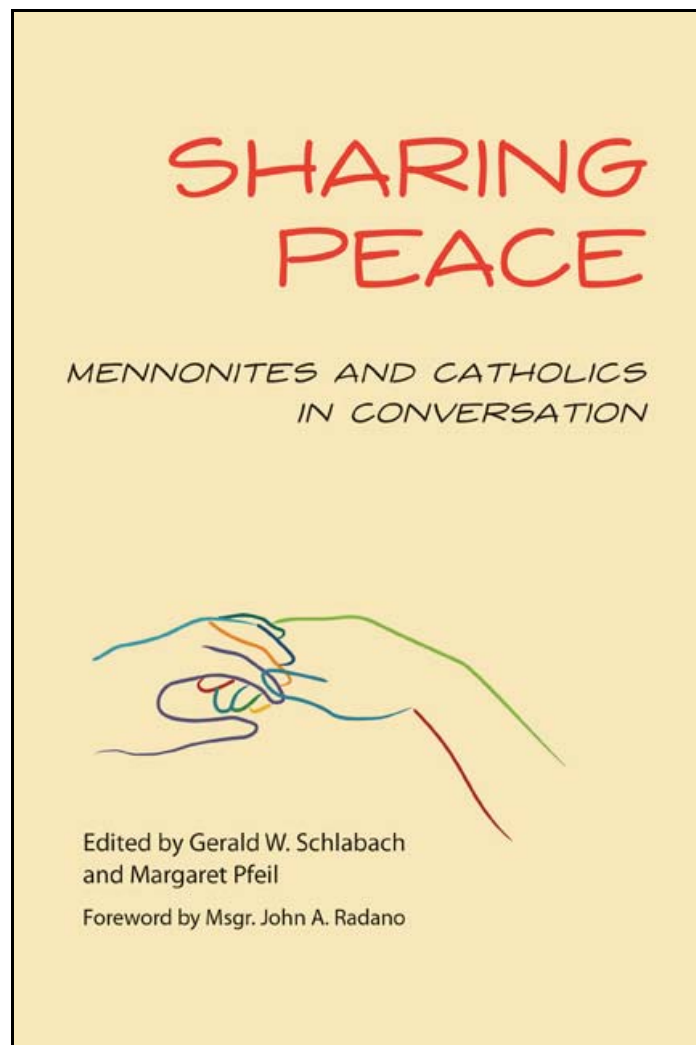


**“This Is My Body”
The Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist
and the Call to Be Peacemakers**

**by Elizabeth T. Groppe
Xavier University
Cincinnati, Ohio**

Chapter 9 in



**© 2013 Liturgical Press
Collegeville, Minnesota**

To order from the publisher go to
<http://www.litpress.org/Products/8017/sharing-peace.aspx>

“This Is My Body”

The Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist and the Call to Be Peacemakers

Elizabeth T. Groppe

In the fall of 2004, a traveling exhibit on the human cost of the Iraq war came to Cincinnati, the city where I live.¹ A stroll across the academic mall at Xavier University became a walk through a field of black boots placed with careful precision in rows across the grass, each pair a symbol of a young man or woman from the United States military killed in the aftermath of the US invasion. Clustered below trees on the edges of the mall were piles and piles of sandals, sneakers, leather shoes, high heels, and baby booties symbolizing the death of an untold number of Iraqi civilians. Documents and photographs from Iraq were on display in the university library, including a love letter from a soldier to his bereaved fiancée and a photo of the body of a small Iraqi child covered almost entirely in blood.

The city of Ur, in the land we now know as Iraq, was the birthplace of Abraham (Gen 11:26-28), the man who placed the body of another child on an altar in preparation for an act of sacrifice (Gen 22). The command of God spared Abraham's son Isaac, and the Christian exegetical tradition has interpreted this Genesis story both as a prohibition of child sacrifice and a prefiguration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Catholics celebrate this paschal mystery in the sacrament of the Eucharist, which the Second Vatican Council described as a “sacrament of love” and “the source and summit of the Christian life.”²

¹ The exhibit “Eyes Wide Open” is sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee. See <http://www.afsc.org/eyes>.

² Vatican II: *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 47 and *Lumen Gentium* 11. In this chapter, references to the council are from *Vatican Council II: The Basic Sixteen Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, OP (Northport, NY: Costello, 1996).

Called Together to Be Peacemakers, the Report of the International Dialogue, identifies numerous areas of significant congruence between Catholic eucharistic theology and Mennonite understandings of the practice of the Lord's Supper, as well as important and obvious differences concerning the character of Christ's presence. As I review these theologies and elaborate on the Catholic theology of eucharistic real presence, I give particular attention to the relationship between the Eucharist and the practice of peacemaking. As I have reflected on *Called Together*, one cluster of questions in particular has troubled me: *Why does the strong Catholic theology of Christ's real presence in the Eucharist often fail to bear fruit in a practice of peacemaking comparable in strength and consistency to that of our Mennonite brothers and sisters? What liturgical and ecclesial practices might strengthen Catholics in our vocation to become the Body of Christ that we receive?*

Roman Catholic Eucharistic Theology

The Eucharist is the source and summit of Catholic life, the sacrament of our communion with God, one another, and all creation. With Catholics, Mennonites affirm that the celebration of the Eucharist and the Lord's Supper recalls the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Both traditions hold that in this celebration, we acknowledge our sinfulness and receive God's grace made available to all through the paschal mystery. From this grace comes forgiveness, nourishment of the Christian life, strengthening for mission, and growth in our conformity to the body of Christ that we might be ministers of reconciliation, peace, and justice for the world. Both Catholics and Mennonites approach the event as a foretaste of the heavenly banquet and celebrate in the spirit of eschatological hope.³ The most obvious point of contention between Mennonites and Catholics is the question of whether the Eucharist is a symbol of Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection or the real presence of Christ.⁴

³ *Called Together to Be Peacemakers*, Report of the International Dialogue, par. 133.

⁴ "For Mennonites," *Called Together* explains, "the Lord's Supper is primarily a sign or symbol that points to Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection, and that keeps this memory alive until His return" (138). For Catholics, in contrast, "in the sacrament of the Eucharist 'the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained' under the species of bread and wine which have been consecrated by an ordained bishop or presbyter" (139). This is the language of the Council of Trent, reiterated in the 1994 Catechism of the Catholic Church (par. 1374).

