chapters ends with a meditation upon the *stigmata* as worthy of acceptance. *LMj* XIV takes up Francis embrace of his coming death and concludes with Nature's praise of Francis, which anticipates the canonization of *LMj* XV.

<sup>144</sup> Hayes describes the Holy Spirit's passivity in the Trinity as neither produced nor producing but still truly God, see Zachary Hayes, "Bonaventure's Trinitarian Theology," in *A Companion to Bonaventure*, by Jared Goff, J.A. Wayne Hellmann, and Jay M. Hammond, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Boston: Brill, 2013), 227–233. Francis' passivity may not only be a function of being a creature elevated by an active God, but an appropriation to the Holy Spirit. Further consideration of this possibility must be left for another occasion.

<sup>145</sup> Bonaventure's student, Peter of John Olivi, will argue that holy religious are more perfective than unholy Bishops, in the Dionysian sense in ninth question of his own *Questiones disputatae de evangelicae perfectioni* d. 9, published as Pierre Jean Olivi, "Questio de usu paupere," in *De usu paupere: the Quaestio and the Tractatus*, ed. David Burr, Italian medieval and Renaissance studies 4 (Firenze : Perth: L.S. Olschki ; University of W. Australia Press, 1992), 3–85, see the objection at 13.311–319 and Olivi's response at 69.2223–2230.

active hierarchical powers which are exercised for Church beyond the exclusive domain of the ordained.<sup>146</sup>

#### IV.5.2.1.2: The Ecclesial Emphasis in the Historical-Intermediate Level

Having noted that Francis and the Order benefit the whole Church through undergoing and even performing the hierarchical powers which describe the deification of its members and their assimilation to the heavenly hierarchies in the Dionysian tradition, which performance had been traditionally reserved to the angelic and earthly hierarchs (and their ordained subordinates), it is necessary to point the broader ecclesiastical framing of these seven chapters of the historical-intermediate level. At that level, Francis' spiritual progress is punctuated by events, meetings, and visions that express his devotion to God through and towards the Church, that is, the Church on earth. Appropriately, *LMj* I, on Francis' "secular life", has scarcely any interaction between Francis and the institutional Church, aside from his support for liturgical needs of poor priests, and only after the intervention of the Holy Spirit.<sup>147</sup> *LMj* II, on his "perfect conversion", by contrast, is richer in that regard, showing Francis' ecclesial significance in his being singled out for the renewal of the Church (the mystical body on earth) at its beginning, at St. Damiano where Francis was called by Christ to rebuild his Church,<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> As noted above, the brothers are tonsured, but Bonaventure does not otherwise draw attention to their ecclesiastical grade. While their Order is given the authority to preach, the poverty and mendicancy which the root of their hierarchical—that is Christoform and angeloform—life do not depend upon tonsure.

<sup>147</sup> *LMj* I.6.

<sup>148</sup> Muscat explains that through the command from the San Damiano cross "Francis wins over every feeling of shame in being a mendicant. In his choice, which is the result of the command of Christ Himself, Francis introduces a new way of life which is markedly ecclesiological." (Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 196.)

and concluding in two of the three Church buildings he repairs, and furthermore, showing his reception, naked, by the Bishop of Assisi.<sup>149</sup> In *LMj* III, Francis first hears the call of the Gospel at mass and the Order which it inspires is earns a *papal* approval for its *First Rule*.<sup>150</sup> Perhaps as a bookend to the middle pair, *LMj* IV connects the approval of the *Second Rule* with Francis' dream, in which he is commanded to gather crumbs (representing the words of the Gospel) into a single host (representing the *Second Rule*) and give it to those who want to eat it—thus he gives quasi-Eucharistically what he first received at mass in *LMj* III.<sup>151</sup> Furthermore, even though they lacked liturgical books, Francis teaches the brothers to keep the hours of the divine office nonetheless by praying, preferably mentally but at least vocally.<sup>152</sup> In *LMj* XIII, the stigmata and revelations to Francis are called sacraments and if this is too esoteric and tenuous a claim to ecclesial symbolism, the appearance of the Seraph is at least an encounter with the Church above while the truth of the stigmata is attested by Pope Alexander IV.<sup>153</sup> Moreover, *LMj* IV,

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<sup>149</sup> *LMj* II.1, 4, 8.

<sup>150</sup> *LMj* III.1, 10.

<sup>151</sup> *LMj* IV.11. Francis' personal devotion to the Eucharist and exhortations to priests to treat the sacrament of the altar with reverence are a recurrent topic in his own writings, see Francis of Assisi, "Later Exhortation to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance", in FA:ED I, 45–51; "Exhortations to the Clergy" in FA:ED I, 52–55; "The First Letter to the Custodians", in FA:ED I, 56–57; "A Letter to the Rulers of Peoples", in FA:ED I, 58–59; "A Second Letter to the Custodians", in FA:ED I, 60.

<sup>152</sup> *LMj* 4.3: "Vacabant enim ibidem divinis precibus incessanter mentaliter potius quam vocaliter studio intendentes orationis devotae pro eo quod nondum ecclesiasticos libros habebant in quibus possent horas canonicas decantare." Francis' teaches the incipient order to pray "Our Father" and the "We adore you O Christ.", the in lieu of, but not in rejection of, the Divine Office, which Office was bound to be prayed in the Second Rule, see also *Second Rule* and Bonaventure's exposition thereupon in his *Expositio super regulam fratrum minorum*, III.1–6 [VIII, 407A–409A]). For Bonaventure, praying always can refer to seven hours of the divine office, but as vocal prayer leads to mental prayer and through reforming desires makes desire itself a prayer, it is also possible to pray at all times. For Bonaventure, the divine office is "bound to the reception of the Holy Spirit", see Johnson, *Iste Pauper*, 138–156, esp 140: "Thus, Bonaventure goes beyond traditional prophetic and christological interpretations of the liturgical hours to give them a pneumatological underpinning." It is the coming of the Holy Spirit that brings both the virtues that transform action and grant the taste of God in wisdom. Cf. Francis of Assisi, "The Earlier Rule" in FA:ED I, cap. III (pp. 65–66); "The Later Rule" in FA:ED I, cap. III (pp. 101–102).

<sup>153</sup> *LMj* XIII.8.



anticipating XIII, calls the stigmata the “bull or seal of Christ, the Supreme Pontiff, for the complete confirmation of the Rule and approval of its author”, imbuing those wounds with an ecclesiastical character.<sup>154</sup> Francis’ death in *LMj* XIV involves the community of the Minors and is quasi-liturgical, with the Johannine farewell discourse of the Last Supper read over Francis, associating the Eucharist and the *transitus* of Christ’s passion with Francis’ own death.<sup>155</sup> Furthermore, as he once entrusted himself to the Father before the bishop, Francis does not depart the world to go to the Father without approaching his bishop at the close of his life.<sup>156</sup> Besides, Francis dies only when all the mysteries have been fulfilled in him, whereupon he is absorbed by the abyss of the *divina claritas*, the divine ray—the Son—mediated through the hierarchies, as in the medieval

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<sup>154</sup> *LMj* IV.11.

<sup>155</sup> *LMj* XIV.5.

<sup>156</sup> *LMj* XIV.6.

reception of the *CD*.<sup>157</sup> Finally, *LMj* XV has a largely ecclesial situation, including both (elements of) the funeral and canonization rites for Francis.<sup>158</sup>

The prominence of the Church's visible rites, authorities, and even edifices paints Francis as son of the Church who is benefitted by and in turn benefits it, not only in himself but also through the three Orders he founded. His role in the Church is mediatorial, albeit not in the mode as the ordained clerics nor yet, however, entirely apart from nor unlike them. As an imitator of Christ, Bonaventure's hierarch, and of the angels,<sup>159</sup> Francis is also a unique transmitter and exemplar of Christ's form of life in "in these last days", during which Francis has been set apart for the renewal of the Church.

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<sup>157</sup> *LMj* XIV.6: "Tandem cunctis in eum completis mysteriis anima illa sanctissima carne soluta et in abyssum divinae claritatis absorpta beatus vir obdormivit in domino." Bonaventure modifies the earlier version of this line from *2C* II.217: "Venit igitur hora et cunctis in eum Christi completis mysteriis feliciter volavit ad deum." Bonaventure has specified Francis' absorption by the "*divina claritas*", which term Eriugena had used to translate φωτοδοσία, and which Hugh also used in his commentary upon Eriugena's *versio*, which both understood to include refer to Christ, the light of the Father who illumines the creatutres. See Chapter II.2.2. and its notes above. Hugh's description of this *divina claritas* sheds light on the meaning which Bonaventure, certainly familiar with Hugh's commentary, may have intended: "Propterea Patris claritas, ad principale lumen suum nos reparare uolens, primum illuminationibus sacri Eloquii ad contemplandam angelorum claritatem nos excitat, et ex ea claritate illuminatos tandem ad suae claritatis agnitionem lumen que reformat, ut unum simus in illa, qui unum accipimus ab illa. Haec uero claritas Patris unius simplicis radii emissionem et illuminationem per cuncta se diffundit et penetrat cuncta, quoniam unam Sapientiam Pater genuit, per quam cuncta opera sua fecit. Verbum quippe Patris lumen de lumine est, unum Verbum et radius unus, et ipsum Verbum Sapientia est, et ipsa Sapientia lumen est, procedens a quo nata est una de uno, et propterea radius unus a claritate una, a quo illuminantur qui ad ipsum reformantur, ut luceant ex ipso et lux sint cum ipso sicut ipse lux est. Et cum sint multa lumina illuminata et uarie dissimiliter que lucentia, unum tamen lumen est illuminans in omnibus illuminatis." (Hugh, *Super hier.*, II-I.425.346–360) By introducing *divina claritas*, Bonaventure, familiar with Eriugena's translation of the *CD* and with Hugh's commentary, may be intending this hierarchical sense and mean that the light which has purified, illumined, and perfected Francis through the Church and the angels, whose source is God, even the Father, has received the one, Francis, it has been preparing through all the events described in the previous thirteen chapters. It is also unusual that Bonaventure eliminated the specification that the mysteries are Christ's from Celano's text. If *divina claritas* has the sense from Eriugena and Hugh's commentaries however, it would be an oblique reference to Christ.

<sup>158</sup> *LMj* XV.5, 8.

<sup>159</sup> *LMj* XIII.2: "Sane cum in trina libri apertione domini passio semper occurreret intellexit vir deo plenus quod sicut Christum fuerat imitatus in actibus vitae sic conformis ei esse deberet in afflictionibus et doloribus passionis antequam ex hoc mundo transiret."; Prol. 2: "Hunc dei nuntium amabilem Christo imitabilem nobis et admirabilem mundo servum dei fuisse Franciscum indubitabili fide colligimus si culmen in eo eximiae sanctitatis advertimus qua inter homines vivens imitator fuit puritatis angelicae qua et positus est perfectis Christi sectatoribus in exemplum."

Francis is totally subordinated to Christ so that his ministry, to call men to penance, is nothing other than to prepare “for the Lord a way of light and peace into the hearts of his faithful.”<sup>160</sup> That is, Francis is Christ’s instrument for drawing the members of the Church to himself. Francis achieves this ministry as the “herald”, “practitioner”, “exemplar” and “leader of Gospel perfection”, whereby he manifests the Christoform life in his own manner of life, which is none other than the life commanded and counseled in the Gospels, the life of poverty, prayer, and preaching by example and word if necessary.<sup>161</sup> The inseparability of Christ and the Gospel is shown by the identification crumbs as the Gospel verses and the *Rule* as a host in Francis’ dream, for, altogether, they communicate who Christ is and how he can be followed and imitated. What the host is for the individual, Christ’s saving sacramental body, the *Rule* (*First* and *Second*) is for the community who follows it, a saving form of life to be practiced together. Indeed, that it is such is confirmed by Francis’ stigmata, the heaven-sent proof that he *has* exhibited Christ through his life and offers that same Christoform life to be taken up by others in a common form of life. Though Francis has gone ahead in death, the *Rule* and the Order it vivifies continue to call the wider Church to the Christoform holiness of Gospel perfection and ultimately to the *transitus* the Gospel intends, both in the secret darkness of contemplation and in the bodily death by which, like Francis, one may passover with Christ, in the Holy Spirit, to the Father.<sup>162</sup> Finally, as the *LMj* makes clear, this *transitus* through penance and poverty is not the property of a select few talented mystics or exceptional ascetics but is for all and is only received by fidelity to the Church. Francis’

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<sup>160</sup> *LMj* Prol. 1.

<sup>161</sup> *LMj* Prol. 1; VI.1.

<sup>162</sup> *LMj* XIII.3; XIV.6. Cf. *LMj* VII. 9; X.4; *Itin* VII.4–6.

personal dedication to priests, his filial submission to the bishops and the Popes, and intimacy with the Eucharist frame the Franciscan Order as both the fruit of and dependent upon the Church's ordained ministers and sacraments from which the Order derives life<sup>163</sup> and temporal legitimacy reflective of its divine source.<sup>164</sup> Furthermore, in the climate of controversy which afflicted the mendicants in the mid-thirteenth century, Franciscan submission to the sacraments and the papacy signaled a disavowal of inordinate and heretical Joachimism while still laying a Franciscan claim to both an apocalyptic status and the universal protection of papal approval.

#### **IV.5.2.1.3: Francis as Quasi-Hierarch in the Historical-Intermediate Level**

These seven chapters of the historical intermediate triad present Francis' significance to the visible Church and in history as he establishes the Order which persisted to Bonaventure's day and still to the present day. The historical Francis is not a hierarch, he is no priest or bishop, and yet he is the imitator and living symbol of Christ *the* hierarch. He does not purify, illumine, and perfect through the sacraments nor through sacerdotal authority. Rather, he is purified, illumined, and perfected through their ministrations, though not by them alone. The sanctifying grace and the gifts the ministers of the Church impart strengthen and make possible participation in holiness suffused through the whole of life. However, it is the extraordinary divine intervention, his embrace

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<sup>163</sup> See *LMj* IX.3. The Eucharist arouses charity in Francis in response to Christ's condescension and his own devotion to Eucharist excites a similar devotion in others.

<sup>164</sup> *LMj* IV.11. That Bonaventure calls Christ the *Summus Pontifex* immediately after speaking of Pope Honorius III's approval of the *Second Rule* casts that *papal approval* as emblematic of divine approval.

of poverty, and adherence to the scriptures—widely recognized for their hierarchical power by Bonaventure and Hugh<sup>165</sup>—that unfold the potential glory inherent in the grace given to Francis and his followers through the Church’s ministers. In turn, Francis and his Order, adhering to the Gospel and imitating Christ, the “One who purified, illumines, and inflames”, themselves purify, illumine, and perfect the Church, not in the manner of sacramental grace, but through their penance, poverty, prayer and preaching that disposes souls to purification, illumination, and perfection because Christ himself is manifested in and through their holiness and exemplary acts and prayers, teaching, and miracles. What the Church’s authority instills in (at least) potency, i.e., Christoformity, Francis and his followers show actualized in their poverty, penance, prayer, and preaching. Francis inculcates those four fundamental acts of the exterior Franciscan life in his followers (official and unofficial) in the manner of, but yet not as by ordination, a hierarch. He does so through instilling a form of life that purifies by its poverty, by establishing a rule that illuminates by revealing the Christoform life, and by leaving a teaching by deed and word the elicits the thirst for the eternal rest in God.

Francis is, thus, a mediator and founder of a *religio* who performs the hierarchical powers, but although historically and exteriorly Francis imitates Christ, he is certainly not identical with the historically incarnate God-man. Rather Bonaventure frames Francis like John the Baptist as one who points the way to Christ, like Enoch and Elijah ascend to heaven above, and like Moses—or the tablets he carried—is marked with finger of God announcing a Christlike way of life. However, the virtues which inhabit, undergird and enliven the Franciscan way of poverty, penance, prayer, and preaching, the life of

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<sup>165</sup> *Brev Prol.* 4; Hugh, *Super hier* II-I, 424.295–305 (942A).

gospel perfection, laid out, in an orderly progression in *LMj* V-XIII do show that Francis, and by implication those who would follow him are inwardly transformed into Christ through undergoing and performing the hierarchical powers. I will turn to those nine chapters and Bonaventure use of the hierarchical conceptualities in them next.

At this intermediate-historical level, the mediatory structures that constitute Dionysian hierarchy (principally, cooperation with God in the deification and salvation of others through Christoformation and angeloformity exercised in the context of the community of the Church) supply a structure able to account for Francis' historic and continuing importance to the Church through the founding of the Order. Unlike the Church of the *EH*, Francis' importance and role is not established upon his clerical status nor by his performance of the rites, although the rites and the Order of the Church are woven into to the narrative of the formation of the Order. Rather, the fundamental elements of Franciscan life become the context of the reception and performance of the hierarchical powers: poverty, mendicancy, alms, attention to scripture, prayer (including participation in the sacraments and offices), preaching to Christians non-Christians, ecstatic rapture, and suffering death. While these actions do not receive a systematic elaboration as the sacraments and rites of *EH*, they do appear in a progressive order in a textual structure ordered according to the hierarchical powers.<sup>166</sup> The specific Franciscan acts presented in these seven chapters do not only borrow the structure of the hierarchical powers and the role of the hierarch to organize Franciscan life, but expand and redefine

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<sup>166</sup> It is possible that the seven chapters of the historical-intermediate level loosely echo the chapters of the *EH*. *EH* I treats no rite and introduces the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, while *LMj* I treats of Francis' introduction to poverty. *EH* II treats baptism which purifies and illumines, while *LMj* II treats Francis' conversion in poverty. *EH* III treats the Eucharist, with which *LMj* III begins. A fuller investigation must wait for another occasion.

the content of the hierarchical life beyond Dionysius conception. For this reason, Francis, by the mode of life exemplified and offered to others, is, for Bonaventure, undoubtedly a hierarchical man.

#### IV.5.2.1.4: Other Triadic Structures at the Intermediate-Historical Level

Before proceeding to the intermediate-virtue level, I will briefly elaborate how the development of the Order recalls two Trinitarian patterns. The course of these seven chapters indicate a progression along the metaphysical triad of emanation, exemplarity, and reduction. Francis, as father (or mother) of the order is the origin of the Order that emanates from his life.<sup>167</sup> As the model, teacher, and law-giver of Christ's poor, Francis is the Order's proximate exemplar "worthy of complete acceptance".<sup>168</sup> Finally, through his *transitus* in burning love (which includes *LMj* XIII as a transitional chapter between the virtues and chronology) he demonstrates perfected Christian love (*amor*) teaching and impelling a rightly ordered desire through his ecstatic poverty.<sup>169</sup> From this perspective,

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<sup>167</sup> *LMj* III.1. Bonaventure presents Francis under maternal images also in *LMj* VIII.1 (VIII, 526A): "[...] tanta miserationis teneritudine deplorabat, ut eas [animas] tanquam mater in Christo quotidie parturiret". Haase identifies Bonaventure's redaction of the Celanese material as emphasizing Francis' role as the mother of the Friars Minor, who at the Portiuncula and in prayer to Mary "conceives of order", "brings the order to birth" and Bernard as his "firstborn" (Haase, *Life of Francis*, 218–219). Cf. "Morning Sermon on St. Francis, 1267, in FA:ED II, 575–580. This sermon presents the three orders founded by Francis as his three daughters. If the association of Francis' with the Father even as a Mother should seem in opposition to his frequent depiction as an image of Christ or the Son, it ought to be recalled that Bonaventure's doctrine of expression and exemplarity cannot be severed. The eternal Son expresses the Father entirely as *Verbum increatum*, and so even as *Verbum exemplar incarnatum* reveals the Father. Insofar as Francis is an image of Christ, he is an image of the image of the Father.

<sup>168</sup> *LMj*; XIII.10; see also Prol. 2 (VIII, 504B) "Hunc Dei nuntium amabilem Christo, imitabilem nobis et admirabilem mundo servum Die fuisse Franciscum, [...], imitator fuit puritatis angelicae, qua et positus est perfectis Christi sectatoribus in exemplum." And Prol. 3: (VIII, 505A) "Ad huius tam venerabilis viri vitam omni ad imitationem dignissimam describendam indignum et insufficientem me sentiens [...]."

<sup>169</sup> *LMj* IV.11 (VIII, 522B): "Quod ut certius constaret testimonio dei paucis admodum evolutis diebus impressa sunt ei stigmata domini Iesu digito dei vivi tamquam bulla summi pontificis Christi ad confirmationem omnimodam regulae et commendationem auctoris sicut post suarum enarrationem virtutum

in which Francis is the founder of the order, he represents the Father as origin or power, Son as exemplar or wisdom, and the Spirit as reducer or benevolence.

As seen in his own personal progress through history, however, Francis' life manifests the movement of the economic Trinity moved by the Spirit to pass out the world with the Son to the Father. *LMj* I and II both include references to Francis being moved by the Holy Spirit in their first section,<sup>170</sup> while *LMj* III-IV identify Francis as like Christ in his preaching,<sup>171</sup> and finally Francis' stigmata, death and canonization in XIII, XIV and XV show his departure with Christ out of this world to the Father.<sup>172</sup>

These two lines of progress, Francis' personal perfection and his founding and nurturing of the order, must be read together just as they are wholly intertwined in the narrative of *LMj* I-IV and XIII-XV. As Francis' acts of poverty culminate as acts of piety so does he, as the prototype of minorite life, have larger effect upon the brothers through his personal poverty and piety. Through his poverty he elicits poverty from his followers and by his prayerfulness he establishes the centrality of praying without ceasing in the friars' life of poverty, preferably mentally but vocally also. Moreover while Francis has visions in *LMj* I-II, in III-IV the other Franciscans begin to have visions. What is his is theirs, just as what is Christ's has become Francis', and moreover, the living crucifixion

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suo loco inferius describetur.”; XIII.10 (VIII. 545B): “Christi namque crux in tuae conversionis primordio tam proposita quam assumpta et dehinc in conversationis progressu per vitam probatissimam baiulata in te ipso continue et in exemplum aliis demonstrata tanta certitudinis claritate ostendit evangelicae perfectionis apicem te finaliter conclusisse ut demonstrationem hanc christianae sapientiae in tuae carnis pulvere exaratam nullus vere devotus abiciat nullus vere fidelis impugnet nullus vere humilis parvipendat cum sit vere divinitus expressa et omni acceptione condigna.” Francis' stigmata are induced by his *amor* and imprinted by the Holy Spirit, to whom love is appropriated (*Itin* III.5), so that they do not exhort the life of penance and poverty, they ought to inflame love (as the angels do see II *Sent* d. 9, praenota)

<sup>170</sup> *LMj* I.2; II.1.

