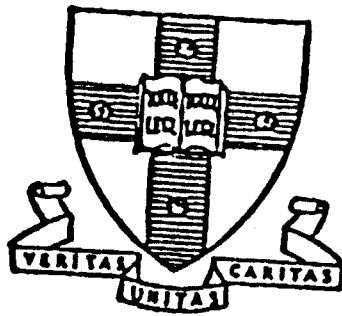


AUGUSTINIAN STUDIES



VOLUME 19

1988

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THE SAINT AUGUSTINE LECTURE 1988

AUGUSTINE : ON BEING A CHRISTIAN

Russell J. DeSimone, O.S.A.

Introduction

The "Christian" is a major theme that runs throughout the width and breadth of St. Augustine's voluminous writings. Augustine was himself, in the words of F. Van der Meer, that "unconditional Christian," and the unconditional character of his Christianity has an urgent significance and relevance which has remained undiminished through the ages.¹ Towards the end of her life, Monica addressed these words to her son, Augustine:

Son, I feel now that nothing gives me pleasure any longer in this life. What am I still doing here? I really do not know why I am here because I no longer have any more expectations in this world. One thing gave me the desire to live a little longer and that was to see you become a Catholic Christian (*christianum catholicum*). God has granted me this beyond my greatest expectations, namely that I should see you abandon all hopes of earthly happiness and become his servant. What am I doing here?²

Monica died at Ostia shortly thereafter in 387. Monica's words remained indelibly fixed in the heart and mind of her son. Augustine strove henceforth with all his energy and exceptional talents no longer, he says, to "succeed in this world and to excel in those arts of discourse which would only serve to bring me honor among men and to gain deceitful riches," but rather to become a Catholic Christian, the totally committed servant of God that his saintly mother had so perseveringly prayed for all those seemingly endless years.³ Now that he was a full-fledged Catholic Christian and a servant of God, he gloried in the name "Christian." On the

anniversary of his episcopal consecration, which he had accepted with much fear and trepidation, Augustine reminded his faithful: "For you I am a bishop. With you, I am a Christian. The former is the name of the office I have taken, the latter of grace; the former is one of danger, the latter one of salvation."⁴

Hans Küng in his recent work, *Christ Sein: On Being a Christian* re-examines what it means to be a Christian today; he assesses the impact of other world religions, humanism, science, technology, and political revolution, affirms belief in Jesus Christ as the center of existence, and then challenges his readers with the direct question:

Why should one be a Christian? Why not be human, truly human? Why, in addition to being human, should we be Christians? Is there something more to being a Christian than to being human? Is it a superstructure?⁵

To this question and challenge, Augustine replies in his *Commentary on the Gospel of St. John* 1.33:

Pay attention, my brothers, to what the Christian has. That he is a man, he has this in common with many other people. That he is a Christian, this places him apart from the crowd. It is more important for man to be a Christian than to be a man. As a Christian, he has been formed anew in the image of God (cf. Col. 3.10), by whom he has been made to the image of God. As a man, he may be evil, may be a pagan, may be a worshiper of idols.

Persecution, explains Augustine, strives to take away from the Christian his better part: "...what makes him live, what makes him a regenerated man, what makes him a Christian. The Christian lives in time because his soul gives life to his body. But he lives eternally because he has been regenerated in baptism."⁶ We shall see that to be a Christian for Hans Küng is to be radically human; for Augustine it means to become radically godlike.

I. *Christians of the Old Testament*

We may be startled to hear Augustine insisting that Christians already existed in the Old Testament. In *Sermon 300* on the Solemnity of the Maccabean martyrs, delivered on August 1, Augustine said to the faithful:

Let no one think that before there was a Christian people, there was no people of God. There was not at the time of the Old Dispensation, the usage of the Christian name. Nevertheless, the Christian people existed at that time (*christianus etiam ille tunc populus fuit*).... The Christian people was born of Abraham. When you admire the Maccabean martyrs, do not think that they were not Christian martyrs (*ne ... illos martyres ... putetis non fuisse christianos*). They were Christians (*christiani fuerunt*), but the name of "Christians" was divulged only later, while the deeds proper to Christians anteceded the name.

The Maccabean martyrs did not openly confess their faith in Christ because the mystery of Christ was still veiled: "For the Old Testament is a veiling (*velatio*) of the New Testament; the New Testament a revealing (*revelatio*) of the Old Testament."⁷

Likewise, in his commentary on Psalm 104 Augustine maintains that the ancient patriarchs and prophets were covertly already Christian because they were called "Christs" (*christi*) or "Anointed" from *χρισμα* or the consecrated oil used to anoint kings and prophets of the Old Testament. Christ (*Χριστός*) or "Anointed One" and "Christian" (*Χριστιανός*) are derived from the same root. Therefore Augustine can say: "They were called 'Christs' (*christi*) because, although secretly (*latenter*), they were nonetheless already Christians (*iam tamen christiani*)."⁸

Why is Augustine insisting that Christians already existed in the Old Testament? The answer can be found in his *Retractations*⁹ where he comments on a statement he made in his *The True Religion*: "In our times, this is the Christian religion which to know and follow is most secure and

most certain."¹⁰ He fears his reader may be misled from such a statement to believe that the Christian religion was merely contemporary with "our times," that is the time of the writer. When he made this statement, Augustine explains, he was referring to the name only, not to the reality of the Christian religion which existed even among the ancients and goes back to the beginnings of the human race. With the birth of Christ the true religion, which already existed, began to be called "Christian." After the Resurrection and the Ascension of our Lord into heaven, the disciples preached and many believed. "The disciples were first called 'Christians' at Antioch."¹¹ Augustine concludes: "For this reason, I said: 'In our times, this is the Christian religion,' not because it did not exist in former times, but because it had received this name in later times."¹² This is Augustine's argument from antiquity.

Porphyry was labelled as "the bitterest enemy of the Christians by Augustine in his *City of God*."¹³ He wrote fifteen books against the Christians. Fragments of this work are found in Augustine's *Letter 102*.¹⁴ One of the Neo-Platonic philosopher's more weighty arguments against the Christians was: "If Christ says He is the way, the grace, and the truth, and He places in Himself alone the approach of believing souls to Him, what did the men of so many centuries before Christ do?"¹⁵ Augustine's reply was that those who believed in Christ were not lacking, from Adam to Moses, among the people of Israel which was by divine ordinance the prophetic race, nor were they lacking among other peoples,¹⁶ although we do not find mention of these other people in the Sacred Books. From the beginning of the human race, all those who believed in Christ, the unchangeable Word of God who guides all creatures, and knew him and lived a good life, whenever and wherever they lived, were saved by him.¹⁷ The pagans rejected Christ as "only of yesterday," as one who had not "been known by name until his own time."¹⁸ Ambrose appears to have been one of the few defenders of Christianity to admit, in his dispute with Symmachus, "that this argument from antiquity did not hold" Ambrose writes: "Not the antiquity of years, but that of morals is laudable. It is not shameful to move on to something better."¹⁹ Augustine was saying that salvation was possible in all ages because God's grace was ever present.

Furthermore, if Christians and the Christian religion already existed in reality in the Old Testament, then the heroes of the Old Testament could be presented, by means of allegorical interpretation, as role models of Christian virtue to Christians of every age. For example, Augustine teaches that Noah, Daniel and Job are figures or types of the three categories of Christians of the New Testament: Noah is a figure of the ministers of the Church. For, just as he guided the Ark over the deluge, those who govern the Church guide it to the eternal shores.²⁰ After the Deluge, Noah worked his vineyard;²¹ a figure, says Augustine, of pastors who preside over the churches.²² Daniel is a type or model of the soul completely consecrated to God by continence and contemplation.²³ Job is a role model for married people who are not crushed by the revolving, as it were, millstone of the vicissitudes and adversities of this world, as are the lovers of this fleeting world.²⁴

Abraham, Isaac, and the holy people of the Old Testament are, therefore, types or figures of the Christian. Augustine sees in the births and generations of the free (Sarah) and the slave (Hagar) women of Abraham four kinds of men (good men born of evil men, evil men of good, or good men of good, or evil men of evil) in whom is completed the figure of the future Christian people.²⁵ Rebecca, the mother of Isaac, is a type (*typum*) of the Church, which is found not only in the saints who lived after the advent of Christ, but also in the patriarchs, prophets and the just of the Old Testament.²⁶ The blessing of Jacob by Isaac typifies the preaching of Christ to all the nations.²⁷ In his struggle with the angel (Gn. 32.29) Jacob was blessed in his progeny who believed in Christ, and lame in those who refused to believe.²⁸ The withered part of Jacob represents bad Christians; the blessing, good Christians. Now the Church limps. The touch of the Lord chastens and vivifies.²⁹ The blessing with crossed hands (Gn. 48.14-16) of Joseph's children, Ephraim and Manasse, is a prophecy of Christ and Christians.³⁰ David is a type or figure of the *Christus totus*, that is, of Christians who are anointed, as King David was, and incorporated in Christ, "so that in him we also are Christ (*ut in illo et nos Christus essemus*)."³¹ David's meekness and humility prefigure the submission of Christians to Christ and his Church.³² David was held prisoner in Gath, which means "wine press". Christ's Body, the Church, is

held in the press of oppression and persecution. "If you think," continues Augustine, "that you will not have tribulations, you have not yet begun to be a Christian because the Apostle (2 Tm. 3.12) says: 'All who seek to live piously in Christ, will suffer persecution.'"³³