These need not be mutually exclusive approaches. In a survey of early Christian eucharistic theologies, Paul Jones echoes Jaroslav Pelikan in his conclusion that the theologians of the church's first three centuries approached the Eucharist with an appreciation for both its symbolism and its realism. Justin Martyr used an incarnational analogy to emphasize that the food blessed with the Word of God becomes the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, while Clement and Origen placed more emphasis on the figurative and symbolic character of the bread and wine.⁵ In a neo-Platonic culture that assumed things visible to our eyes participate in a spiritual reality that transcends sense experience, no one interpreted the Eucharist as merely a sign, even when countering the accusation that Christian liturgies were an occasion for cannibalism.⁶ Indeed, John McKenna notes, it is a remarkable fact that in the diversity of traditions and theologies that emerged as Christianity grew and developed in both East and West, "there was no dispute over Christ's presence for the first eight centuries."⁷ The primary focus of theological attention was the communion shared by those who partake of the Eucharist and its potential to transform and unite the communicants in Christ's body.

Landmarks in the development of the tradition include Benedictine monk Paschasius Radbertus' ninth-century treatise *De Corpore et Sanguine Domini* (On the Body and Blood of the Lord), which affirmed that the Eucharist is both a sign and image of the true body and blood of Christ, as evidenced in accounts of bleeding hosts. Emperor Charles the Bald found this approach excessively realistic and commissioned the monk Ratramnus to write another treatise, which distinguished the body of Christ that was crucified on Calvary from the Eucharist that is a true sacrament of Christ's body. Another notable historical landmark is the eleventh-century exchange between Berengarius of Tours and Lanfranc of Canterbury. Berengarius, pressured to confess at the Synod of Rome (1059) that after consecration the bread and wine are "the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ—and that these are truly, physically, and not merely sacramentally, touched and broken by the hands of the priests and crushed by the teeth of the faithful," authored

⁵ Paul H. Jones, *Christ's Eucharistic Presence: A History of the Doctrine* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 25–33; Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1971), 1:28, 167–71.

⁶ On this point see William R. Crockett, *Eucharist: Symbol of Transformation* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1989), 78–88.

⁷ John McKenna, "Eucharistic Presence: An Invitation to Dialogue," *Theological Studies* 60, no. 2 (1999): 302.

De Sacra Coena (On the Sacred Meal), which stated that the priest breaks not the body of Christ but the sacrament of Christ's body. Lanfranc responded in his *Liber de Corpore et Sanguine Domini* (On the Body and Blood of Our Lord) that the earthly elements on the Lord's table are changed in an unspeakable and incomprehensible manner into the essence of Christ's body. In this dispute, Nathan Mitchell explains, Catholic theology was striving to find a way to articulate that "the Eucharist is real without being crudely realistic, and symbolic (sacramental) without being unreal."⁸

Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) articulated this with great care in the *Summa Theologiae*, a comprehensive account of the sacramental economy as a means to our healing from sin and participation in the divine nature.⁹ Aquinas described the sacrament of the Eucharist as a sign that refers to something other than itself, the sacred reality that is being signified (the *res sacra*). In this sense, the Eucharist is a symbol and figure of Christ's body. At the same time, the bread and wine contain the crucified Christ "not merely in signification or figure, but also in very truth."¹⁰ That the Eucharist is Christ's true corporeal presence is a mystery of Christ's love, through which Christ assumed for our salvation a body of our nature and continues to abide with us in our state of pilgrimage (John 6:57).¹¹ When Christ says of the bread and wine through the instrument of the priest "This is my Body" and "This is my blood," bread and wine truly become the body and blood of Christ, not in the way a human agent changes one form to another (e.g. flour to bread) but through God's divine power by which "the whole substance of the bread is changed into the whole substance of Christ's body, and the whole substance of the wine into the whole substance of Christ's blood."¹² The language of "substance" (*substantia*) has a physicalist sense to our twenty-

⁸ Nathan Mitchell, OSB, *Cult and Controversy: The Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* (New York: Pueblo, 1982), 151. Berengarius' *De Sacra Coena* is not available in English translation. For Lanfranc's work, see Lanfranc of Canterbury "On the Body and Blood of Our Lord" and Guilmund of Aversa "On the Truth of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist," trans. Mark G. Vaillancourt (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2009).

⁹ On Aquinas' sacramental theology, see Liam G. Walsh, OP, "Sacraments," in *The Theology of Thomas Aquinas*, eds. Rik van Nieuwenhove and Joseph Wawrykow (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), 326–64.

¹⁰ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (ST), IIIa, q. 75, a. 1, ad. c. All quotations are from the Benziger Brothers edition, translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province.

¹¹ Ibid. The other reasons he identified are the perfection of the new law and the perfection of faith.

¹² Ibid., a. 4, ad. c.

first century ears, but for Aquinas the substance of Christ's body and blood is a supernatural reality perceptible in faith only to the spiritual eye or the intellect.¹³ Christ is present in the Eucharist both in sign *and* in truth, but this true corporeal presence is supernatural rather than local or sensual, a spiritual gift that enables us to grow in grace and virtue. As a sacrament of Christ's presence, the Eucharist "is the sign of supreme love."¹⁴

When the Council of Trent articulated its own Eucharistic theology, the context was one of polemics against the Reformers: "If anyone should maintain that the sacrament of the Eucharist does not truly, really, and substantially contain the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, but (that these) are only there as in a sign or a symbolic form, let him be excommunicated." Trent directed these strong words against Zwingli, Oecolampadius, and the Sacramentarians who believed that the mass had become an illegitimate instrument of exclusive ecclesiastical power and that notions of Christ's presence were too crudely material.¹⁵ Trent affirmed that there is a real conversion (*conversio*) of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ and that this conversion is most suitably (*aptissime*) expressed by the term "transubstantiation."¹⁶

In the twentieth century, the tradition continued to develop. Kantian philosophy, existentialism, quantum theory, uneasiness with Aristotelian terms remote from modern thought, ecumenical dialogue, and the rediscovery of the symbolic in the work of theologians such as Paul Tillich and Karl Rahner invited new approaches to eucharistic theology.¹⁷ Among these are theologies that employ phenomenology and personalist philosophy. Edward Schillebeeckx, for example, used a phenomenology of the nonduality of body and soul to articulate a theology of personal encounter in which the visible bread and wine disclose the real presence of the Body of Christ. There is

¹³ Ibid., q. 76, a. 7, ad. c.