<sup>171</sup> In *LMj* III.2 the Holy Spirit makes Francis into a preacher, to the point that the Pope declares that Christ speaks in him (*LMj* III.10). In *LMj* IV.5, Francis preaches like Christ, announcing the Kingdom of God. *LMj* Prol. 1 and V.2 also identify Francis with John the Baptist.

<sup>172</sup> *LMj* XIII.3; XIV.6.



of the stigmata, while not impressed upon the other friars and sisters, is presented by Bonaventure as the confirmation of their rule and way of life.<sup>173</sup> Therefore, Francis' anagogy and assimilation to the Trinity, likewise, becomes his brothers'.

#### IV.5.2.1.5 Conclusion to the Historical-Intermediate Level

As the conceptual triad through the historical narrative shows the hierarchical powers as forming a community of imitation of Francis, and through Francis, Christ.<sup>174</sup> In this way, although Francis' clerical state is only that of tonsure and license to preach, and eventually that of deacon, he holds a role analogous to the hierarch, in the Order and the wider Church, as the proximate source inculcating imitation of Christ in others through his own imitation of Christ.<sup>175</sup> Francis' role in forming the Franciscans as imitators of Christ is not cast in opposition to or set over the sacraments—Francis is devoted to priests and the liturgy—nor is it identical with his governing role within the order since he resigns his generalship of the order. Francis' authority is found in his poverty which shows, within an already liturgical and governed Church, what a Christian is to become not in spite of the sacraments and Church governance but through them.

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<sup>173</sup> *LMj* II.8.

<sup>174</sup> See Daniel, "Symbol or Model," 57.

<sup>175</sup> As noted above at, after the *LMj* in the later "Evening Sermon on St. Francis, 1267" and the *Apol paup*, Bonaventure attributed active hierarchical powers to Francis and those who follow his way of life. In *Apol paup* XII.10, Bonaventure confronts the hypothetical accusation that the exercise of priestly works, which lead people to God, does not comport with religious life since the *EH* subordinates monks to priests. Bonaventure responds that this predates the days of priest-monks or even literate monks and that, furthermore, the religious professors of poverty who purify, illumine, and perfect do so on the authority of the bishops and the Pope. Furthermore, Bonaventure here includes preaching as a hierarchical act, a claim made earlier in II *Sent* d. 10, a. 2, q. 2, resp. (II, 267A-B).

#### IV.5.2.2 Intermediate Triad II: The Forma Minorum

While the historical narrative at the intermediate level presents Francis as an imitator of Christ and a proximate object of imitation through the exterior acts of his Franciscan life, the narrative of Francis' interior spiritual progress at the intermediate level (*LMj* V-XIII) elaborates the virtues that make his external acts holy and worthy of imitation, and thus, establish him as the *forma minorum*. These nine chapters chart his spiritual progress in virtue, not through time but by the logical priority and posteriority of the virtues. Bonaventure's ordering of *LMj* V-XIII lays out the fundamental habits of lowliness, the ascent to God in prayer that stands upon them, and the ecstasy which is the fruit of both. As with the moments of the Order's formation in Francis' history, the anatomy of Francis' interior spirituality is ordered according to the hierarchical powers. These nine chapters, however, do not abhor historical order entirely. *LMj* XIII, on the stigmata, belongs also to the historical chapters resumes where *LMj* IV left off. Binding both intermediate-level triads, XIII culminates the development of virtue in time and describes the miraculous historical manifestation of his of virtue so that in bearing Christ's wounds, Francis' inner conformity to Christ is expressed in his body. The account of his stigmatization does not relinquish any of the virtues of the eight preceding chapters but recapitulates them, confirms their simultaneity, and integrates them into one highest virtue: to suffer to be totally consumed by the fire of love as Christ did in his death.<sup>176</sup> Like the last of the historical chapters, it is less Francis' action than God's

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<sup>176</sup> Indeed, all of the earlier virtues can be found in *LMj* XIII: bodily austerity in the wounds, humility in desire to hide them, poverty in lack of control, piety in his care for others and praise for God, charity in the love which transform him, prayer in his vision of the Seraph—a fellow citizen of heaven—, prophecy in the secrets he received, penetration of scripture, and healing through the stigmata.

coming upon Francis in the absorbing power of divinity by imposing the perfecting passion upon his soul, anticipating interiorly what will follow in his body two years later in Francis' death.<sup>177</sup>

#### IV.5.2.2.1 The Organization of the Intermediate-Spiritual Level

Unlike the historical-narrative triad, which consists of two pairs and a trio of chapters, the narrative of interior spiritual development consists of three trios of chapters, which may be represented graphically as a 3x3 square organized by the conceptual triad:

	Purification Conversion Exteriority	Illumination Conformity Interiority	Perfection Thirsting Ecstasy
Purification Conversion Exteriority	V. Austerity	VIII. Piety	XI. Prophecy/ Knowledge
Illumination Conformity Interiority	VI. Humility	IX. Charity/ Martyrdom	XII. Preaching/ Healing
Perfection Thirsting Ecstasy	VII. Poverty	X. Prayer	XIII. Stigmata

Tab. XV The Enneadic Structure of the Intermediate-Spiritual Level

As Jay Hammond has explained, this graphical structure invites multiple readings.<sup>178</sup> He has noted that, on the one hand, each trio maps unto on to one of three hierarchical powers:

<sup>177</sup> The unity of self-offering sacrifice, deiformity, and the imitation of Christ crucified is expressed in Bonaventure's *De regimine animae*, likely written after *LMj* (*De regimine animae*, VII [VIII, 130A]), see also *WSB* X, 199.

<sup>178</sup> By "horizontal" I do not mean it in Armstrong's sense as according to restoration of the vision of the world verus "vertical ascent to God", but in terms of the development of Bonaventure relationship to his neighbor.

	Purification, et al.	Illumination et al.	Perfection et al.
Trio of Chapters	V-VII	VIII-X	XI-XIII

Tab. XVI Each Trio is Assigned to Moment of the Conceptual

On the other hand, each chapter within any trio is associated with one hierarchical power and in progressive order. In this serial reading, that is, reading in chapter order, the moment of the conceptual triad with which a trio as a whole is associated undergoes an internal development through all three moments of that same conceptual triad.

Accordingly, the first trio of chapters depicts the purification, illumination, and perfection *of purification* (and the other facets of the conceptual triad) and so on with the other trios and their respective associations:

	Purification, et al.	Illumination et al.	Perfection et al.
...of purification	V. Austerity	VI. Humility	VII. Poverty

Tab. XVII Each Vertical Trio Includes All Moments of the Conceptual Triad

Thus, read serially, *LMj* V-XIII threads a continuous narrative of spiritual development on multiple levels and exemplifies the interpenetration of each of the hierarchical powers in the others. Hammond called the trios associated with one power the “horizontal” reading, and the individual chapters in one trio associated with a single power in those trios the “vertical” reading based on which axis was followed in his chart.<sup>179</sup> I will continue to use Hammond’s sense of “vertical” to refer to the subdivision of each chapter in reading order. I, however, will not use the term “horizontal” to refer the trios but, rather, with a different sense.

<sup>179</sup> Hammond, “Bonaventure’s *Legenda Maior*,” 484–85.

In my sense, the “horizontal” reading coordinates the same *internal* moments between *different* trios. In this way, one and the same moment of the hierarchical powers can be read in the context of three distinct iterations, showing how it takes on a new mode in every stage of spiritual development in the virtues embodied by Francis while retaining its character. For example, perfection may be considered as perfection in purification, in illumination, and even in perfection, as in *LMj* VII, X, and XIII:

	...in purification	...in illumination	...in perfection
Perfection et. al.	VII. Poverty	X. Prayer	XIII. Stigmata

Tab. XVIII Each Horizontal Trio Repeats the Same Moments of the Conceptual Triad

In this way, two, mutually-inverse but complementary trajectories of development describe the relationships between Francis virtues in the 3x3 square formed by *LMj* V-XIII. Each virtue can, thereby, be understood according to the vertical development within each hierarchical power (and by extension, each moment of the conceptual triad) or the according the iterative recurrence of the same power or moment in every power. For example, as in the two figures above, one virtue, poverty can be understood *vertically* as the perfection of purification, culminating austerity and humility, or *horizontally* as the purifying, initial form of perfection that reappears as prayer and culminates in the ecstasy of the stigmata:

	Purification	Illumination	Perfection
Purification	V. Austerity (Pur. of Pur.) (Pur. in Pur.)	VIII. Piety (Pur. of Ill.) (Ill. in Pur.)	XI. Proph./Knowl. (Pur. of Per.) (Per. in Pur.)
Illumination	VI. Humility (Ill. of Pur.) (Pur. in Ill.)	IX. Charity/Martyr (Ill. of Ill.) (Ill. in Ill.)	XII. Preach/Heal. (Ill. of Per.) (Per. in Ill.)
Perfection	<b>VII. Poverty</b> <b>(Per. of Pur.)</b> <b>(Pur. in Per.)</b>	X. Prayer (Per. of Ill.) (Ill. in Per.)	XIII. Stigmata (Per. of Per.) (Per. in Per.)

Tab. XIX The Vertical and Horizontal Reading Trajectories

The other virtues can be similarly interpreted according to the vertical and horizontal readings, which I shall unfold below. When they are, a pattern emerges in which the vertical and horizontal orders according to the above chart (Tab. XIX) out of its visual symbolism. The vertical reading of development *within a power* shows a continuous development in Francis' union to God, corresponding to the *ἐνώσις* of Dionysian hierarchy by which Francis ascends to God. In the vertical order, the virtues show Francis as receptive and affected by the hierarchical powers. The horizontal order shows a continuous development of Francis acting cooperatively with God for the good of other humans and creatures, corresponding to the assimilation or *ἀφομοιώσις* of Dionysian hierarchy. In this horizontal order, the virtues show how Francis develops from a recipient to performer of the hierarchical powers.

The vertical and horizontal trajectories of interrelating the virtues of *LMj* V-XIII can also be integrated in a third, diagonal trajectory by following the paradigmatic chapters of each trio: *LMj* V, purification of and in purification, *LMj* IX, illumination of and in illumination, and *LMj* XIII, perfection of and in perfection:

	Purification	Illumination	Perfection
Purification	<b>V. Austerity</b>	VIII. Piety	XI. Prophecy/ Knowledge
Illumination	VI. Humility	<b>IX. Charity/ Martyrdom</b>	XII. Preaching/ Healing
Perfection	VII. Poverty	X. Prayer	<b>XIII. Stigmata</b>

Tab. XX The Diagonal Trajectory Points to the Cross

The negative symmetry of the three paradigmatic chapters draws a visual connection between their subject virtues and the cross: a diagonal line through the heart of the chart forms a cross by integrating the horizontal and vertical trajectories. The focus on the cross is also supported textually, as these paradigmatic chapters alone devote attention to the cross in *LMj* V-III. Furthermore, this diagonal development emphasizes the center or *medium*, which concept represents Christ's role in the Trinity and as incarnate in Bonaventure's thought. The center of the chart's square, *LMj* IX, indeed looks at Francis devotion to and imitation of Christ the *mediator* (the hierarch as per the *Brev*'s prologue) in its account of his Eucharistic devotion, interior cruciformity, burning charity, living, martyrdom and spiritual sacrifice. In this integration of the vertical and the horizontal, union to God and cooperation with God in assimilation are presented, however subtly, as united in the cross of Christ which Francis embraced and manifests, even bodily.<sup>180</sup>

Below I will detail how the virtues of *LMj* V-XIII, read according to all three ways of relating them together, vertically, horizontally, and diagonally comprise Bonaventure's vision of Francis' spiritual, Christoform—and therefore *hierarchic*—life.

<sup>180</sup> Cf. *Trip via.* II.4–7: The integration of union to God and serving the good of others is made explicit in the description of the highest worship of and intimacy with God as dying for the world.

#### IV.5.2.2.2 Vertical Triads and Narrative Spiritual Development

The account of the virtues belonging to Francis' interior life begins with purification, particularly the most exteriorly oriented form of purification, namely, Francis' austerity, through which he relinquishes physical comforts in food, clothes, and dwellings.<sup>181</sup> It is the purification of purification, in which he withdraws from the world. Francis' corporal severity leads to his interior purification from self-regard through embracing humility and its correlate, obedience, the topics of *LMj* VI.<sup>182</sup> Conscious of his own lowliness and desiring to be deemed lowly by others, Francis' submits himself to others through obedience, as exemplified by his resignation from leading the order he founded.<sup>183</sup> In this way, in the illumination of purification, he is thereby conformed to Christ's humility and obedience manifested by his incarnation. Francis' desire for self-abnegation through obedience culminates, in turn, in the poverty of *LMj* VII. He relinquishes the possession of anything whatsoever: status, subjective delights and even his own mind:

“Whoever desires to attain this height,” he said, “must renounce in some way not only worldly wisdom but also the expertise of knowledge, that having renounced even this possession he might enter into the mighty works of the Lord and offer himself naked to the arms of the Crucified.”<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> *LMj* V.1–4.

<sup>182</sup> In *DEP*, Obedience is independent. The virtues of Gospel perfection in *LMj* V-VII is ordered differently than in the *DEP*. *DEP* introduces humility as the root of the evangelical perfection and subordinates austerity, or exterior humility, as a result of interior humility. Poverty does follow humility in *DEP*, but obedience is the summit of perfection rather than the entryway to humility.

<sup>183</sup> *LMj* VI.4.

<sup>184</sup> *LMj* VII.2 (VIII, 523A): “Ad huius inquit culmen qui cupit attingere non solum mundanae prudentiae verum etiam litterarum peritiae renuntiare quodam modo debet ut tali expropriatus possessione introeat in potentias domini et nudum se offerat brachiis crucifixi.”



Francis gives all away—even his very self—but in this total renunciation Francis, while still in the world, inwardly gains passage over to the Lord *out of the world* to his spiritual gain, the perfection of his purification. This passing-over is the *transitus*, in which he joins Christ in passing out of this world to the Father, the description of which Bonaventure puts on Francis’ lips later in the chapter, when Francis was so poor that he begged alms from the other mendicant brothers:

When he had humbly received [the alms], he taught (*informavit*) them with sacred eloquence that passing through (*transeuntes*) the desert of this world just as pilgrims, strangers and true Hebrews, they continually celebrate the Passover of the Lord—that is, his *transitus* out of this world to the Father—in the spirit of poverty.<sup>185</sup>

This *transitus* or passover to Father in *LMj* VII.9 brings the first triad of virtues to its climax. Through poverty, Francis receives “special care” from God, “the Father of the poor”.<sup>186</sup> having renounced sensible/exterior (*LMj* V) and interior/intelligible possessions (VI), Francis’ himself is given over in ecstasy to God and neighbor (VII). Poverty, although it connotes a tangible lack, is not a return to the exterior austerity of *LMj* V. Rather, poverty and the mendicancy that accompanies it are a departure from the world since Francis subsists by a complete reliance upon alms, given for and through God are the “bread of angels”.<sup>187</sup> In turn, *LMj* VII.10-12 also recount how Francis’ “wealthy poverty supplied” the needs of others, not only materially, but by leading others to

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<sup>185</sup> *LMj* VII.9 (VIII, 525A): “Quam cum accepisset humiliter sacris eos informavit eloquiis quod transeuntes per mundi desertum tamquam peregrini et advenae verique Hebraei Pascha domini hoc est transitum ex hoc mundo ad patrem in paupertate spiritus continue celebrarent.” I have departed from FA:ED II’s translation in order to show that Francis explains that their poverty is a celebration of the Lord’s passover

<sup>186</sup> *LMj* VII.9.

<sup>187</sup> *LMj* VII.8. In this case Bonaventure calls alms received “the bread of angels” because angels prompt that it be given to those who seek it for love of God *out of* God’s love,

embrace poverty and supplying “those things that are given to all in the usual plan of divine providence”, i.e., spiritual goods.<sup>188</sup> Thus through austerity, humility and obedience, and poverty, Francis is reconfigured towards the world to the extent that creation, by God’s good pleasure, in turn supplies his needs in response to what he has given up.<sup>189</sup> Indeed, so fully reliant on God’s generosity, like the angels, Francis even begins to cooperate God’s generosity for his neighbor.<sup>190</sup> For in the perfection of his purification and gradual self-abnegation, Francis also cooperates in the *purification* of another. Such enriching poverty echoes Dionysian principle once uttered by Proclus: the perfected *qua* perfect perfects another.<sup>191</sup> In this case the perfection which perfect is Francis’—*Christ’s*—poverty, the root of Gospel perfection and the “special way to salvation.”<sup>192</sup> Purification, therefore, as represented by *LMj* V-VII does not only pertain to the rejection of sin, but to turning toward to the Lord, just as Francis at the beginning of his conversion turned not merely from evil to good, but from the good to the better, passing out of the world with Christ to the stability of the Father’s embrace.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> *LMj* VII.10, 12. That Francis’ “*pauperies opulenta*” supplies for needs is said at the end of *LMj* VII.10, but its sense applies to all of the episodes of *LMj* VII.10–12.

<sup>189</sup> In *LMj* V and VI, Austerity and Humility are also balanced by the comforts of other creatures in response to his Austerity and the obedience of other creatures to him in response to his humility, see Cousins, “The Image of St. Francis in Bonaventure’s *Legenda Maior*.” Francis also teaches the brothers that whoever wants to be first must be a servant and a slave. Bonaventure says through his own humility and obedience, God obey’s Francis prayers. This continues the theme that what Francis renounces he receives back in a much better form. (*LMj* VI.5, 7, 10.)

<sup>190</sup> *LMj* VII.10, 12.

<sup>191</sup> Cf. Proclus, *El. Th.* prop. 27.

<sup>192</sup> *LMj* VII.1.

<sup>193</sup> See Armstrong, “Spiritual Theology”, 164–172. Armstrong focuses on purification as the driving out of sin and its accompanying sorrow and the awareness of his nothingness before God. While this is true, the correlative positive aspect of purification is an increasing dependence upon God who supplies Francis’ needs, obeys his prayers, and receives his soul in Christ. The culmination in purification is to be held by the Lord and to be firmly established in the spiritual life. This is implied in Armstrong’s description of purification as productive of the peace necessary for the next illuminative stage. (Armstrong, 172.) Nonetheless, I contend that 1) illumination is already occurrent if not fully flowered in the positive stability of purification since 2) the transitus in which purification concludes is always already dependent

The transition from the triad of Francis being purified (*LMj* V-VII) to the triad being illuminated (VIII-X) highlights the integral unity between poverty (VII) and piety (VIII).<sup>194</sup> In *LMj* VIII's introduction, Bonaventure treats piety as implicitly active in the previous three virtues:

True piety, which according to the Apostle gives power to all things had so filled Francis heart and so penetrated its depths that it seemed to have claimed man of God completely into its dominion.<sup>195</sup>

There are four aspects of this piety which “works all things”, which both recall the previous virtues and anticipates those yet to come:

This [piety] is what through devotion, lifted him up into God; through compassion transformed him into Christ; through self-emptying, turned him to his neighbor; through universal reconciliation with each thing refashioned him into the state of innocence.<sup>196</sup>

This introduction to piety highlights the love of God, the thematic concern of the vertical progress in illumination through *LMj* VIII-X, but it does not leave the earlier virtues behind. Francis elevation through devotion<sup>197</sup> and descent through self-emptying reflect the double direction of poverty towards the superior God and the inferior indigent

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upon Christoformity, as indicated by the Cruciform description of austerity and the Christoformity of humility-obedience (*LMj* VI .1, 5).

<sup>194</sup> See IV.4.2 above.

<sup>195</sup> *LMj* VIII.1.

<sup>196</sup> *LMj* VIII.1 (VIII, 526A): “Haec est quae ipsum per devotionem sursum agebat in deum per compassionem transformabat in Christum per condensationem inclinabat ad proximum et per universalem conciliationem ad singula refigurabat ad innocentiae statum.”

<sup>197</sup> An emphasis on devotion is found throughout Bonaventure's corpus. Devotion is worship either as an act or habit, deeply connected with prayer, oblation, unction or union with God. See Bougerol, *Lexique Saint Bonaventure*, 53.

neighbor.<sup>198</sup> The Christoform-ing compassion of charity and power of prayer (*LMj* IX and X) will further stress their unity. As the transition from *LMj* VII to VIII suggests, ascent and descent are two sides of one ecstatic motion in imitation of Christ, the loving worship of God for the sake of the world. Indeed, *LMj* VIII.1 continues by stating that Francis' reveres "the ministers of God's word" because they piously lead souls and especially sinners to conversion for the sake of Christ, an "*officium*" that Bonaventure says, is "more acceptable to the Father of mercies than every (other) sacrifice."<sup>199</sup> Thus, although poverty was the climax of the narrative triad of purification, *LMj* VIII's focus on piety does not signal break with the first three chapters but an investigation of the worshipfulness and Godward ecstasy of poverty by looking at it under different aspect.

