The Offices of Christ, *Lumen Gentium* and the People's Sense of the Faith

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Abstract: The article examines the historical origins of the notion of Christ's threefold office as priest, prophet and king as applied to the church, highlighting the seminal contribution of John Calvin. After an initial reception into Catholic theology in the nineteenth century, it is Vatican II's document *Lumen gentium* which first receives the trilogy into official Catholic teaching in a significant way. The author examines issues that need addressing in any reconstructed theology of, in particular, the "prophetic office" and proposes that future ecumenical dialogue with Protestants on the three offices may provide opportunities for further Catholic reception of this Protestant framework.

VATICAN II CAN BE UNDERSTOOD as an event of reception in several ways. If Walter Kasper is right in claiming that the primary intention of the council was "the renewal of the whole tradition, and that means the renewal, for our time, of the whole of what is Catholic",[1]then Vatican II was an attempt by the Catholic Church to re-conceive itself through a re-reading of the past tradition in the light of the challenges of the contemporary world. In doing so, it re-interpreted the past with an historical consciousness that was mediated through the scholarship of the biblical, liturgical and ecumenical *ressourcement* theologians during the decades preceding the council. In that process, as is evident in the final documents, many elements of the tradition highlighted by Protestant churches were received into Catholic teaching.[2] Thus Vatican II, to a limited degree, was also a reception of Protestantism.

One such element received from Protestantism is the notion of the threefold office of Christ applied to the mission and ministry of the church: by virtue of their baptism, Christians participate in continuing

1. Walter Kasper, "The Continuing Challenge of the Second Vatican Council: The Hermeneutics of the Conciliar Statements", in *Theology and Church* (New York: Crossroad, 1989) 166-76, at 172.

2. For example, see George H. Tavard, "Reassessing the Reformation", *One in Christ* 19 (1983) , 354-67.

the work of Christ as Prophet, Priest and King. This notion of a "threefold office of Christ" (*munus triplex*) is historically a predominantly Protestant one, as will be shown. Over the course of the council's debate on the document on the church (finally published as *Lumen gentium*), the notion emerges as a significant *theologoumenon* for structuring the document and clarifying the commonalities and differences between the ordained and the laity in a Catholic understanding of church order.[3] My primary, and somewhat narrow, interest in the trilogy lies in the structural placement of *Lumen gentium's* discussion regarding the *sensus fidei fidelium*: the infallible sense of the faith which the whole body of the faithful possesses by virtue of its anointing by the prophetic Holy Spirit of God.[4] The formulation of this teaching takes place in Chapter Two on the People of God, and more specifically in paragraph 12, which treats the participation of the whole People of God in the *prophetic* office of Christ. After its discussion of the common participation in the three offices, the document then proceeds to discuss the different ways in which the hierarchy and the laity differ in their specific participation.[5]

Lumen gentium 12a and 12b state the conciliar teaching on *sensus fidei* (*fidelium*) in terms of a cluster of notions and assertions: the People of God; the prophetic office (*munus propheticum*) of Christ (the ministry of the word) as the office of teaching (*munus docendi*); the participation of the whole church (*universitas fidelium*) in that office; the category of witness or testimony as the mode of that participation in the ministry of the word; the infallibility in believing (*infallibilitas in credendo*) exhibited by the whole church; the supernaturality and giftedness of the *sensus fidei* (*fidelium*) due to the faithful's anointing by the Holy Spirit; its area of competence (its object) as pertaining to "matters of faith and morals"; the notion, beyond that of a sensus, of an emerging consensus regarding

3. On the notion of "theologoumenon", see Wolfgang Beinert, "Theologoumenon", in Wolfgang Beinert and Francis Schüssler Fiorenza (eds.), *Handbook of Catholic Theology* (New York: Crossroad, 1995) 699: "A theologoumenon is a theological statement that has not been formally pronounced by the ecclesial magisterium yet which arises from the insight into the connections resulting when the truths of revelation are brought into contact with concrete historical experience. It expresses the perspective in which the elements of faith are interpreted in a concrete historical context."

4. The council actually uses the phrase *sensus fidei* to refer to the communal sense of the faith, *sensus fidei fidelium.* I will be using the alternative phrase *sensus fidelium* throughout this article, as many authors do. On the individual's sense of the faith, the *sensus fidei fidelis,* see Ormond Rush, "*Sensus Fidei:* Faith Making Sense of Revelation", *Theological Studies* 62 (2001), 231-61.

5. See *Lumen gentium* 10-13 regarding the whole People of God; 20-21 and 25-31 regarding the hierarchy; and 34-36 regarding the laity. The Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People, *Apostolicam Actuositatem,* promulgated a year after *Lumen gentium* (18 November, 1965), reiterates the laity's participation in the three offices (*AA* 2 and 10). Remarkably, the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum,* which was promulgated on the same day in 1965, does not once use the threefold framework with regards to the ministry of Christ, despite the fact that the content of the document focuses precisely on Christ as the sum and mediator of revelation.

those matters; the notion of the whole People's reception of the word of God, and the emphasis on active reception by linking the four verbs *accipit, adhaeret, penetrat* and *applicat* to describe the ecclesial process of that reception.[6] *LG* 35, in addressing the distinctive participation of the laity in the prophetic office of Christ, once more explicitly mentions the exercise of *sensus fidei* by the laity, and re-visits some of those same notions, for example the notion of testimony or witness and the acquisition of "a deeper knowledge of revealed truth" through that life of witness.