¹⁴ Ibid., q. 75, a. 1, ad. c.

¹⁵ On Zwingli, see Thomas N. Finger, *A Contemporary Anabaptist Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2004), 185.

¹⁶ Council of Trent: DS, 1651.

¹⁷ For surveys of these developments, see Edward J. Kilmartin, SJ, "Sacramental Theology: The Eucharist in Recent Literature," *Theological Studies* 32, no. 2 (1971): 233–77; Edward J. Kilmartin, SJ, "The Catholic Tradition of Eucharistic Theology: Towards the Third Millennium," *Theological Studies* 55, no. 3 (1994): 405–57. For Rahner's theology of symbol, which may have potential to build bridges between the Catholic and Mennonite traditions, see "The Theology of the Symbol," trans. Kevin Smyth, *Theological Investigations* 5 (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974): 221–52.

a need, he wrote, for a eucharistic realism that is sacramental rather than physicalist.¹⁸

Whether one formulates the Catholic theology of eucharistic presence with the language of Aquinas, Trent, or Schillebeeckx, the tradition has at its heart the conviction that the Eucharist is not only a sign that calls the paschal mystery to mind but also an encounter with the incarnational reality of Christ's profound and enduring love: "This is my body, which is given for you" (Luke 22:19). The Catholic tradition emphasizes that this real presence of Christ is not conditioned by the character of the priest nor that of the assembly. The priest who iterates Christ's words and invokes the Spirit in the prayer of *epiclesis* is simply an instrument of God's grace. In technical terms, the grace of the sacrament is given not *ex opere operantis* ("from the work of the worker") but *ex opere operato* ("from the work worked"). Although the sacrament is complete only when those who partake of the Body of Christ respond in grace to the love they have received, the reality of Christ's love is not contingent on our response. It is precisely this theology of Christ's presence as a gift neither conditioned nor constructed by the collective community, writes Jean Luc-Marion in response to critiques of Roman Catholicism, that guards against idolatrous worship.¹⁹

Several features of contemporary Catholic eucharistic theology bear highlighting in the context of this Mennonite-Catholic dialogue. First, the theology of Christ's eucharistic presence can be expressed in language other than that of "transubstantiation," a term that historically has been an obstacle to interdenominational understanding. Anabaptists, writes Thomas Finger,

¹⁸ Edward Schillebeeckx, OP, *The Eucharist*, trans. N. D. Smith (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1968). See also his *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God*, trans. Paul Barrett, Mark Schoof, and Laurence Bright (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963).

¹⁹ Jean-Luc Marion, *God Without Being*, trans. Thomas A. Carlson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 161–82. Liam Walsh notes in his article "Sacraments" that the position that sacraments give grace *ex opere operato* "was a smart way of expressing the objective value of a properly celebrated sacrament, over against the value of any other exercise of piety in the church (such as prayers offered for people) that depends on the subjective goodness, or lack of goodness, of the one who performs it. It was never meant to suggest that subjective dispositions were of no account in sacraments, either in the minister or, more particularly, on the part of the one who receives the sacrament. It was taken as obvious that, without exercising faith and charity, the recipient could gain no saving grace from a sacrament, for all its objective reality. The limitation of the expression *ex opere operato* is that it says nothing about the reason why sacraments have their objective reality. And it carries the risk of suggesting that the rite has some inherent power that works independently of all personal factors" (364, n. 46. Cf. p. 358).

have affirmed Christ's presence through the Spirit²⁰ but "employed concepts that apparently denied Christ's presence (e.g., the bread is only bread)" in order "to deny the notions of presence they know, because these seemed too crudely material."²¹ Schillebeeckx emphasizes that Trent left open the possibility that one can speak of the eucharistic *conversio* in terms other than the council's own chosen language of transubstantiation, and the official Vatican response to the World Council of Churches' Commission on Faith and Order report *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry* (1982) expressed an openness to "possible new theological explanations as to the 'how' of the intrinsic change."²²

Second, although Catholicism emphasizes that Christ is "present . . . most of all in the Eucharistic species" (SC 7), the Catholic tradition also recognizes other modes of eucharistic presence. The Second Vatican Council affirmed that Christ is present also in the person of the minister, the word of Scripture, and the church united in prayer and song (SC 7).²³ Judith Marie Kubicki notes that this conciliar approach recovers the ethos of the apostolic and patristic eras in which Christ's presence in the Eucharist is inseparable from Christ's presence in the gathered *ecclesia*.²⁴

Finally, Catholic theology today emphasizes that the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist finds its full meaning in the transformation of the communicants who are, in turn, to be a witness to Christ's love in our broken world.²⁵ The full mystery of the body and blood of Christ is that "you are beginning to receive what you have also begun to be," as Augustine exhorted his congregation, "provided you do not receive unworthily."²⁶ A renewed

²⁰ At the conclusion of a historical survey of the theology of the Lord's Supper, he writes: "If *sacramental* means expression of invisible, spiritual grace through visible, material channels, Anabaptists appear quite sacramental so far." Finger, *Anabaptist Theology*, 107.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 197.

²² Schillebeeckx, *Eucharist*, 41–53; Edward J. Kilmartin, "The Official Vatican Response to BEM: Eucharist," *Ecumenical Trends* 17 (1988): 39.

²³ See also *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, par. 1373; Michael G. Witczak, "The Manifold Presence of Christ in the Liturgy," *Theological Studies* 59, no. 4 (1998): 681–90.

²⁴ Judith Marie Kubicki, CSSF, "Recognizing the Presence of Christ in the Liturgical Assembly," *Theological Studies* 65, no. 4 (2004): 821–26.

²⁵ See, for example, Bernard Cooke, *Sacraments and Sacramentality* (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1983), 168–212; James L. Empereur and Christopher Kiesel, *The Liturgy that Does Justice* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1990), 109–30; David N. Power, OMI, "Eucharistic Justice," *Theological Studies* 67, no. 4 (2006): 856–79.