Whereas *LMj* V-VII approached Francis's ascent to God through his virtues renouncing the world and even of himself, *LMj* VIII-X approaches Francis ascent to God through three different virtues of love. These virtues, affectionate piety, burning charity, and zealous prayer, describe Francis' interior vision and willing embrace of God and other creatures and persons *in God*.<sup>200</sup> Focused on Francis interior life *per se*, *LMj* VIII-X are associated with illumination. Illumination, however, as noted above is not only a

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<sup>198</sup> As noted above in n. 79 in IV.4.2, Bonaventure makes much use of Augustine's definition of piety as worship that allows extended meanings such a filial piety and compassion, which although once distinguished from latreutic piety by Bonaventure are now fully allowed to be fully integrated, a worship of God which extends through and is accomplished in his relationship to creatures.

<sup>199</sup> *LMj* VIII.1. Cf. *Brev* V.6.

<sup>200</sup> In light of illumination connection to renewed understanding it seems misplaced to distinguish reformed vision as "horizontal" complementary approach to the "vertical" ascent of hierarchy, as Armstrong does in his earlier work when such restored vision could be read as a function integral to hierarchical illumination, which I have argued is present in every movement alongside purification and perfection. Moreover, given the *CD*'s use of symbolism and focus on the vision of God and the angels through these symbols in the context of hierarchy, the opposition between hierarchical ascent and vision is anachronistic. Indeed, even both Hugh and Erigena treat symbolism and the restored vision of the world in their treatments of hierarchy. Moreover, Armstrong himself acknowledges that in the *Trip via*, illumination is related to Christ's truth, a topic that he laments Bonaventure did not fully elaborate in the *LMj*. (Armstrong, "Spiritual Theology," 181.)

matter of intelligence or spiritual vision but of transformation into Christ. Like purification in the earlier chapters, Francis' transformation by being illumined results in a correlate effect upon or for the world, as piety draws the affection of creatures, charity for God erupts into desire for martyrdom, and prayer manifests its effective power. Furthermore, piety, charity, and prayer all pertain to worship, which befits Francis' inner conformity with Christ because Christ is, for Bonaventure, the hierarch, mediator, and true worshipper.<sup>201</sup> Thus, although Francis' transformation into Christ was inaugurated in the purification of V-VII it is intensified and explicitly explained in these middle chapters.

The vertical progress through the virtues in which Francis is interiorly illuminated follows the same organization as *LMj* V-VII. Piety, the purification of illumination, the most exteriorly oriented of the three, implored, at the beginning of spiritual life, the divine mercy bought through Christ's precious blood.<sup>202</sup> Francis' mother-like love and grief for souls that have sinned that they might be brought to "birth in Christ."<sup>203</sup> By piety, Francis repudiates *spoken* detractions and avails aid for broken bodies and destitution. Through the same piety he looks irrational creatures as "brother and sister" because he sees God, their common source, through them.<sup>204</sup> Preternaturally attracted to him on account of his God-seeing piety, many animals obey the innocent Francis, restored to the right relationship between God and creation, and are led to worship God as

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<sup>201</sup> *DMT*, q. 1, a. 2, concl. (V, 56A): "Et quia summus et maximus cultor omnium fuit Iesus Christus [...]"

<sup>202</sup> *LMj* VIII.1.

<sup>203</sup> *LMj* VIII.2. Maternal imagery is also used in God the Father's response to Francis' impetrations that evil done by members of the order would be cursed, to which the Father says that he has called the Order and other good Friars "yet unborn" will be "born", that is, they will take the place of the bad Friars. (*LMj* VIII.3).

<sup>204</sup> *LMj* VIII.6ff.

far as they are able in their own mode.<sup>205</sup> The love of piety, broadly speaking, stands in an external position by imploring the God's mercy for the souls others for Christ's sake, nurturing their ailing bodies, and approaching God through the visible creation.

*LMj* IX presents the illumination of Francis' illumination as his burning charity, his love for God and human souls *in themselves*, and it is this interiorly-oriented love which animates exterior piety.<sup>206</sup> By piety, Francis is restored to right relationship with the creator and the visible creation, but by charity he is inwardly conformed to God the redeemer and "bridegroom" and returns love "to him who loved us so greatly."<sup>207</sup> *LMj* IX is a direct continuation to the ascents begun *LMj* VIII regarding God and salvation. Whereas Francis was raised to God the source of creatures *through creatures* in piety, by the charity *within* himself, he sees "in beautiful things, beauty itself" and "with a feeling of unprecedented devotion he savored in each and every creature—as if by so many rivulets—that Goodness which is their fountain source."<sup>208</sup> i.e. their interiority through his inner conformity to Christ.<sup>209</sup> Francis' interior charity also burns for Christ, for "Jesus Christ crucified always rested as a bundle of myrrh in the bosom of Francis' soul [...]." Not only does Francis burn with love for Christ himself and those through whom Christ's salvation was cooperated, Mary, the angels, and the apostles, he also burned for the salvation of those for whom Christ died.<sup>210</sup> Hence, "[Francis] longed to be totally

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<sup>205</sup> *LMj* VIII.12. Bonaventure teaches that as the animals rebelled against humanity in the Fall, Francis gains their obedience by his restoration to holiness. Francis is, after all, the imitator of Christ the *new Adam*. See *Brev* VII.4 for the relationship between humanity and the irrational creatures in creation, the fall, and eschaton.

<sup>206</sup> *LMJ* VIII.1. Pious preaching arises out of perfect charity.

<sup>207</sup> *LMj* IX.1.

<sup>208</sup> *LMJ* IX.1. The ascent of seeing God through creatures as source to seeing God as Goodness in creatures as Goodness resembles *Itin* V and VI.

<sup>209</sup> *LMj* IX.1–2.

<sup>210</sup> *LMj* IX.2–3.

transformed into [Christ] by the fire of ecstatic love”—a transformation that would extend to sharing in Christ’s saving death through the desire for martyrdom.<sup>211</sup> Thus illuminated by interior conformity to Christ by charity, the fraternal of love piety, which had made him a brother to other creatures, is elevated to a higher brotherhood with those “who are marked in the image of their creator and redeemed with the blood of their Author”, that is, humanity.<sup>212</sup>

So transformed into Christ inwardly by charity, *LMj* X at last describes the perfection of illumination, the virtue of Francis’ ascent to God in prayer. As inner charity followed exterior piety, not in time but in logical succession,<sup>213</sup> charity renders Francis “insensible to earthly desires” and zealous “to keep his spirit in the presence of God by praying without ceasing [...]”<sup>214</sup> His exterior reorientation in piety and interior transformation in charity lead to the superior: Francis’ yearning to be with God since he is separated by his body alone—and even then, his ecstasies occasionally even shine through his body.<sup>215</sup> Borne above by the flame of love into perpetual prayer Francis possesses, or rather, is possessed by, God and God’s light, which is the perfection of illumination in intimate and delightful contemplation, where Francis is rapt with groans in private ecstasy. Here he has joined the angels as a citizen and, save in body, stands beyond the world.<sup>216</sup> This is not of course, the end of Francis’ virtues—he is still wracked

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<sup>211</sup> *LMj* IX.4–5. See Amrstrong, *Spiritual Theology*, 177–179.

<sup>212</sup> *LMj* IX.4.

<sup>213</sup> In *LMj* VIII.1, charity also works through piety, as in Francis’ preaching through word and example.

<sup>214</sup> *LMj* X.1.

<sup>215</sup> *LMj* X.4.

<sup>216</sup> *LMj* X.1.

with struggle, forced to combat the demons in prayer and hides ecstasies from those who might see him.<sup>217</sup> The fullness of ecstatic rest is yet to come in his final three virtues.

In sum, *LMj* VIII-X ascend from Francis' love for souls of others for Christ's sake, their bodies and irrational creatures (interior care for the exterior), to his love for God in creatures, God as redeemer, and the souls he redeems (interior care for the interior), and finally to the love of God apart from all (interior care for the superior/ecstatic).<sup>218</sup> In this middle vertical trio, which maps on to illumination, progress, and Christoformity, Francis follows Christ who in his earthly life ministered to the multitude by his care for creatures (VIII), who saved souls by evangelical zeal and his passion (IX), and who passes over to the Father through earnest prayer (X).<sup>219</sup>

This arc of interior ascent to God through Christoformity must also be recognized for its thematic emphasis upon worship. As noted above, *pietas* and its derivatives connote not only loving care but worship.<sup>220</sup> *Pietas* motivated by charity is identified as

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<sup>217</sup> *LMj* X.3–4.

<sup>218</sup> Johnson, *Iste Pauper*, 148ff. Johnson explains that for Bonaventure the prayer of desire, the good desires of the heart are both petitionary payers and lead upward to union with God, just as in Dionysius' understanding that prayers which seems to move God by petition in truth elevates the petitioner. (ibid, 154–5). So much is shown by *LMJ* VIII-X, wherein Francis' love for creatures in their corporeality, for the salvation of souls, and for the spiritual taste of God holds together petition and the experience of God, vice versa, that through such ecstatic experience Francis stills seeks the good of others, e.g. Francis' prayers against natural ills and for the abbot to be elevated in prayer (*LMj* VIII.8–11; X.5).

<sup>219</sup> While the identification of *pietas* as the sacrifice of mercy corresponds to the definition of sacrifice in Augustine's *De Civ* X.6, these three chapters, VIII-X, may correspond as stages to three sets of meanings of piety, cult, and sacrifice. Augustine has mercy, honoring parents, and *latría* offered to God which (cf. *De civ* X.1) which Bonaventure adopts in I and III *Sent*. On the other hand, Bonaventure's own scheme of the meaning of *cultus* and sacrifice, triads which he arranges from least to most properly so, might accord with VIII-X as *cultus* as any good work (VIII), theological virtues (IX), *latría* (X) (see III *Sent* d. 9 a. 1 q. 2), while Bonaventure's distinction of the sacrifices of good works, devout prayer, and immolation would seem to provide an appropriate model only if devout prayer, and immolation were switched.

<sup>220</sup> As noted above, at n. 79 in IV.4.2, earlier in his corpus, Bonaventure, following Augustine, identifies worship with *vera sapientia*. The Christological associations here are ripe since *sapientia* is appropriated to the Son who as Christ incarnate whom Bonaventure called the "true worshipper." In *DMT* q. 1, a. 2, resp.



the highest form of sacrifice, while in *LMj* IX, the fire of charity is understood as the immolating fire of divine worship as Francis is twice identified as a living sacrifice who:

[...] offered his [body and soul] so continuously [...] immolating his body through the rigor of fasting and his spirit through the ardor of desire, without, sacrificing a holocaust in the courtyard and within, burning incense in the temple.<sup>221</sup>

and furthermore:

Set on fire, therefore, by that perfect charity which drives out fear, he desired to offer to the Lord his own life as a living sacrifice in the flames of martyrdom so that he might repay Christ, who died for us, and inspire others to divine love.”<sup>222</sup>

It is as such a sacrifice that Francis rises to the presence God in prayer, scarcely remaining in the world. Thus the passage from *LMj* IX to X does not represent worship giving way to contemplation, rather, Francis’ burning desire, by which he is offered as a sacrifice he entrusts himself to *divine* piety, and so worship is the context of the intimacy of contemplation and the engine of prayer.<sup>223</sup> Conversely, prayer is also “comfort to the contemplative” and it is in prayer that Francis is visited by the Lord, gazes upon the passion, and is even illuminated visibly by a miraculous light.<sup>224</sup> Furthermore, Bonaventure’s arrangement of his sources shows his intent to devote this middle vertical

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<sup>221</sup> *LMj* IX.3 (VIII, 530A): “Non habebat aliud Christi pauper nisi duo minuta, corpus scilicet et animam, quae posset liberali caritate largiri. Sed haec per amorem Christi sic offerebat continue, ut quasi omni tempore per rigorem ieiunii corpus et per ardorem desiderii spiritum immolaret, exterius in atrio sacrificans holocaustum et interius in terapio concremans thymiama.” This section is entirely Bonaventure composition.

<sup>222</sup> *LMj* IX.5 (VIII, 531A): “Desiderabat propterea et ipse, illa perfecta caritate succensus, quae foras mittit timorem, per martyrii flammara hostiam Domino se offerre viventem, ut et vicem Christo pro nobis morienti rependeret et ad divinum amorem ceteros provocaret.” While the connection of love and missionary martyrdom has an antecedent in *IC* I.55, the latreutic language is Bonaventure’s composition.

<sup>223</sup> *LMj* X.1.

<sup>224</sup> *LMj* X.1, 6. See also *Trip via*. II. 4–8, wherein worship the summit of prayer and the locus of intimacy with God.

trio to the identification of Christoform love as reverence and worship. Bonaventure incorporates Celano's descriptions of Francis' devotion into these three chapters, setting devotion to priests under piety, to the Cross, Eucharist, to Mary, and St. Michael under charity, and his devotion to the name of the Lord and the nativity under prayer.<sup>225</sup> Finally, Bonaventure's arrangement establishes a common liturgical thrust between these three chapters. Francis zeal for souls and love for God proceed through a narrative arc in which Francis leads inanimate creatures to praise God in both liturgical and quasi-liturgical settings (VIII.6-10), burns with admiration for the Eucharist as the Lord's highest charity and is himself described by a panoply of sacrificial language (IX.2), and concludes with a description of Francis' disciplined recitation of the canonical hours and as serving as a deacon at a solemn mass (X.6-7). Thus, as the narrative progresses in intimacy with God, Francis becomes more actively involved in the Church's cult.

So portrayed, Francis, in his Christoformity, is drawn as a thoroughly cultic figure in his divinely-aided ascent to ecstatic contemplation of God through love not as a mere sequel to the *transitus* and transformation of *LMj* VII but as an exposition of its implications. In the purification arc of V-VII, Bonaventure charts the virtues in the growth of ascesis into ecstasy. The illumination arc of VIII-X examines the virtues that animate that ecstasy and elaborates it as conformity to Christ in Christoform worship and the experience of God through and in creatures and *in se*. What follows in XI-XIII, the perfection arc, elaborates the implications of ecstatic Christoformity through the virtues of which Francis' gospel perfection in imitation of Christ in ascent to God in the *vertical* order is fulfilled.

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<sup>225</sup> *LMj* IX.2-3; X.6-7. Cf. *2C* II.196-203. Bonaventure omits Francis' reverence for relics.

After the gradual progress from the outer to the inner and the lower to the higher in *LMj* V-X, the transition from *LMj* X to XI is, at first sight, puzzling.<sup>226</sup> Francis' ecstatic presence to God in prayer in *LMj* X is not followed in XI by a clear ascent beyond contemplation but by Francis' understanding of Scripture and the prophetic gift. This transition could be seen to stall the vertical narrative of progressive ascent to God, since the virtues of both XI and XII, on Francis' healing and preaching, are manifestly oriented towards the good of other human beings. Reading these two chapters after the *LMj* X's depiction of contemplation could even be seen to map on to a spiritual schema of ascent-contemplation-descent, as in Hugh's *De triplicibus diebus*, wherein the one who has ascended to God descends for the sake of his spiritual inferiors. Indeed, Francis' debate over whether he should pray (ascend to God) or preach (descend to his neighbor) and the divine will that he should in *LMj* XII suggests that Bonaventure may be amenable to such a schema.<sup>227</sup> This is not the final answer, however, as *LMj* XIII commences with Francis' embrace of both options: "It was a custom of the angelic man Francis never to rest from the good, rather, like the heavenly spirits on Jacob's ladder he either ascended into God or descended to his neighbor."<sup>228</sup> This introduction bridges *LMj* XII and XIII, since the latter begins with Francis' departing the crowd to pray, in which prayer he receives the stigmata. Thus the vertical ascent towards union with God is not that of the ascent of the spiritual vision in love as in *LMj* VIII-X. Rather, Francis' ascent in XI-XIII is more ecstatic still because this trio of chapters presents the fullness of his

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<sup>226</sup> Puzzling enough that it made Regis Armstrong reconsider the whole division of the *LMj* according to hierarchy that he had presented in his dissertation. See n. 93 on p. 36 above.

<sup>227</sup> *LMj* XII.1–2. Francis' posing of the question does not come from one of Celano or an earlier source, but from Bonaventure's hand. See FA:ED II, 630–1.

<sup>228</sup> *LMj* XIII.1.

transformation into Christ by a literal imitating of his earthly mission through receiving divine wisdom, prophesying, preaching, healing, and being marked with the wounds of the cross. Francis imitation' exceeds his own effort and ultimately even overwhelms his own will. In this way, *LMj* XI-XIII completes the intimacy Francis found with God in X.

Indeed, that intimacy with God Francis found in prayer is the foundation of virtues presented in the last vertical trio. For through prayer Francis has access to the divine presence, light, and wisdom at the root of his understanding of scripture and prophetic power:

Unflagging zeal for prayer and with a continual exercise of virtue had led the man of God to such serenity of mind that, although he had no expertise in Sacred Scripture through learning, his intellect nevertheless enlightened by the splendor of the eternal light, probed the depths of Scripture with remarkable incisiveness. For his genius, pure and unstained, penetrated the hidden mysteries, where the knowledge of teachers stands outside.<sup>229</sup>

and as Francis' miraculous appearance to others during his life attest:

It should be believed that this was done by divine providence so that from his miraculous appearance in bodily presence it might shine forth how present and open his spirit was to the light of eternal wisdom, which is mobile beyond all motion. Reaching everywhere because of its purity, spreading through the nations into holy souls, it makes them prophets and friends of God.<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>229</sup> *LMj* XI.1 (VIII, 535A): "Ad tantam autem mentis serenitatem indefessum orationis studium cum continua exercitatione virtutum virum Dei perduxerat, ut, quamvis non habuerit sacrarum litterarum peritiam per doctrinam aeternae tamen lucis irradiatus fulgoribus scripturarum profunda miro intellectus scrutaretur acumine. Penetrabat enim ab omni labe purum ingenium mysteriorum abscondita, et ubi magistralis scientia foris stat, affectus introibat amantis." These words largely are taken from 2C II.102, but Bonaventure connects them to *LMj* X. Haase thinks the theme of understanding reflects the Joachimite belief that the *virī spirituales* would also possess *intellectus spirituales*. The weaving of apocalyptic themes that illustrate Francis' uniqueness and novelty with the hierarchical construction of the *LMj* must be considered further, see Haase, "Bonaventure's *Legenda Major*", 317–18; cf. Armstrong, "Spiritual Theology," 182, who also sees the transition from *LMj* X to XI as grounded in the ascent of prayer.

<sup>230</sup> *LMj* XI.14 (VIII, 538B): "Quod factum esse divina dispositione credendum est, ut ex praesentiae corporalis apparitione mirabili patenter claresceret, quam praesens et pervius spiritus eius luci sapientiae foret aeternae, quae omnibus mobilibus mobilior est et ubique attingens propter sui munditiam per nationes in animas sanctas se transfert et Dei amicos et prophetas constituit"

Furthermore, Bonaventure also describes Francis' understanding of scripture, which even dazzles scholars, as a fruit of his imitation of Christ:

If the holy man had received from God an understanding of the Scriptures, it is because, through his imitation of Christ, he carried in his activity the perfect truth described in them and, through a full anointing of the Holy Spirit, held their Teacher in his heart.<sup>231</sup>

Even the study of scripture, which Francis allows to the brothers, must be conformed to the example of Christ who “prayed more than he read.”<sup>232</sup> All that follows in *LMj* XI-XIII stands upon Francis' approach to God in his ecstatic, contemplative prayer and in his imitation of Christ so that which he has experienced and loved inwardly consumes the entirety of his person, demonstrating Bonaventure's earlier dictum that nobody possesses God who is not possessed by God.<sup>233</sup> Therefore, Francis' final vertical ecstasy is to step beyond himself and become, as fully as possible, perfect in Christ, into whom he has already been transformed in his heart.

The pattern of ascent from the previous two trios obtains here in the vertical trio dedicated to perfection. In his Christoform ecstasy, Francis is not only perfected but functions as a perfector. Purified in his perfection, Francis purifies others by his prophecies (*LMj* XI), the purification of perfection. *LMj* XI is the most externally

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<sup>231</sup> *LMj* XI.2 (VII, 536A): “Nec absonum, si vir sanctus Scripturarum a Deo intellectum acceperat, cum per imitationem Christi perfectam veritatem ipsarum descriptam gestaret in opere et per sancti Spiritus unctionem plenariam doctorem earum apud se haberet in corde.”

<sup>232</sup> *LMj* XI.1.

<sup>233</sup> See *Brev* V.1 (V, 253A): “Et quoniam nullus Deum habet, quin ab ipso specialius habeatur; nullus habet et habetur a Deo, quin ipsum praecipue et incomparabiliter diligit et diligatur ab ipso sicut sponsa a sponso; nullus sic diligitur, quin ad aeternam hereditatem adoptetur pro filio: hinc est, quod gratia gratum faciens facit animam templum Dei, sponsam Christi et filiam Patris aeterni.”

oriented chapter of the three, narrating Francis' manner of imitating Christ's life by penetrating the scriptures outside of himself as a teacher and allaying the hidden fears and inspiring conversion in others—or forewarning their demise—as a prophet.<sup>234</sup> So established in the stability and purity of the divine light, Francis, who in piety saw God through the world, and in Charity God in the world, now, Christlike, sees the word *through God* and serves it from his ecstatic position.

In *LMj* XII, Bonaventure elaborates the illumination of Francis' perfection whereby he is conformed to Christ's life by effective preaching and graced healing, in imitation of Christ's ministry before the passion. Francis' ascent in this chapter comes in the form of the submission of his intellect to the divine will. When unsure of whether he ought to devote himself to prayer or preaching, Francis humbles himself to ask Brother Sylvester's and Clare's aid in answering the question so that he might “more effectively arrive at the summit of perfection.”<sup>235</sup> Their answer, that he should preach, is taken as the divine will, which Francis obeys swiftly “as if the hand of God were upon him, giving him new strength from heaven.” In this way, Francis is illuminated by “the pattern shown to us in [Christ] as on the heights of mountain”, a reference to the heavenly pattern of the tabernacle in Exodus but transferred to Christ the temple who

[as] the only begotten Son of God, who is the highest wisdom, came down from the bosom of the Father for the salvation of souls in order to instruct the world by His example and to speak the word of salvation to people, whom he would redeem by the price of his blood, cleanse with its washing, and sustain with its draught, holding back for Himself absolutely nothing that he could give for our salvation.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> *LMj* XI.6–13.