II. *The Name*

At the time of Augustine, catechumens were considered as part of the Christian family: "Already they belong to the great house (*de domo magna sunt*) because they have the sign of the cross on their forehead."³⁴ Faith in Christ, the sign of Christ (*signum Christi*), that is, the sign of the cross on the forehead, prayer, and the imposition of hands sanctified the catechumens. Augustine considered this a sort of sacrament (*sacramentum*): the catechumen belonged to Christ through faith and the sign of Christ. The catechumen, however, "did not become the body of Christ (*non fit corpus Christi*)," since that was brought about by baptism alone.³⁵ Therefore, against the position of H. Karpp and E. Lamirande,³⁶ V. Grossi can state categorically: "A dichotomy or opposition between catechumen and Christian does not exist in Augustine's writings. Augustine never denied catechumens that title."³⁷ The catechumen, however, was not yet anointed or baptized:

Interrogate the man: 'Are you a Christian?' If he is a pagan or a Jew, he replies: 'I am not.' If he replied: 'I am,' ask him: 'Are you a catechumen or one of the faithful?' If he replies: 'A catechumen,' he is not anointed (*inunctus*), not yet baptized (*lotus*).³⁸

In light of all this, one cannot speak of a conversion of Augustine from paganism to Christianity. He was never a pagan. In his *Confessions* he says explicitly: "I was signed with the sign of his cross and seasoned with his salt."³⁹ And in his *On the Catechizing of the Unlearned*, he explains: "That thing [i.e., salt] which has the likeness of seasoning (*condiat*)" is also the salt of catechumens.⁴⁰ The prebaptismal rites of the sign of the cross and the *donatio salis* were followed by the imposition of hands.⁴¹ E.J. Lathan has shown that Augustine is the earliest witness to the use of salt in Western liturgy. Before his time there is no record of a *donatio salis*.⁴²

Augustine speaks of salt as a condiment that bestows wisdom: Why was Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt, if not to serve as a condiment for men, that they may have a taste for wisdom?⁴³

In his *Commentary on the Psalms*, Augustine states clearly that one is a Christian because he has been anointed:

Anointing pertains to all Christians ... We know that we are the Body of Christ, because we are all anointed. And all of us are Christs in Him; and we are Christ, because in some way, the Whole Christ is the Head of the Body.

Anointing in the Old Testament foreshadowed the anointing of Christ and the anointing of Christians in baptism. The kings, priests, and prophets of the Old Testament signified Christ, who was to come in mystery, bearing the functions of these offices in Himself.⁴⁴ Edward J. Hughes has demonstrated that Augustine taught the "royal and prophetic priesthood" of Christians which was not purely metaphorical, but a real participation in the triple office of Christ who is at once a King, Priest, and Prophet.⁴⁵ In his work *On Eighty-Three Diverse Questions* 55, Augustine speaks of a "royal and sacerdotal anointing"; that is, he omitted the prophetic dimension of the priesthood. In his *Retractations* I.26, however, he corrects himself and concludes: "We read that prophets, too, were sometimes anointed (*unctos aliquando legimus et prophetas*)."⁴⁶

In all his discussions on anointing, Augustine maintains that it is not only Christ, but also his entire Body, the Church, that is anointed. Augustine speaks of a post-baptismal anointing of Christians: God anointed Christ with the Holy Spirit, not with visible oil, but with the gift of grace, which is signified in the visible ointment with which the Church anoints the baptized. The grace symbolized by that anointing is the same grace that Christ received in his anointing, the Incarnation.⁴⁷ The anointing which flows from Christ the Head on to his priestly garment (cf. Ps. 132.2), the Church, "is symbolized by the post-baptismal chrismation," explains L. Ryan. This was a sacred sign for Augustine just as was baptism. He considered the postbaptismal anointing a rite of confirmation.

Participation in Christ's priesthood is an effect of this confirmation in Augustine's teaching. In the early centuries, the single rite of initiation included both baptism and confirmation.⁴⁸ The anointing of the Old Testament figures was a sign of the anointing of Christ and Christians, a sign of the royal priesthood of the Church:

Almost no one among the faithful will doubt that the priesthood of the Jews was a figure of the future royal priesthood which is in the Church, in which are consecrated all those who belong to the Body of Christ, the true High Priest. For now all are anointed, which was done only to the kings and priests in those days. Thus Peter (I Pt. 2.9) writing to the Christian people, called them "a royal priesthood," declaring that both these names belonged to that people to whom this anointing pertained.⁴⁹

The foundation of this Lay Priesthood or Priesthood of the Faithful is twofold: The sacramental character of Initiation and sanctifying grace. Augustine taught against the Donatists that Baptism could be conferred validly even if it did not confer grace, and remained in the soul as a permanent reality, never to be repeated. Baptism consecrated the Christian to Christ by imprinting on the soul a permanent character. This teaching also applied to Holy Orders. Augustine's teaching was a development of the earlier patristic teaching of the seal (*σφραγίς*) of the first three centuries which asserted the indelibility of the baptismal sealing. It had its foundation in the scriptural references to Christ as the warrant (engraving, seal) of the Father in Hebrews 1.3.⁵⁰ By the fourth century some patristic writers spoke of the "consecration" brought about by Baptism and Holy Orders. But it was Augustine who formulated the doctrine of sacramental "character" and insisted that these sacraments were not to be repeated.⁵¹ The common teaching of the Patristic writers is that Initiation imprints a seal that marks the Christian as Christ's property and forms him to the image of Christ. This teaching of the patristic writers *implicitly* contains the distinction between the permanent sealing of the character and the imprinting of God's image on the soul by sanctifying grace. But Augustine was the first to distinguish the two *explicitly*.⁵²

In our time, Y.-M. Congar has shown that sanctifying grace and the character are two distinct titles to the priesthood of the faithful, of the Christian's union with Christ. "Augustine," he writes, "brought the priesthood of the faithful strongly into relationship with their character as members of Christ, and this character with the life of grace, faith and of charity." Augustine expressly associated the priestly quality of the faithful with the sacrament of Baptism, more particularly with the anointing.⁵³

Augustine insists that all Christians are priests; however, only bishops and presbyters are properly (*proprie*) called priests. The participation of the faithful in the royal and prophetic priesthood of Christ is not just a metaphorical, but a real participation in the one Body of Christ, the High Priest.⁵⁴ The beginnings in Augustine of the modern teaching on the sacramental character as configuring the Christian to Christ the King, Priest, and Prophet is resonant of the *Dogmatic Constitution of the Church* of Vatican Council II: "The faithful are by Baptism made one body with Christ They are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ" (n. 31). Christians share in the threefold mission of Christ through the seal or character of Baptism: "The baptized, by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, are consecrated as a spiritual house and a holy priesthood in order that ... they may offer spiritual sacrifices" (n. 33). The priesthood of the faithful, although it differs essentially from the ministerial priesthood, is nonetheless real and not merely metaphorical: "Though they differ from one another in essence and not in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are interrelated. Each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ" (n. 10).⁵⁵

From his teaching on the priesthood of the faithful, Augustine draws an interesting analogy between the martyrs and ordinary Christians. The martyrs share in the regal and prophetic mission of Christ because they bear witness to the truth of Christ and conquer the devil.⁵⁶ Since the cause, and not the suffering, makes the martyr, they differ from Christians only in the nature of the suffering endured, not in their basic mission as

Christians.⁵⁷ The martyrs, admonishes Augustine, have fulfilled their mission: Christians must fulfill theirs by a good life, by avoiding sinful pleasures and patiently bearing with the suffering of the present life.⁵⁸ In so doing Christians exercise their common priesthood by "offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (cf. I Pt. 2.5), after the example of Christ who suffered for us to have us follow in his footsteps (cf. 1 Pt. 2.21).⁵⁹

During the time of the Donatist Controversy, when Donatists asked a person whether he or she was a Christian, that question was generally followed by a second one: "What communion do you pertain to?" The Donatists rejected Christian Catholics from their assemblies.⁶⁰ The second question was asked to ascertain whether dissidents were to be considered Christians or not. Augustine maintained that all the baptized were Christians because they have a common Baptism, a common Gospel, and common Scriptures.⁶¹ Christians were referred to as the "faithful." Even infants were numbered among the faithful because they had been baptized.⁶² To Faustus' objection that many Christians who called themselves Catholics were adulterers, thieves, moneygrubbers, and drunkards, Augustine replied: "This is not an indictment of sound doctrine, which alone is Catholic. Many want to be reckoned among those who bear the Christian name, without realizing the salutary effects of Catholic doctrine."⁶³ Thus we have seen for Augustine, a Christian is one who belongs to the Christian family, is anointed, Catholic, baptized, and faithful. Finally, he is a brother. By the end of the second century, the practice of calling a fellow-Christian "brother," as distinguished from a non-Christian, had become a firmly established custom. It is found in the New Testament: 30 times in Acts and 130 times in St. Paul. The name remained in use until late in the third century, when its use was gradually restricted to clerical and monastic circles.⁶⁴ In general, Augustine restricts the appellation "brother" to Christians; to express the solidarity of all human beings, he uses the word *proximus*, neighbor. Christians are brothers of Christ and children of God: "The Father of all brothers of your Christ."⁶⁵ Writing to a Donatist bishop of a neighboring church, Augustine greets him as "honorable brother" because, he tells him, "You know that I have a divine precept to call you brother, and that even to

those who refuse to be our brothers, we say: 'You are our brothers.'"⁶⁶ Joseph, the Patriarch, is given the name of "brother" because, explains Augustine, he stood out as illustrious among his brethren for the injuries he suffered and the good return he made.⁶⁷