²⁶ Augustine, Sermon 228B, in *Sermons III / 6*, *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century*, ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. Edmund Hill (New Rochelle, NY: New City Press, 1993), 262.

emphasis on this dimension of sacramental theology opens possibilities for building bridges with the Mennonite theology of the Lord's Supper, which does "not dismiss the effectual power of the ordinance to bring change to the participants and to the community of faith."²⁷ *Called Together to Be Peacemakers* attests that Mennonites experience a power and closeness in their sharing of the Lord's Supper and that they leave the service changed by a spiritual presence.²⁸

The Eucharist and the Practice of Peacemaking

The risen Christ greeted the disciples with a sign of peace (Luke 24:36; John 20:19, 26), and the Catholic tradition has found in Christ's eucharistic presence a source of strength to resist war. Cyprian of Carthage (ca. 200/210–58) stated in his treatise *On the Goodness of Patience* that "after the reception of the Eucharist the hand is not to be stained with the sword and bloodshed."²⁹ Saint Basil (ca. 330–79) wrote that anyone who has shed blood in warfare should abstain from the Eucharist for three years.³⁰ Even after the church moved from the predominantly pacifist ethos of its early centuries to an accommodation with warfare, some eucharistic restrictions were placed on arms bearing and participation in military activity. The Council of Chalcedon (451) decreed that clerics and monks should not take up military service; those who did so and failed to repent were subject to excommunication.³¹ According to the Council of Lerida (524), clerics who served at the altar, distributed the Body of Christ, and touched the vessels of the divine service were not to spill any human blood, not even that of an enemy.³² Councils in Macon (583) and Bordeaux (660) prohibited clerics from bearing arms, and the Council of Saint-Jean-de-Lone (ca. 670–73) included bishops in this prohibition.³³ A canon of the eleventh council of Toledo (675) prohibited

²⁷ *Called Together*, par. 126.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Cyprian of Carthage, *Liber de Bono Patientiae*, 14, trans. Louis Swift, *The Early Fathers on War and Military Service* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983), 48. Cf. Carol Frances Jegen, "The Eucharist and Peacemaking: Sign or Contradiction?" *Worship* 59, no. 3 (1985): 204.

³⁰ Migne, PG, xxxii, 681, trans. C. John Cadoux, *The Early Christian Attitude to War: A Contribution to the History of Christian Ethics* (New York: Seabury, 1972), 261.

³¹ Canon 7, in Charles Joseph Hefel , *Histoire des Conciles d'apr s les documents originaux* (Paris: Letouzey et an , 1908), II.1:788–89.

³² *Ibid.*, II.2:1063.

³³ *Ibid.*, III.1:203 and 273.

priests from participating in any proceedings involving bloodshed.³⁴ The First National Germanic Council (742) did allow clerics to bear arms in warfare, except for “those who celebrate the holy mass or carry relics.”³⁵

Thomas Aquinas articulated the theological basis for the canons and conciliar rulings that barred celebrants of the Eucharist from participation in bloodshed. Once ordained, he explained, a man should not participate in military activity, for the disquieting character of warfare prevents contemplation of divine things and warfare violates the priest’s sacramental representation of Christ. “Wherefore it is unbecoming for them to slay or shed blood, and it is more fitting that they should be ready to shed their own blood for Christ, so as to imitate in deed what they portray in their ministry. . . . [I]t is altogether unlawful for clerics to fight.”³⁶ Today a long tradition of exempting military chaplains from combat continues, and this, Carol Frances Jegen comments, “is basically a question of eucharistic celebration.”³⁷

In our own era, there has been renewed attention to the eucharistic imperative to peacemaking. Virgil Michel, a leader of the preconconciliar liturgical movement in the United States, emphasized that “the Eucharist as the sacrament of the mystical Body of Christ, or of the perfection of love, is preeminently the sacrament of the peace of Christ.”³⁸ War, he continued, is an evil that tears apart Christ’s Mystical Body and the Eucharist is the foundation of the regeneration of a society that has been fragmented by injustice and bloodshed. Vatican II’s Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*) decried the savagery of war and enjoined Christians to cooperate with others in securing a peace based on justice and charity, while the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*) emphasized the universal call to holiness—a theology that challenges a two-tier morality that prohibits priests from bloodshed but allows laity to participate in warfare.³⁹ “The Mass,” the US Catholic bishops stated in 1983, “is a unique means of seeking God’s help to create the conditions

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid., III.2: 822

³⁶ Ibid., ST, II–II, q. 40, a. 2, ad. c.

³⁷ Jegen, “The Eucharist and Peacemaking,” 202. On clerical pacifism see also Kenneth Kemp, “Personal Pacifism,” *Theological Studies* 56, no. 1 (1995): 23–25.

³⁸ Virgil Michel, OSB, *The Christian in the World* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1939), 179. See also Tobias L. Winright, “Virgil Michel on Worship and War,” *Worship* 71, no. 5 (1997): 451–62.

³⁹ *Vatican Council II: Gaudium et Spes*, pars. 77–90; *Lumen Gentium*, pars. 39–42.

essential for true peace in ourselves and in the world.”⁴⁰ The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* issued by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace described the Eucharist as “a limitless wellspring for all authentic Christian commitment to peace.”⁴¹ In 2005, the XI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops issued a message to the people of God entitled “The Eucharist: Living Bread for the Peace of the World.”⁴² At the Synod, bishops shared moving stories about the peacemaking power of the Eucharist,⁴³ and the Synod included among their *propositiones* this statement: “All who partake of the Eucharist must commit themselves to peacemaking in our world scarred by violence and war, and today, in particular, by terrorism, economic corruption and sexual exploitation.”⁴⁴ Pope Benedict XVI highlighted this point in his 2007 postsynodal apostolic exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis*.⁴⁵

Across the globe, Catholics are engaged in peacemaking action. *Called Together to Be Peacemakers* highlights the contributions of national and diocesan justice and peace commissions, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, and the Caritas network.⁴⁶ One could add many other examples, such as the indispensable leadership of Bishop Jaime Sin and the Catholics of the Philippines in the successful nonviolent resistance to the attempted election fraud of dictator Ferdinand Marcos,⁴⁷ the work of Pax Christi International,⁴⁸

⁴⁰ US Conference of Catholic Bishops, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*, par. 295.

⁴¹ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (USCCB: Washington, DC: 2004), par. 519.

⁴² Available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html.

⁴³ There is no public record of these stories, but Pope Benedict wrote: “During the Synod sessions we heard very moving and significant testimonies about the effectiveness of the Eucharist in peacemaking. In this regard, *Propositio* 49 states that: ‘Thanks to eucharistic celebrations, peoples engaged in conflict have been able to gather around the word of God, hear his prophetic message of reconciliation through gratuitous forgiveness, and receive the grace of conversion which allows them to share in the same bread and cup.’” Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, n. 242.