<sup>235</sup> *LMj* XII.2.

<sup>236</sup> *LMj* XII.1 (VIII, 539A): “[...] quod videlicet unigenitus Dei Filius, qui est sapientia summa, propter animarum salutem de sinu Patris descendit, ut, suo mundum informans exemplo, verbum salutis hominibus loqueretur, quos sacri sanguinis et pretio redimeret et emundaret lavacro et poculo sustentaret, nihil sibi omnino reservans, quod non in salutem nostram liberaliter erogaret”

Conformed to this pattern of divine wisdom, Francis in turns heals, *reforms*, bodies and reforms souls “in the deepest part of the heart” to Christoformity by his preaching the Gospel, thereby illuminating them.<sup>237</sup> The extent of Francis’ Christoformity is also shown by the power of his preaching, which extends over the animals (the famous birds) and inanimate creatures.<sup>238</sup> Anointed with the Spirit of the Lord like Christ, Francis holds nothing back that can serve the salvation of other, and so willfully submits his intellect and pattern of his life to God’s will and wisdom. Bonaventure remarks that Francis was so outstanding that when he spoke people paid attention “as if an angel of the Lord were speaking”, for he was, by his virtues, otherworldly and angeloform on account of his anagogy to God.<sup>239</sup>

However Christoform and angeloform Francis was in his preaching and healing, the final chapter on the virtues, *LMj* XIII draws these heavenly assimilations further upwards in Francis imitation of Christ’s passion. For “the man filled with God understood that just as he had imitated Christ in the actions of his life, so should he be conformed to him in the affliction and sorrows of his passion before passing out of this world.”<sup>240</sup> It is in this imitation of that passion, the highest virtue of spiritual death, that Francis’ will is overcome in the ecstasy of the Seraph vision and the stigmata that seal his status as the messenger of God.

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<sup>237</sup> *LMj* XII.6 (VIII, 540B): “[...] ut sanae doctrinae verbis afflueret et magnae potentiae miraculis coruscaret. Erat enim verbum eius velut ignis ardens, penetrans intima cordi [...]” *LMj* XII.4–12 relates the abundance of his transformative preaching and healing.

<sup>238</sup> *LMj* XII.3.

<sup>239</sup> *LMj* XII.12. (VIII, 542A): “Cum his et aliis multis miraculorum prodigiis praeco Christi praedicans coruscaret, attendebatur his quae dicebantur ab eo, ac si Angelus Domini loqueretur.”

<sup>240</sup> *LMj* XIII.2 (VIII, 542B): “intellexit vir Deo plenus, quod sicut Christum fuerat imitatus in actibus vitae, sic conformis ei esse deberet in afflictionibus et doloribus passionis, antequam ex hoc mundo transiret.”

The end of the entire vertical arc and the last of its trios presents the perfection of Francis' perfection, the summit of his hierarchization in conformity to Christ—and the angels—in virtue, and of his union to God. It is, therefore, fitting that the sole reference to the hierarchical powers *together* should appear in this chapter. Of the wounds which Francis miraculously received, Bonaventure says:

Thus, it is obvious to certain witnesses that those sacred marks were imprinted by the power of Him Who, through a seraphic activity, purifies, illumines, and inflames.<sup>241</sup>

It is noteworthy that here, in the perfection of perfection, that the expected term perfection (or 'perfects' in this case) would be replaced by 'inflames'. The involvement and significance the fiery Seraph, representative of both the summit the angelic hierarchies and meditation, an explanation for inflaming replacing perfecting since Francis is made like the Seraph who burn with love.<sup>242</sup> Francis finds himself consumed by his ecstatic love in *LMj* XIII. As Francis' love for Christ is intensified<sup>243</sup>, which already burned in his charity, he is raised and transformed by it:

Since, therefore, he was being born aloft into God by seraphic ardor of desires and was being transformed by compassionate sweetness into Him who chose to be crucified out of the excess of his love [...] he saw one Seraph having six fiery wings [...].<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> *LMj* XIII.7 (VIII, 543B): "Certis itaque constat indiciis, sacra illa signacula illius impressa fuisse virtute, qui operatione seraphica purgat, illuminat et inflamat."

<sup>242</sup> *LMj* XIII.2.

<sup>243</sup> *LMj* XIII.2.

<sup>244</sup> *LMj* XIII.3 (VIII, 542B–543A): "Cum igitur seraphicis desideriorum ardoribus sursum ageretur in Deum et compassiva dulcedine in eum transformaretur, qui ex caritate nimia voluit crucifigi; quodam mane circa festum Exaltationis sanctae Crucis, dum oraret in latere montis, vidit Seraph unum sex alas habentem tam ignitas quam splendidas de caelorum sublimitate descendere." I have heavily modified the text from FD:II because it did not reflect the *cum* clauses that introduced the Seraph vision as *causal*, which *igitur* suggests, indicating the reasons for Francis' vision and "*quodam mane...*" indicating the time.



Contemplative vision and submission to the divine will in imitating Christ in are the context in which Francis' God-inflamed desires transform him into the total-likeness of Christ crucified inwardly and outwardly by both a new "marvelous fire" in his heart and by the stigmata in his hands, feet, and side. Nor are these marvels the embellishment upon a completed ascent to God; their mode of reception by Francis is of the character of his final stage of ascent into God. First, this last stage of ascent is suprainTELlectual, primarily obtaining in Francis' *affectus*, wherein in divine love is impressed and expressed. Second, it is transformative, so that his ascent is not simply towards an object but towards assimilative union with Christ in thought, *affectus*, and action.<sup>245</sup> Third, this final stage is less an ascent to than God's descent upon Francis, in the manner the Glory of the Lord overwhelmed trembling Sinai. This last virtue is hardly a 'virtue' at all, because Francis is passive and "carried up" (*sursum ageretur*) to God. This passivity, which is Francis' spiritual death, is his supreme act, or *non-act*, the summit of his perfection and joy, much as described in *Itin* VII.<sup>246</sup> Bonaventure underlines the extent and power of Francis' passivity through the vision and stigmata that came upon him from above. Francis was so fully grasped by God and transformed into Christ by his ecstatic love that God's love now shines and overflows through Francis. Moreover, although he strives to conceal these "royal secrets" engraved by "the finger of the living God", they

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<sup>245</sup> See also *LMj Mir.* I.1 (VIII, 549B): "[...] qualiter apparitione crucis dominicae septiformi tam cogitatu quam affectu et actu totus fuit in Crucifixi effigiem per ipsius ecstaticum transformatus amorem."

<sup>246</sup> *Itin* VII.3–4, 6. The brief retelling of the Seraph vision in *Itin* VII presents it as Francis entering rest and the tomb with Christ. His entering the tomb is the relinquishment of all intellectual activities when the *affectus* is borne and transformed into God. This, Francis' spiritual death in which God is seen by love, is enkindled by the passion. The thematic borrowing of *LMj* XIII from *Itin* VII include ecstasy, ascent, fire, the Seraph, transformation, and the cross and show a consistent understanding of the event between the two works.

escape his humble hiding when God reveals his own glory through them.<sup>247</sup> In the summit of his ecstasy, Francis is no longer his own but, having died to himself and belonging totally to God, he is the conduit of a great good, his neighbor's perfection.<sup>248</sup> Indeed, perfected in the passivity of spiritual death, Bonaventure understands Francis' vision and wounds, the seal testifying to his full perfection to have even endowed as *sacraments* for the good of others. In his total appropriation to the cross, Francis himself may be taken as a sacrament and living sacrifice, pierced by love for the Christ, for God, and for the good of the Church as the "summit of Gospel perfection" bearing "the proof of Christian wisdom [...] worthy of complete acceptance".<sup>249</sup>

These three chapters present the earthly fulfillment of Francis' unity with God, although, as is clear from their content, unity and assimilation in cooperation with God are separated by the thinnest distinction on the basis of narrative orientation. In them, Francis' perfection is purified in receiving the pure divine light, illuminated in conforming to divine wisdom (the pattern of Christ's self-relinquishing incarnation), and perfected in the passive splendor of spiritual death through ecstatic love. Here God has entered Francis as light, wisdom, and love, as source, plan and end and made the poor man fully his own son in the likeness of the only-begotten and incarnate Son.

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<sup>247</sup> *LMj* XIII.4, 5, 8.

<sup>248</sup> In the *LMj*, the man like a Seraph of Celano's vita is made into a Seraph properly, see J. Wayne Hellmann, "The Seraph in the Legends of Thomas of Celano and St. Bonaventure: The Victorine Transition," in *Bonaventuriana. Miscellanea in Onore Di Jacques Guy Bougerol OFM.*, ed. Francisco de Asís Chavero Blanco, vol. 2, Bibliotheca Pontificii Athenaei Antoniani 27 (Roma: Edizioni Antonianum, 1988), 346–56. Hence, Bonaventure implies that Christ is not only symbolized by the Seraph but works through the Seraphic activity. The association between Christ and the Seraphim in *EH* IV comes to mind in Bonaventure's treatment of the vision although there do not appear to be any textual borrowings from the *CD* in *LMj* XIII besides the hierarchical powers and, perhaps, the use of *claritas* if drawn from Eriugena's *versio* of the *CD*, see note n. 51 on p. 155 above.

<sup>249</sup> *LMj* XIII.9; IX.3, 5.

#### IV.5.2.2.3 Horizontal Triads as Intensification

Whereas the vertical trajectory follows the arc of each trio as ecstasy into God, the progress of the virtues according to the horizontal trajectory charts Francis' assimilation to God in ecstasy of mercy towards his neighbor. Thus, while the three trios of the vertical order culminate in poverty (VII), prayer (X), and the stigmata (XIII), respectively, as moments of *transitus* into God,<sup>250</sup> the trios on the horizontal trajectory each culminate in Francis' leading others to the imitation of Christ through his own imitation of Christ by his knowledge and prophecy (XI, representing John the Baptist), preaching and healing (XII, representing the mission of Christ), and stigmata (XIII, representing the passion of Christ). As I stated above, in these horizontal arcs, Francis' virtues present his assimilation to God as one hierarchical power (or moment of the conceptual triad) that recurs in three progressive contexts: his conversion from the world, his reorientation towards the world, and finally his benefitting the world through performing that power. Since Francis' experiential ascent and cooperative assimilation to God are woven together, material that I discussed in the ascents of the vertical chapters will reappear here, although I will endeavor to avoid repetition as far as possible.

The horizontal purification arc progresses from austerity (V), to piety (VIII), and concludes in prophecy (XI). In austerity, purification in purification, Francis relinquishes creature comforts and chooses only to be endowed with those given by God, thus detaching himself from the sensible world.<sup>251</sup> This most exterior purification is followed

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<sup>250</sup> This vertical trajectory also included the ecstasy towards the neighbor in virtue of sharing the same content, but here unifying thread between the horizontally arranged triads is their intention toward the neighbor.

<sup>251</sup> *LMj* V.8.

by piety, the exterior and purifying moment of illumination. As pious, Francis loves God through caring for the visible creation while Francis' interiority is restored to right relationship with that creation, constituting a reorientation and a repristination of the exterior world that rebelled in the Fall.<sup>252</sup> So restored himself, Francis, finally cooperates in giving what he has received through his supernatural understanding of scripture and prophecy, which is purification in perfection. Through ecstatic access to the divine light by which Francis peers into human hearts, scripture, and the future, Francis calls others to purification exteriorly and interiorly in imitation of Christ, like the prophets before him, and the angels whose ministry he shares.<sup>253</sup> The distinctive character of purification that emerges in this horizontal trajectory is correcting one's own or another's relationship to the world.

The horizontal illumination arc of humility-obedience (VI), charity-martyrdom (IX), and preaching-healing (XII), as the middle arc, follows the development of Christoformity through conversion, transformation, and inculcation. Bonaventure identifies humility-obedience, illumination in purification, as the virtue manifested by Christ's incarnation and lowliness in life, which Francis assumes by submitting himself to fellow men, thereby detaching himself from world of respect and pride.<sup>254</sup> Francis' willing servitude to others blossoms into fuller imitation of Christ, illumination in illumination, when he is inwardly transformed into Christ by his charity and longs to die for Christ unto the salvation all those towards whom he is already humble. At last, having become Christoform inwardly and zealous for souls to the point of martyrdom, Francis

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<sup>252</sup> *LMj* VIII.5–6. This middle moment of second horizontal triad shows that to be like Francis is to be like Christ when reformed by piety and so set in in right relationship to the world.

<sup>253</sup> *LMj*. Prol. 1. Bonaventure associated Francis with John the Baptist and Elijah.

<sup>254</sup> *LMj* VI.1, 2, 5 11.

preaches and heals like Christ in his earthly life, illumination in perfection, effecting the restoration of bodies to health and rallying souls to embracing Gospel perfection and so to conform to Christ, the pattern of divine wisdom.<sup>255</sup> In this way, Francis imitates Christ the Word by leading humans and even the irrational creatures back to the same Word who is the exemplar of creation.<sup>256</sup> The distinctive character of illumination read horizontally is thus reforming souls.

The third and final horizontal arc follows the development of Francis' liberality through poverty (VII), prayer (X), and the stigmata (XIII). While the vertical trios each culminate in an ecstasy to God, the horizontal reading of these three culminating ecstasies strings them together. Just as being perfected has consistently been connected to effective—even perfective—power by Bonaventure in the *LMj*, each moment horizontal perfection arc presents Francis' efficacious ecstasy to his neighbor coordinate to his ecstasy into God. In poverty, perfection in purification, Francis supplies for the exterior needs of the indigent through his relinquishing all things, an ecstatic ascent to God out of the world, simultaneously divesting himself of self-interest and turning towards God in a spiritual nakedness through his care for the neighbor.<sup>257</sup> Through his *efficacious* praying, perfection in illumination, Francis obtains the needs of others by petition and even fills others the same divine savor he has received in prayer on account of his ecstatic presence to God.<sup>258</sup> Finally, through his reception of the stigmata on account of his ecstatic love which transforms him into Christ—the exemplar of ecstatic love—, which is perfection in perfection, Francis reveals divine “sacraments”, the content of his vision and the

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<sup>255</sup> *LMj* XII.7, 8, 12.

<sup>256</sup> *LMj* XII.12; *Brev* IV.1.

<sup>257</sup> *LMj* VII.2–4.

<sup>258</sup> *LMj* X.5.

stigmata. Which sacraments, though he should try to hide them, flow through him anyway at God's pleasure. These "sacraments" effect miracles, inspire faith, but most importantly confirm the *cruciform* life as lived by Francis and show in him both the way to and summit of Gospel perfection so that others may take up the cruciform life and follow Christ into eternity.<sup>259</sup> Thus in the ecstasy of purification Francis gives away his worldly goods, shares his interior goods in the ecstasy of illumination, and in the ecstasy of perfection (or ecstasy perfected) he is even a conduit for divine goods, which he did not seek and which overcome and overflow from him, by which others are led to perfection.<sup>260</sup> The distinctive character of perfection that emerges is: ecstasy into God or being entered by God and therein acting towards others in a God-like, Christlike way. This highest form of this perfect action is not simply voluntary; although Francis' agency is found in the work donation through poverty and the supplication through prayer, foundationally, it is God himself working in and through Francis, most of all in the profound passivity of his spiritual death, that succors and perfects others.

In these three trajectories to the aid of the neighbor, Francis represents Bonaventure's adherence to the neoplatonic principle that the perfected perfect their

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<sup>259</sup> *LMj* XIII.6–8.

<sup>260</sup> This process shows an inversion since he wills to give away the interior things, he shares what cannot be simply lost in transaction (his interior goods), and yet he hides the divine, which are revealed in spite of himself. In a sense he is most poor because he suffers what he does not will, not for pride, but from humility. Thus the divine sacraments imprinted on Francis are fruitful through him through their excess. This is perhaps a true case of "παθεῖν τὰ θεῖα", to experience the divine (*DN* II.9 648A-B [133.13–134.4.]). Robert Glenn Davis address this dynamic of mystical death on multiple occasions in his Robert Glenn Davis, *The Weight of Love: Affect, Ecstasy, and Union in the Theology of Bonaventure*, First edition (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017), pointing out that Francis exemplary, arduous love is not active but passive—a being grasped by God (Davis, 42.). Davis cites *LMj* XIII and Francis' living death in XIV as the fulfillment of Francis' image obedience: the skeleton decked out as a king (Davis, 2; 115–124). Furthermore, Davis takes Francis being moved by God to be representative of binary operative in Bonaventure work that is even more fundamental than intellect and will: moving and being moved, that is, which can be mapped on to *intellectus* and *affectus* (Davis, 124).

inferior.<sup>261</sup> Thus, as Francis is purified, illumined, and perfected he purifies, illumines, and perfects another. While these active powers are typically ascribed to the clerical orders by those who follow Dionysius' hierarchical thought, later in his career Bonaventure will explain that these powers are extended from clerics to the religious practitioners of Gospel perfection, at least in the mode of preaching.<sup>262</sup>

#### IV.5.2.2.4 The Cross, Christoformity, the Center, and Progress

Besides the reading the virtues of *LMj* V-XIII vertically along the trajectory of ascent to God and horizontally along the trajectory of aid to neighbor, the third reading, diagonally, attends to the relationship between the cross and the virtues. The paradigmatic moment of each trio conceived either vertically or horizontally connects the cross with the virtue under consideration. While some of the surrounding chapters do mention the cross, and especially the sign of the cross, they do not link their subject virtues with the cross as *LMj* V, IX, and XIII do.<sup>263</sup>

*LMj* V on austerity—purification of and in purification—, introduces the treatment of virtue establish the centrality of the cross:

When the man of God, Francis, saw that many were being inspired by his example to carry the cross of Christ with fervent spirit, he himself, like a good leader in

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<sup>261</sup> Gallus expresses the same idea in Gallus, *Explanatio in CH* III.268ff, explaining that the purified purify from out of their own purification following the series of *influentia* or *influre*.

<sup>262</sup> On the importance of preaching in the thirteenth century and Francis' relation to its revival in Bonaventure's eyes see Bernard McGinn, "The Influence of St. Francis on the Theology of the High Middle Ages: The Testimony of St. Bonaventure.," in *Bonaventuriana. Miscellanea in Onore Di Jacques Guy Bougerol OFM.*, (Roma: Edizioni Antonianum, 1988), 102–5.

<sup>263</sup> Francis makes the sign of the cross while blessing or healing at *LMj* V.9–10; XI.5, 12, 14; XII.3, 9, 10. *LMj* X.4 has Francis praying with arms outstretched in the shape of a cross. *LMj* VII.9 speaks of Christ's passover and VIII of Francis devotion to Christ crucified.

Christ's army, was encouraged to reach the palm of victory through the height of heroic virtue.<sup>264</sup>

Bonaventure then turns immediately to the subject topic of the *LMj* V, exterior and bodily austerity and relates it to the cross:

He directed his attention to the text of the Apostle, "Those who belong to Christ have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires." To carry in his own body the armor of the cross, he held in check his sensual appetites [...].<sup>265</sup>

In that way, austerity approximates the bodily sufferings of the cross by "crucifying the flesh."

*LMj* IX, on charity and martyrdom—the illumination of and in illumination—, identifies that cross as the shape of Francis' interior life of charity.

Jesus Christ crucified always rested like a bundle of myrrh in the bosom of his soul, into Whom he longed to be totally transformed through an enkindling of ecstatic love [...]. He was borne aloft into Christ with such burning intensity, but it seemed to the servant of God that he was aware of the presence of that Savior before his eyes, like a yoke, as he once intimately revealed to his companions.<sup>266</sup>

Francis' desire to become Christ crucified brings Christ into his spiritual vision and makes him seek the salvation of others through his death which he might offer to Christ.

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<sup>264</sup> *LMj* V.1 (VIII, 516A): "Cum igitur cerneret vir dei Franciscus suo exemplo ad crucem Christi baiulandam ferventi spiritu plurimos animari animabatur et ipse tamquam bonus dux exercitus Christi ad palmam victoriae per culmen invictae pervenire virtutis."

<sup>265</sup> *LMj* V.1 (VIII, 516A): "Attendens enim illud apostoli verbum: qui autem sunt Christi carnem suam crucifixerunt cum vitiis et concupiscentiis: ut crucis armaturam suo ferret in corpore tanta disciplinae rigiditate sensuales appetitus arcebat ut vix necessaria sumeret sustentationi naturae."

<sup>266</sup> *LMj* IX.2 (VIII, 530A-B): "Christus Iesus crucifixus intra suae mentis ubera ut myrrhae fasciculus iugiter morabatur in quem optabat per excessivi amoris incendium totaliter transfomiari. [...] Tam fervido quidem in Christum ferebatur affectu, sed et dilectus illi tam familiarem rependebat amorem, ut videretur ipsi famulo Dei quasi iugem prae oculis ipsius Salvatoris sentire praesentiam, sicut aliquando sociis familiariter revelavit."



Loving the cross or Christ crucified was also an element of medieval spirituality but Francis' desire to be crucified for the world is a rarer theme.<sup>267</sup> *LMj* IX concentrates on Francis' living martyrdom, summarized in Bonaventure's explanation in the same chapter that Francis

used to say that nothing should be preferred to the salvation of souls, demonstrating this forcefully with the fact that *the Only-begotten Son of God* saw fit to hang from the cross for the sake of souls.<sup>268</sup>

Thus, the cross does not only provide the model for exterior penitential purification and conversion but informs the desires of Francis' heart and illumines his vision through the love of God in others human beings.