III. *Kinds of Christians*

Augustine never tires reiterating that the mere title of Catholic Christian is not a guarantee of salvation. Conversion of heart and charity are required. It is the Augustinian theme of the unfaithful faithful (*infideles fideles*).⁶⁸ There is need for *conversion of heart*. Commenting on Psalm 39: "They are multiplied beyond number," Augustine says: "There is a fixed number that belongs to that heavenly Jerusalem. The Lord knows those who are his" (2 Tm. 2.19). They are Christians who observe the commandments, who walk in the ways of God, who keep themselves from sin, who confess when they fall into sin. These are they who belong to the number." How great the number of believers (*fideles*) who are gathered together. Many of them are truly converted, many but in appearance. Those who are truly converted are the minority; those in appearance are the majority, because they are multiplied beyond the number of the elect.⁶⁹

Charity is also required: one must abide in the Body of Christ. Pseudo and wicked Christians are not to be reckoned among the members of Christ. According to Augustine, three classes of Christians "will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5.19-21): baptized heretics who later fall into a life of sin; Catholics reborn to grace, but who pass into heresy or schism; baptized Catholics who keep the faith, but continue to live immorally. That they have been cleansed in the baptism of Christ and have partaken of his Body and Blood will not suffice to save them. One must interpret correctly the words of the Lord Jesus: "If anyone eat of this bread, he will live forever ... he will not die" (Jn 6.50-51). Augustine explains:

Heretics and schismatics who are separated from the unity of this Body can, indeed, receive the sacrament, but to no avail -- in fact,

to their harm -- since the result is to increase the pain rather than to curtail the length of their punishment. The truth is that they are not in the bond of peace of which the sacrament is the outward sign.

Nor are baptized Catholics, who keep the faith but continue to live immorally, safe because they persevere in their communion with the Catholic Church and put their trust in the text: "He who has persevered to the end will be saved" (Mt.10.22). These Christians abandon Christ by the wickedness of their lives. St. Paul made it clear that "they who do such things will not attain to the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5.21). Perseverance in Christ means to persevere in the faith "which works through charity" (Gal. 5.6). and charity "does no evil" (Rom. 13.10). When Christ said, "He who eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, abides in me and I in him" (Jn 6.57), he meant not partaking merely of the outward sacramental sign, but partaking also of the reality and truth of remaining in Christ, so that Christ may remain in him who eats and drinks sacramentally. Christ was saying in effect, "Let no one who does not abide in me, and in whom I do not abide, dare to say or imagine, that he is eating my Body or drinking my Blood." No one can be a member of Christ and the member of a harlot (1 Cor. 6.15), unless he desists from evil by repentance and reconciliation, and returns to the good.⁷⁰

In his struggle against the Donatists, Augustine maintained that in the Catholic Church there is a clear division of unfaithful Christians who have the sacraments without grace, and faithful Christians who have the sacraments with grace and charity. Christians who do not have good *mores* are said to be not of God. He alone is a Christian who has the sacraments and good morals. Commenting on Psalm 47.8: "We have received, God, your mercy in the midst of your people," Augustine asks: "Who are they who have received, and where have they received?" Christians partake of the sacraments, but not all partake of God's mercy. They are called Christians because they have received the sacrament of baptism, but not all live in a manner worthy of such a sacrament. They have the appearance of piety, but are wanting in what constitutes its essence (cf. 2 Tm. 3.5). Because of this appearance of piety, they carry the

name of the people of God, just as the grain is found with the chaff until it is winnowed. Faithful Christians who do not "receive the grace of God in vain" (2 Cor. 6.1), receive both the sacrament and the mercy of God. Faithful Christians are like lilies among thorns or unfaithful Christians: "As a lily among thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters" (Cant. 2.2). Scripture does not say, observes Augustine, "among strangers," rather "among the daughters."⁷¹ It is a question here of wicked daughters of Mother Church: They have the sacraments (*sacramenta habent*), but not good conduct. Even the daughters, that is, unfaithful Christians of the Church, are strangers because of their semblance of piety; strangers, because of their lack of virtue. Augustine exhorts his hearers:

Be a lily, receive the mercy of God. Have the strong root of a good flower. Do not be ungrateful of the soft rain (grace) that comes from heaven. The thorns are ungrateful. They grow because of the rain, but they grow for the fire, not the granary.⁷²

Who are these unfaithful Christians? They are the ravens who seek their own interests. Who are the doves? Those who seek the things that are Christ's. The Donatists boast that the bishop of Hippo acknowledges their baptism as a real baptism; a baptism that the Donatists received outside the fold of the Catholic Church. Augustine retorts: Do not unfaithful Christians have what you boast of? Many intemperate and greedy Christians have baptism. The dove, that is, the Catholic Church groans among her ravens, namely, unfaithful Christians in the Church.⁷³

In a Sermon on New Year's Day, after the congregation had just finished singing Psalm 106, Augustine admonishes the faithful to put into practice what they have sung with their lips: Save us, Lord, our God and gather us from among the nations (Ps. 106.47). What separates Christians from pagans is their Christian faith, hope, charity, and good works. The unfaithful Christian is no better than the pagan! If you believe, hope, and love in a manner completely alien to the pagan, "prove it with your life, show it by your actions (*vita probet, factis ostendat*)." You take part in the pagan's New Year celebration, his games of chance, you become intoxicated as the pagan does. How are your faith, hope, and love

different from his? The Christian must follow his Redeemer, and not identify himself with pagan *mores* and deeds. The pagan gives New Year's gifts (*strenas*); you give alms. They run to theaters: you hasten to the church. They get intoxicated, you fast. Augustine concludes: "I am speaking now to true Christians (*Christianis veris*). If you believe in a different manner, hope in a different manner, love in a different manner, then live in a different manner and prove your difference of faith, hope, and charity by your different morals."⁷⁴

Who then are the Church's enemies? Pagans, Jews? No, exclaims the bishop of Hippo, they are unfaithful Christians. He likens them to useless, severed branches, fit only to be tossed into the fire. Their wicked lives are a stumbling block for those who draw near to embrace the faith. Hence the Psalmist (Ps. 30.12) cries out: "Among all my enemies, I am become a reproach."⁷⁵ Christians cheat and break their solemn word. Why become a Christian? An unfaithful Christian resembles a blind man in broad daylight, who is dead to the life-giving rays of Christ, the Light.⁷⁶ Hence, false and unfaithful Christians constitute the "mystery of iniquity" in the Church.⁷⁷ Augustine identifies the beast's "image" of Revelation (20.4) with false Christians:

The beast's "image," I think, is his deception as found, for example, in such men as profess the faith yet live like pagans. For they pretend to be what, in fact, they are not, and are called Christians, not because of full faith, but of false face (*vocanturque non veraci effigie, sed fallaci imagine christiani*).

On the other hand, faithful Christians do not accept the "mark" of the beast on their "foreheads" (where Christians bear the sign of the true faith, the Cross) and "hands" (good works) because they refuse to bear the stigma of false faith and bad morals.⁷⁸ Faithful Christians are set apart from unfaithful Christians not by space, but by their love. As far as bodily presence goes, they intermingle in the Churches. Augustine sees everlasting punishment in the maw of the cattle.⁷⁹

Interesting and always relevant is Augustine's case against unfaithful Christians who are habitual sinners, but who believe nonetheless that they

will be saved because of their almsgiving. These Christians base their view on James 2.13: "For judgment is without mercy to him who has not shown mercy," and the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Augustine replies: If unfaithful Christians distribute all they have to the poor members of Christ, it avail nothing, unless they stop sinning and return to the possession of that charity which "thinks no evil" (cf. 1 Cor. 13.3-4). He who gives alms to his neighbor must also have pity on himself. Even faithful Christians should not look upon their almsgiving as the price for the commission of evil. Almsgiving serves to cancel former sins, not to encourage a sense of irresponsibility in perpetuating the habit of sin. Augustine insists:

If they were really giving bread to a needy Christian in a Christian spirit, they could not refuse to give themselves the bread of holiness which is Christ Himself Anyone who loves Christ in a fellow-Christian gives him alms with the purpose of getting closer to Christ, not with the desire of playing the deserter from Christ with impunity.... This kind of purely outward almsgiving is like being baptized without being justified No one loves Christ if he refuses to be justified in Christ.⁸⁰