The history of the constitution's drafting traces a shift in Catholic teaching from depicting the laity in a derivative and passive relationship with the hierarchy in the mission of the church, to a more active description of that relationship in which laity also participate, albeit in different ways, in that mission. Initially in the drafting process, the principle that all the baptised faithful share fully in the mission of the church finds expression through the rubric of the common and ministerial priesthood, which enables the drafters to outline the commonality and difference between hierarchy, priests and laity. But this focus on Christ the Priest and priesthood widens to include another, one could say, more expansive rubric, the three *munera* of Christ as priest, prophet and king, applied initially to the bishops as the ones who continue those offices, and later, to a common participation by all the baptised in the threefold priestly, prophetic and kingly role of the People of God as a whole. The council will finally come to affirm that all the faithful (bishops, priests and laity), not just bishops, participate in (1) the priestly office, the *munus sacerdotalis*, which is the *munus sanctificandi* (the office of sanctifying), (2) the prophetic office, the *munus propheticum*, which is the *munus docendi* (the office of teaching), and (3) the kingly or pastoral office, the *munus regalis*, which is the *munus regendi* (the office of governing). As we shall see, it will take over two years for the council to fully adopt the second rubric, while still retaining the first.

The council therefore envisages an active role for all the baptised in appropriating and passing on the reality of salvation, that is, God's living Word in human history, God reaching out to humanity through Christ in the power of the Spirit. The council's emphasis on the critical importance of the *sensus fidelium* for the very effectiveness of revelation through its infallible reception shifts the theological spotlight onto the *addressees* and *recipients* of God's self-communication and highlights their necessarily active, co-operative role on behalf of God in enabling

6. See Gilles Routhier, "Reception in Current Theological Debate", in Hervé Legrand, Julio Manzanares, and Antonio García y García (eds.) *Reception and Communion among Churches* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1997) 17-52, at 31-32. Routhier notes the council's preference for the verb *accipere* (90 occurrences throughout all the documents) for describing an active sense of reception, rather than the verb *recipere* (only 35 occurrences).

that divine revelatory process to achieve its goal. Such a foregrounding of the *reception* of revelation has important implications for a theology of church according to the mind of the council.[7]

HISTORICAL ORIGINS

What are the historical origins of the notion of the three "offices" (*munera*) of Christ? Furthermore, what are the historical origins of the notion of the church's (and of individual groups within the church) participating in those offices?[8] The threefold typology is nowhere explicitly applied to Christ in the New Testament, although the individual *titles* are separately named or alluded to by various writers, when read retrospectively.[9] Post-biblical interpretation of the ministry of Jesus in terms of the three titles can be found in a long line of interpreters, most of whom will base the application of the titles to Christ, the Anointed One, almost as sub-titles, in virtue of the fact that Old Testament priests, prophets and kings were all considered "anointed ones".

Justin Martyr is the first to group together the three titles.[10] Jerome, Eusebius of Caesarea and Peter Chrysologus apply the trilogy to Christ;[11] however, it is John Chrysostom who is the first to extend its application to all the baptised.[12] Later both Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure will use it, but applying the titles to Christ.[13] In these twelve hundred years, no author applies the tripartite schema to the

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7. Perhaps it would even be possible for a whole systematic ecclesiology to be constructed from this perspective as a Reception Ecclesiology, with the category of "reception" as its integrating principle. But that can't be defended in this essay.

8. For this historical sketch of the threefold office of Christ, I am drawing upon J. Fuchs, "Origines d'une Trilogie ecclésiologique à l'epoque rationaliste de la Theologie", *Revue de sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 53 (1969), 186-211; Ludwig Schick, *Das Dreifache Amt Christi und der Kirche: Zur Entstehung und Entwicklung der Trilogien* (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 1982); the review of Schick and further development of the notion in Yves Congar, "Sur La Trilogie: Prophète-Roi-Prêtre", *Revue de sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 67 (1983) 97-115; Joseph H. Crehan, "Priesthood, Kingship, and Prophecy", *Theological Studies* 42 (1981) 216-231; Peter Drilling, "The Priest, Prophet and King Trilogy: Elements of Its Meaning in *Lumen gentium* and for Today", *Eglise et Théologie* 19 (1988) 179-206; Donald J. Goergen, "Priest, Prophet, King: The Ministry of Jesus Christ", in Donald J. Goergen and Ann Garrido (eds.), *The Theology of Priesthood* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press: 2000) 187-209; Lothar Ullrich, "Offices of Jesus Christ", in Beinert and Schüssler Fiorenza, *Handbook of Catholic Theology*, 509-12.

9. For a summary of the biblical evidence, see Ulrich, "Offices of Jesus Christ", 509-11. See also Marinus De Jonge, "Messiah", in David Noel Freedman (ed.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Volume 4 (New York: Doubleday, 1992) IV: 777-788; Marinus De Jonge, "Christ", in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, I: 914-921.

10. Justin Martyr, *Dial.*, 86.2.

11. Jerome, *Com. in Hab.*, 2.3; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.*, 1.3.7-10; Peter Chrysologus, *Serm.*, 40.