Between *LMj* IX and XIII there are a few references to the sign of the cross but there are no further accounts of Francis' cruciform life until the vision of crucified in the Seraph and the impression of the stigmata.<sup>269</sup> Francis' mystical and miraculous

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<sup>267</sup> The crucifixion of the flesh is typical of piety popularized by the Cistercians in the middle age. Cistercian spirituality looked at the cross as both an image and incitement to penance and an object of devotion, see C. Matthew Phillips, "Crucified with Christ: The Imitation of the Crucified Christ and Crusading Spirituality," in *Crusades -- Medieval Worlds in Conflict*, ed. Thomas Madden, James L. Naus, and Vincent Ryan (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 27. What makes Bonaventure's appropriation of this cross-centered piety noteworthy is that the cross is not only an instrument of penance and object of devotion but the very means and form of ascent into God. See also *Trip via*. II.4–7.

<sup>268</sup> *LMj* IX.4 (VIII, 531A): "Saluti animarum nihil praeferendum esse dicebat eo maxime probans quod unigenitus dei pro animabus dignatus fuerit in cruce pendere." Cf. Davis, *The Weight of Love*, 2, 115–24. Davis' focus on Francis' humility and obedience as a living death to the point of the stigmata apprehends the central role this subversive motif plays in Bonaventure's tracing of Francis' ascent to God by being moved by God in the *Itinerarium* and the *LMj*, but gives little space to the association of one's transformation into pleasing and saving sacrifice to God for neighbor. His explanation of subjective ascent as an instance of transparency to Dionysius' own embrace of eros is illuminating (Davis, 135), but it must be complemented with attention to the role of συνέργια in hierarchical ascent, whereby union to God also furthers the salvation of all to present a full picture of both Bonaventure's and Dionysius' account of ascent.

<sup>269</sup> *LMj* X.4: Francis appears alight and in the form of the cross; XI.5, the sign of the cross is used to heal a man at Rieti; XI.12, Francis blesses two friars with the sign of the cross; XI.14 vision of Francis appearing at Arles with a fiery cross; XII.3 Francis makes the sign of the cross over the birds; XII.9–10 healing with sign of the cross

experience in *LMj* XIII concludes the progress in cruciformity begun in *LMj* V and developed in IX. Bonaventure makes explicit reference to the concerns of both chapters in anticipation of the Mt. Laverna experience. He first refers to cruciform austerity of *LMj* V:

And although his body was already weakened by the great austerity of his past life and his continual carrying of Lord's cross [...].<sup>270</sup>

and then its transformation by charity and desire for martyrdom of *LMj* IX:

[...] he was in no way terrified but was eagerly inspired even more vigorously to endure martyrdom. The unconquerable enkindling love in him for the good Jesus had grown into *lamps and flames of fire*, that *many waters could not quench so powerful a love*.<sup>271</sup>

In this way exterior cruciform austerity and interior cruciform charity advance by steps towards an even more perfect cruciformity when he “was being transformed by compassionate sweetness into Him who chose to be crucified out of the excess of his love”.<sup>272</sup> Thus, from the exterior to interior imitation of the cross, Bonaventure presents the final step of Francis' ladder of cruciformity as completed in the ecstatic imitation of Christ's own ecstatic love in which, though God, he was born, died, and rose as a man.

In this final diagonal trajectory, the stages of vertical and horizontal progress are joined and reduced to the cross. For while *LMj* XIII concludes one vertical and one

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<sup>270</sup> *LMj* XIII.2 (VIII, 542B): “Et licet propter multam austeritatem vitae praeteritae crucisque dominicae baiulationem continuam imbecillis esset iam corpore, [...]”

<sup>271</sup> *LMj* XIII.2 (VIII, 542B): “[...] nequaquam est territus, sed ad martyrii sustinentiam vigorosius animatus. Excreverat siquidem in eo insuperabile amoris incendium boni Iesu in lampades ignis atque flammaram, ut aquae multae caritatem eius tam validam extinguere non valerent.”

<sup>272</sup> *LMj* XIII.3 (VIII, 542B): “Cum igitur seraphicis desideriorum ardoribus sursum ageretur in Deum et compassiva dulcedine in eum transformaretur, qui ex caritate nimia voluit crucifigi [...]”.

horizontal trio, in the diagonal reading, XIII concludes the paradigmatic moments of purification and illumination, beginning and progress, and conversation and conformity as paradigmatic perfection, consummation, and thirst for God. Together, the paradigmatic virtues represent the whole progress of the life of Francis' virtues in one sweep as the most external and initial in renunciative austerity, the most internal and progressive in transforming charity, and the ecstatic and final in the stigmata and the divine union which they represent. So, taken together and represented by the paradigmatic virtues, Francis' whole spiritual development can be summarized not only as progress in *Christoformity* but also of *cruciformity*. Indeed, for Bonaventure's Francis, Christoformity *is* cruciformity and, therefore, inasmuch the hierarchical powers are woven into the fabric of Christoformity so is the cross. For by purification, illumination, and perfection Francis, representing the hope for all Christians, mounts the cross to join Christ and through Christ's cross, he—and all who would imitate him—share in the work of purifying, illuminating, and perfecting another.

So conceived by Bonaventure, perfect cruciformity is not a penance, nor having the cross as an object of love, although these dimensions are also necessary, but is to be *totally transformed* into Christ. To fully embrace the cross is ecstasy, the proleptic participation of heavenly life and eschatological rest in God. Nonetheless, if the conclusion of the diagonal trajectory is an ultimately an ineffable *transitus* in the manner of *Itin VII* the supraintellectual union, it nonetheless does not leave its first two moments behind. The enkindling of Francis soul when he is *totally transformed* into the likeness of Christ crucified has effects at the lower interior and exterior levels because it left a “marvelous fire” in Francis heart and the “marvelous signs” of the stigmata in his flesh.

Thus, in the cruciform “summit of Gospel perfection”, the whole fabric of Francis’ virtue is recapitulated and consummated. His perfection does not only exceed the lower levels of virtue but extends its transformation back down to them so that his interior sense presents his own ecstasy into Christ and God to himself while his body expresses it to and for the good of the world. So, in the summit of ecstasy, the vertical and horizontal dimensions are fixed together to the cross, at once a perfect ascent and a perfect descent with Christ. However novel in the explicit conformity of the hierarchized man to the cross, Bonaventure’s depiction of perfection through Francis’ hagiography remains well within in the tradition of Dionysian understanding of hierarchy as an imitation of Christ through cooperation in his *φιλανθρωπία* or saving descent to the cross, a doctrine preserved in both Eriugena and Hugh’s reading of the *CD*.<sup>273</sup>

Dionysian hierarchy indeed echoes loudly in *LMj* XIII, even in its Franciscan tenor, when Francis is conformed most explicitly to the chief-mediating Seraph and Christ, who purifies, illumines, and inflames, both of whom who each hold their own pride of place in Dionysian hierarchy. However, the diagonal trajectory observed in the paradigmatic virtues presents another novelty alongside the extensive cruentricity in which Bonaventure couched Francis’ hierarchic life, namely, a privileged position given to the center. I have noted above that Bonaventure’s use of the hierarchical powers or conceptual triad on multiple levels simultaneously relativized the order of the hierarchical powers. This relativization is also manifested in the diagonal trajectory of *LMj* V-XIII.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> See especially *EH* IV.3.12; see II.2.3 and II.3.3, for Eriugena and Hugh’s account of Christ’s role in hierarchy, respectively.

<sup>274</sup> Whereas for Dionysius and his earlier medieval interpreters the middle power of *φωτίσμος*, receiving the Christ the light, anticipates *τελειωσις*, the fullest form of imitation of Christ and his saving and deifying work, Bonaventure seems to afford the middle hierarchical power greater dignity than they do

Visually, the diagonal trajectory joins the beginning (taking up the cross in austerity) and end (being taken up by the cross in the stigmata) of the virtues and the hierarchical powers by passing through the middle: charity set ablaze by the cross. As I noted above, Francis' ecstasy in XIII evacuates neither bodily austerity nor interior charity of their importance but confirms them. Rather, in the charity of IX, Francis "longs to be totally transformed" by an enkindling of ecstatic love is already conformed to Christ and awaiting consummation of what was first approached under austerity. Austerity, in which Francis is, although perfect, always beginning, charity in which Francis offers himself to God and for man as a living sacrifice, and the stigmata in which he, the sacrifice, is ratified as worthy of acceptance—indeed not only by humanity but by God—are inseparable in the Cross. The beginning, the center, and consummation cannot be sundered, but is also no accident that for Bonaventure, in presenting these nine chapters on the virtues, that charity, conformed to Christ who is the *medium* in God, creation, and salvation is found in the very center of them all under the axis of the cross.

#### IV.5.2.3 Conclusion to the Intermediate-Level Triads

The two intermediate-level triads depict complementary aspects of Francis' life: the ecclesial position of his historical founding and leadership, canonically and spiritually, of the Order of Friars Minor in the seven chapters of I-IV/XIII-XIV and the virtues that define his way of life in the nine chapters of V-XIII. Both intermediate-level

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in light of his evaluation of the of eternal Word as the *medium* in God and *mediator* in creation, see *Brev Prol.* 3 and IV.1, see also Hayes, *The Hidden Center*, 61–63 and Hellmann, *Divine and Created Order in Bonaventure's Theology*, 62–72. Furthermore It may be said similarly of the implied relationship of purification, the beginning, to the Father. See section IV.3. above for my consideration leveling-out of the hierarchical powers' relative status.

narrative triads are governed by the one conceptual triad: purification-illumination-perfection/conversion-Christoformity-thirsting for God/beginning-progress-end.

Moreover, both narratives demonstrate the receptive and active aspects of the hierarchical system through the particularities of Francis' prototypical Franciscan penance, poverty, prayer, and preaching. In the presentation of Francis' historico-ecclesial actions, Bonaventure shows how his reception of purification, illumination, and perfection is integral to the founding of the Order but also that these powers are performed through the Order. In his account of Francis' virtues, which underlie the Franciscan life, Bonaventure illustrates how Francis' personal progress is effected by these hierarchical powers and how they are effective upon other individuals through him. Nonetheless in both of the intermediate-level triads, Bonaventure depicts Francis' growing in union to God and mercy to neighbor through love (*amor* and *caritas*). Thus, one spiritual process runs through both of these complementary triads: the hierarchization of the soul (or souls) wrought *exteriorly* in the form of Franciscan life and *interiorly* through the virtues intrinsic to the honest life of gospel perfection. Through both the order which he founded, formed, and led and in his own person, Francis is hierarchized—conformed to Christ (*the* hierarchy) and the angelic hierarchies—and in turn participates in hierarchizing others.

#### IV.5.3 The Macrostructural Triad

Structurally, these two complementary triads, the historical triad of *LMj* I-IV/XIII-XV and the spiritual or virtue triad of V-XIII, arranged one around the other, can be taken all together to form a single triad comprising the macrostructure of the *LMj*: I-IV, V-XIII, and XIII-XV. In this manner Bonaventure departs from the structure the

previous hagiographies. In *IC*, Celano narrates Francis' chronology until 1224, then his imitation of the passion of the last two years of life, and finally his canonization in three books, respectively, but although Bonaventure does delineate three sections he shifts the imitation of the passion to the very end of the middle section and combines his last two years with his canonization as historical chapters.<sup>275</sup> The *LMj*'s fifteen long chapters are more like Julian of Speyer's *Life St. Francis*'s thirteen chapters in length and arrangement than the many brief chapters of *IC* and *2C*, but Bonaventure introduces the distinction in history and virtue which Julian does not. In *2C*, Celano treats history in its first book and then how Francis as the "mirror of holiness of the Lord" in its second, but Bonaventure differs by interposing his own virtue chapters between the history chapters.<sup>276</sup> Thereby in one stroke Bonaventure symbolizes in his own the textual arrangement the specific mode of complementarity between the *LMj* I-IV/XIII-XV and V-VIII (as exterior and interior or communal and personal) and from two divisions (history and virtue) punctuates three distinct sections in the text, constructing an overarching macro-triad summarizing the entirety of the *LMj* and Francis' overall significance.<sup>277</sup> As observed above, in this arrangement, history surrounds the virtues as

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<sup>275</sup> See FA:ED I pp. 176–177.

<sup>276</sup> *2C* II.26. Furthermore, in this macrostructure, I take *LMj* XIII, the event of the stigmata, to remain as shared between history and virtue as in the intermediate level because it continues to represent the external revelation of Francis' interior transformation. For Celano's earlier *vitae*, Francis' death belonged to Francis as the mirror of Christ's holiness and while the event of the stigmata is not described but only referenced in *IC* and *2C*, although in the Seraph vision and reception of the stigmata are detailed in Celano's later (1250–1252) *Treatise on the Miracles of St. Francis* (*3C*, in FA:ED II 397–468), *3C* II.2–13. Bonaventure, relative to Celano, shifts Francis' death into an historical and ecclesial significance.

<sup>277</sup> See Hammond, "Bonaventure's *Legenda Maior*," 480–83. This recombination of the two intermediate triads into a single triad shows yet another flexibility of the triadic organization of the chapters. Their integration into a larger triad does not do violence to other levels of meaning. On the one hand, the basis of reading multiple narrative structures is that each chapter follows the trajectory of conceptual triad, none is locked into one simple meaning. On the other hand, this is not a *carte blanche* for eisegesis because each chapter also has a determined theme or topic so that collective meanings also emerges by the grouping of chapters. As noted above, the order of chapters is not arbitrary—they could not

the wings of the Seraph enwrap Christ in the vision on Mt. Laverna and the definitive image of who Francis becomes in life (and death) conceived as not only as figure of ecclesial importance or as a model or virtue but an historical man and saint with a real place of origin, way of life, and *transitus*, who was and is the epitome of poverty and the image of the poor Christ and a goad to sanctity for all.

As in the other narrative triads at the intermediate and microstructural levels, the divisions of the macrostructural triad correspond to the stages of Francis' life conceived overall in its beginning, progress, and consummation, or rather, his own conversion, conformity to Christ, and the ecstatic *transitus* into God. These three stages embody the hierarchical powers of purification, illumination, and perfection active in his life both upon him and through him.<sup>278</sup> Like the microstructure, and unlike the intermediate structure, the hierarchical powers are not presented in a manner that enables a clear distinction between their reception and performance but only more generally, representing their purpose.

In this macrostructural perspective, the triadic divisions and conceptual appropriations of both Francis' history as founder of the Friars Minor (I-II/III-IV/XIII-XIV) and own virtues (V-VII/VIII-X/XI-XIII) are transposed and reorganized into one arc describing Francis' life. Whereas *LMj* I-IV is divided into the two moments of conversion (purification) in I-II and forming the order (illumination) in III-IV at the

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be randomly rearranged with the same meaning—and Bonaventure has carefully organized each in itself and in relation to the others to produce a recurrence of the same conceptual triad. For Bonaventure, at least in the *LMj*, each part resembles and precontains the whole so that the hierarchical powers purification, illumination, and perfection and the moments of the other facets of the conceptual triad have gradual order and yet are also interior to each other.

<sup>278</sup> Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 186.



historical intermediate level, at the macrolevel they narrate as a block the beginning, conversion, and purification of Francis in embracing the gospel life of the Order.<sup>279</sup> This historical conversion in the context of the Order's life of penance, poverty, prayer, and preaching is then followed by V-XIII's presentation of his virtues that, condensed into a depiction of Francis' progress in spiritual conformity to Christ, reflect, as whole, his illumination. As in the historical intermediate triad, *LMj* XIII-XV form the conclusion, but in the context of Francis' whole life, the events of these final chapters should not be read primarily as the seal upon the Order but as Francis personal *transitus*, his ecstatic rest in God.<sup>280</sup>

Summarized, the triadic narrative arc of the macrostructure runs thus: Francis' life in the Order according to its two *Rules*, the exterior moment of conversion, leads to an interior Christoformity that at last prepares his thirsting soul to depart this world, Christlike all the while, to go to the Father. The story of Francis, the foremost imitator for Christ for Bonaventure, is the story of the purifying power of the Order's—the Gospel's!—life of poverty, whence arises the renovating illumination of the inner man according to Christ, who so conformed thirsts for union with God that is only satisfied in the utmost height of perfection.

Moreover, as in the *Brev*, these hierarchical powers both performed and undergone by Francis can be coordinated with the spiritual senses of scripture. In his life and death, for Bonaventure, Francis preached the Gospel by showing what ought to be

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<sup>279</sup> See Muscat, 185–86. Muscat regards the first four chapters as an account of Francis' conversion to Gospel life.

<sup>280</sup> If, *LMj* XIII belongs to the last moment of the macrostructural triad, it and XIV-XV could be read as representing Christ's, and Francis' participatory, passion, death and resurrection-ascension-session.

done practically at least by the Order (tropology) in *LMj* I-IV, who Christ and his angels of his heavenly kingdom are (analogy) in V-XIII, and how much God should be desired (anagogy) in XIII-XV.<sup>281</sup> As all senses of scripture are reduced to Christ the hierarch, the macro-level account of Francis' life shows similarly that the components of Franciscan life illustrated in the intermediate and micro-levels can be reduced to Francis as their prototype and proximate source because he is the imitator of Christ and, thus, of God. Indeed, in Bonaventure's deployment of the hierarchical powers the Seraphic Father Francis is truly theomimetic according to Dionysius' sense of θεομίμησις.

As I have shown, for Bonaventure, Francis was and is uniquely important for the Franciscan *religio* and for the church. His importance, frequently framed through the use of tropes drawn from and or at least shared with Dionysian hierarchy, is not unlike that of the Dionysian figure of the hierarch both as regards his effect upon the wider community of the Church and individually in its spiritual intimacy with God and the angels. Like the hierarch, Francis is a singular founder figure. He is an angeloform leader of worship among all visible creation and an offeror of sacrifice. He is also and a cooperator in sanctification and deification through the hierarchical powers. He has penetrating spiritual vision into the mysteries he celebrates (in this case, more in life than in rite). Francis is, finally, the imitator of Christ, who is Bonaventure's hierarch and he in whom, for Dionysius, all hierarchs have their prototype.<sup>282</sup>

And yet, unlike Dionysius' hierarch, Francis is also an eschatological figure by his place in history a sign of a new era of Christianity and the model of what the Christians of this coming age will be. Bonaventure's use of angelomorphic language,

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<sup>281</sup> Cf. *Brev* Prol. 4.

<sup>282</sup> *EH* V.1.5 505A-B (107.13–17).

especially the “angel of the sixth seal” does not belong to the provenance of hierarchy alone—angel-language’s currency throughout Christian expression is all too common to be so narrow. No, Francis points to the future and to the end of history as a prophet. Debates about to just what extent the shadow of Joachim or Fiore and Franciscan Joachimism have not yet been settled.<sup>283</sup> Nonetheless, Francis is a prophet and like a hierarch not because he is exceptional but because he is *exemplary*, the exemplar of Christ the exemplar. As the exemplar of the Christ incarnate in history, Francis’ reality as a person is the locus and focal point of Christ’s action through him; his value cannot be reduced to the Order he founded nor to an abstract complex of virtues that define gospel perfection. Hence it is fitting that those aspects, his Order and his virtues, be reduced to him, just as he is reduced to Jesus Christ, and the, ultimately the Trinity that is symbolized by the macro-level and every triad.

#### IV.6. Numerological symbolism

I will conclude my analysis of the place of hierarchical concepts in the *LMj* by showing how Bonaventure uses numbers in his textual structure to recapitulate and coordinate the *LMj*’s themes. This numerological coda will be, unlike the rest of this dissertation, brief.

*LMj* has less explicit numerology than other texts by Bonaventure, nonetheless, as I have demonstrated above, three prominent numbers do appear in the text’s structure: nine, seven, and, of course, three. First, nine, the ennead of three by three, is represented

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<sup>283</sup> I spoke with Colt Anderson at the International Medieval Congress, 2018 in Kalamazoo and he made known his desire continue to argue that Bonaventure strongly rejected Joachim, *pace* Ratzinger.

in the chapters in ascending order detailing Francis' virtues. It recalls the nine orders of angels in their triads, reduces easily to its square root, three, and in light of its textual use, bearing the diagonal trajectory, is tied to the cross.

Second, seven, is represented by historical chapters and the seven visions of the cross seen therein by or about Francis. In seven, the heptad, resonating with the order the creation week of the visible world, conveniently bears the story of Francis' visible, temporal progress, both in terms of chapters and the sequential visions of the cross. This heptad also nods towards the church in her sacraments and hours of prayer and so to ecclesial context of Francis' life. Still more, the heptad points to other symbolic groupings across Bonaventure's corpus, including the virtues, beatitudes, and the petitions of the *Our Father*.<sup>284</sup>

Third, the number three, the triad, which I have already considered at length above, represents the most basic unit of any process or reality in Bonaventure's thought, first of all the Trinity, and in the case of metaphysics, causes, ascent and so on down a list seemingly without end. The triad underlies the structure of the whole *LMj*, undergirding both the ennead and the heptad and every other division of the *LMj*.

Subjoined to the ennead, heptad, and triad must be numerological significance of four, the combination of three and four, and of six and one. The presence and function of these numbers are no flight of whimsy on Bonaventure's part. On the contrary, as number is "nearest God" and constitutive of beauty, Bonaventure's thoughtful, rigorous application of numerological structures to Francis' hagiography testify to the

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<sup>284</sup> *Brev* V.10.

(participatory) divinity and eternal beauty of the Seraphic Father's life.<sup>285</sup> His beauty is cosmic, angeloform, triform, and, most manifestly, cruciform.