To drive home his point, Augustine has recourse to Matt.5.22: Any one who calls his brother a "fool" has the duty first to be reconciled to his brother and then to offer his gift. Alms are useless if one makes no effort to break the habit of sin. The Lord's Prayer is said because we have sinned -- not with the intention to sin because we have said the prayer. Augustine distinguishes Christians living on three different levels: 1) One kind of life is so evil that no amount of almsgiving will help them into the kingdom of heaven. 2) Another is a good life that makes it possible to obtain beatitude. 3) Between these is the third kind of life which stands in need of the merits of those whom they have befriended by their alms to obtain mercy.⁸¹

The intercession of the poor or saints has a certain counter-part, according to Augustine, in Virgil's description of the Elysian fields where pagans fancy that the souls of the blessed abide. Virgil portrays there not

only those who were able to reach that realm in virtue of their own good deeds, but also "men who made good friends who did not then forget them."⁸² "There is then," continues Augustine, "such a middle mode of living, too sinful of itself to prepare a way to the kingdom of God, yet too full of services to the saints not to win their friendship and their intercession for God's indulgence."⁸³ Furthermore, Christians are not to take the passage about good ground yielding thirty-fold or sixty-fold or a hundred-fold (Mt. 13.8) to mean that saints, according to their variety of spiritual fertility, will yield freedom for thirty or sixty or a hundred souls on Judgment day. This erroneous view promises impunity on the ground that it seems to open the way to universal liberation. Augustine wittingly concludes: It is better, by leading a good life, to be sure to be among those who do the praying for other people's liberation. It is possible ... that the number of saints may be so small that, once their thirties and sixties and hundreds have been exhausted, there may be a great many left over with no chance of liberation. Christians delude themselves when they "imagine that the judgment to come will be nearer to their heart's desire than to what the Scriptures tell us."⁸⁴

Conversion and charity, that is, the conversion of the soul from self-love to the love of God, can only be achieved by the constant practice of virtue. Augustine defines virtue as love: Loving what ought to be loved.⁸⁵ In his practice of virtue, the Christian is to depend completely on God.⁸⁶ The cardinal virtues destroy the love of all that is not God in the soul and have a special part to play in true conversion. Temperance, "which the Greeks call *sophrosyne*,"⁸⁷ is "love offering itself in its integrity to what is loved";⁸⁸ prudence decides what is worthy to be loved; justice establishes a hierarchy of what is to be loved and gives each its due; fortitude clings to the love of God and neighbor, despite the difficulties.⁸⁹

IV. *Sermon on Christian Discipline*

This Sermon is a compendium of what it means to be a Christian, namely, on being a Christian. The sermon, however, receives its title from the word "discipline" (*disciplina*), because Augustine begins with the words of the Book of Ecclesiasticus 51.31, 36: "Receive discipline in the

house of discipline." Augustine explains what he means by discipline: "Discipline is a good thing, and it is called discipline from the one learning."⁹⁰ Augustine's point of departure is the word *disciplina* used in the strict sense of "instruction." The house of discipline (*disciplinae domus*) is the Church of Christ where Christians receive instruction (*disciplina*) from Christ the Teacher. What do they learn there? They learn how to live well (*bene vivere*).⁹¹ In the words of Augustine the word *disciplina* is found many times in the broad sense of "Way of Life" (*Lebensweise*), "the habitual behavior of a person."⁹² This, then, is the "discipline" one learns in the house of discipline, to live well so that one may live forever (*semper vivere*).

Augustine proposes to treat of briefly: first, what it means to live well; then what is the recompense of a good life; third, who are true Christians; fourth, who is the true Master. First, what does it mean to live well? One may lose heart before the many precepts in the law in which the good life is commended. But the Lord himself comes to our rescue when he said: "The Lord shall make a consummate and abbreviated word over the face of the earth."⁹³ The treasury of Sacred Scripture is so great: it contains many and admirable precepts. What then is this consummate and abbreviated word of Sacred Writ?⁹⁴ It is: "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul, and with all your mind. And you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two precepts the whole law is based and the prophets as well" (Mt. 22.37, 39-40). That is what is taught in the house of discipline: Love God and love your neighbor, namely, God as God, your neighbor as yourself.

Do you want to know how to love your neighbor? Turn your attention to yourself, and love your neighbor the way you love yourself. The big problem now, says Augustine, is how are you to love yourself? Mark well, how you love yourself! If you love yourself, then do not love iniquity. The Psalmist says: "Whoever loves iniquity, hates his own soul" (Ps. 10.[11].6). Truth itself has declared: If you live iniquity, "you hate yourself." How then can I entrust your neighbor to you: so you can love him as you love your wicked self? In no way! Perish alone! Either put in order your love, or renounce the fellowship.⁹⁵ You insist, but I love my neighbor as myself.

Yes, you love him, agrees Augustine, but you love him in a very destructive way. In fact, you get intoxicated with your neighbor whom you love as yourself. Your heart is set on earthly things, whereas the liturgy bids us "to raise up our hearts (*cor sursum*)." We should not answer deceitfully when we reply, "Our heart is with the Lord (*Habeamus ad Dominum*)."⁹⁶ What does *sursum cor* mean but to "love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your mind" (Mt. 22.37). St. Paul in Rom. 13.9-10 says that "not to commit adultery, not to murder, not to covet, and any other commandment there may be, are all summed up in this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love is the fulfillment of the law." But nothing was said of the love of God, only of the love of neighbor, observes Augustine, as sufficing to fulfill the Law. The Law has become more abbreviated: What were two precepts, have become one. The precious pearl of great price (Mt. 13.45-46) is really one precept.⁹⁷ Love your neighbor and it suffices.⁹⁸

Only the love of God can make man happy. Man did not make himself, therefore he cannot make himself happy. But instead of looking to God to make him happy, man turns to money which he loves very much. Very well, says Augustine, if you love your neighbor as yourself, then share your money with him. You reply: If I share my money, we will both have less. Because I love him as myself, I want him to have only what does not diminish what I have, and puts him on a par with me. Your neighbor is Christ. He begs from you, who gave to you. He was rich and became poor so that you could give him something.⁹⁹

Continuing his treatment of true self-love, the bishop of Hippo admonishes his faithful to think about the poor, who are their neighbors, brothers, and fellow travelers. Lighten your own burden and give to your fellow traveler. But you reply: what shall I reserve for my children? If you have one son, pleads Augustine, let the Lord be your second son. If you have two, let Christ be your third. If you have three, let him be your fourth. You will have nothing of this. You do not love your neighbor as yourself.¹⁰⁰ You whisper in your neighbor's ear: "You will be worth as much as you have." But you did not learn this in the house of discipline.¹⁰¹ Drive such a person far from you, and tell him: "You are a Christian. I am

a Christian." "Hedge round your ears with thorns" (Sir. 28.28) because "Wicked conversation corrupts good morals" (1 Cor. 15.33).¹⁰² Inordinate self-love puts its trust and happiness in amassing wealth, and urges one's neighbor to do likewise. This is a pernicious sort of love of neighbor. Such a Christian is blind: preferring lesser goods to the Supreme Good. In his personification of greed, Augustine likens greed to a blind greedy person who cannot see his wealth, only believe in it and love it: whereas, the true Christian will one day see his imperishable Supreme Good and possess it forever.¹⁰³

At this point in his Sermon, Augustine returns to a favorite theme: We are carried along by love as by a weight: the weight of cupidity, the inordinate desire for wealth, greed, avarice, versus the weight of true love.¹⁰⁴ In the Book of Proverbs 2.4, wisdom calls us to love her "as money." It is not fitting, comments Augustine, to compare wisdom with money, but it is a question of comparing love with love. The love of money drives you to face danger, to undertake strenuous labors, to make untold sacrifices. Look for a better object for your love, love God as much as you love your money! The bishop of Hippo is speaking here to the wealthy shipowners, merchants, and traders of his North African community, who are hopelessly submerged in material things. He invites them to true conversion: Let us confess our guilt, strike our breasts, and not allow our sins to harden. Mere external manifestations of guilt, such as striking our breast at the Pater Noster of the Mass at the words "Forgive us our sins" are not enough. We must correct ourselves, punish ourselves, or the Master will punish us later on.¹⁰⁵

Up to this point, Augustine has been speaking of *what* the Christian learns in the School of Christ. Now he takes up the question which was asked at the introduction of his Sermon, namely, *why* does a Christian learn.¹⁰⁶ What he says is reminiscent of what he poignantly describes in his *Confessions* regarding his early school day beatings. Augustine probably delivered his *Sermon on Christian Discipline* (398?) while he was busy writing his *Confessions* (397-400). Parents and teachers drive their children to study so that they can make money, win honors, and hold high positions.¹⁰⁷ Parents do not say: Learn to read and write that you may be

able to read the Sacred Scriptures. But what will happen to all that, concludes Augustine, when death comes?¹⁰⁸ The point Augustine wants to make is that the recompense of a good life is eternal. Whereas, if you love sin, you are only rushing headlong to another death. You want a good tunic, a good house, a good son, a good friend. You even want a good death and you pray for it. You love your death, more than your life, You fear to die badly, but you do not fear to live badly. Correct your wicked life. He cannot die badly, who lives well. Examine carefully the death of the martyrs. Examine it with the eyes of the flesh: They died badly by the sword, by wild beasts. Examine it with the eyes of the faith: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his holy ones (Ps. 115.6). Augustine urges his listeners to imitate the martyrs, not to fear what happens when they depart from the body. He illustrates this with the Gospel account of Lazarus and the rich man (Lk. 16.19-31): "You are a Christian. Look with the eye of faith. Who died well, who died badly? I think the poor man died better than the rich man. Do you want to be buried with spices and thirst in the lower regions?"¹⁰⁹