⁴⁴ The *propositiones* are confidential, but some, including this one (*propositio* 48) are cited by Pope Benedict XVI in *Sacramentum Caritatis*.

⁴⁵ Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, par. 89.

⁴⁶ *Called Together*, par. 154.

⁴⁷ Ma. Christine A. Astorga, “Culture, Religion, and Moral Vision: A Theological Discourse on the Filipino People Power Revolution of 1986,” *Theological Studies* 67, no. 3 (2006): 567–601.

⁴⁸ See <http://www.paxchristi.net/international/eng/index.php>.

the Community of Sant'Egidio,⁴⁹ or the efforts of the Catholic Peacebuilding Network.⁵⁰

Becoming What We Receive

Catholics have borne powerful witness to the call to peacemaking that is rooted in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ that we celebrate in the eucharistic sacrament. At the same time, we must honestly face our historic failures to fully become the Body of Christ that we receive. Catholics participated in pogroms against Jews, crusades against Muslims, and acts of violence against the indigenous peoples of the Americas that accompanied European colonialism. After nearly two millennia of Christian civilization, the continent of Europe became, in the twentieth century, a theater of total war and genocide in which Catholics killed not only Jews and Protestants but also other Catholic communicants. In World War I, Catholic France, Belgium, and Italy (on the Allied side) fought Catholic Austria. "Members of the body of Christ," William Temple lamented, "are tearing one another, and His Body is bleeding as it once bled on Calvary, but this time the wounds are dealt by His friends. It is as though Peter were driving home the nails and John were piercing the side."⁵¹ In the 1980s, baptized men and women killed one another in the civil wars that sundered the small nations of Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala, which were overwhelmingly Catholic in the aftermath of the sixteenth-century Spanish conquest of Central America.

In our own day, Pope John Paul II exemplified Catholic peacemaking in his diplomatic efforts to counsel the Bush administration against the catastrophic invasion of Iraq in which we are still engaged.⁵² Yet while the Vatican called the US plans immoral and illegal, polls showed American Catholics in favor of war by a margin of two to one.⁵³ When the United States did invade Iraq, the Vatican continued to advocate peace, but this had little effect on

⁴⁹ See <http://www.santegidiousa.org/> on the US branch on this international Catholic lay association.

⁵⁰ See <http://cpn.nd.edu>.

⁵¹ William Temple, *Christianity and War*, Papers for War Time No. 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1914), 3.

⁵² John Paul II, "The International Situation Today," Address to the diplomatic corps accredited to the Vatican, *Origins* 32, no. 33 (January 30, 2003): 544; "There Is Still Room for Peace," (address before midday angelus, *L'Osservatore Romano* March 17–18, 2003), 12.

⁵³ Richard Major, "Stars and Stripes or Keys of Peter," *The Tablet* (March 22, 2003): 4.

participation in the war by Catholic members of the military.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, at the parish level, it was difficult to talk or even pray about the war and its victims. In one Cincinnati parish, a pastor vetoed inclusion of a prayer for enemies in a bulletin insert on the grounds that this particular selection from a series of prayers provided by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops would be too controversial. On two occasions, my husband, a professor of social ethics, was invited to speak to local parishes about Catholic social teaching on war and peace, but in both cases the invitation came with the proviso, “we do not want you to speak about Iraq. That would be too controversial.”

Meanwhile, many Mennonites stand clear in their opposition to the war and some have supported or participated in the Iraqi delegations of the Christian Peacemaker Teams.⁵⁵ Although Mennonites are relatively few in number, Gerald Schlabach observes, they have a remarkable track record of building relationships with “enemy” nations, working behind the scenes in international mediation, and initiating projects to defend populations subject to human rights abuses.⁵⁶

Given Catholicism’s theology of the real presence of Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist, one would expect our record on peacemaking to be at least as strong as that of the Mennonite tradition. Yet our Mennonite sisters and brothers are more consistent in their resistance to war and development of alternative means of response to human injustice and conflict. Why is this the case? Mennonites are members of a peace church within the Anabaptist tradition and a principled opposition to war is part of their religious identity. Yet, as *Called Together to Be Peacemakers* notes, the just war tradition that dominates Catholic thinking on issues of war and peace does insist that war must be strictly a last resort.⁵⁷ The starting point of the Catholic ethic is a presumption *against* war,⁵⁸ and the conditions set forth for engagement in

⁵⁴ John Michael Botean, Bishop of the [Eastern Rite] Romanian Catholic Diocese of Saint George in Canton, Ohio, is one bishop who did call publicly for conscientious objection. The text of his letter is available at <http://www.catholicpeacefellowship.org/nextpage.asp?m=2033>.

⁵⁵ See <http://www.cpt.org>.

⁵⁶ Gerald W. Schlabach, “Practicing Just Policing,” in *Just Policing, Not War: An Alternative Response to World Violence*, ed. Gerald W. Schlabach (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007), 99.

⁵⁷ *Called Together*, par. 157.

⁵⁸ The US Catholic Bishops stated in their 1983 pastoral *The Challenge of Peace* that both the just war and pacifist traditions share a “strong presumption against war” and for peace (pars. 70, 80, 83, 120). Margaret R. Pfeil explains that although an explicit

warfare are so stringent that a 1991 editorial in the Vatican-approved newspaper *La Civiltà Cattolica* suggested that no war fought with modern means can meet the just war criteria.⁵⁹ In 2003, Archbishop Renato Martino, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, stated that the church's position on warfare is moving toward a "quasi-abolitionist stance."⁶⁰

This development in Catholic social teaching is not well-known among Catholics. Moreover, we have not adequately understood or practiced the vocation to peacemaking that is implicit in our celebration of the Eucharist. Many young Catholics at Xavier University do not even associate the Eucharist with peacemaking. In an informal survey of 71 Catholic students, most stated that the Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Christ. Some spoke of real presence or even transubstantiation. Yet only one student explicitly identified eucharistic reception with the mission of peacemaking.⁶¹ Even those who do make this association may not have sufficient support to live

affirmation of the presumption against the use of force is a relatively recent addition to the just war lexicon, it has resonance with the broader tradition. See her chapter "Whose Justice? Which Relationality?" in *Just Policing, Not War*, 111–29.