12. John Chrysostom, *2 Cor. homilia*, 3, 5.

13. Aquinas, *Ad Rom.*, lect. 1; *Super ad Hebr.* 1.1.4; *In Ps.* 44.5; *STh* 3, q. 22, a. 1; STh 3, q. 31, a. 2. Bonaventure, *Lign. vit.*, 39.

ordained specifically.[14] From then on, up until the nineteenth century, Catholic authors are largely silent, although the Catechism of the Council of Trent applies the three titles to Christ.[15]

Luther does not use the trilogy. In Reformed theology, it is John Calvin who is the classic highpoint in the significant shift from speaking of Christ's three "titles" to speaking of his three "offices" (*munera*). In his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, he employs the three offices as a framework for structuring his soteriology.[16] Furthermore, all the faithful, asserts Calvin, continue the function of Christ's three offices in the church. According to Peter Drilling, it is Calvin who "begins the modern movement to pattern Christian ministry on the threefold function of Christ's ministry".[17]

Calvin's framework is taken up extensively from then on by Reformed and Lutheran theologians, and becomes significant in Pietism, beginning with Philip Jacob Spener and later the Evangelical Awakening in England and the Great Awakening in America. Two sermons by John Henry Newman, while still an Anglican, employ the notion.[18] In the twentieth century, Karl Barth, Emil Brunner and Gerhard Ebeling employ it in their christologies, albeit critically. In recent times, Protestant theologians such as Wolfhart Pannenberg have given it a sustained critique, seeing in it a framework that has no foundation in Scripture.[19]

What of Catholic theology? A study published in 1940 by Josef Fuchs has been seminal in demonstrating how the notion of a threefold *munus* enters Catholic theology through the reception of Protestant rational theology by a few Catholic theologians in the nineteenth century.[20]

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14. Drilling, "Trilogy", 189, makes the pertinent point: "Interestingly none of the texts cited [in the 1963 second schema of *De Ecclesia*] from the first twelve hundred years of the Church's history applies the three, as three that are inseparable, as titles or as characteristics of the ministry of the ordained. It may be because they do not refer specifically to the ordained that these texts do not appear in the references of Chapter III of the 1964 draft of *Lumen gentium*."

15. *Cathechismus Tridentinus,* I cap. 3, q. 7.

16. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, I in Ford Lewis Battles (ed.), *The Library of Christian Classics,* Vol 20 (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960) 494-503.

17. Drilling, "Trilogy", 191. For a full discussion of Calvin's treatment of the trilogy, see Klauspeter Blaser, *Calvins Lehre von den drei Ämtern Christi* (Zürich: EVZ-Verlag, 1970).

18. John Henry Newman, "The Christian Ministry", in *Parochial and Plain Sermons,* II (Westminister: Christian Classics, 1966) 300-319; "The Three Offices of Christ", *Sermons Bearing on Subjects of the Day. Sermon V* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1898) 52-62. See also his 1837 Anglican The Via Media of the Anglican Church Illustrated in Lectures, Letters and Tracts. Volume 1: *Lectures on the Prophetical Office of the Church* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1911) and the Catholic "Preface to the Third Edition", xv-xciv.

19. See Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus: God and Man.* Second Edition. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968, 1977) 212-25.

20. Josef Fuchs, *Vom Wesen der kirchlichen Lehrgewalt: Eine Kontroverse des 19. Jahrhunderts; historischer Beitrag und systematischer Versuch* (Valkenburg, Germany: doctoral dissertation). Unfortunately this volume was not available to me. I am dependent on the references to Fuchs' conclusions in the writings of Congar, Schick and Drilling, and to

Through their work the notion becomes integrated with the long-accepted Catholic canonical notion of a twofold *potestas* (*potestas ordinis* and *potestas jurisdictionis*). Although the Catholic Church had long theologised in terms of the triad *magisterium, ministerium* and *regimen*, it was not until the nineteenth century that these would be grounded and linked *christologically*.

Fuchs' study shows how such a christological grounding is to be found in the work of the theologian Johann Adam Möhler (1796-1838), but above all in the work of the Catholic canon lawyers Ferdinand Walter (1794-1879) and George Phillips (1804-1872).[21] Phillips synthesises the work of Möhler and Walter into his own distinctive contribution. It is Phillips who is, according to Fuchs, the "decisive influence"[22] in the reception of the trilogy into Catholic theology. Through its continued appropriation by theologians such as Matthias Joseph Scheeben,[23] the neo-scholastic manuals come to use it as a framework for the treatment of soteriology.

While the draft schemas of Vatican I's *De Ecclesia* make some reference to the trilogy,[24] in official Catholic teaching it is only in the twentieth-century that papal encyclicals will begin to speak of the three offices together. For example, Pius XI's *Quas Primas* on the kingship of Christ alludes to it.[25] But it is the talks and encyclicals of Pius XII where one finds the beginnings of extended usage, particularly in *Mystici Corporis* on the mystery of the eucharist and the church, and in *Mediator Dei* on the liturgy and the priesthood of Christ.[26] In the years leading up to Vatican II, works by theologians such as Sebastian Tromp and Yves Congar consolidate this reception of the framework into Catholic ecclesiology.[27]

Fuchs' own summary of his conclusions in Fuchs, "Origines d'une Trilogie ecclésiologique".

21. The contributions of Walter and Phillips are the main subject of Fuchs, "Origines d'une Trilogie ecclésiologique". Christoph Ohly, *Sensus Fidei Fidelium: Zur Einordung des Glaubenssinnes aller Glaubigen in die Communio-Struktur der Kirche im geschichtlichen Spiegel dogmatisch-Kanonistischer Erkenntnisse und der Aussagen des II. Vaticanum* (St Ottilien: EOS Verlag, 1999) summarises the work of Möhler (42-50), Walter (50-72), and Phillips (72-90). See also Drilling, "Trilogy", 192-96.

22. Fuchs, "Origines d'une Trilogie ecclèsiologique", 210. See also the discussion of Phillips' contribution in Schick, *Das Dreifache Amt Christi*, 109-118.

23. Matthias Joseph Scheeben, *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik*, Book V (Freiburg: Herder, 1954; originally published 1882) 226-306.

24. See the discussion in Schick, *Das Dreifache Amt Christi*, 119-23.

25. *DS* 3675ff. See Claudia Carlen (ed.), *The Papal Encyclicals 1903-1939* (Wilmington, NC: McGrath Publishing Company, 1981) 271-279, at 278.