In the two remaining chapters, Augustine returns again to the last points of the Sermon: The question of Christians and the Teacher in the Church. Those who learn are Christians. Whether they profit or do not profit, Augustine says, he continues to scatter the seed (Mt. 13.4-8). It is the Lord who scatters the seed; Augustine, the preacher, is the basket from which the Lord scatters the seed. The Lord has placed in him the seed which he scatters to his hearers. "Do not direct your attention to the basket of the sower, but rather to the love of the seed and the power of the sower."¹¹⁰ In the concluding chapter, Augustine makes it clear that Christ is the true and authentic Teacher of his Body, the Church. His school is his Body. The Head teaches his members.¹¹¹

In summary, Augustine's *Sermon on Christian Discipline* is a call to live the Christian life, to be a true Christian by the faithful observance of the commandments of love of God and neighbor. Augustine takes us step by step through the labyrinth of self-love, of self-deception: he who loves sin, hates his own soul. If a Christian does not love himself properly, he cannot love his neighbor properly. He cannot be a true Christian if he

loves his wealth more than God and his neighbor, if he does not avoid greed, envy, and jealousy in all its pernicious forms. It is only in the house of discipline, in the Church of God, under the aegis of Christ, the Teacher, that the Christian learns to live well, that he may live forever.

V. *Augustine and Küng's Christ Sein*

Let us now return to Hans Küng's challenge: Why should one be a Christian? What does it mean to be a Christian today? For Küng to be a Christian is to be radically human. He vigorously contests the theme of deification which was so dear to Augustine and the ancient tradition of the Church.¹¹² In his book, chapter VI, "Interpretations" under the subtitle: Deification or humanization?, Küng asks, "But does a reasonable man *today* want to become God?"¹¹³ There is here, explains the Conference of German Bishops, a certain curtailment of the reality of redemption: "In the redemption, man does not cease being a man because he has become God, in that he partakes of the eternal life given him and shares in the blessedness of God."¹¹⁴ To the contrary, Küng longs for a Christianity that would be at the service of the promotion and "the humanization" of man.¹¹⁵ We see in Küng the tendency of some modern theologians who maintain that the image of God in man, or the Christian meaning of the deification of man, is a Hellenistic notion of salvation which leads to a mentality of flight from the world, and the denial of human values. The patristic axiom: "God became man to make man God" is substituted with one that they claim is more adapted to our age: "God is made man, so that man may be made more human."¹¹⁶

The theme of the image of God and the re-forming of that divine image is a recurrent one in Augustine's thought. The image of God makes man "capable of the highest nature (*summae naturae capax*)," namely, God Himself. Man "can participate in that highest nature (*esse particeps potest*)." Hence, man's nature is a great nature (*magna natura est*). Man's true greatness, his perfection, and happiness is to become godlike: "to achieve likeness to God."¹¹⁷ This likeness or nearness to God, that is, our progress toward God is not measured in terms of physical distance: "... not by walking, but by loving; not with our feet, but by good morals."¹¹⁸

Augustine repeats this Plotinian theme in his *City of God*: "If nearness to God is measured by our likeness to him, then there is no other distance from God than that of unlikeness."¹¹⁹ The bishop of Hippo tells his faithful: "It is by loving that we advance."¹²⁰ For "the closer you approach to the likeness of God, the greater is your progress in charity."¹²¹ All this is brought about by the grace of justification which restores the image of God in man: "He who can justify is the same as He who deifies ... we are become gods by a grace of adoption, not by the nature of our human generation."¹²²

Since the Christian is elevated by divine grace to participation in the divine nature (2 Pt. 1.4), Karl Rahner asks whether an authentic and integral doctrine of grace, as is found in St. Paul, Jesus, and Christian tradition is found in Küng's book? Or does Küng simply reduce grace to some sort of "emancipatory humanism."¹²³ Küng's theology of the cross is Pelagian: The efficacy of the cross depends solely on the example of Christ, who perpetuates himself in our remembrance of him. There is no objective act of salvation, only Christ's example. He rejects the mysterious "substitution" brought about by Christ in reference to the sin of the world.¹²⁴ In his *Confessions*, Augustine speaks very poignantly of the necessity of the intervention of divine grace and the part played by the cross of Christ in his life and in the lives of all members of a fallen race.¹²⁵ Furthermore, the unconditional surrender of Christ on the cross does not mean that Christ failed or missed the purpose of his life, as Küng seems to imply. On the contrary, Christ's surrender to the Will of his Father for sinners did not imply his own undoing, rather his self-fulfillment, which had its culmination in his resurrection.¹²⁶

Hans Küng's understanding of the mystery of Christ raises serious questions regarding the compatibility of his position with the Church's traditional understanding of the mystery of Christ. The divinity of Christ is expressed inadequately. There can be no abridgement of the truth: Jesus Christ is true man and true God. Küng fails to present the whole Christ, as Augustine does, and his saving action in all its fullness. Jesus is not the Son insofar as He is God's agent (*Sachwalter*); He is God's agent because he is God's Son. We can not understand in what sense Jesus is

and claims to be the agent of God, unless he is also the eternal, not made, Son of God.¹²⁷ When the divinity of Christ, true God and true man, is not asserted with unmistakable clarity, a distorting diminution of the Gospel follows. The double, namely, Jesus Christ is true man and true God permits no alternative, of a Christology one-sidedly or exclusively "from below" centered on the humanity of Christ, nor that of a Christology only "from above" centered on the divinity of Christ.¹²⁸ Since, according to Küng, Christ repudiated every messianic designation, the title "Son of God" was attributed to him by the Post-Pascal community. Hence Küng can conclude that Christ was merely the agent (*Sachwalter*), the representative of the one God of the Old Testament.¹²⁹

Küng also denies the existence of original sin. He writes: "The idea of an originally paradisiac-unspoiled world, of a primal sin of the first pair and above all the Augustinian theory of an inherited sin, transmitted through generation (belongs -- so to speak to the race), all seems problematic to us today." Elsewhere he states: "The same is true of the mythological idea of a sin transmitted through physical generation, an idea spread in the Western Church since Augustine's time¹³⁰ In other words, Küng denies the sin of Adam: originating original sin (*originale originans*), and that of his descendants' originated original (*originale originatum*) sin.¹³¹ Rationalists through the centuries have reasoned that original sin is due to the limitations of the universe, or man's innate propensity to create myths to explain the mysterious. Modern social consciousness labels "original sin" as all the limiting factor of time, place of birth, these particular parents, etc., which are all original to man, beyond the inheritance of nature as a human being.¹³²

After St. Paul, no one described the poignant experience of helplessness under the tyranny of pride and concupiscence and the tragic condition of fallen nature until rescued by the gratuitous grace of Christ, as did Augustine in his immortal *Confessions*. Among the voluminous writings on the subject of original sin, I find his commentary of Psalm 57 (58) both instructive and entertaining. In Psalm 57 (58), the Psalmist rebukes certain unjust judges, and invokes God's punishment upon them. He skillfully combines two figures derived from snake life: The harm

done by these wicked judges is as deadly as a serpent's venom, and these men are as unresponsive to God's teaching as certain stubborn snakes are to the music of the snake charmer, "Theirs is poison like a serpent's, like that of a stubborn snake that stops its ears, that it may not hear the voice of enchanters casting cunning spells" (Ps. 57[58].5-6). The bishop of Hippo gives the following exegesis to exhort faithful Christians not to attach their hearts to this present life by means of unceasing Christian renunciation of the pleasures of the senses. The adder shuts his ears by pressing one of them against the ground and by stopping up, corking up, the other ear with its tail. The "tail" of the snake signifies the *posteriora*, that is, "what lies behind" (Phil. 3.13). The Christian is to turn away from past and present things and fix his heart on the eternal, "If the present life still charms you, press your ear against the ground: if past things delight you ... stop up your ear with the tail." Listen to Paul when he says, "I give no thought to what lies behind, but push on to what is ahead" (Phil. 3.13). Throw away the old tunic of sin (cf. Gn. 3.7.21). To do this, imitate the cunning astuteness of the snake: "You must be clever as snakes" (Mt. 10.16). The snake, continues Augustine, will expose all its members -- but never its head -- to allure, entrap, and overcome its adversaries. In like manner, the Christian in his eternal struggle with the devil, "the ancient serpent" (Rv. 12.9. 20.2) may have to expose his members, but never his head, that is, "Christ the head of every man" (cf. 1 Cor.11.3). But you feel yourself weighed down by the hard skin (*pondus corii*) as it were, "the old age of the old man (*senecta veteris hominis*)."¹³³ The apostle says, "Put aside your old self and put on the new man" (Col. 3.9-10). How can you divest yourself of the old man? Imitate the shrewdness of the serpent. What does the serpent do to divest itself of its old skin? It forces itself to pass through a narrow opening. But you ask: "Where is this narrow opening?" Listen, "Narrow and strait is the way that leads to life, and few are those who venture upon that road" (Mt. 7.14). Augustine concludes: "It is there, that you must put aside your old tunic (*vetus tunica*); you cannot do it in any other way. If you wish, however, to be weighed down with the "old age (*vetustate*)"¹³⁴ that you carry about with you, overburdened and encumbered as you are with it, then do not pass through the narrow way." The Christian must put aside his carnal, inordinate desires, and divest himself of his concupiscences. He can only

do this by taking the narrow road: by being clever as the serpent.¹³⁵ As an epilogue to Augustine's exegesis, I might add that it is generally held today that snakes are charmed not by the music, which they cannot hear, but by the rhythmic, swaying movement of the snakecharmer!