⁵⁹ Editorial, "Coscienza cristiana e guerra moderna," *La Civiltà Cattolica* 142.3385 (1991): 3–16. An English translation by William Shannon appears as "Modern War and Christian Conscience," *Origins* 21.28 (December 19, 1991): 450–55.

⁶⁰ Cited in John L. Allen, Jr., "Pope's 'Answer to Rumsfeld' Pulls no Punches in Opposing War," *National Catholic Reporter* (February 14, 2003): 3–4. In May 2003, Cardinal Ratzinger (now Pope Benedict XVI), stated in an interview that "There were not sufficient reasons to unleash a war against Iraq. To say nothing of the fact that, given the new weapons that make possible destructions that go beyond the combatant groups, today we should be asking ourselves if it is still licit to admit the very existence of a 'just war.'" See <http://www.zenit.org/article-7161?l=english> (September 18, 2011).

⁶¹ Ten respondents did say that reception of the sacrament means we must live like Jesus, eight said it means we must make moral choices and resist sin, three said it means we must live like God, and two spoke of the need to follow the laws of the church. Whether or not the students understood these responses to imply an ethic of peacemaking would need to be determined by further questioning. In an alternate version of the survey administered to another sixty-four students, I followed the question on the meaning of the Eucharist with the very direct question "does Eucharistic celebration have any implications for Catholic ethics and practice in regard to issues of war and peace?" When the question was posed in this manner, 45 percent did affirm a relation between the Eucharist and peacemaking. Some explained that the Eucharist is a sacrament of unity, while others emphasized that it should make us more like Christ. Twenty percent, however, responded negatively, and another 15 percent answered with a question mark or did not respond at all. One student who stated that the Eucharist is the real presence of Christ said that the Eucharist has "no specific implications" for the ethics of war and peace. Another said, "I don't understand how the Eucharist deals with war and peace."

out the eucharistic vocation to peacemaking. A striking feature of the Mennonite practice of the Lord's Supper is their strong emphasis on a real sharing of goods and a mutual commitment to costly discipleship. Encounter with Mennonites who exercise this discipleship reminds us that we are indeed called to become what we receive.

To this end, I suggest four liturgical and ecclesial practices that could strengthen our fidelity to the vocation to peacemaking rooted in Christ's love: the inclusion of explicit references to Christ's practice of nonviolence and call to discipleship within the eucharistic prayers; contextualization of the sacrificial language of the Eucharist in this nonviolent practice; the development of eucharistic prayers that take the form of lamentation; and the development of ecclesial education and training in the practice of active nonviolence, grounded in contemplative prayer.

1. Making Explicit the Nonviolence of Christ within the Eucharistic Prayer

The four eucharistic prayers most commonly used in the postconciliar Catholic liturgy do include multiple references to peace.⁶² Eucharistic Prayer I (the Roman Canon) asks God to give "peace and unity" to the holy Catholic Church and to "grant us your peace in this life." Catholics exchange with one another a sign of peace prior to reception of the Eucharist, and the rite of dismissal includes the prayer, "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord."⁶³ Yet our history attests that these prayers and practices alone are not enough to impress upon all Catholics the mission to peacemaking implicit in eucharistic reception.

Scripture readings contextualize the eucharistic prayer. The Sermon on the Mount, however, and Christ's exhortation to love our enemies, are read in the Sunday liturgy only once in a three-year cycle. The same is true of the prophet Isaiah's vision of the peaceable kingdom.⁶⁴ In a culture such as ours

⁶² Among the additional eucharistic prayers approved for use in the United States are two prayers for reconciliation that have a strong explicit theology of peace.

⁶³ For a full account of references to peace in the eucharistic liturgy, see the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium*, n. 1102; Tobias Winright, "Gather Us In and Make Us Channels of Your Peace: Evaluating War with an Entirely New Attitude," in *Gathered for the Journey: Moral Theology in Catholic Perspective*, eds. David Matzko McCarthy and M. Therese Lysaught (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 294–96.

⁶⁴ Isaiah 2:1–5 and Isaiah 11:1–10 are read on the first and second Sunday of Advent in lectionary Year A. Matthew 5:1–12a and 5:38–48 are read on the fourth and seventh Sunday of ordinary time in lectionary Year A.

that popularizes images of Jesus the warrior,⁶⁵ we need a stronger formation in the messianic teaching and practice of Jesus Christ and the Christian vocation to a peacemaking discipleship. To this end, Fr. Emmanuel McCarthy recommends that we include in our eucharistic *anamnesis* an explicit affirmation of Christ's nonviolence. He proposes that we pray not simply "on the night before he died, he broke bread" but rather: "on the night before he died, rejecting violence, loving his enemies, and praying for his persecutors, he bestowed upon his disciples the gift of a New Commandment: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another."⁶⁶

2. Contextualizing the Sacrifice of the Eucharist in the Nonviolent Practice of Christ

In the Roman Catholic tradition, the Eucharist is both a memorial of Christ's unique sacrifice and a sacramental act that makes this sacrifice present, inviting members of Christ's Body to unite their own sacrifices to that of the cross.⁶⁷ Our interpretation of the sacrificial language is shaped not only by the gospels but also by association with events in our historical and cultural memories. Among the memories of North African Catholics in the fourth century was the martyrdom of Marcellus, who threw down his soldier's belt before the standards of the Roman legion and declared that he would serve Christ.⁶⁸ Today, however, the sacrificial symbols of the Eucharist meet a historical memory that typically associates the image of the cross with combat and death on a battlefield. In Germany soldiers are honored with the Iron Cross, in Britain with the Victoria Cross, in Russia with the Saint George Cross, and in France with the Cross of the League

⁶⁵ David D. Kirkpatrick, "Return of the Warrior Jesus," *New York Times* (April 4, 2004).

⁶⁶ Emmanuel Charles McCarthy, "The Nonviolent Eucharistic Jesus: A Pastoral Approach," http://www.centerforchristiannonviolence.org/data/Media/NV_Eucharist_PastoralApproach_01d.pdf.

⁶⁷ On differences in Protestant and Catholic perspectives on the Eucharist and sacrifice, see David N. Power, *The Sacrifice We Offer: The Tridentine Dogma and its Reinterpretation* (New York: Crossroad, 1987). On the meaning of sacrifice from a trinitarian theological framework as distinct from sacrifice as understood in the history of religion, see Robert Daly, "Sacrifice Unveiled or Sacrifice Revisited: Trinitarian and Liturgical Perspectives," *Theological Studies* 64, no. 1 (2003): 24–42.