26. *DS* 3847ff; 3916 (*Ad caeli Reginam*). For the full texts of *Mystici Corporis* and *Mediator Dei*, see Claudia Carlen (ed.), *The Papal Encyclicals 1939-1958* (Wilmington, NC: McGrath Publishing Company, 1981) 37-63; 119-154. For a discussion of Pius XII's developing use of the trilogy in his talks and encyclicals, see Schick, *Das Dreifache Amt Christi*, 125-29.

27. Sebastian Tromp, *Corpus Christi Quod Est Ecclesia, Vol. II, De Christo Capite Mystici Corporis* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1946); Yves Congar, *Lay People in the Church: A*

The pervasive employment of the threefold typology by Vatican II in *Lumen gentium* is therefore a remarkable reception of a Protestant framework. In citing sources for the trilogy, the final version of *Lumen gentium* gives minimal references. However, most of the previous authors I have listed above are cited in footnotes of the 1963 draft. It is perhaps not surprising that Calvin is not cited as the decisive source for the trilogy of *munera*.

VATICAN II

How does reception of the trilogy come about during the council proceedings? At least four factors, direct and indirect, are retrievable: (1) the indirect influence of theological works at the time, (2) the direct influence of theologians involved in the drafting process as consulting experts, (3) written submissions by groups of bishops to the Doctrinal Commission during the general sessions and during the intersessions, and (4) interventions on the council floor by bishops speaking on their own behalf or for a group of bishops.

Indirect influence no doubt comes from the accumulated work of theologians on the theme. Newman has been cited as the critical influence.[28] The study of Peter Drilling however claims that this reception by Vatican II was mediated, not so much through a reception by the council of Newman's use of the threefold typology,[29] but rather through reception of the writings of two theologians who also happened to be involved in drafting of the constitution on the church: the Dutch Jesuit Sebastien Tromp and the French Dominican Yves Congar.[30]

In 1953, Yves Congar had published a book that was to become widely influential, *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat* (*Lay People in the Church*). It had major chapters on participation by the laity (note: only the laity) in each of the three offices. Congar was one of the initial 29 consultors to the preparatory Theological Commission, continued on as a consultor to the Doctrinal Commission and, following on from Jean Daniélou, was a *peritus* to Bishop Gabriel Marie Garrone, Coadjutor of Toulouse, on the special subcommission of "The Seven" for re-drafting the constitution on the church.[31]

Study for the Theology of the Laity (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1965), originally published in French in 1953.

28. For example, Joseph H. Crehan, "Priesthood, Kingship, and Prophecy", *Theological Studies* 42 (1981) 216-31.

29. As we will see later, Bishop Émile De Smedt does explicitly refer to Newman in his intervention.

30. On these judgements regarding the historical significance of Tromp and Congar, I am indebted to the study of Peter Drilling, "Trilogy", 192-99. Newman is never cited in any of the interventions at the council regarding the threefold office, nor does Tromp or Congar refer to him in that regard.

31. See J. A. Komonchak, "The Struggle for the Council during the Preparation of Vatican II (1960-1962)", in Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph A. Komonchak (eds.), *History of*

In 1946, seven years before Congar's book, Sebastien Tromp of the Gregorian University had published a book called *Corpus Christi Quod Est Ecclesia,* which was republished with minor changes on the eve of the council in 1960. It presents an ecclesiology which explicitly applies the christological *munera* to the church's life and mission. As a member of the preparatory Theological Commission and later Secretary of the Doctrinal Commission under the like-minded Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani, Tromp was directly involved in the drafting processes for the document on the church. Although the early drafts give brief references to the trilogy, Drilling claims that Tromp's prior attention in his book to the trilogy would have made him open to the written submissions and aula interventions on the topic by bishops suggesting its more pervasive inclusion in the document.[32] It is interesting also to note that the citation of the theme's patristic sources in the 1963 draft of *Lumen gentium* mimic the references in Tromp's own book.[33]

In addition to the possible direct or indirect influence of Tromp, Congar and others, it was particular written submissions to the drafting commission during the first intersession and certain interventions in the aula during the Second Session which were to become critical for the adoption of the trilogy by the council. The rejected 1962 preparatory schema (*Aeternus Unigeniti Pater*)[34] certainly mentions the three titles of Christ, but only in passing reference as parallels to the functions of bishops. The unofficial alternative schema (*Concilium Duce Spiritu Sancto*) by the Louvain theologian Gérard Philips, which became the basis of the second draft discussed on the council floor in October 1963, likewise mentions the three titles but without drawing direct parallels to ministry in the church. In 1954, Philips had published *Le Rôle du Laicat dans L'Église*.[35] Whereas he employs the trilogy here in reference to a threefold ministry in the church, he depicts the laity's role in a

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Vatican II. Volume 1: Announcing and Preparing Vatican Council II. Toward a New Era in Catholicism (Maryknoll: Orbis 1995) 167-356, at 228.

32. Drilling, "Trilogy", 198.

33. See Drilling, "Trilogy", 198 and 198, n58. In addition to Tromp and Congar, a few other possible influences emerge when one examines both the composition of the Doctrinal Commission and the subcommission on *Lumen gentium*. It seems doubtful that Gérard Philips was a direct influence (see below). Another possibility is the Croatian Franciscan Carlo Balic, acting as peritus on the subcommission to the Holy Office assessor Archbishop Pietro Parente. Balic interestingly had once written an article on *sensus christianus*, his synonym for *sensus fidei,* however without correlation with the threefold office of Christ. See Carlo Balic, "Il senso cristiano e il progresso del dogma", *Gregorianum* 33 (1952) 106-134. Also in Charles Boyer (eds.), *Lo sviluppo del dogma: Problemi e Orientamenti I.* (Milano, 1957) 106-34.