Küng underscores the central importance of *metanoia*, but insists, "nevertheless, Jesus does not expect an acknowledgment of sin, a confession, from the person who wants to change his ways." Compare this statement with Augustine who said: "I wish to heal, not accuse," when he was referring to the exercise of the pastoral activity of penance; it is thanks to the medicine of confession, he adds, that the experience of sin does not degenerate into despair.¹³⁶

In general, Hans Küng's *Christ Sein* does not conform with the norms of Catholic Christian faith, especially its Christology, the doctrine of the Trinity,¹³⁷ the theology of the Church¹³⁸ and the Sacraments,¹³⁹ the place of Mary in the history of salvation.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, he follows a method that dissociates itself from the previous tradition of the Church. His selective use of Scriptural texts is prejudicial and results in a diminishing of the faith.¹⁴¹ In his attempt to reconcile modern science¹⁴² and modern thought at the expense of the integrity of the Catholic Church, Küng is really a Neo-Modernist: He denies original sin. The dogmas of faith are only verbal formulations whose meaning substantially changes with the times. Faith is reduced to a purely subjective experience, apart from an objective divine revelation and independent of the magisterium or teaching authority of the Church. He is a spokesman for a New Christianity, a radically changed Catholic Christianity, namely, a man-centered religion, preoccupied with the present world, with stress on the Bible to the exclusion of revealed tradition, a classless Church in which the hierarchy under the Vicar of Christ does not have binding power, and a Church whose purpose is to serve the world and humanity's social needs, with emphasis on Christ's humanity.¹⁴³

In a word, Küng fails in his "small *summa* of the Christian faith,"¹⁴⁴ to present the whole Christ in all his saving action. We remain confident that Hans Küng will eventually submit his work in subsequent editions to a

labor of "retractation," as did the great Augustine in his noble effort to align his theological thought with the traditional faith and teaching of Catholic Christianity.¹⁴⁵ St. Augustine's teaching constituted a quasi-definitive *summa* for the Latin Middle Ages, and remains undiminished through the centuries. Christ is the Way. Christ is the model of Christian life, of the practice of Christian virtue, and finally of the Christian's resurrection and glorification.¹⁴⁶ Science for Augustine is only the knowledge of the goods of this world, of the useful; whereas Wisdom is concerned with the ultimate end of man, what makes him happy and leads him, at long last, to Him who is his Eternal Sabbath: "For You have made us for Yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in You."¹⁴⁷

NOTES

1. F. Van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop* (London, 1961) 585.
2. *Conf.* 9.10.26.
3. *Ibid.* 1.9.14; C. Lepelley, "Spes saeculi. Le milieu social d'Augustin et ses ambitions séculières avant sa conversion," *SEA* 24 (1987) 99-117.
4. *S.* 340.1.
5. Hans Küng, *Christ Sein* (R. Piper & Co. Verlag, München 1974); English translation: *On Being a Christian* (Doubleday & Co., Inc. 1976, New York. N.Y.) 25. Citations from the English translation.
6. *Io. ev. tr.* 5.12.
7. *S.* 300; the place and year of delivery are not known with precision. Cf. the theme: Christians are already the people of God and the true Israel in Justin Martyr, *Dial.* 123, 135.
8. *En. Ps.* 104.10; *Io. ev. tr.* 7.13. Cf. the theme in Theophilus, *Autol.* 1.12 and Tertullian, *Apol.* 3.5; cf. Justin Martyr, *LApol.* 4.
9. *Retr.* 1.13.3.
10. *Vera rel.* 10.19.
11. Acts 11.26.

12. *Retr.* 1.13.3 (*FaCh* 60.52).

13. *Civ.* 19.22.

14. For the Table of Fragments of Porphyry in Augustine's *ep.* 102, see A. Benoît et al. (ed.), "Le 'Contra Christianos' de Porphyre: où en est la collecte des fragments," in *Paganisme, Judaïsme, Christianisme* (Paris, 1978) 271; cf. also G. Rinaldi, "L'Antico Testamento nella polemica anti-cristiana in Porfirio di Tiro," *Aug* 23.1-2 (1982) 97-111; P. Hadot, "Citations de Porphyre chez Augustin," *REA* 6 (1960), 205-244 which is his review of J.J. O'Meara, *Porphyry's Philosophy from Oracles in Augustine* (Paris, 1969); C. Muti, *Porfirio. Discorsi contra I cristiani* (Padua, 1977); E. TeSelle, *Augustine's Strategy as an Apologist* (Villanova, Pa., 1974), 12-24, esp. 56, n. 35: Augustine defends the changes in Biblical moral standards. The law of justice always remains the same. God can apply it according to the times and circumstances.

15. *Ep.* 102.8 (*FaCh* 18.153).

16. Cf. Justin Martyr: The divine Logos is the universal reason, the "seminal logos" in which all rational beings participate. Therefore seeds of truth are found in everyone endowed with reason, especially in the philosophers who discovered it independently of Biblical revelation. See R. DeSimone, "Giustino filosofo e martire" in *DPAC* (1984) II. 1628-1632.

17. *Ep.* 102.12 & 15 (*FaCh* 18.155-156, 158-159).

18. Cf. Origen, *c. Celsum* 1.14; Tertullian, *Apol.* 37.4.

19. Ambrose, *ep.* 18.7; J. Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition* (Chicago, 1972), 34-35.

20. *Exc. urb.* I.1; *en. Ps.* 132.5; *pecc. mer.* II.10.12.

21. Cf. Gn. 9.20.

22. *En. Ps.* 36.S.I.2.

23. *En. Ps.* 132.5; *pecc. mer.* II.10.12-13; *exc. urb.* I.

24. *Qu. ev.* II.44; *exc. urb.* I.1; *pecc. mer.* II.10.12; see G. Folliet, "Les trois catégories de chrétiens à partir de Luc (17,34-6), Matthieu (24,40-1) et Ezéchiel (14,14)," *AM* II (1954) 636-638.

25. *Io. ev. tr.* 11.8; see M. Marin, "Agostino e l'interpretazione antica di Gal. 4.24. Note sulla fortuna di allegoria in ambito latino," *VetChr* 24.1 (1987), 5-21; *idem*, "Allegoria in Agostino," *Quaderni di VetChr* 20 (1987), 135-161; J. Pépin, "Saint Augustin et la fonction protreptique de l'allégorie," *RA* 1 (1958), 244-286.

26. *S.* 4.11.

27. *Civ.* 16.37.
28. *Ibid.* 16.39.
29. *S.* 5.8.
30. *Qu. vet. t.* I.148; I.166; *en. Ps.* 77.9.
31. *En. Ps.* 26.S.II.2.
32. *En. Ps.* 131.1-3.
33. *En. Ps.* 55.3-4; see A. Gosselin, *The King's Progress to Jerusalem: Some Interpretations of David during the Reformation Period and their Patristic Medieval Background* (Malibu, Ca. 1976) 13-24; M. Pontet, *L'exégèse de Saint Augustin prédicateur* (Paris, 1946) 318-319; 387-418. Before David, Elijah taught the Jews love for Christ and to understand the Law spiritually (*civ.* 20.29: cf. *S.* 264.5).
34. *Io. ev. tr.* 11.3-4; cf. *civ.* 1.35: Christians are "the redeemed family of Christ the Lord."
35. *Pecc. mer.* 2.26.42.
36. H. Karpp, "Christennamen," *RACH* 2 (1954) 1135; E. Lamirande, "La signification de 'Christianus' dans la théologie de saint Augustin et dans la tradition ancienne," *REA* 9 (1963) 221-234.
37. V. Grossi, "Christianus (Christianismus Christianitas)," *Augustinus Lexicon*, ed. C. Mayer (Basel/Stuttgart, 1986), Blatt 2. I am grateful to the author for a copy of the Manuskriptblätter.
38. *Io. ev. tr.* 44.2.
39. *Conf.* 1.11.17. That Augustine was a pagan before his conversion, let two recent instances suffice: D. Simpson, "Epicureanism in the confessions of St. Augustine," *AugStud* 16 (1984) 41; "Augustine's life ... from pagan to Christian"; R. Di Lorenzo, "Divine Eloquence and the Spiritual World of the Predicator: Book III of St. Augustine's confessions," *AugStud* 16 (1984) 76; "A pagan rhetorician becomes a Christian Praedicator"; to the contrary, cf. W.H.C. Frend, "The Family of Augustine: A Microcosm of Religious Change in North Africa" *EPA* (1987) I. 140; Because of Monica's influence "both paganism and Donatism were impossible options for Augustine to adopt."
40. *De cat. rud.* 26.50.2.
41. *Pecc. mer.* 2.26.42.
42. E.J. Latham, *The Religious Symbolism of Salt* (Paris, 1982) 101, 103.
43. *En. Ps.* 83.3; *civ.* 16.30; *S. de cantico novo ad catechumenos* 4; Three types of Christians displease God: Christians who turn back, as Lot's wife did; Christians who err from the

right way, that is, heretics; see R. DeSimone, "The Baptismal and Christological Catechesis of Quodvultdeus," *Aug.* 25.1 & 2 (1985) 269, for Augustine's catechesis and that of his disciple, Quodvultdeus.