⁶⁸ Alban Butler, *Lives of the Saints*, ed. Herbert Thurston, SJ, and Donald Attwater, vol. 4 (Westminster, MD: Christian Classic, 1981), 220–21.

of Honor.⁶⁹ In World War I, Catholic soldiers on both sides of the trenches understood themselves to be participants in Christ's sacrifice.⁷⁰ In 1942, Catholic bishops in Hitler's Germany sent a letter to Catholic soldiers on the Russian front exhorting, "give up your life in the cross of the Lord as an expiatory sacrifice for our sins and the redemption of our people."⁷¹

There is no question that the suffering of those who lie dying in agony on battlefields is part of the suffering that Christ enters through the mystery of the cross. At the same time, we must recognize a fundamentally important theological distinction between Christ's sacrifice on the cross and the death of an armed soldier. The paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection is God's definitive triumph over the power of sin and death, the eschatological beginning of a new creation. War, in contrast, in the words of Pope John Paul II, is "a defeat for humanity"—a continuation of our fallen condition.⁷² To sacrifice one's life bearing no sword or weapon is an eschatological action in the way that the sacrifice of an armed soldier is not. This is not to say that in our terribly fallen world a Christian can never be justified in taking up a weapon to defend the innocent.⁷³ It is rather to emphasize that one who takes up arms cannot act in conformity to Christ in the same way as one who resists evil nonviolently. As the Eastern Orthodox tradition emphasizes, even if one kills another person only to prevent a greater evil, there are still damaging spiritual consequences to this act, which falls short of the norm of Christ-like love.⁷⁴

René Girard's analysis of human history leads him to the conclusion that our willing sacrifice of human persons is a primal response to social rivalry and a means of creating social order. He believes that the history of human sacrifice climaxes with Christ's revelation of the illegitimacy of this

⁶⁹ Jürgen Moltmann, "The Cross as Military Symbol for Sacrifice," trans. Ingeborg Larsen, in *Cross Examinations: Readings on the Meaning of the Cross Today*, ed. Marit Trelstad (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 260.

⁷⁰ See Richard Schweitzer, *The Cross and the Trenches: Religious Faith and Doubt among British and American Great War Soldiers* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003); Annette Becker, *War and Faith: The Religious Imagination in France, 1914–1930* (New York: Berg, 1998).

⁷¹ Cited in Moltmann, "The Cross as Military Symbol," 262.

⁷² John Paul II, "The International Situation Today," 544.

⁷³ I know of even some Mennonites who maintain that some kind of international police force should bear and if necessary employ arms to protect the innocent and prevent genocide.

⁷⁴ See Philip LeMasters, "Peace in Orthodox Liturgy and Life," *Worship* 77, no. 5 (2003): 408–25.

practice; the victim immolated on the altar of social and political necessity is disclosed in Christ as the innocent lamb before whom all the mythologies of sacrificial violence unravel. Christians, he acknowledges, have been slow to recognize the meaning of our own revelation, but it remains embedded in the very structure of the Gospel, and the Holy Spirit, the advocate (*parakletos*) of the victim, is actively working to discredit all the gods of violence.⁷⁵

We might hear the voice of the *parakletos* more readily if the eucharistic prayers contextualized their language of sacrifice in affirmations of the nonviolent practice of Jesus Christ, challenging our cultural assumptions about the social and even soteriological power of violence. The priest might pray, for example: “we offer to you, God of glory and majesty, this holy and perfect sacrifice of Christ who in love renounced violence and called us to do likewise, the bread of life and the cup of eternal salvation.”⁷⁶ Or “Lord, may this sacrifice, of Christ who loved even the enemy, advance the peace and salvation of all the world.”⁷⁷ These prayers would heighten our awareness of the difference between the sacrifice of Christ and the death of a soldier on a battlefield. “If Christian worship is finally and essentially praise and thanksgiving,” David Power observes, “this is because Christians have received in Christ a way of salvation which breaks the vicious circle of evil.”

3. Incorporating Lamentation into our Eucharistic Prayers

We live, writes Power, among the ruins of human culture and community. The sharper our sense of the difference between Christ’s peaceable kingdom and our world of children maimed by landmines, women raped in warfare, soldiers and civilians scarred by posttraumatic stress, and soils and waters poisoned by toxins and radioactive materials, the greater the need to incorporate lamentation into the eucharistic liturgy. Through the prayers of lamentation in the Hebrew Bible, the people Israel came to God with their anguish and grief and named the betrayal of promises and the absence of *shalom*. Lamentation is the prayer both of Rachel who has lost her children (Jer 31:15) and of the sinner who has turned from the ways of God (Ps 51). For a people

⁷⁵ René Girard, *The Scapegoat*, trans. Yvonne Preccero (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986), 207. See also Gil Baillie, *Violence Unveiled: Humanity at the Crossroads* (New York: Crossroad, 1995).

⁷⁶ Eucharistic Prayer I in *Sacramentary* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1985), with addition in italics.

⁷⁷ Eucharistic Prayer II in *ibid.*, with addition in italics.

who are suffering, lamentation is a way of bearing the unbearable by turning pain and loss over to God—a way of voicing rage that if left to fester, readily turns to vengeance.⁷⁸ For one who is complicit in the pain of others or inured to their suffering, lamentation can rend open our hearts and begin a process of conversion.⁷⁹ Forms of systematic sin that obscure God's glory "have to be named in sorrow or bewailed," Power explains, "in order to open the way to the event of God in eucharistic remembrance."⁸⁰ Without lament, Walter Brueggemann emphasizes, praise and doxology can become acts of denial.⁸¹

David Power's eucharistic blessing for a time of calamity would be an appropriate prayer for a time of war. Here is just one excerpt:

How long, O God, shall you allow death and evil to prevail over your people? Our voices are stilled by the pain that we behold on the faces of those so doomed. Be comforted, you say, but where is comfort? Peace, you proclaim, but where is peace? Receive my truth, you ask, but where is truth? . . . We praise you for Jesus Christ, for he is the one in whose suffering your judgment speaks and in whose fire we are baptized. In him we have been promised another rule, a compassionate presence, even amid strife and suffering and in hours of darkness.⁸²

In the subsequent prayer of remembrance, Power proposes extending the intercessions to include those dead in the calamity at hand. In our present context, we could name not only the American men and women killed by insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan but also the Iraqi and Afghani people killed by our bombs or by the destruction of infrastructure and the chaos that followed the invasion. In Iraq alone, the number of men, women, and children who have died is estimated to number over six hundred thousand. The US government does not include these persons in its tallies of war death statistics.⁸³ Our eucharistic liturgies should remember and mourn them.