34. The schema was distributed to the council bishops towards the end of the first general session on November 23, 1962 and discussed between 1-7 December.

35. Published in English as Gérard Philips, *The Role of the Laity in the Church* (Chicago: Fides Publishers, 1956).

relationship of dependence on the hierarchy.[36] He seems not to have been a decisive influence in employing the trilogy as a rubric for structuring the chapter on the People of God once it was decided to place it before the chapter on the hierarchy.

One important parallel direction in the submissions and interventions is evident in the second draft's incorporation of the rubric of the common priesthood of the People of God as an integrating category for discussing the roles of bishops and laity in the common mission of the church, the first time an ecumenical council had done so in such a detailed way.[37] Like the three offices notion, that of the general or common priesthood was a favourite Protestant notion, particularly for Luther, and one which likewise begins to be treated in Catholic theology after the Reformation only in the twentieth century through its retrieval by the liturgical revival and *ressourcement* theologians.[38] An outline of the history of reception of this *theologoumenon* from Protestant theology into Catholic ecclesiology requires another study. To my reading of the conciliar discussion and re-drafting process of *Lumen gentium*, the notions of the People of God as a priestly people and of the "common priesthood of the faithful" were together the *initial* rubric that the council fathers seized upon which would enable them to portray a more active role for the laity in the church and to ground the notion of what is common to all the baptised.[39]

However, another rubric soon emerges, in parallel but almost in competition, to that of the priesthood of the faithful. That is the notion that the People of God (Chapter 2) are a *priestly, prophetic* and *kingly* people. The tension between the two rubrics is evident in written submissions

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36. See the discussion on Philips' role in Ludwig Schick, "Teilhabe der Laien am dreifachen Amt Christi: Ein zu realisierendes Programm", in *Theologische Berichte XV: Die Kirche und Ihr Recht* (Zürich: Benziger Verlag, 1986) 39-81, at 46-47.

37. Gérard Philips, "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: History of the Constitution", in Herbert Vorgrimler (ed.), *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II* (London: Burns & Oates, 1967), 105-139, at 120: "For the first time in the history of the Councils the draft spoke in detail of the significance of the general priesthood."

38. See Werner Löser, "Priesthood of the Faithful", *Handbook of Catholic Theology*, 549-550, at 549-550: "Until the twentieth century, the priesthood of the faithful was not a matter discussed in Catholic theology. The 'liturgical movement' and related new departures then prepared the way for the revolution that bore its full fruit in Vatican II."

39. For a discussion of the conciliar debate on common and ministerial priesthood and the movement towards the use of "common" as the accepted terminology, see Peter J. Drilling, "Common and Ministerial Priesthood: *Lumen gentium*, Article Ten, *Irish Theological Quarterly* 53 (1987) 81-99. Drilling notes: "The momentousness of the Council's recovery of the doctrine of the church as the People of God and of the priestly character of all the People of God derives not only from the concern, already noted to have been building within the circles of church authority throughout the twentieth century, to enhance the status and activity of the church's lay people, but also from the revived appreciation that before there are differences among the members of the church because of ministry, rite, culture, locale, there is the unity of a common participation in the priesthood of Christ." (p. 85).

and aula interventions. Some of the language of bishops calling for the three offices still uses the notion "priestly people" as the umbrella notion for discussion of the three priestly, prophetic and regal offices in the church. However, what emerges from the debate is the decision to use the notion of the three offices as a clear structuring principle for the chapter on the People of God, for its discussion on what is common to all the baptised, and for the later chapters (3 and 4) on what distinguishes the ordained and the laity. The logical tension between the rubric of priesthood as the overarching category and the three offices as the overarching category remains in the final documents, no doubt due to the reshuffling of paragraphs and the late inclusion of some paragraphs.

Who are the key players among the bishops in the debate? The first significant introduction of the trilogy rubric, applied to the whole People of God, comes through a written submission by the Conference of Chilean bishops to the Doctrinal Commission during the first inter-session period, before the second general session of 1963.[40] The Chilean schema addresses the question of the ministry of the whole Christian people in terms of its being a priestly, apostolic and royal people.[41] When the second session debates opened on 1 October 1963, Archbishop Raúl Silva Henríquez (Santiago, Chile) reiterated the Chileans' call for employing the three offices as a way of describing both the hierarchy and the laity (but this time using "prophetic" rather than "apostolic").[42] On 9 October, Cardinal Leo Josef Suenens proposes that the chapter "On the People of God and especially the Laity" be divided and that a separate chapter on the People of God come before the chapter on the hierarchy. Acceptance of this suggestion changed the whole direction of the debate and indeed the vision of church being portrayed.[43]

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40. The full Latin text of the Chilean submission can be found as an "Appendix VI: Schema chilensis Ecclesiam Dei" in Giuseppe Alberigo and Franca Magistretti, *Constitutionis Dogmaticae Lumen gentium: Synopsis Historica* (Bologna: Istituto per le Scienze Religiose, 1975) 393-415. According to Alberigo's chronology, this was circulated in January 1963.

41. See Drilling, "Trilogy", 181-182. Drilling interestingly notes the suggestion of the Dutch bishops that the tripartite division not be adopted because it is "a Protestant invention of the nineteenth century" (ibid.).

42. *Acta Synodalia,* II, I, 366; see also Drilling, "Trilogy", 183.