44. *En. Ps.* 26.S 2.2; 44.19; 108.26; *civ.* 17.16.

45. E.J. Hughes, *The Participation of the Faithful in the Regal and Prophetic Mission of Christ according to St. Augustine* (Diss., Mundelein, Ill. 1956).

46. *Div. qu.* 61.2; *retr.* 1.26; Hughes 59.

47. *Trin.* 15.26.46.

48. *C. litt. Pet.* 2.238-239; L. Ryan, "Patristic Teaching on the Priesthood of the Faithful," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 29 (1962) 36, 42-43.

49. *Qu. ev.* 2. q. 40, trans. of Hughes 64; V. Grossi, "Sacerdozio dei Fidei," *DPAC* (1983) II. 3047-3051.

50. *Eph.* 1.13; 4.30; 2 *Cor.* 1.22; *Rv.* 7.2-8; J. Daniélou, *The Development of Christian Doctrine before the Council of Nicaea. Theology of Jewish Christianity* (London, 1964) 327-31.

51. See N. Haring, "St. Augustine's Use of the Word Character," *Medieval Studies* 14(1952), 79-106, especially 83. He has shown: [1] that Augustine's use of the word "character" designates the Trinitarian form or the external sacramental rite, not a spiritual imprint on the soul; [2] that to express the doctrine that Baptism and Holy Orders produce a permanent effect which modern theology calls "character," Augustine used a different terminology, *sacramentum* (the Augustinian equivalent of character), less frequently, *sanctitas*, *consecratio*, *baptismus*, and *ordinatio*. Augustine adopts the word "character" in the sense of (1) military "character" *ornota*, (2) mark of identification or ownership branded on sheep, (3) less frequently, designation of the Cross. See F. van der Meer, "Sacramentum chez S. Augustin," *La Maison-Dieu* 13 (1948) 50-65; D. Wright, "Donatist Theologoumena in Augustine? Baptism, Reviviscence of sins, and unworthy ministers," *SEA* 25 (1987) II. 217-218. Although sacraments received unworthily do not avail for salvation, maintains Augustine, they do so immediately upon the recipient's repenting. In *De nupt. et concup.* 1.11.10, Augustine gives the example of a repentant apostate, one of the finest expressions of the doctrine of reviviscence in patristic literature.

52. K.J. McNamara, "Lay Priesthood," *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 8 (1967) 579; P.L. Hanley, "Sacramental Character," *ibid.* 12 (1967), 787.

53. Y.-M. Congar, *Lay People in the Church* (Westminster, Md., 1956) 130-131; E. Lamirande, "L'idée d'onction dans l'ecclésiologie de saint Augustin," *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa* 35 (1965), 103-126.

54. *Civ.* 20.10; cf. *ibid.* 17.5. The union of Christ and his members is so intimate for Augustine, that he does not hesitate to say: "Because they also are me: quia et ipsi sunt ego." (*ep. lo. tr.* 8). See J. Pintard, *Le sacerdoce selon s. Augustin. Le prêtre dans la Cité de*

- Dieu* (Paris, 1959), 204-215; P. Dabin, *Le Sacerdoce royal des fidèles dans la tradition ancienne et moderne* (Paris, 1953), 89-115 (Augustine).
55. *Sacrosanctum Oecumenicum Concilium Vaticanum II. Constitutiones Decreta Declarationes* (typis polyglottis Vaticanis, 1966), 152, 110-111, 155-156; trans. by W.M. Abbot (New York, 1966), 57, 26-27, 59-60.
- 56.S. 128.3.
57. Non enim facit martyrem poena sed causa.S. 94/A.1.
- 58.S. 375/B.1 (Denis V, MA I.23); S. 313/A.1 (Denis XIV, MA I.65); Hughes 71-78.
- 59.S. 114.3; S. 284.6; cf. *Dogmatic Constitution on Church* 10. Abbot 27: "They exercise that priesthood ... by the witness of a holy life, self-denial, and active charity."
- 60.S. 46.31.
61. *Bapt.* 4.17.24.
62. *Ep.* 217.16.
63. *C. Faust.* 20.23.
64. H. Pétré, *Caritas. Etude sur le vocabulaire latin de la charité chrétienne* (Louvain, 1948), 118; K.H. Schelkle, "Bruder," *RCh* 2: 631-640; J. Ratzinger, *Die christliche Brüderlichkeit* (Munich, 1960); L. Verheijen, *Saint Augustine's Monasticism in Light of Acts 4.32-35* (Vilanova, 1979), 62-64.
65. *Conf.* 9.12.33; L.J. Van der Lof, "The Threefold Meaning of Servi Dei in the Writings of Saint Augustine," *AugStud* 12 (1981), 45.
66. *Ep.* 23.1.
67. *Doctr. chr.* 4.7.20.
68. Cf. Polycarp, *ep. to Philip* 6.3; Ignatius of Antioch, *ep. to Magn.* 2.4; Augustine, *cat. rud.* 48; *Io. ev. tr.* 50.7. *Io. ev. tr.* 4.4: Multi vocantur Christiani, et in rebus non inveniuntur; *ibid.* , Totus mundus christianus est, et totus mundus impius est; *ibid.* 5.12, Quomodo te gloriaris esse christianum? nomen habes, et facta non habes. Nam si factis non ostendis te christianum, omnes te christianum vocent; quid tibi prodest nomen, ubi res non inveniuntur? See Fr. Refoulé, "Situation des pécheurs dans l'Eglise d'après saint Augustin," *Studia Theologica* 8 (1954), 86-102.
69. *En. Ps.* 39.10. The predestination of the elect or the saints is nothing else than that foreknowledge (*praesentia*) and that preparation of the gifts of God (*preparatio beneficiorum Dei*) whereby they, who are liberated from the mass of condemned mankind (*massa damnata*) because of Adam's sin, are most certainly liberated (*persev.* 14.35). Com-

menting on Rom. 8.30-31 against the Pelagians, Augustine maintains that God predestined us before we existed. He called us when we were turned away from him. He justified us when we were sinners. He glorified us, since we were mortals (§. 158.1). St. Paul said: "If God is for us, who can be against us" (Rom.8.31). "God is for us," explains Augustine, "that is why he predestined us. God is for us, that is why he called us: God is for us, that is why he justified us. God is for us, that is why he will glorify us" (*ibid.*). Predestination, therefore, is God's foreknowledge of the gifts that he decided to bestow on the elect, not foreknowledge of their merits (*persev.* 20.53). God had determined the number of the elect. God wills that the elect accomplish the meritorious works which are the condition of gaining salvation, although these meritorious works are not the condition of the divine choice. The elect are *vocati secundum propositum*: others simply *vocati*, and they will not be saved because of their sins (*corrupt.* 7.14). See, F. Cayré, *Manual of Patrology*, tr. H. Howitt (Paris, 1936), I.688-695.

70. *Civ.* 21.25. (FaCh 8.396-398).

71. *En. Ps.* 47.8; the Hebrew text of Cant. 2.2 reads: "among women," the Septuagint: "among the daughters."

72. *En. Ps.* 47.8 end (v.10).

73. *In Jo. ev. tr.* 6.17.

74. *S.* 198.2-3.

75. *En. Ps.* 30.II.S.2.6 (ACW 30.33-35).

76. *En. Ps.* 25.II.14 (ACW 29.256).

77. This is the second of two interpretations of 2 Thess.2.1-11 in *civ.* 20.19.

78. *Civ.* 20.9 (FaCh 24.278-279).

79. *En. Ps.* 8.1 (ACW 29.96-97); cf. also *en. Ps.* 30.II.S.3.3.

80. *Civ.* 21.27.3.

81. *Ibid.*

82. Virgil, *Aeneid* 6.664; *civ.* 21.27.5.

83. *Civ.* 21.27.5 (FaCh 8.410-413).

84. *Civ.* 21.27.6.