#### IV.6.1 The Ennead

The ennead of ascending chapters of the middle section of the *LMj* that are divided into triads have an obvious likeness to the nine choirs of angels according to the Dionysian division into three triads of three ranks each. An association between the nine choirs of angels and just as many powers or activities are prevalent in Bonaventure's works and are found prior to the *LMj* in *Itin* IV, roughly concurrent with the *LMj* in *Trip via*, and abounds in the later *Hex* XX-XIII. None of these instances of coordinating angels and powers, however, contain lists powers or activities identical to the virtues and actions described in in *LMj* V-XIII. Nonetheless, these texts commonly describe humanity's assimilation to the angels through the ecclesiastical hierarchy, which itself participates the angelic hierarchies.<sup>286</sup> This notion of the earthly Church's ascent to the angels—and to the saints with them—appears elsewhere in Bonaventure's corpus under the image of ascending to the supernal Jerusalem.

The angelic characterization of Francis (and the Franciscans) appears throughout the *LMj* but especially in V-XIII and the prologue, where he is associated with the apocalyptic angel of the sixth of seal and is also identified as having being deputed with an angelic office and set aflame by a “seraphic *incedium*.”<sup>287</sup> Francis' humility, reflects

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<sup>285</sup> Cf. *Itin* II.10.

<sup>286</sup> *Itin* IV.4; *Trip via* III.14; *Hex* XXII-XXIII.

<sup>287</sup> *LMj* Prol. 1, 2.

the particular characteristics ascribed to the rank of the angels, the lowest spirits (and not the angels generically), while angels are also associated with announcing, not unlike Francis' preaching office.<sup>288</sup> At the same time he is also associated with the Seraphim, the highest order of the angels.<sup>289</sup> Francis' identification with the extremes of the angelic ranks gesture toward Francis as the recapitulation of nine choirs of angels. There is no straightforward evidence to map all nine chapters of *LMj* V-XIII with corresponding ranks of the angels, although XI-XIII could be seen as mapping onto the first triad of the Thrones, Cherubim, and Seraphim in as much as they describe the reception of the divine light, communication through preaching, and Seraphic elevation.<sup>290</sup> Nonetheless, in V-XIII Francis is likened to the angels inasmuch as he seeks the bread of angels, is served by angels, is devoted to St. Michael for his role in "presenting souls to God", is a citizen of heaven, and is set aflame with seraphic ardor for God and souls.<sup>291</sup> Francis' angeloformity is attested in the historical chapters through his purity, said to be "living the angelic life", and in his founding the Franciscan's are founded at St. Mary of the Angels', and of course, the experience of the crucified Seraph shared with the middle chapters.<sup>292</sup> In both the historical and virtue chapters, but especially the nine chapters of the latter, Francis is also seen to turn his gaze from the visible to the invisible, from the earthly to the heavenly (and to the earthly in a heavenly mode), from the world to the divine mysteries. This too is constitutive of his assimilation to angelic life, even when the steps in this process do not mention the angels.

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<sup>288</sup> Cf. *Itin* IV.4; *Hex* XX.10, 25.

<sup>289</sup> *LMj* Prol. 1; IX.3; XIII.3. Cf. *Hex* XXII.25.

<sup>290</sup> Cf. *Hex* XXI.31; XXII.20–22.

<sup>291</sup> *LMj* VII.8; IX.3; X.1; XII.12; XIII.3.

<sup>292</sup> A miraculous heavenly light is described as occurring at St. Mary of the Angel's, *LMj* II.8.

This ennead does not only symbolize, Francis' angeloformity but suggest his Trinitarian conformity since nine is the product of three threes. At the very least, assimilation to the angels would be an implicit assimilation to God, since God acts in the angels.<sup>293</sup> On the other hand, although Bonaventure does not lay out a systematic nine-fold Trinitarian pattern anywhere in the *LMj*, as shown above in IV.3.5.2.2., the conceptual triad suffused through the *LMj* often maps on the to the procession of Father/Son/Holy Spirit or the ascent or *reductio* through the Spirit, with the Son to the Father. Since Bonaventure will later use a nine-fold scheme to describe the intra-Trinitarian relationships in *Hex XX*, the already Trinitarian thrust of the conceptual triad wrought into a 3x3 scheme in V-XIII may present an early experiment on Bonaventure's part.<sup>294</sup> Indeed, the Trinitarian structure given in *Hex XX*, Father in *se*, in the Son, and in the Holy Spirit, etc. seems to be anticipated in the recurrence of the conceptual triad in each moment of the triad in every instance throughout the *LMj*, particularly in *LMj V-XIII* with its nine chapters and triple triads.<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> See *Itin* IV.4. God's and the angels are inseparable because, as Bonaventure teaches, following St. Bernard of Clairvaux, the nine activities in the angels are God's action in them.

<sup>294</sup> *Hex XX-XXIII*, a decade after the *LMj* explicitly coordinates the nine angelic ranks to the nine relationships in the Trinity so that conformity to the angels is necessarily a conformation to the Trinity. Granting that the conceptual triad can supports appropriations to triads of the Father/Son/Spirit and Spirit/Son/Father, two readings of the nine virtues are possible, from the Father to the Spirit and the Spirit to the Father (through the Son). The latter traces the narrative of ascent and is more explicit. For example, the trio of V-VII represents conversion through the Holy Spirit, while *LMj V*'s austerity (the purification of purification) represents the Holy Spirit *in se* as withdrawal from the world, VI's humility-obedience (the illumination of purification) the conformity to the Son in this conversion and represents the Spirit in the Son, and VII's poverty (the perfection of purification) with its attendant passover out of the world to the Father represents the Spirit in the Father. On the other hand, *LMj V*, as the beginning in the exterior represents the producing Father in activity and power, VI as progress in the interior represents the incarnate Son as produced and producing obedience in wisdom, while the passivity of Francis' passover in poverty in VII would represents the passivity of the produced Holy Spirit in goodness. Like patterns would obtain for VIII-X in piety (Son in the Spirit in love, Father producing creatures), in charity (Son *in se* in the love of God and souls, Son incarnate produced and producing saving souls), and prayer (The Son in the Father in effective payer, the Spirit in the passivity of ascent in prayer) and likewise for XI-XIII in prophecy (The Father in the Spirit who speaks through the prophets, the Father as source or "Father of Lights", cf. James 1:17), in preaching and healing (The Father in the Son in recalling creatures, the Son incarnate restoring

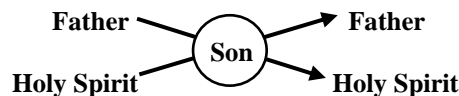
Although Bonaventure does not make this Trinitarian plotting of V-XIII explicit, the nine-fold relationships of the Trinity, the divine hierarchy, which will be used in *Hex* XX-XXIII as the architecture of the hierarchization of the angels, the Church and the human soul, seem to be already stirring in the *LMj*. Bonaventure deliberately placed nine central chapters between and outside of the historical chronology to mark Francis' hierarchization in assimilation to the angels. For a man so given to appropriating triads to the Trinity, placing a triad of triads at the heart of the *LMj* formed around the love of Christ the *medium* (*LMj* IX) in the Godhead, creation, and salvation can hardly be accidental, even in the face of Bonaventure's silence on the text's structural symbolism. For in *LMj* V-XIII, the reduction of the vertical and horizontal readings to the crucicentric diagonal reading produces a Trinitarian reading of those chapters likewise yoked to the cross, a structure expressive of Bonaventure's own expressive exemplarism.

#### IV.6.2 The Heptad

The heptad, the seven-fold structure of the *LMj* appears in two ways, as noted above: the seven historical chapters (I-IV/XIII-XV) and the seven visions of the cross which occur in those chapters. The structural function of the seven visions of the cross is pointed out by Bonaventure in XIII.9 and 10: they interpret and measure Francis'

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creation), and in the stigamata of Mt. Laverna (The Father in se as the end and trajectory of ascent, the Spirit as the consuming fire of love in divine passivity). Such patterns may also be applied to the horizontal trajectory. If Bonaventure did intend such a pattern of a double Trinitarian movement in these and in very other instance of the conceptual triad, then every such triad is not only encoded with the Trinity but with the cross in as much as a chiasm obtains around Christ the center when the two Trinitarian patters are overlaid:





historical progress through the cross.<sup>296</sup> The seven visions do not map one-to-one on the seven historical chapters. Rather, all but one the visions occur in *LMj* I-IV (the Seraph vision of Mt. Laverna is the exception), and each of those four chapters has either one or two cross visions. This distribution accords with all three moments of the intermediate-historical triad and demarcates the first and third moments of the macro-level triad. For the visions can be divided triply into those seen by, seen of, and seen by and of Francis *or* divided in two as representing the exteriority of conversion of I-IV and his perfect passing over into what God had begun and symbolized in XIII and fulfilled in XIV-XV, his Christoform death.

The first three cross visions are those seen by Francis himself: the dream of the cross-sealed weapons (I.3), his soul-melting vision of Christ (I.5),<sup>297</sup> and Christ's command to rebuild the Church from the San Damiano cross (II.1). These first three visions, foretell and compel Francis' imitation of Christ yet to come and occupy the purificatory moment of the historical triad (*LMj* I-II) that narrates Francis' conversion to mendicancy. The second three visions of the cross are around Francis and seen by others: the vision of Francis slaying the dragon with the cross, which converts Brother Sylvester (III.5), the conscience enlivening vision of Francis the preacher making the sign of the

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<sup>296</sup> There are many other visions narrated in the text, but these seven visions are distinguished from all the rest by *LMj* XIII.10, which identifies the seven cross visions.

<sup>297</sup> Muscat notes that this second vision is not referenced by any other thirteenth century biographies of Francis and is considered a fiction by Octavian Schmucki, see Octavian Schmucki, "Das Leiden Christi Im Leben Des Heiligen Franziskus von Assisi," *Collectanea Franciscana*, 1960, 244–45. If fictitious, however, this soul-melting vision of *LMj* I.5 further corroborates Bonaventure's biography as reliant upon interpretive symbols. Padding the other visions with a seventh vision that not only completes the symbolic number seven but places a mystical experience on the heels of Francis' encounters with the leper who becomes associated with Christ and thereby binds ecstatic love of Christ with the love of poor, to whom Christ has become alike in his incarnation and cross. In this vision, Francis literally becomes co-passionate with Christ. (Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 190–91.)

cross seen by Brother Pacifico (IV.9), and the consoling vision of Francis seen by Brother Monaldus (IV.10). These three occupy the illuminative moment of historical triad (*LMj* III-IV), which details Francis' inculcation of mendicancy to others and "the underlying theme of [which] chapters is the progress in the evangelical life made by Francis and the first brothers."<sup>298</sup>

So divided, each set of three visions also follows the conceptual triad. Francis is led to conversion from out of misunderstanding (I.3: purification), led to love of and identification with Christ in the vision of Christ crucified (I.5: illumination), and sent to minister by the command of Christ at San Damiano (II.1: perfection). In the second triad, Sylvester, who once despised the Minors is converted (III.4: purification), while Pacifico who was already attracted to Francis changes his way of life (IV.9: illumination), and then Monaldus and other Minors, are filled with consolation by the apparition of Francis' during Anthony's preaching (IV.10: perfection). In the first trio, the cross-visions chart Francis' personal growth in following Christ in radical poverty, in the second, they chart Francis' effect on others doing likewise as a "seal of God's new covenant with humankind manifested in the Word Incarnate and Crucified [...]."<sup>299</sup>

The seventh and final vision is both seen by and of Francis. On the one hand, it consummates the account of Francis' conformation to Christ (*LMj* V-XIII) but also inaugurates his passage out the world as his own *transitus* to and rest in God as a "true Hebrew" and as the sign of hope (and aid) unto the same rest for the Minors and all Christians. Moreover, by its double aspect (it is both seen by Francis and seen, by extension, in his stigmata) it unites and resolves the opposition of the two kinds of cross-

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<sup>298</sup> Muscat, *Life of St. Francis*, 197.

<sup>299</sup> Muscat, 202.

visions as a harbinger of eschatological rest, just as it (and *LMj* XIII overall) binds the two intermediate level triads of history and virtue. This seventh vision is, therefore, the culmination of the previous visions both by its placement in the text and by way of integrating the cross visions seen by and of Francis while also transcending them because it is also the reception of the cross which was previously seen. Note, additionally, that whereas the first two sets of visions can each be treated as a triad, like *LMj* XV, the final vision that presents the cross as ecstasy and rest, is not divided but is one alone.<sup>300</sup>

Indeed, the rest that concludes these seven visions of the cross that are seen by or of Francis echoes the *Itin*'s conclusion, as the conclusion to *LMj* XIII makes apparent:

Behold, you have arrived with seven apparitions of the cross of Christ wondrously apparent and visible to you following an order of time, like six steps leading to the seventh where you finally found rest. (*LMj* XIII.9)

We have covered these six considerations, comparing them to the six steps by which one ascends to the throne of the true Solomon where the mind finds peace. It is here that the true person of peace rests in the quiet of the mind as in an interior Jerusalem. (*Itin* VII.1)

While the seven visions in the *LMj* do not map its own division of the seven historical chapters one-to-one, i.e. one vision per chapter, (which do, however, in themselves follow the structure of the *Itin*), nonetheless they present waypoints in the development of Francis' historical life<sup>301</sup> The first six mark the stages of the Francis' and the orders

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<sup>300</sup> In this way, the seven visions share the same organization of *Itin* I-VII viz. the Gallusian triad and are seen by Francis before the Rule (perhaps like nature), seen of Francis under the *Rule* (as an act of effort), and finally are seen in and by him by the sheer descent of grace upon him.

<sup>301</sup> What the *Itin* shows for Francis' subjective development, the *LMj* presents for his historical visible life in the world. While the *LMj* does present at Francis' history *and* his interior life, it does not consider his mind, at least not in terms of describing the content of his contuiton and vision of God. Nonetheless the difference in approach underlines as similar purpose. Each text is a spiritual theology based on the person of Francis, in that sense the fundamental assumption of each text is the same: passage into God, "like true Hebrews" is only found through the cross—*conformity* to the cross.

historical development in *LMj* I-IV while the seventh inaugurates Francis' *historical* ascension into God in complete Christoformity and the Order's eschatological—or apocalyptic—fulfillment. As a trajectory, they testify to the principle shared with the *Itin*, that the only path to God and to peace “like true Hebrews,” is through the cross and, moreover, conformity to the cross. Each text, the *LMj* and the *Itin*, is a guide and an exhortation to be transformed. *Itin* VII.4 reaches its climax describing the soul's fiery transformation into God, especially in the:

If this [*transitus*] is to be perfect, it is necessary that all intellectual activities be [left behind] and the summit of [*affectus*] be wholly carried into [*tranferatur*] and transformed [*transformatur*] into God.<sup>302</sup>

The *LMj*, of course, narrates *transitus*, transference, and transformation but, generally into Christ. The most salient of *transitus* and *transformation* together—although individually focused upon in VII.9 and IX.2, respectively—belongs to XIII:

The man filled with God understood that just as he had imitated Christ in the actions of his life, so he should be conformed to him in the affliction and sorrow of his passion, before he would pass out [*transiret*] of this world. [...] Since, therefore, he was being born aloft [*sursum ageretur*] into God by seraphic ardor of desires and was being transformed [*transformaretur*] by compassionate sweetness into Him who chose to be crucified out of the excess of his love [...] he saw one seraph having six fiery wings [...].<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>302</sup> *Itin* VII.4.(V, 313A): “In hoc autem transitu, si sit perfectus, oportet quod relinquantur omnes intellectuales operationes, et apex affectus totus transferatur et transformetur in Deum.” This translation is my own.

<sup>303</sup> *LMj* XIII.2–3 (VIII, 542B): “intellexit vir Deo plenus, quod sicut Christum fuerat imitatus in actibus vitae, sic conformis ei esse deberet in afflictionibus et doloribus passionis, antequam ex hoc mundo transiret [...] Cum igitur seraphicis desideriorum ardoribus sursum ageretur in Deum et compassiva dulcedine in eum transformaretur, qui ex caritate nimia voluit crucifigi.” Again, the second half of this quotation at which I also cited above (n. 244), has been heavily modified the text from FA:ED II. Transference, in this instance, is not represented lexically but by *sursum ageretur*, although transference into God appears in Francis' ecstatic prayer, in *LMj* X.4 employs the language of being borne into God: “When he prayed with the brothers he completely avoided all coughs, groans, hard breathing, or external

Broadly speaking, Francis' transformation, transference, and *transitus* into God in and through Christ through in the establishment and approval, papal and divine, of the Franciscan Order are the concern of *LMj*'s seven historical chapters. These seven chapters, which detail the visible, historical, and ecclesial significance of the *povorello* and the Order(s) he founded are also, by being interwoven with the seven cross-visions, Bonaventure's declaration that way to life is through the mode of live which is conformed to the cross, a life of gospel perfection. That mode of life is best (but not only) instantiated (at least *externally*) in manner of Franciscan piety, the life in which purification, illumination, and perfection are received and furthered through penance, poverty, prayer, and preaching—and a good death. It is a life that, as the prologue suggests, observed leads to the true imitation of Christ *perfectly*.<sup>304</sup>

To that point, I will turn to two subtle numerological points identifiable in the organization of the seven historical chapters. First, that they are divided into four and three chapters. Elsewhere, Bonaventure has divided sets of seven into four and three, where four of some set refer to the world and three to God or the soul.<sup>305</sup> In the *LMj*, the four chapters dividing Francis' conversion and foundation and leadership of the order are set apart from those three that tell of his passing over to God out of this world, divided from each other, as in the macro-level, by the middle chapters, but at the historical

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movement either because he loved to keep secrecy or because he had withdrawn into his interior and was totally carried into God [ferebatur in Deum]" from VIII, 534A: "Exscreationes gemitus duos anhelitus extrinsecos nutus orans inter fratres devitabat omnino sive quia diligebat secretum sive quia ad interiora reintrans totus ferebatur in deum."

<sup>304</sup> *LMj* Prol. 2.

<sup>305</sup> See *Brev* V.10. There, for instance, the petitions of the Our Father or the compilation of the theological and cardinal virtues, or to the spiritual and the bodily, as in the case of the endowments of the resurrected man being three in soul and four in body.

intermediate level form a united but neatly dichotomous account of Francis' history: his life in the word and his life leaving this world.

Furthermore, the fourth of these seven chapters is the entryway into the nine central chapters that symbolize Francis' conformity to the angelic hierarchies. As noted in the previous chapter, four of seven frequently represents coordinates with hierarchy in Bonaventure's works, the most striking examples of which are in *Itin* IV and *Hex*'s fourth vision of the days of creation, which occupy in XX-XXIII.<sup>306</sup> While *LMj* IV, like most of the text, does not speak about hierarchy directly, IV's conclusion with a papally approved *Second Rule* and the dream about the rule under the image of a eucharistic host, images of order and the sacraments, segues appropriately to the virtue chapters on Francis' interior hierarchization and conformity to Christ in act and in passion.

Finally, inasmuch as these seven chapters and their seven cross visions echo the *Itin*, so do they borrow the six and one structure (albeit not at the same places). As remarked in section IV.5.2.1.1, six chapters describe Francis' life and one his eternal life beyond the world just as six visions of the cross anticipate the seventh is which is totally transformed to it. The seventh, singular step in *Itin* and the *LMj*'s chapters and visions represents ecstasy with Christ and rest. The six steps which mount to this ecstasy represent the wings of the Seraph which may be conceived of either as three ascending prayers (exterior, interior, and superior, both in *LMj* and *Itin*) or as mirrored trios (*per/in* in *Itin*; the chapters on *receiving* and giving or vision by or of Francis in *LMj*) just as the wings of the Seraph are divided in the *Itin*'s prologue. In both texts, Francis' spiritual

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<sup>306</sup> Togni, "The Hierarchical Center in the Thought of St. Bonaventure."

journey in history or in mind is a Seraphic journey into the ecstatic fire of Christ's, of God's charity.

Through attention to the number seven, the heptad discloses the interface of the textual structure of the *LMj*'s layers of imagery pointing to the cross, the creation week, the church, the Seraph, and even hierarchy in its middle chapters, patterns common elsewhere in Bonaventure's corpus.

#### IV.6.3 The Triad

Finally, the triad abounds in every division of the text, macro-, intermediate-, and micro-level. The ennead may be reduced easily to triads and Bonaventure's clear division show the heptad reduced to triads in both the chapters and visions it structures. The individual chapters themselves can be plotted according to triadic divisions too. These triadic narrative forms play host to a conceptual triad with multiple levels of concepts:

purification/illimitation/perfection  
conversion/Christoformity/thirst for and rest in God  
beginning/progress/end  
emanation/exemplarity/consummation  
exterior/interior/superior

These triads, although not identical, are similarly progressive in their order, and yet, as I have shown above, they are also subject to recursion and circularity. Although it would be inaccurate to call them Trinitarian appropriations, properly speaking, nonetheless, their very form as triads together with their conceptual content and narrative context construes these triads as quasi-appropriable to the Trinity in two orders:

Father/Son/Holy Spirit  
Holy Spirit/Son/Father

Of these two orders, the first is representative of intratrinitarian procession, the second of reduction of intelligent creatures (or creation generally) to God through the works of the Trinity *ad extra*.<sup>307</sup> If read into the conceptual triad, both orders appear throughout the *LMj* at every level. In this way, the Trinity or a Trinitarian form underlies Francis' whole life (macro-level), history and inner angelo- and Christoformity (intermediate-levels), and in every aspect of his life (micro-level, except *LMj* XV). Every level of conceiving Francis both manifests the eternal life of Trinity and illustrates the Trinity's drawing its creature, Francis, into union.