43. On 1 October, Cardinal Rugambwa (Bukoba, Tanganyika) had already made a similar proposal; furthermore, the previous year, during discussion of the Theological Commission's draft from 1 December to 7 December, 1962, Cardinals König (Vienna) and Döpfner (Munich), among others, had also proposed treatment of the People of God before the hierarchy. But Suenens' proposal seems decisive. However, Congar claims that the idea had already emerged in the Coordinating and Theological Commissions: "On a motion of the Coordinating Commission, the Theological Commission had already agreed to divide this chapter into two parts and to allocate the contents to a separate chapter on the People of God and a chapter on the laity. We believe that this decision was one of the most important made, and that chapter 2 on the People of God, as it was finally drawn up and voted by the assembly, has the greatest promise for the theological, pastoral and ecumenical future of ecclesiology." Yves Congar, "The People of God", in John H. Miller

Philips' commentary mentions in particular the interventions during October of three other bishops who likewise called for use of the trilogy: another Chilean Bishop Manuel Larraín Errázuriz (Talca, Chile), Bishop Joseph Schröffer (Eichstätt, Germany), and Bishop Émile De Smedt (Bruges, Belgium).[44] De Smedt's October 18 intervention becomes crucial, as later acknowledged by the Doctrinal Commission.[45] A pastoral letter to his priests that De Smedt had written in 1961 before the council had indeed used the tripartite rubric in reference to both bishops and laity.[46] Significantly, De Smedt quotes in his references the two seminal works by Tromp and Congar. Nevertheless, he does refer to Newman in his aula intervention.[47] Both his Pastoral Letter and his intervention on the council floor swing between use of the rubric of the common priesthood and use of the three *munera* as ways of presenting a more unified notion of ministry.[48] He claims 60 subscribers to his intervention; the official *Relatio* the next year on the incorporation of his

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(ed.), *Vatican II: An Interfaith Appraisal* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1966) 197-207, at 197.

44. See Philips, "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: History of the Constitution", 121: "To meet all these wishes, Bishops Schröffer, De Smedt, Larrain and others thought that it would be useful if the presentation was based explicitly on the participation in the threefold mission of Christ – priestly, prophetic and kingly, the last being understood as the noblest and humblest form of service. This was taken into account in great measure in the preparation of the final version."

45. For an inventory of De Smedt's archives, highlighting his contributions throughout the council to subcommissions and through aula interventions, see Alois Greiler and Luc de Saeger (eds.), *Emiel-Jozef De Smedt, Papers Vatican II. Inventory* (Leuven: Bibliotheek van de Faculteit Godgeleerdheid, 1999).

46. The Pastoral Letter was published in English the following year; see Émile-Joseph de Smedt, *The Priesthood of the Faithful* (New York: Paulist Press, 1962). For the significance of the letter, see Leo Declerck, "Msgr. De Smedt (1909-1995) and the Second Vatican Council", in Alois Greiler and Luc de Saeger (eds.), *Emiel-Jozef De Smedt, Papers Vatican II. Inventory* (Leuven: Bibliotheek van de Faculteit Godgeleerdheid, 1999) pp. xv-xxiii, at xix: "Although only indirectly associated with the Council, De Smedt's pastoral letter to the priests of his diocese dated January 10th, 1963, is far from unimportant. The letter appeals to diocesan priests to offer themselves to the mission territories as Fidei Donum priests. The letter was to come to the attention of John XXIII who expressed his personal joy over its contents to De Smedt during a private audience on May 14th, 1963. The audience, which took place only a few weeks before the pope's death, left a profound impression on the Bishop of Bruges."

47. *Acta Synodalia* II/III, 103: "Nomine plurimorum episcoporum hic ostendere conabor quomodo doctrina sacerdotii universalis applicata vitae laicorum hanc intime et profundissime connectit cum sacerdotio Iesu Christi et cum muneribus sacrae hierarchiae. Quid hic dicentur iam saeculo elapsu spiritu quasi prophetico innuebantur a card. Newman. Laici ad munus sacerdotale, propheticum et regale Iesu Christi participandum destinantur." This point is highlighted by Melvin Michalski, *The Relationship between the Universal Priesthood of the Baptized and the Ministerial Priesthood of the Ordained in Vatican II and in Subsequent Theology: Understanding "Essentia Et Non Gradu Tantum", Lumen gentium No. 10* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen University Press, 1996) 38, n87. Michalski's work only briefly refers to the threefold office and nowhere discusses the relationship between the two rubrics.

48. *Acta Synodalia,* II, III, 101-106. Further on the significance of De Smedt, see also Ohly, *Sensus fidei fidelium,* 255-56.

suggestions into *Lumen gentium*, particularly into Chapter 4 on the Laity, would mention 120 subscribers among the bishops.[49]

It is during the next intersession period (December 1963 – September 1964) that the major work is done of inscribing the tripartite pattern of ministry into the structure and the content of *Lumen gentium*, as a way of naming both what is common to all members of the People of God (Chapter 2), and then what marks the differences (Chapter 3 on the Hierarchy and Chapter 4 on the Laity).[50] But the major appeals for inclusion of the trilogy had already been received as "the mind of the council" by the end of the second session. The assembly finally voted on Chapter 2 on 17 November 1964 and the full text of *Lumen gentium* was officially promulgated on 21 November 1964.[51]

I do not intend to summarise the breadth and depth of *Lumen gentium*'s teaching on the three offices of Christ and the consequent tripartite notion of ministry in the church. Significant work has been done in that area.[52] My concern is narrower: the implications of the council's teaching on the actual participation of all the baptised *in the office of teaching* and the criteriological function of the sensus fidelium in the determination of church teaching. That these remain controversial issues in the contemporary Catholic Church illustrates that reception of *Lumen gentium*'s teaching on the matter has hardly begun. As a contribution to that reception, this essay has only investigated some of the history behind the text of *Lumen gentium* and attempted an initial reconstruction of the council's intention regarding the participation of the whole church in the prophetic office of Christ. A fuller hermeneutical reconstruction of the meaning of the prophetic office would first of all need to extend the investigation beyond a hermeneutics of the history behind the text to a hermeneutics of the text itself, its internal structure and its place alongside other documents produced by the council (for instance, *Dei Verbum* and *Gaudium et Spes*, which would be promulgated the next year). For example, is there any significance in the fact that *Dei Verbum* does not use the trilogy at all?