⁷⁸ See Walter Brueggemann, "Voice as Counter to Violence," *Calvin Theological Journal* 36 (2001): 22–33.

⁷⁹ Denise M. Ackermann, *After the Locusts: Letters from a Landscape of Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 117–21.

⁸⁰ David N. Power, OMI, *The Eucharistic Mystery: Revitalizing the Tradition* (New York: Crossroad, 1994), 336. See also "When to Worship Is to Lament" in Power, *Worship: Culture and Theology* (Washington, DC: Pastoral Press, 1990), 155–73.

⁸¹ Walter Brueggemann, "Lament as Antidote to Silence," *Living Pulpit* 11 (October–December 2002): 24.

⁸² Power, *Eucharistic Mystery*, 336–37.

⁸³ See Gilbert Burnham, Riyadh Lafta, Shannon Doocy, Les Roberts, "Mortality After the 2003 Invasion of Iraq: A Cross-Sectional Cluster Sample Survey," *The Lancet* (Octo-

4. Integrating Contemplation and Nonviolent Action in Catholic Formation

In a reflection on the possibility of sacramental encounter with God in our postmodern world, Paul Levesque emphasizes that mysticism and the *via negativa* must become common practices rather than the discipline of the few.⁸⁴ The loss of a sense of transcendence in the sacraments is, in his analysis, concomitant with modernity's removal of God from nature, leaving human beings as the sole masters and makers of meaning. Absent the cultural support for a theology of neo-Platonic participation or a sacramental consciousness, the Eucharist can appear to be little more than human words and gestures or a magical act disconnected from our daily lives. In response to this crisis of meaning, Levesque calls for a recovery of the inner life, following the path of darkness and unknowing in mystics such as Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Pseudo-Dionysius, and Jan van Ruusbroec.

Just as there is little social support for sacramental consciousness in our postmodern world, so too is there little cultural support for nonviolence in our increasingly militaristic society. Patrick McCormick observes that recourse to violence is so deeply embedded in our culture that "the vast majority of American Catholics and Christians approach the moral analysis of every call to arms with a strong presumption in favor of war."⁸⁵ If the Eucharist is to be the foundation of an effective counterculture, it must be celebrated with the reverence, beauty, and joy of the Spirit that has the power to move our hearts. The exercise of contemplative disciplines such as centering prayer and eucharistic adoration support sacramental practice and give us the inner strength to resist the violence and militarism of our culture.⁸⁶ Building on this foundation in liturgy and prayer, catechesis and adult education programs can train Catholics in peacemaking and the practice of nonviolent resistance; parishes and dioceses can organize peacemaking initiatives and nonviolent action for justice at the local, national, and international levels;

ber 11, 2006). Published online at: [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(06\)69491-9/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(06)69491-9/fulltext). For more recent analysis see Ronald Osborn, "Still Counting: How Many Iraqis Have Died?" *Commonweal* 138 (February 11, 2011): 10–14.

⁸⁴ Paul J. Levesque, "The Possibility of Encountering God in Postmodernity: A Return to Apophatic Theology," in *The Presence of Transcendence: Thinking 'Sacrament' in a Postmodern Age*, eds. Lieven Boeve and John C. Ries (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 107–201.

⁸⁵ Patrick T. McCormick, "Violence: Religion, Terror, War," *Theological Studies* 67, no. 1 (March 2006): 159.

⁸⁶ Joyce Ann Zimmerman, "Eucharistic Adoration and *Missio*," *Liturgical Ministry* 13 (Spring 2004): 88–95.

and the church can support Catholic members of the military who exercise selective conscientious objection.

Conclusion

The Catholic tradition brings to our dialogue a sacramental theology of the real presence of Christ whose love overcomes even the bonds of sin and death. “This is my body, given for you.” Warfare, notes war correspondent Chris Hedges with reference to Sigmund Freud’s analysis of *eros* and *thanatos*, is a potent social force with erotic allure. War has the power to inspire sacrifice and unite society under the shadow of a common threat, forging bonds between the members of military units and civilian supporters. This apparent unity, however, is based on a polarizing opposition against an enemy and exists in the shadow of the possibility of annihilation.⁸⁷ It has, nonetheless, an attraction that cannot be effectively countered with moral injunction but only by the power of true *eros* and authentic communion.⁸⁸ The Eucharist has this power. It has sustained Dorothy Day, Oscar Romero, and many others unknown to us in acts of profound love and nonviolence.

Our Mennonite sisters and brothers do not share Catholicism’s theology of Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist *ex opere operato*. Yet contemporary developments in Catholic eucharistic theology such as an openness to the use of terms other than “transubstantiation,” along with an emphasis on the Eucharist’s invitation to the transformation of the communicants, may open new possibilities for bridge-building between the Catholic and Mennonite traditions. In this dialogue, Catholics offer to Mennonites a strong sacramental theology that testifies to the incarnational and unconditioned love of Christ. The Mennonite practice of the Lord’s Supper challenges us, in turn, to exercise more consistently our eucharistic vocation to peacemaking. The gap between our strong sacramental theology and our historic failures to resist war to the same degree as our Mennonite brothers and sisters is cause for reexamination of our ecclesial practice. The incorporation of explicit

⁸⁷ Chris Hedges, *War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning* (New York: Public Affairs, 2002).

⁸⁸ After probing the complicity of German Christians in Hitler’s rise to power, Eugen Drewermann concluded that the churches failed to counter the deep fears of the populace that Hitler manipulated. The church will become an instrument of peace, he argued, not by simply moralizing against war but by mediating God’s love in a manner powerful enough to counter the fears that haunt the human psyche. See Matthias Beier, *A Violent God-Image: An Introduction to the Work of Eugen Drewermann* (New York: Continuum, 2004).

reference to Christ's nonviolence and call to discipleship in our eucharistic rites, the development of eucharistic prayers of lamentation, the cultivation of contemplative practices, and an ecclesial commitment to the practice of nonviolent resistance and peacemaking may help us to better exercise our vocation to become the Body of Christ that we receive.