From a certain perspective, the two intermediate-level triads seem to accommodate either the Trinitarian triad of procession *ad intra* or of reduction *quoad extra* so that seven-fold and the nine-fold divisions of the *LMj* present numerological images of perfection. The heptad of the historical chapters and visions follows Francis' cruciform life as converted by the Spirit, conformed to Christ, and passing over to the Father, and so represents the *ad extra* saving operation of the Trinity. Similarly, the ennead of chapters describing Francis' virtues is an image the nine intratrinitarian relationships, which will be defined in *Hex*, beginning with Paternal stability, developing in Christoformity, and concluding in being set aflame with love (*amor*) which is so often appropriated to the Holy Spirit.<sup>308</sup> However evident, these associations, are not exclusive. For, as I have noted above, the seven chapters also suggest the order Father-

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<sup>307</sup> Whether the second order, Spirit/Son/Father, is also descriptive of *intratrinitarian* reduction deserves consideration which cannot be given space in this dissertation.

<sup>308</sup> The Seraphim are also associated with the Holy Spirit as early as II *Sent* d. 9, prænota and IV *Sent* d. 18, a. 3, q. 2, resp., an association that perdures to *Hex* XXI.31.



Son-Spirit as Francis is the founder, the same order as the intratrinitarian procession, or perhaps, the order of creation, which Bonaventure will treat as appropriable to the Trinity in *Hex XXI*.<sup>309</sup> Similarly, the ennead of chapters presents ascent to the Father recurrently (see *LMj* VII, X, XIII), and whether this represent intratrinitarian reduction in the three-by-three structure is an astute possibility. However, any sharply distinguished meanings fastened to the intermediate level triads must be compared to the triads at the macro- and micro-level. At present, I am content to argue that Trinity-suggesting triads of both orders are operative at every level of the *LMj* and concede that, at least in regard to this project, their systematicity remains elusive.

#### IV.6.4 Conclusion to Numerology: The Seraphic Structure

Through his numerologically-oriented curation and arrangement of the *LMj*'s sources and originally composed text, Bonaventure frames the life of Francis, who ascends into God "like a hierarchic man", with an orderly, *beautiful*, textual sculpture of the Seraph bearing the Crucified and the Trinity between its wings. The heptad of chapters of history surround nine chapters symbolizing the angels (sharing XIII, of course). Six of those historical chapters, forms the wings of the Seraph. The two covering its feet are the chapters of Francis' conversion. The two with which it flies are those about order establishment and growth, which in narrative order, lead into the nine middle chapters of angelic, hierarchical ascent or hierarchization. The two with which it covers its face are those in which Francis faces Sister Death, mystically and physically. The seventh of those chapters stands at the end of his history as both Francis' rest in God and

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<sup>309</sup> *Hex XXI*.5-6, 11; cf. *Brev.* II.12.

his heralding, in body and soul, the apocalypse and resurrection soon to come. The ennead of chapters in the middle of the of wings represent collectively Christ crucified amid the wings of the Seraph on Mt. Laverna, with *LMj* IX, the fire of charity, at the center. An as ennead, those chapters also represent Francis interior conformity to the angelic ranks and hierarchies and especially to the Seraphim.

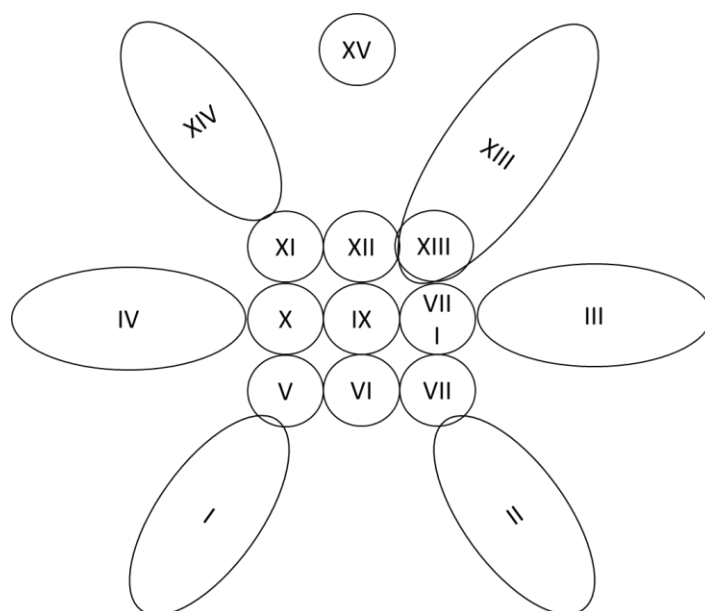


Fig. III The Seraphic Structure of the *LMj*

In this text-sculpture, every level takes its place. Each individual chapter, with its internal triadic division, has its place. The historical and exterior character of the *LMj* I-IV/XIII-XV and the interior and angelomorphic character of V-XIII are appropriately distinguished visually, with the seven surrounding the nine. Moreover, as chapter XIII is shared, their visual relationship also shows that Francis' interior life is expressed in history. For just as much as Francis' ascent by the hierarchical powers and through conformity to the angels and thereto to Jesus Christ, so is he also a conduit and window

for the workings of the angelic powers—especially, as in *EH XIII*, of the Seraph who purifies through the angel—, of Jesus Christ himself, and of the Trinity which he, the incarnate Son, has expressed in his humanity and especially on the cross.

Just as in the Seraph vision and stigmata, Francis' form of life and chronological life become transparent to each other, and so do the visible creation to the spiritual and their transcendent divine source, the historical to the eternal. In his depiction of Francis, the *povorello*, the Seraphic Father and man filled with God, Bonaventure limns both the anagogic, mediatory, and theomimetic aspects of Dionysian hierarchy in his own logic of expression and exemplarity yet with scarcely a word spent on defining this combination in a technical and systematic manner. Ultimately, to show as much by depiction and through the episodes of Francis' life is more fitting in accord with Francis himself who taught not as much with words as by the deeds in which he embodied Christ.

#### **IV.7 Conclusion**

Bonaventure's *Legenda maior* is indeed, as Armstrong demonstrated, a work of spiritual theology, and moreover, it is a rich, organized, theological sculpture of the concept and theology of hierarchy. Many have agreed that the *LMj* uses the conceptual framework of Dionysian hierarchy to articulate the nature and demands of Christian life as exemplified in St. Francis of Assisi. Heretofore, however, scholarship has only exhibited an awareness of the hierarchical powers of purification, illumination/enlightenment, and perfection as a narrative key, albeit in varying degrees. The entire conceptual construct in which these three powers have their role and meaning is almost entirely unconsidered or not even recognized as belonging to the concept of

hierarchy. Limiting hierarchy to merely the process of personal ascent to God as outlined in the *Itin* obscures the robust and innovative legacy of Dionysius' hierarchical system in the *LMj*. So narrow a focus on ascent passes by unaware that the foremost element of Dionysian hierarchy in *LMj*'s is in fact its defining emphasis on Francis as the chief example of an exemplar for imitating Christ. For inasmuch as Dionysian hierarchy in the *CD* may be reduced to Christic θεομίμησις, the imitation of Christ in the *LMj* coordinates and governs a constellation of concepts shared with or sourced from the tradition of Dionysian hierarchy but is embodied in the Franciscan life and virtues of Gospel perfection. Furthermore, without acknowledging the thoroughness of Dionysian hierarchy's presence in the *LMj* it is well-nigh impossible to identify Bonaventure's innovations in his understanding of the hierarchical system.

In order to explain and elaborate the extent of hierarchy's embeddedness in the *LMj*—or perhaps better, in Francis himself as Bonaventure understood him—I have laid out the ways Bonaventure's faithfulness to, departure from, and innovations in Dionysian hierarchy are apparent in both his organization of the *LMj* and the concrete episodes of Francis' life. To that purpose, I approached the presence of hierarchy in the text by first presenting the prologue's framing (V.2) and then addressing the structure and its implications about hierarchy (V.3) and the major tropes that appeared through Bonaventure's telling of Francis' life (V.4). Afterwards I analyzed the interface of the textual structure and major tropes with the text's hagiographical episodes to show how hierarchy was experienced and performed by Francis both in his form of life and in history (V.5). Finally, I offered a review of the numerology operative in the *LMj* (V.6) and explained how it reinforced Bonaventure's uniquely Franciscan vision of hierarchy. I

will summarize below how Bonaventure's faithfulness and innovation can be addressed either of through the two questions I proposed in the introduction to this chapter: what do 1) the *LMj*'s structure and 2) the interface of hierarchy and Franciscan values reveal about Bonaventure's faithfulness to, departure from, and innovation beyond Dionysian hierarchy earlier medieval reception?

#### **IV.7.1 Structure and Hierarchy in the *LMj***

Answering the first question by attending to the structure of the *LMj* shows complex development in the patterns governing hierarchical activity. Foremost among the implications of the *LMj*'s structure for hierarchy is the circumincession of the three hierarchical powers, purification, illumination, and perfection in each other. The *LMj*'s quiet organization into a series of nested triads at once affirms the progression and simultaneity of the hierarchical powers in Dionysius' conception—Bonaventure is closer to Dionysius than even to commentators such as Hugh of St. Victor in this regard—but also goes beyond Dionysius' understanding by identifying each of the powers as active within any one power and thereby allows the powers to be treated iteratively: any experience of perfection always includes the incipency of purification within itself, a deepening of Christoformity, and yet may also stand as moment of a higher purification, and so on. This circumincession is not only limited to the three hierarchical powers. The triadic pattern of iterative progress spiraling upward in history, in likeness to the invisible angelic and divine hierarchies, and from micro- to the macro-level evinces several other triads operating in tandem with the hierarchical powers: the pattern of conversion, Christoformity, and thirst for God and also of beginning, progress, and end. Triads of

metaphysics and ascent, too, echo in the *LMj*'s structure. Bonaventure thus nestles the hierarchic powers into a wider *gestalt* of spiritual and cosmic progress that reproduces the same steps over and over again, but in a mode accordant to any given place in the micro- or macrocosm. Francis' own spiritual growth by hierarchy is described in patterns borrowed from the mind's rising to God and from the universe causes. Although nobody could accuse Dionysius of lacking a cosmology, Bonaventure novelly locates Francis' concrete hierarchization—in its distinctiveness as the effect of grace—within an eternal pattern suffused through all levels of reality. This pattern is, of course, the life of the Trinity expressed in its *medium*, the Son, who is the exemplar of creation and the mediating hierarch of every hierarchy. Bonaventure, therefore, has gone well beyond what Dionysius understood his triads to mean. Indeed, whereas Dionysius rejected a numerological interpretation of the triads in hierarchies or hierarchical powers in the *CH* (nor did his earlier medieval commentators differ much), Bonaventure embraces it, not only in the symbolism of the triad, but even of the heptad and ennead. What Bonaventure presents through his numerology in structuring the *LMj*, nevertheless, affirms central aspects of Dionysian hierarchy. For organizing the virtues, which sit in the center between the historical chapters, in nine chapters climbing to the Seraph symbolizes that hierarchy performed in the visible creation depends upon and is assimilated to the angels, a standard Dionysian doctrine. Furthermore, symbolizing the cross through the heptad and ennead builds upon the importance of Christ's "ἀγαθοουργία" worked on the cross, which is important in the *CH* and *EH* too.<sup>310</sup> While the cross was the climax of Christ's

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<sup>310</sup> Indeed, *CH* IV speaks of Christ's ἀγαθοουργία, meaning his saving cross, which, *EH* IV addresses in the interpretation of the consecration of of μύρον, which points to *EH* II's and V's references to cross as the model of life for the baptized and the clerics too.

descent and presented as a form of life for Dionysius, Bonaventure explicitly develops the cross into the symbol of ascent into God, which as among the angels and clerics in Dionysian hierarchy includes the descent that cooperates with God's saving work, although Bonaventure does not attach this descent to clerical status he does continue its angelic associations. By presenting the effective power of the cross through those who have embraced and have been conformed to Christ crucified in the triad of the hierarchical powers, Bonaventure also strongly attests to the active character of the hierarchical powers, namely that they are both received and performed by human agents cooperating with God and the angels. Ultimately, while Bonaventure's structuring of the *LMj* according to the hierarchical powers and the hierarchical system generally reaffirms many of the original elements of Dionysian hierarchy, nonetheless, he departs from Dionysius in embracing numerology and develops a notion of hierarchy in which the persons of the Trinity and the Cross are given as its underlying *gestalt*. This innovation expands, intentionally or not, upon the original Christocentrism of the *CH* and *EH* and articulates a sense of the hierarchical powers that function outside of but nonetheless in continuity with the liturgy and clerical orders of the Church on earth and which can be applied to multiple situations or contexts without being exhausted.

#### **IV.7.2 Franciscanism and Hierarchy in the *LMj***

Answering the second question, attending to the interface between hierarchy and Francis and the Franciscan ideals he represents in the *LMj*'s thematic chapters and episodes presents Christ's earthly ministry and passion as the embodiment and model for hierarchical activity. Indeed, in the *LMj* a life of Gospel perfection, a life rooted in

poverty and crowned by love (charity and transforming *amor*) is the actualization of hierarchic life, active and passive. To a certain extent, the *LMj*'s Christocentrism in taking Christ as the pattern of both the life reformed by (purified, illuminated, and perfected) and performing (purifying, illuminating, and perfecting) hierarchy is in line with Dionysian hierarchy's Christocentrism. For in *CH* and *EH*, θεομίμησις is largely construed as an imitation and participation in Christ the light of the Father. While Dionysius includes the earthly deeds of Jesus among the theurgies that the cultic practice of the hierarchies participates and regards Christ's life and cross as the model for Christian conduct he does not take the literal details of the Gospels as the model of imitation and his ethical prescriptions are frequently negative admonitions. Although Dionysius clearly articulates Christ's merciful condescension that elevates the angels and saves humanity from sin and death in *EH* III.3.10 and IV.3.10-12, a position with which Bonaventure concurs, Dionysius does not parse Jesus condescension through the lens of earthly poverty and psychological lowliness or of transforming *amor*, nor still the by works of preaching and healing. Bonaventure's enshrinement of hierarchy in Francis, the exemplary imitator of Christ, results in an embodiment of the hierarchical powers in the actions and habits of (at least of his vision) of Franciscan life of gospel perfection. In the *LMj*, as in other biographies of Francis, this life of gospel perfection is spurred by Francis' reception of the Holy Spirit intervention to inspire his love of Christ and the lowest among humanity (*LMj* I) and also his hearing of the Gospel's call to penance, poverty, and embracing the cross (*LMj* II; III.1-3). In the *LMj*, the embodiment of the hierarchical powers in the exemplary Francis unfolds in two trajectories of the intermediate-level: in Francis the founder of the Order of Friars Minor, who set out their



way of life by his “form, rule, and teaching” and also in Francis’ personal virtues. The former consists in penance, poverty, prayer, preaching and a good death and the latter in an ennead of virtues (austerity, humility-obedience, poverty; piety, charity-desire of martyrdom, zeal for prayer; prophecy-knowledge of scripture, preaching-healing, stigmata). Both sets represent the result and means of being refashioned into the likeness to Christ through the hierarchical powers exercised by God through those angels and human cooperators who have been so hierarchized, such as Francis and his followers, who in turn exercise the hierarchical powers through these same acts and virtues.

Bonaventure’s embodiment of the hierarchical powers in the mode of life and virtues that comprise the Franciscan *religio* evidently departs from and goes beyond Dionysian’ hierarchy and its other medieval receptions in a number of ways while also converging in others. For instance, in the *EH*, hierarchy was considered in the context of a particular Church with one hierarch and his attendant priests and deacons (occasionally nodding towards other hierarchs) celebrating their liturgies or teaching for the sake of the liturgy for their own sake and the sake of the monks, the holy laity, and those undergoing purification. Furthermore, in the *EH*, the hierarchical powers are performed and received through the performance of baptism, the Eucharist, and the consecration and use of *μύρον*. Bonaventure, however, in the *LMj*, approaches the hierarchical powers as they are performed by and received through one man, Francis and those whom he has formed into a religious order within the context of a universal Church. It is in their life of gospel perfection rather than any set of liturgies that they, communally or personally, imitate Christ’s sojourn in the world. The *LMj*, of course, is not of the same genre of the *EH*, a liturgical mystagogy, nor of the *CH*, a biblical commentary and discussion of the

principles of hierarchy. For that reason, drawing too systematic a comparison between the content of these works is inapposite. Nevertheless, it is obvious that Bonaventure considers the performance of hierarchy in ways Dionysius never approached. That the brothers who need not have received holy orders, although major clerics numbered among them (much more so in Bonaventure's day) and would be best associated with Dionysius sub-clerical monastic rank are purifiers, illuminators, and perfectors and do not primarily exercise this role through the liturgy marks a break with Dionysius' understanding of hierarchy. That they do so through first of all through begging marks another.<sup>311</sup>

The *LMj*'s exposition of these hierarchically active mendicants is not, however, a simple translation of the role of Dionysian clerics to them, since, as is clear, they are situated within wider structures of the Church's sacraments and episcopal and especially papal authority. The use of hierarchy in the *LMj* to explain Francis' significance as the imitator of Christ for the Church in Bonaventure's day amounts, rather, to a reconfiguration of understanding hierarchy through both a much more concrete set of Gospel demands and at the same time a wider scope in who performs the hierarchical powers—indeed not only the Franciscans but anyone who takes up the cross (as all three Franciscan Orders represent), albeit not necessarily in the same way or to the same extent, as the recursively progressive presentation of the hierarchical powers in the *LMj* permits.

Such simultaneous specificity in acts and breadth in persons performing hierarchy is not indicative of any retreat from the loftiness of the Dionysian vision. Worship and

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<sup>311</sup> Although they are also commissioned as preachers, Bonaventure points out they first teach by exemplary action rather than words. (*LMj* Prol. 1; VI.1)

mystical ascent and fellowship with the angels permeate the *LMj* and color the earthly actions of the *povorello* with a heavenly glow. The tropes of the integrity of poverty and piety and Francis' ascent from the visible to the invisible appear in almost every chapter and coalesce in the cross, for the cross is at once rooted in poverty, is Christoform in the shape of a saving and glorifying offering, and is the access to the Father, in the Son, and through the Spirit. Indeed, the whole of Francis' hierarchized life, inwardly and outwardly, is a living (and dying!) spiritual sacrifice in Christ, an offering of worship that succors his human brothers and sisters and rests in the bosom of God. In this ascent, Francis' acts become like those of the angelic hierarchies, especially the rank of Seraphim who burn with love of God and man. That is Dionysius' vision for the perfected soul, too, but the mysterious Areopagite did not articulate it in the same temporal, practical, nor affective context.

When Bonaventure interprets Francis and his legacy through hierarchy, hierarchy emerges both reconfigured to Franciscanism and yet also closer to original purpose in Dionysius, resembling more closely the anagogy to Christic θεομίμησις while also while casting a wider net on who performs hierarchical activity and how.

Even in this regard, the Franciscanizing of hierarchy by Bonaventure results in a recovery of likeness to Dionysius' sense of the hierarchical powers and a broadening of their meaning. In tandem with the other facets of the conceptual triad (beginning/progress/end; conversion/conformity/thirst) the hierarchical powers, as organized in the many episodes and stages of the *LMj*, take on a wider meaning than Eriugena, Hugh, and earlier Bonaventure present. Whereas for them powers correspond to morals, intellect, and union (Hugh and early Bonaventure) or to stages intellectual

conversion, reception, or ascent (Hugh and Eriugena) the powers embodied in the structure of the *LMj* broad correspondences to categories of stability (which includes moral rectitude), conformation to Christ the light (which includes intellectual vision), and effective rest in God (which includes union). In this way the hierarchical powers can be seen in every dimension of graced life and can be reduced to the cross as their pattern in being both received and performed. Indeed, for the *LMj*, the cross, rooted in poverty, shaped in Christ, and leading beyond the world contextualizes and includes the whole purpose of hierarchy as it was in Dionysius: anagogy, θέωσις, union, assimilation, and θεομίμησις are all found in the cross.

The cross, especially, shows that Francis' experience of anagogy, a point stressed by Gallus, is powerfully passive, as what is begun in poverty is consummated in poverty, not only because he dies naked on the ground but much more because he has renounced all things for God and neighbor, even himself. In this total renunciation, Francis has not taken hold of God as much as God has taken hold of Francis. For all his striving in hierarchy, Francis' beatitude is, however cooperative, ultimately a matter of passivity. The *LMj* is not an ascetic's manifesto but a manifestation of the deifying power of God through the life of the poor man, Francis. Hierarchy is the means of that deification—in truth a Christoformation—which lies open to all. A life transformed by hierarchy, as Bonaventure earlier and later works show, cannot be had apart from the Church order's sacraments or authority, or from the angelic hierarchies' aid. Rather, receiving the sacraments enables the sort of life witnessed to by Francis and his brothers and sisters in the world, a divine life that comes to fruition through daily Christlike lowliness and love to suprainтеллектуал rest in God.

### IV.7.3 Francis the Quasi-Hierarch in the *LMj*

Finally, in considering both the structure and Franciscanized vision of hierarchy together, Francis himself emerges as the image of the angels (especially the Seraphim), Christ in his ministry and saving passion, and even the Trinity akin to Dionysius' angel-and-God-revealing hierarch who is the coordinating center of hierarchy and hierarchical action in the earthly Church. The ordering of the episodes of Francis' life, in their various levels, and their content both contribute to framing Francis, who ascends like a hierarchic man, in the likeness of the Dionysian hierarch. Like a hierarch, Francis is the inspired source (as founder) of a concrete *religio* (the three orders) and he is its leader in worship and teaching and its most eminent member, even after both his renunciation of the generalate and his death. Like a hierarch, he is an angelic man and a revealer of heavenly realities to his fellows on earth. The structural complexity of the *LMj* depicts as much by interposing Francis' virtues between the historical chapters. Indeed, similar to Dionysius' hierarch in the earthly church, he stands on the cusp of the angelic realm in virtue of which he leads the Order(s), and the wider Church that he has been to salvation and deification. Through these virtues by which, in the course of his life, Francis has been purified, illuminated, and perfected he in turn shares the same to others by participating and cooperating in Christ the mediator's mysteries—a participation which is largely a literal imitation of the Gospel. By taking up the life of Christ and most of all Christ's cross, Francis models Dionysian θεομίμησις in a Franciscan light, and yet in him Bonaventure has shown the loftiness of what Francis and all his followers may achieve, not only ethical purity but to taste God and to be molded into God so far as possible, to resemble not only the Seraphim and Christ the light descending from the Father but even

the Triune life from which that Christ that saving light came forth into the world of visible and invisible creatures. Such is especially the conceptual force of the structural and numerological symbolism in the *LMj*.