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49. *Acta Synodalia,* III, I, 285. See also Drilling "Trilogy", 185-86.

50. Drilling, "Trilogy", 183: "In the interim between the second and third sessions of the Council the schema *Lumen gentium* was revised significantly in favour of the tripartite paradigm for Christian ministry. Several new articles were inserted into the text of what would become the dogmatic constitution on the Church, while others were rewritten to highlight the tripartite character of ministry."

51. For a detailed chronology on the stages of *Lumen gentium*'s formulation, see Giuseppe Alberigo and Franca Magistretti, "Chronology of the Drafting of the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium",* in *Constitutionis Dogmaticae Lumen gentium: Synopsis Historica* (Bologna: Istituto per le Scienze Religiose, 1975) pp. xxiii-xxv.

52. See L. Hödl, "Die Lehre von den drei Ämtern Jesu Christi in den dogmatischen Konstitution des II. Vatikanischen Konzils 'Über die Kirche': Das theologiegeschichtliche und hermeneutische Problem einer christologischen Formel", in Leo Scheffczyk, Werner Dettloff, and Richard Heinzmann (eds.), *Wahrheit und Verkündigung. Michael Schmaus zum 70. Geburtstag* (München: Schöningh, 1967) 1785-806. See also the systematic sections of Drilling, "Trilogy", 199-206; Goergen, "Priest, Prophet, King", 193-209.

Furthermore, a fuller hermeneutical reconstruction would need also to focus on the addressees of the document, the local churches of the world, by means of a hermeneutics of reception. This would entail a diachronic investigation of the history of the text's reception in the past thirty-eight years, as well as a synchronic investigation of the diverse horizons out of which the text has been and is being interpreted today.

LUMEN GENTIUM AND FURTHER RECEPTION

I would like now to summarise the implications of *Lumen gentium*'s teaching on the "common" participation in the prophetic office and to highlight some issues that will need to be addressed in the process of further reception. *Lumen gentium*'s Chapter II on the People of God asserts that, just as Christ the Messiah, the Anointed One, was empowered by the Spirit and was, like the Old Testament figures, anointed priest, anointed prophet, and anointed king, so too all Christians (ordained and laity), by virtue of their chrismation at baptism and confirmation, are empowered by the Holy Spirit to participate in the offices of Jesus Christ, priest, prophet and king/pastor/shepherd. As a form of participation by the whole church in the office of *teaching*, the *sensus fidelium* can be said to operate also on the level of the church *learning*. The *sensus fidelium* is a capacity or instinct for understanding, interpreting and applying revelation within diverse contexts. The *sensus fidelium* guarantees the church's *infallibilitas in credendo,* infallibility in believing. Through it, the Holy Spirit guarantees that the People of God "unfailingly adheres to [the] faith, penetrates it more deeply through right judgment, and applies it more fully in daily life" (*LG* 12a)]. The *sensus fidelium* is a practical capacity that enables the People of God to carry out the prophetic office, the *munus docendi,* the office of teaching, the ministry of the Word. Because all are teachers (in homes, at work, in society, etc), the magisterium must exercise its special task of authentic interpretation in a mutually receptive relationship with the *sensus fidelium.* Here it is important to emphasise that *Lumen gentium* does not narrowly equate the *sensus fidelium* with some *sensus laicorum* ("sense of the laity"), although the former would include the latter. Clearly *LG* 12, located squarely in the middle of the chapter on the People of God, understands the *fideles* inclusively, "from the bishops to the last of the lay faithful" (*ab Episcopis usque ad extremos laicos fideles*), quoting Augustine.[53]

If one word sums up Vatican II's vision of how all of the faithful (ordained and laity) participate in the prophetic office of teaching it is the word "witness" (*testis*) or "testimony" (*testimonium*). The word occurs almost as a definition at the beginning of *LG* 12: "The holy people

53. Augustine, *De Praed. Sanct.*, 14, 27.

of God shares also in Christ's prophetic office: it spreads abroad a living witness to him". In *LG* 19 on the hierarchy, the Risen Christ's confirmation of the apostolic mission is recalled: "You shall be my witnesses" (Act 1:8: *eritis mihi testes*). In *LG* 35 on the laity's specific participation in the prophetic office, the words "testimony", "witness" and "witnesses" are used five times.

It is striking that the affirmation in *LG* 12 regarding participation by all the faithful in the office of teaching (*munus docendi*) is set, almost provocatively, alongside the statement of the church's conviction regarding the faithful's infallibility in believing (*infallibilitas in credendo*). While certainly not stating that all the faithful participate in the church's infallibility in teaching, it is nonetheless a telling juxtaposition that highlights the prior context for the magisterium's particular role in the church's *infallibilitas in docendo.* All believers participate in the office of teaching because the word of God is entrusted to all.[54] The manner of that participation and the active role of the *sensus fidelium* in formal exercise of the teaching office by the magisterium is one of the burning issues in the ongoing reception of Vatican II.