85. *Mor.* 1.15: *ep.* 155.4.13; T. Deman, "Héritage antique et innovation chrétienne dans le De moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae," *AM* 2 (1954) 713-726.

86. *Civ.* 4.20; *ep.* 155.3.12.
87. *Civ.* 19.4.3; cf. G.F. Klends, "Augustinus und die 'humanitas christiana,'" *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte* 169 (1961/2), 169-185.
88. *Mor.* 1.15.25.
89. H. North, *Sophrosyne. Self-Knowledge and Self-Restraint in Greek Literature* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1966), 370-373; G. Scott Davis, "The Structure and Function of the Virtues in the Moral Theology of St. Augustine," *SEA* 26 (1987) III.9-18; P. Delhaye, "Saint Augustin et les valeurs humaines," *Melanges de science religieuse* 12 (1955), 121-138.
90. *Lib. arb.* I.3; cf. the influence of Varro, *De ling. lat.* 6.62: ab docendo docere, disciplinam discere litteris ...; Augustine, *sol.* 2.11.20.
91. *Disc. chr.* I.1.
92. For example, *epp.* 62; 78.8; *reg.* 6.43; *en. Ps.* 93.15; *civ.* 19.17; *C. Faust.* 32.1; see *Thesaurus linguae latinae* V. 1316-1326.
93. *Is.* 10.23 (Septuagint and Vulgate).
94. *Disc. chr.* III.3.
95. *Ibid.* IV.4.
96. *Ibid.* V.5.
97. *Ibid.* II.2.
98. *Ibid.* VI. T.J. van Bavel, "The Double Face of Love in St. Augustine. The Daring Inversion: Love is God," *SEA* 26 (1987) III.69-80; R.J. Teske, "Love of Neighbor in St. Augustine," *SEA* 26 (1987) III.81-102.
99. *Ibid.* VI.6; VII.7.
100. *Ibid.* VIII.8.
101. *Ibid.* VIII.9.
102. *Ibid.* IX.
103. *Ibid.* IX.10; X.
104. Cf. *ep.* 157.2.9; O. O'Donovan, *The Problem of Self-Love in St. Augustine* (New Haven & London, 1980), 10-36.
105. *Disc. chr.* X.11.

106. *Ibid.* I.1.
107. Cf. *Conf.* 1.9.14; 1.12.19.
108. *Disc. chr.* XI.12.
109. *Ibid.* XII.13.
110. Augustine had made this clear at the beginning of his sermon: *disc. chr.* I.1; XIII.14.
111. *Ibid.* XIV.15.
112. Küng, 440-444.
113. *Ibid.* 442.
114. *The Küng Dialogue. Facts and Documents*, United States Catholic Conference (Washington, D.C., 1980), 139.
115. B. Sesboué, "Bulletin de théologie dogmatique christologie: Hans Küng ...," *Recherches de science religieuse* 67/4 (1979), 570-571, 575, 578.
116. See the statement of the International Theological Commission: *Theology Christology Anthropology* (Washington, D.C. 1983), 11-12.
117. *Trin.* 14.4; cf. Plotinus, *Enneads* 1.2; Plato, *Theaetetus* 176 A f. See John E. Sullivan, *The Image of God* (Dubuque, Iowa, 1963).
118. *Ep.* 155.4.13.
119. *Civ.* 9.17.
120. *S.* 295.8.8: *Proficimus enim amando.*
121. *En. Ps.* 99.5.
122. *En. Ps.* 49.2. See G. Bonner, "The Desire for God and the Need for Grace in Augustine's Theology," *SEA* 24 (1987) I. 203-215; G.R. Evans, "Augustine on Justification," *SEA* 26 (1987) III. 275-284.
123. H. Urs von Balthasar et al., *Diskussion über Hans Küngs' Christ Sein* (Mainz, 1976); for the French trans., J.R. Armogathe (ed.) *Comment être chrétien? La réponse de Hans Küng* (Paris, 1979), 95. Cf. K. Rahner, "Zu Hans Küngs neuestem Buch. Erste Eindrücke und erste Fragen," *Theol. der Gegenwart* 18 (1975), 80-87.
124. Küng, 396-410, 437. See L. Scheffezyk, "Un christianisme au bord de l'auto-destruction," *Esprit et Vie* 86, n.24 (1976), 345, which appeared in the Austrian review, "Entscheidung," n.61 (cf. "Theologisches," n.68, 197).

125. Cf. also, the *Enchiridion* 53: The cross of Christ, his burial, resurrection, ascension, and place at the right hand of his Father are a type of the Christian life. See J. McWilliam Dewart, "Augustine's Developing Use of the Cross: 387-400," *AugStud* 15 (1984) 15-33.
126. Küng *Dialogue* 134-140; Küng, 424-427.
127. *Ibid.*, 134-136; this declaration of the conference of German bishops was rejected by Küng as a distortion of his thinking in his book: *Existiert Gott?* (München, 1978), 885, n.11.
128. Küng *Dialogue*, 134.
129. G. Dejaifve, "Etre chretien selon Hans Küng," *NRTh* 97 (1975), 258.
130. Küng, 422, 114; cf. also Küng 454: "... as a result of increasing criticism of the Augustinian view of the transmission of 'original sin' by the act of procreation." That the "idea of original sin spread in the Western Church since Augustine's time" is simply not true; see R. DeSimone, "Modern Research on the Sources of Saint Augustine's Doctrine of original Sin," *AugStud* 11 (1980), 205-227.
131. For Augustine's teaching on original sin, see M. Huftier, *Le tragique de la condition chrétienne chez Saint Augustin* (Paris, 1964); U. Bianchi, "aspetti ontologici della trasmissione del peccato in Agostino," *SEA* 24 (1986), I. 451-464.
132. J.A. Hardon, S.J., *The Catholic Catechism* (New York, 1975), 99-102.
133. An evident allusion to original sin after the Fall. In Pliny, the Elder, *senecta* designates the slough or castoff skin of a serpent: *Historia Naturalis* 20, 23, 95 par. 254: *serpentes senectam exuendo*, etc. St. Augustine made use of Apuleius of Madaura as a source on demons in his *Civ Dei* VIII-IX. For his polemic against the latter, see C. Moreschini, *Apuleio e il platonismo* (Firenze, 1978), 240-254.
134. That is, original sin and its effects.
135. *En. Ps.* 57 (58).9-10. Truly, an ingenious manner of reaching the level of his audience, giving them an explanation of the truth and mystery of original sin and its consequences.
136. Küng, 250; Augustine, *S.* 82.8.11; 352.3.8-9, quoted by John Paul II in the Apostolic Exhortation: *On Reconciliation and Penance* (Vatican City, 1984), 117.
137. One can only speak of the Trinity, says Küng, in a "functional" sense. Ontological doctrine is incomprehensible to modern man. Küng (p.477) states categorically: "The traditional formulas of the doctrine of the Trinity, defined in Hellenistic terms, however, helpful they may have been, cannot be imposed as a timeless obligation of faith in all believers at all times." See Dejaifve 261.
138. See F.X. Lawlor, "Some thoughts on Küng's ecclesiology," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* 73, No.4 (1973), 10-20; *idem*, "Laity and clergy according to Küng," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* 73, No.7 (1973), 10-20.

139. The view suggested by Küng in his *The Church* (New York, 1967), 178, 380, 382-383 that, at least in case of necessity, the Eucharist can be validly consecrated by a non-ordained baptized person is not compatible with the teaching of the Fourth Lateran Council and with Vatican II. See the Declaration of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Feb. 15, 1975 in *The Küng Controversy*, 92-93; cf. Augustine, *S.* 227: only a bishop or priest can offer the sacrifice.
140. Küng, 453-457, relegates to "myths" and "legends" the virginal birth of Christ, and Marian theology in general. Augustine, *S.* 51.11.18 sums up the ancient faith of the Church: "The Virgin conceived, the Virgin gave birth, Virgin she remained."
141. Declaration of German Bishops, Nov. 17, 1977: *The Küng Dialogue*, 133-134.
142. Küng, 228: *Miracles?* "The natural sciences had not been developed at that time. Why should not ... myths and sagas be appropriated to testify to the activity of the living God?"
143. Cf. J.A. Hardon, S.J., *Modern Catholic Dictionary* (New York, 1980), 373-375.
144. Küng, 20.
145. Dejaifve, 266.
146. See J.J. O'Meara, "Augustine and Neo-platonism," *RA I* (1958), 107-111; Wilhelm Geerlings, *Christus Exemplum. Studien zur Christologie und Christusverkündigung Augustins* (Mainz, 1978), 148: exemplum virtutis; 191: exemplum vitae; 195: exemplum resurrectionis. Licinio Galati, *Cristo la via nel pensiero di S. Agostino* (Roma, 1956), 52-59 (the failure and pride of the philosophers), 62-65 (the universal way of salvation is found in the true Religion); J.A. Goenagad, *La Humanidad de Cristo, Figura de la Iglesia. Estudio de Theologia Espiritual Agustiniana en la 'Ennarationes in Psalmos'* (Madrid, 1963), 129: La vida de Cristo y la vida cristiana.
147. *Conf.* 1.1.1.