Nonetheless, Francis, although like a hierarch, is not Dionysius' hierarch. Bonaventure's Francis is not a bishop and chief liturgical and sacramental actor and authority over the Church, however striking the similarities. Francis is a cultic leader, devoted, as his own writings show, to the divine office and the Eucharist, but his worship is also that which leads the Church, and in a way, all creation to fulfill the praise of the God who made and redeemed it as a sacrifice. Yet, he is still not a bishop. Even though he performs the hierarchical powers as much as he receives them, he does not do so through the sacraments whereby grace, *gratia gratum faciens*, is instilled, strengthened, and nourished in the soul—but he leads those who possess it to their fruition. He is not in any way in opposition to the sacraments but, rather what the Eucharist does in the individual soul, Francis, having been conformed to Christ's sacrifice by imitation, he does for the Church at large, leading Christians to a like imitation of Christ's poverty and piety in their bodies, intellects and by fanning the flames of charity and the love that transforms into its beloved and stirring them to enter *transitus* and *passover* that belongs to Christians as true Hebrews.<sup>312</sup>

Furthermore, unlike the Dionysian hierarch, Francis is an apocalyptic figure, the angel of the sixth seal given to the medieval church badly in need of repair and sent to raise up an order that, like Christ, won praise and scorn. Though Francis announced “peace” in all his comings and goings, his legacy was not emblematic of the Dionysian

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<sup>312</sup> *Itin* I.9; *LMj* VII.9.

hierarchy's serenity. Bonaventure knew Francis as the naked, weeping, fool for Christ—patent on the pages of the *LMj* and *LMn*, too, who birthed and nursed an order mired in conflicts in Church law over their own rights, in doctrine over the limits of Joachimite apocalypticism, and within the university and its own quarrels over the preeminence of theology. Francis and the institution of his Order stir up conflict in an all too human but nonetheless divinely instituted Church. Yet in that Church, he, at most a deacon, submits to the rightful authorities above him but this perfected imitator of Christ in his own mode yet looms above them as in the likeness Enoch and Elijah ascending and John the Baptist warning and even like Moses receiving a law written on the tablet of his own body. Francis, the unique but exemplary imitator of Christ enshrines a vision of θεομίμησις that both differs from and concurs with that which is seen in Dionysius' hierarchy.

Similarly, the Bonaventurian understanding of hierarchy that undergirds the *LMj*, for all its divergence and developments, it is remarkably similar to the fundamentals of Dionysian hierarchy's taxonomy and purpose. The Franciscanized hierarchy—or hierarchized Franciscanism—is, as I will discuss in the conclusion, even closer to these principles than in his earlier descriptions and uses of hierarchy. However, this similarity is not necessarily due to (or solely to) a closer reading of Dionysius' by Bonaventure (although there is reason to suspect so, as Ratzinger has suggested) since other medieval movements, including psychological attentiveness of the Augustinian thought the love-mysticism of the Cistercians, Victorines, and Thomas Gallus certainly furnished much to Bonaventure's description of Francis that was also amenable to the original Dionysian articulation of hierarchy's ecstatic and transforming power. The question of Bonaventure's sources is different from the question of the resemblance between older

and newer articulations of hierarchy. To the latter, it is clear that the *LMj* and the *CD* share demonstrably similar concepts in manifestly different contexts and therefore, to the former, that Bonaventure either accidentally molded his understanding of hierarchy to greater conformity with its original articulation or Bonaventure found his way there in the pages of the *CD*, or perhaps both by happy confluence. Given the increasing importance of *CD*, conceptually speaking, in the works prior to the *LMj*, I believe it likely, however, that the hierarchical conception of Francis and his legacy is the product of a conscientious turn towards the Areopagite in the Seraphic Doctor's thought. However, any further investigation of that development must wait for a future study.



## CONCLUSION

### Summary of Demonstrations

In the four preceding chapters I sought out to respond to four lacunae I perceived in scholarly treatments of Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy: 1) an insufficient familiarity with the priestly, latreutic, and Christocentric character of Dionysian hierarchy that impeded an adequate judgement of Bonaventure's Dionysianism and his understanding use of the concept of hierarchy in particular; 2) no close reading of Bonaventure's use of hierarchy had been put forward from which to affirm or deny whether his doctrine of hierarchy developed; 3) the lack of a precise account of how Bonaventure applied hierarchy to Francis—that is, more than an explanation of Francis atop states of spiritual ascents in *Hex XXII*—in terms of the technical language of hierarchy and related concepts; 4) finally, while elaborate structures had been applied to the *LMj*'s on the basis of the three hierarchical powers of purification, illumination, and perfection across almost fifty years, no detailed consideration of what insight these structures imply about Bonaventure's own doctrine of hierarchy had been written.

I have responded to these four lacunae by: 1) reviewing, in detail, the Dionysian doctrine and system of hierarchy and its modification in its medieval receptions that were available to Bonaventure; 2) comparing the meaning and use of hierarchy and related concepts in four of Bonaventure's major works written prior to the *LMj*, namely, *II-IV Sent*, *Comm Luke*, *Brev*, and *Itin* in chronological order; 3) analyzing the presence of themes and content from Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy in the works prior to *LMj* in order to understand how they frame Bonaventure's presentation of Francis as a model *vir*

*hierarchicus* worthy of imitation; 4) assessing how the hierarchical concepts and themes applied to Francis and Franciscan spirituality in the *LMj* together with the structure in which they are applied express a Franciscanized version of the concept of hierarchy on Bonaventure's part.

These four responses to the four lacunae were accomplished in four chapters. In Chapter I, I analyzed the taxonomy, purpose, and means of accomplishing hierarchy in the *CD* and established that these aspects are all centered around a Christocentric θεομίμησις, the imitation of God by angels and humans through the reception of and cooperation with Christ the light of the Father in a deification that is not merely achieved through worship but a deification which is worship. In Chapter II, compared the interpretations of Dionysian hierarchy in the *CPD* belonging to Eriugena, Hugh of St. Victor, and Thomas Gallus, explaining that while they passed on Dionysius' taxonomy, they introduced diverse senses of hierarchy's purpose and means of accomplishment, against which Bonaventure's own doctrine might be better judged. This two-chapter review of the history of the concept of hierarchy responded to the first lacuna.

Chapter III turned to chart the development of Bonaventure's understanding and deployment of hierarchy from the II-IV *Sent* to the *Itin*, I outlined how Bonaventure's use of hierarchy broadened when Bonaventure adopted Christ as the hierarchy, whereafter hierarchy was not only used to articulate ecclesiology and intelligent creatures' return to God but was entwined with the doctrine of grace and used to interpret the embrace of cross as the way of deification. In that way, I showed how Bonaventure's increasing integration of hierarchy with Franciscan themes and Francis himself brought his

understanding of hierarchy closer to Dionysius' than its use II-IV *Sent*. The comparison of these works of Bonaventure's corpus responded the second lacuna.

In Chapter IV, I undertook an analysis of the themes and structures of the *LMj*, arguing that the hierarchical powers and the implicit structures of Bonaventure's doctrine hierarchy, especially of the divine and angelic hierarchies, provide the conceptual underpinnings of the *LMj*'s narrative structure. This analysis and assessment of the relationship between hierarchy, Francis, and Franciscanism responded the third and fourth lacunae.

Through these four chapters I have set Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy in relief with Dionysian hierarchy in its full sense as a work heavenly and earthly priesthood and with the medieval accounts of hierarchy that reinterpreted hierarchy. Against this background I have made two main arguments over and above the many granular analyses I have conducted heretofore. First, that between II-IV *Sent* and the *LMj*, Bonaventure's doctrine hierarchy underwent a development in both its conceptual scope and its architectural role, a development that was more than translation of hierarchy from being a theological to a spiritual lens, as Jacques Guy Bougerol proposed of Bonaventure's Dionysianism in general, but rather was hierarchy's blossoming from an explanatory to an organizing concept. While Zachary Hayes is correct to see that Bonaventure's earliest understanding of hierarchy is not erased in this development, the emergence of the figure of Christ the Hierarch and the cross in all its dimensions with him is a genuine novelty that attests to the originality of Bonaventure's later thought.<sup>1</sup> Second, I have argued that Bonaventure's doctrine of hierarchy as it appeared by 1263 in the *LMj*, despite

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<sup>1</sup> Hayes, *The Hidden Center*, 153–54, 157–161.

divergences from Dionysius original articulation of hierarchy, has become closer to Dionysius' by its assimilation to the Christocentricity of Franciscan spirituality. Moreover, the divergence and convergence between Bonaventure and the Areopagite are not capable of simple tabulation but, in some cases, the very points of divergence are the soil from which a convergence arises. Nowhere is this seemingly paradoxical relationship more manifest than in Bonaventure's hierarchical interpretation of Francis as the foremost image of hierarchization. He, in whom poverty, spiritual ascent, and the embrace of the God-revealing cross are joined is at once so unlike *CD*'s bishop-hierarchy and yet as the model of Bonaventurian imitation of Christ represents all the core elements Dionysian θεομίμησις: receiving God as being elevated to likeness to God in handing God on further in cooperating with the Son of God.

### **Bonaventurian Hierarchy and the Limits of This Study**

The results of this limited study of Bonaventure's Franciscan reception of Dionysian hierarchy up to his composition of the *LMj* could never offer a comprehensive account of his doctrine of hierarchy. Since I have left the *Hex*, Bonaventure's final statement of hierarchy to the side, which is also his most thorough account of the taxonomy of hierarchy, any such comprehensive study would be impossible, let alone given the number of other works that would round out his account of hierarchy and the interface of Franciscanism, including the *Trip via*, *Apol paup*, *De donis*, and numerous sermons. Nonetheless, the present study permits the following conclusions of about the taxonomy, purpose, and means of hierarchy's accomplishment by the time of the publication of the *LMj*.

### Who: Taxonomy in Bonaventuran Hierarchy to 1263

Bonaventure's taxonomy of hierarchy in 1263 has not largely departed from the organization of the hierarchies in *II Sent* d. 9, a the divine hierarchy of the Trinity, the three angelic hierarchies, which are also at times referred to as a single hierarchy, and the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Prior to *Hex XX-XXIII*, Bonaventure does not stand by the nine-fold distinction of clerical orders, an order is first found in Honourius Augustodunensis writings,<sup>2</sup> however by the *Itin*, Bonaventure follows Dionysius' rather than Gregory the Great's ordering of the nine angelic orders. As with Dionysius, Eriugena, and Gallus, Bonaventure upholds the angels as cooperators in the descent of the divine light, the higher aiding the lower and all aiding the church with what they have received from God—namely their deiform glory. What they are cooperating in handing in on, however in Bonaventure's terminology is not the *claritas* of the Eriugena and Hugh of St. Victor, but, as in Gallus *Extractio*, the divine *influentia* by which humans and angels receive the light which is God. Furthermore, unlike Eriugena and Hugh, and certainly unlike Dionysius, Bonaventure regards the angelic ranks as having an association to the persons of the Trinity, although that schema will not be fully developed until the *Hex*. Like Gallus, and again, in distinction from all of his predecessors, by 1263 he has employed a taxonomy of interior or mental powers which correspond to the angels and which are aided by the angels. Moreover, these angels aiding humanity internally, are themselves the vehicles of God's own action. Just as for Dionysius, for Bonaventure, all hierarchical

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<sup>2</sup> David E. Luscombe, "Hierarchy in the Writings of Alan of Lille, William of Auvergne, and St. Bonaventure," in *Angels in Medieval Philosophical Inquiry: Their Function and Significance*, ed. Isabel Iribarren and Martin Lenz, Ashgate Studies in Medieval Philosophy (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Pub. Ltd, 2008), 17.

action can be referred to God not only as first source, but as active at all levels and in every act of mediation. God is interior to every hierarchical action, a doctrine that finds its fullest expression in Bonaventure's attribution of the role of hierarch to Christ. For Bonaventure, Jesus Christ is operative in all hierarchical actions as the medium, mediator, and high priest, who, by his incarnation and cross restores the world and reduces intelligent creatures to the Trinity in the deity for which they were made. Thus, as Christ is the universal hierarch, but is not simply set above the created hierarchies, he is the hierarch in every hierarchy.

### **Why: The Purpose of Bonaventurean Hierarchy to 1263**

The purpose of hierarchy, being reduction to God, is accomplished through the purification, illumination, perfection of the soul. While earlier in Bonaventure's writings, purification, illumination, and perfection carry the sense of conversion, knowledge of the truth, and union in love to God—much as in Hugh of St. Victor's account of the hierarchical power, by the *LMj* and assuredly even earlier, these powers have assumed a broad range of meaning, so that purification is associated with stabilization, illumination with reformation, and perfection with that union with God in which one becomes fecund like God. In the reading I have proposed, the *LMj* is an extended depiction of these powers in their passive and active sense. As in the *CH* and *EH*, these powers are the fruit of a condescension by Christ (or simply, by God) in which some intelligent creatures cooperate and have ecstasy into God as their fruit through a process of spiritual transformation and assimilation to the angels, in which spiritual senses are acquired and then, even exceeded by passing into the divine darkness through the fire of love, which is

has cross that Christ has made available to be embraced. The primacy of love, ardent love, is symbolized by the Seraph, a prominent figure in both the Franciscan and Dionysian traditions, and in a way, functions as a shorthand for the purpose of Bonaventurean hierarchy, namely, to be transformed into Christ as Francis was inwardly. While the fullest articulation of the Trinitarian configuration of hierarchy will not arrive until *Hex XX-XXIII*, by 1263—implicit in the form the *LMj*—adopting the cross as the form of hierarchic and divinized life is at once also conformity and expression of the Trinity. For, as Bonaventure's teaches, the grace which hierarchizes the soul, *gratia gratum faciens*, is the presence of God, who is the Trinity, in the soul and makes it's a daughter of the Father, spouse of the Son, and temple of the Holy Spirit.

### **How: The Means of Accomplishing Bonaventurean Hierarchy to 1263**

Finally, the means of the accomplishing hierarchy as expressed by 1263 is, perhaps, the least similar to Dionysian hierarchy's original articulation, if only because Dionysius' own account of hierarchy's efficacy is entirely liturgical. Like Eriugena and Hugh, but not like Gallus, Bonaventure does produce a liturgical and Church order scheme that explains how the whole ritual and clerical system continues and carries within itself the work of the angels hierurgies and God's theurgies in them. Nevertheless, Bonaventure is not anti-liturgical, but without having written liturgical commentary, the modes by which Bonaventure expresses the accomplishment of hierarchy are different than the Areopagite's. Certainly, the celebration of the sacraments, in which God gives grace, are a principal means of purification, illumination, and perfection—especially the Eucharist—and liturgical prayer belongs to the fulfillment of the life of grace.

Nonetheless, scripture too, preached and heard, has the power to purify, illumine, and perfect, and, it would seem, so does the presence of Francis in the church enkindle charity within it. Indeed, the *LMj* attests that embracing mendicant life is both a means and fruition of purification, illumination, and perfection. Since in Bonaventure, as I have drawn from the *LMj* and elsewhere, does not treat the hierarchical powers as simply successive nor limited to an association with one effective act, these various means of hierarchization do are in a non-competitive relationship. God is the primary actor in all and the each have a role to play in sanctification, for while in a certain sense it is the sacraments which accomplish this transformation, those who receive them must bring their gifts to fruition, and Francis, imitating Christ the exemplar, has shown how to do so. Furthermore, in their fruition in conformity to Christ, the soul is made a pleasing sacrifice that passes over with him like a “true Hebrew” to the Father in the Holy Spirit. As in Dionysius and Eriugena, and to an extent, Hugh, for Bonaventure, hierarchy remains the deifying act of worship and the worshipful act of deification.

### **Future Goals for Scholarship**

Much remains to be said about hierarchy in Bonaventure’s thought, and not only because I have dealt with such a small selection of texts. It is my hope that my own study my lead to further work on the subject, by myself and others. Indeed, a further consideration of the mendicant controversies would surely nuance and temper any over exaggeration in my effort to read Bonaventure’s hierarchy through a Franciscan lens. In particular, close attention to the use of *CD* by the mendicants' opponents, as Colt Anderson has done, would be indispensable for this purpose. Similarly important would



be a detailed comparison of Bonaventure's immediate predecessors and contemporaries, an approach I set aside for practical concerns, not least of which was space! Indeed, a comparison between the secular, Dominican, and Franciscan readers of Dionysius, especially Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Robert Grosseteste, who wrote commentaries on parts of the *CD* (and translated in Grosseteste's case) would further qualify Bonaventure's novelty. Perhaps even more importantly, the commentary of the *CH* by John the Saracen, found in the *CDP*, remains unedited, as does the commentary on *CH* by John of Peter Olivi, Bonaventure's student. Since Bonaventure never authored a commentary on the *CH*, it could be illuminating to see the extent to which Bonaventure's ideas about hierarchy can be found in Olivi and other of his students, including Matthew of Aquasparta, thus offering an window upon of their impact on the intellectual and devotional world of the Franciscan Order.

### **Practical Applications for Contemporary Theology**

Dionysian hierarchy is not a concept that frequently receives serious and sympathetic consideration in contemporary theology, even less so in ethical explorations. This is, even without raising ideological questions, understandable, for the Areopagite offered little practical directive on how life is to be conducted, beside in a pure and holy manner befitting the spiritual vision of the lay and clerical orders. Bonaventure's Franciscanization of hierarchy, however, invites bringing the mystical or contemplative side of Christianity together with its mission for the corporal works of mercy. For in Francis, the way to climbing the cross of Christ with the angels in ascent to God begins, first of all, with his embrace of a leper and service to those in material poverty and

destitution. Indeed, Francis' ascent to God never sets him apart from the care of bodies and souls. On the contrary, the profundity of his perfection is proportional to the good he works, by effort or miracles, for the poor of every sort. Bonaventure's presentation of the hierarchical Francis is a theological reminder that worship and spiritual development cannot be severed from the practical care of the poor and that, contrawise, the care of the poor can never be perfect unless it serves their souls. In a polarized age and, alas, a polarized Church, I hope that the Seraphic Father may be a sweet influence towards the right integration of all that belongs to the service of Jesus Christ.

### **Final Remarks**

In the last regard, however distant the mendicant movements and the *CD* seem to be from each other at first sight, their eventual interaction was not unforeseeable, especially once the mendicants entered the scholastic environment of thirteenth century. The Seraph, a recurrent figure in this dissertation and emblematic of both the Dionysian and Franciscan traditions, was auspicious of integration. Indeed, Franciscanism and the Dionysian tradition share a Christocentric focus and, albeit in very different modes, recognize their chief figures, St. Francis and the Hierarch as imitators of Christ. Furthermore, Francis himself was deeply devoted to the Church and Eucharist and the clergy.

Nevertheless, however many points of invite the embrace of Dionysian thought by Franciscans, it was Bonaventure who integrated them in a way that distinguished his use of hierarchy from the schoolmen before him. In integrating these two traditions, Bonaventure resolved the elements that strongly distinguish one from the other into a

creative tension. In Bonaventure's synthesis, the a-clericalism of Francis' original vision must stand with clerical-focus of Dionysian hierarchy that regards external rank as commensurate with interior perfection. Similarly, the eschatological thrust of Franciscanism is combined with the "eternalist" character of Dionysian hierarchy. The Franciscan subjectivity (even Augustinian interiority) is brought together with the cosmic objectivities of the Dionysian vision of creation emanation from and return to God. The immediacy of experiencing God, which Francis exemplifies, is joined to the mediatorial structures of hierarchy. In short, Bonaventure attempts an audacious bridging of two spiritualities without simply emptying one's distinctiveness to conform to the other.

Bonaventure's integration and navigation of the convergence and divergence between his Franciscanism and Dionysian hierarchy results in a singular vision of hierarchy, in which Francis is the model of the imitation of God and assimilation to the angels, to the heavenly Jerusalem. Francis, burning with Seraphic love, is the model of become a living worship, a living sacrifice in conformity with Christ and like Christ revealing the inner life of the Triune God. Moreover, since Francis, in a certain, an *everyman*, is the proximate archetype of holiness, Bonaventure declares that the highest holiness is possible for all the faithful, and not just clerics or the inhabitants of monasteries, if they should take the true humility as the path of ascent.

Bonaventure's integration does not only produce a uniquely Franciscan articulation of hierarchy, it also draws back the curtain on a profound but little discussed commonality between the writings of the Areopagite and the Franciscan tradition: that the way of descent is the way of ascent, or rather, the deifying power of Christ's cross is humility. For the *povorello*'s humility and self-dispossession to others is his ascent to

God in conformity to Christ, and hence he was marked with the stigmata in his vision of the Seraph. At the same time, it is all too infrequently recognized that the θεομίμησις which Dionysius presents as the goal of hierarchy is the imitation of God the Son's *descent* as the "gift of light" to humans and angels. It is this deifying descent that the Seraphim—Dionysius tells us—observed all the way to his death on the cross.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, for Dionysius hierarchy describes the participation of Christ's divine and deifying descent, to pour forth his heavenly unction, as much as it describes an ascent, for there is no anagogy without someone reaching down. For both the Franciscan Bonaventure, a minor, master, and minister, and Dionysius these three, deifying ascent and descent, the Lord's cross, and the fire of the highest Seraphim belong together, and through that conceptual and symbolic kinship, Bonaventure produces a genuinely Franciscan model of hierarchy.

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<sup>3</sup> *EH* IV.3.11.

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