Lumen gentium leaves systematic theologians with an ongoing task: whether and how it is possible to retrieve the very notion of Christ's prophetic office, and what it means for baptised followers of Jesus to continue that office. Such a retrieval will provide an important starting point for a reconstructed systematic theology of the *sensus fidelium.* As part of that retrieval, criticisms that have been made of the threefold typology will need to be addressed.[55] One of the problems is that the pre-Easter earthly Jesus seems not to have spoken of himself or envisaged his ministry in terms of "king" or "priest", and certainly not in terms of the three titles together.[56] But we do not want to fall into the methodological trap of disqualifying out of hand as illegitimate post-resurrection interpretations of Jesus that go beyond what may have been

54. On *Dei Verbum*'s teaching regarding this matter, see Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger: "[*DV* 10] first makes the point that the preservation and active realization of the word is the business of the whole people of God, not merely of the hierarchy. The ecclesial nature of the word, on which this idea is based, is therefore not simply a question which concerns the teaching office, but embraces the whole community of the faithful. If one compares the text with the corresponding section of the encyclical *Humani Generis* (*DS* 3886), the progress that has been made is clear.... This idea of *solo magisterio* is taken up here in the next paragraph, but the context makes it clear that the function of authentic interpretation which is restricted to the teaching office is a specific service that does not embrace the whole of the way in which the word is present, and in which it performs an irreplaceable function precisely for the whole Church, the bishops and laity together." See Joseph Ratzinger, "Dogmatic Constitution of Divine Revelation: Origin and Background", in H. Vorgrimler (ed.), *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Herder, 1969) 196.

55. For example, see Pannenberg, *Jesus God and Man,* 212-25.

56. Goergen, "Priest, Prophet, King", 192 states: "When we take the earthly Jesus as our model, the problem emerges. Jesus was historically neither king nor priest in the ways those roles were understood within the Judaism of his day. Jesus would have seen himself neither as priest nor king."

Jesus' own self-understanding (however that may be reconstructed). New meanings will always be found that go beyond authorial intention, but which do not necessarily contradict that authorial intention. Theologically, it may be legitimate to re-interpret Jesus in priestly, prophetic and kingly language, if that framework is judged to be faithful to the Christ event as now perceived, and if it continues to empower future generations in the way of Jesus Christ. It seems that ecclesiologists still continue to find the division of *teaching, sanctifying* and *governing* to be a comprehensive way of speaking about church life, whatever of their use of the trilogy as a structuring principle for their own ecclesiologies. This study has attempted to demonstrate that, despite historical problems regarding Jesus' understanding of himself as priest and as king, a conciliar hermeneutics of authorial intention shows how Vatican II was deliberately wanting to use the framework of the three *munera* to develop in significant ways Catholic teaching on the participation of the laity in the church's mission and to highlight the criteriological function of the whole People's prophetic *sensus fidelium* for determining matters of faith and morals.

In reference to the theological usefulness or otherwise of the threefold schema, Donald Goergen makes an important methodological point:

> In using that schema the question is not so much whether the framework is in fact the best one to use but rather what these titles or images mean as illuminated by the mission, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus.... So when we apply those titles to Jesus, we are making a theological assertion about Jesus and we need to indicate what that "new theology" intends. And that theology must be grounded in Jesus, in the mission and ministry of the earthly Jesus. We cannot simply take theological constructs and apply them to Jesus; Jesus has to elucidate, illuminate those constructs for us.[57]

Any retrieval of the notion of the prophetic office must be grounded in a prophetic Christology that highlights who Jesus was as a prophet and how he understood and exercised his ministry of prophecy. The construction of such a prophetic Christology would well benefit, not only from attention to the witness of the canonical gospels, but also from examination of recent Jesus Research on the ministry of Jesus as Prophet. A prophetic Christology must then be the starting point for constructing a theology of the prophetic office of the *universitas fidelium,* whose mission it is to continue Jesus' prophetic ministry. This christological grounding would demonstrate, I believe, that the notion of prophecy remains a valid *heuristic category* for exploring the function of the *sensus fidelium* in the church's mission to proclaim and witness to the reign of God. Coupled with Vatican II's retrieval of the notion of

57. Goergen, "Priest, Prophet, King", 201, 192. Italics mine.

"the signs of the times", the notion of the prophetic office of the church (within which the laity and the magisterium have distinctive roles) remains a valid category worth further exploration.[58]

CONCLUDING REMARKS

I conclude with two further remarks on the task ahead. Firstly, contemporary ecclesiology needs to address the unresolved tension that remains within *Lumen gentium* between the rubric of the common priesthood as primary and the rubric of the threefold *munera* as the overarching framework. Unbalanced attention to "priesthood" can mean that insufficient attention is given to the question of how the laity can participate more fully in the offices of *teaching* and *governing*. The issue of the *sensus fidelium* and how it can be received will be key to any attempt to address such practical questions. Secondly, it has been noted that *Lumen gentium* is witness to a remarkable reception by Vatican II of the Protestant rubric of the munus triplex of Christ as applied to the church. This reception enabled the council members to go beyond the narrower framework of the notion of common priesthood to a more expansive vision of participation by all the faithful in the teaching, sanctifying and governing of the church. Could it be that continuing reception of Protestant theologies on the three offices, through ecumenical dialogues, will once again provide the Catholic Church with ways forward – in its search for structures of greater participation by the laity in the teaching, sanctifying and governing offices in the Catholic Church?

58. I do not attempt in this article to address issues involved in reconstructing a systematic theology of the other offices of priest and king. My concern is only the correlation of the *sensus fidelium* specifically with the prophetic office.