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The Formation *of* Christian Europe

*The Carolingians, Baptism, &
the Imperium Christianum*



Owen M. Phelan

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*For Lauren,
you make me happy every day.*

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Feast of St. Agatha, 2014

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Introduction

Around the turn of the ninth century, political and religious reformers worked to establish an *imperium christianum*—a Christian empire—a society whose most basic organizing principle was the *sacramentum* of baptism. This study explores why they did this, how they did it, and with what consequences. Toward the end of the eighth century Charlemagne's court attracted intellectuals interested in a reform for Frankish Europe. As a *sacramentum*, baptism was an especially useful tool for Carolingian thinkers pursuing reform: not only could reformers draw on baptism's substantial tradition filled with legal, moral, social, political, and theological ideas, but also its nearly universal familiarity to all Christians rendered it a useful starting point for conversations about beliefs and behaviors.¹ The *sacramentum* of baptism was not merely an abstract concept; it was a widely practiced ritual of initiation and inclusion affirming each individual's place in a community. Thus, baptism offered a medium for the communication and popularization of beliefs, ideas, and goals. The ritual provided a framework for the formation of people throughout the expanding Frankish world. It supplied a medium through which people could understand, internalize, and propagate a vision of how sacramental principles theologically, politically, culturally, and socially supported an *imperium christianum*. The Carolingian Renewal of the late eighth and ninth centuries set in place basic assumptions about Christianity decisive for medieval Europe. The vigorous activities of Carolingian leaders bequeathed to medieval Europeans the vision of an *imperium christianum* and embedded in cultural and intellectual life a number of conventions for organizing their lives and their world. The title, *The Formation of Christian Europe*, reflects the complicated and overlapping processes involved.

Four complementary frames contextualize this study. First, I situate my work in the context of the history of early medieval Europe, particularly the

¹ The literature on baptism in the first several hundred years of the Christian era is vast. A good starting point is Everett Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009).

Carolingian Renewal.² In my view, the Carolingian Renewal consists in Frankish leaders, ecclesiastical and secular, forging consensus on a common vision of an integrated society—the *imperium christianum*—and then attempting to cultivate intellectual, social, political, and legal tools for implementing their vision.³ This study recenters understanding of a key development in the course of Western Civilization, the Carolingian *imperium christianum*, around the ordering concept of the *sacramentum* of baptism. For the Carolingians, the *imperium christianum*, or Christendom, was the society of the baptized. The theological concepts and religious metaphors derived from baptism underlie the political and social ideas common to a variety of early medieval texts including law codes, theological treatises, land charters, ethical instructions, liturgical commentaries, chronicles, and other narrative sources. Disparate political, theological, and cultural projects of the Carolingian Renewal were coordinated by this theological discourse common to a wide array of sources produced in diverse centers over more than a century.

Second, I position my work in the history of baptism. Baptism in the early Middle Ages has been approached from a number of complementary angles. Peter Cramer has surveyed the theology of baptism from late antiquity to the central Middle Ages with particular attention to the evolution of its governing concepts.⁴ A number of authors have studied the liturgy of baptism across the

² An inspiration to me and to numerous others interested in the idea of reform is the magisterial work of Gerhard B. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform: Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959); idem, "Gregory the Great and Gregory VII: A Comparison of their Concepts of Renewal" *Viator* 4 (1982) pp. 1–17; idem, "Die mittelalterliche Reform-Idee und ihr Verhältnis zur Idee der Renaissance" *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 60 (1952) pp. 31–59.

³ See the classic study Walter Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1969). I am indebted to some of his interpretive instincts even as I am aware of the important and substantial subsequent work, e.g. Rosamond McKitterick, "The Carolingian Renaissance of Culture and Learning" *Charlemagne: Empire and Society*, ed. Joanna Storey (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005) pp. 151–66; Johannes Fried, "Karl der Große, die Artes liberales und die karolingische Renaissance," *Karl der Grosse und sein Nachwirken: 1200 Jahre Kultur und Wissenschaft in Europa, I: Wissen und Weltbild*, ed. Paul Leo Butzer, Max Kerner, and Walter Oberschelp (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997) pp. 25–43; John Contreni, "The Carolingian Renaissance: Education and Literary Culture" *New Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. II*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 709–57; Giles Brown, "Introduction: The Carolingian Renaissance" *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1995) pp. 1–51; John Contreni, "The Carolingian Renaissance," *Renaissances before the Renaissance: Cultural Revivals of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. Warren Treadgold (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984) pp. 59–74; Janet Nelson, "On the Limits of the Carolingian Renaissance" *Renaissance and Renewal in Christian History*, ed. Derek Baker (Oxford: Blackwell, 1977) pp. 51–69; G.W. Trompf, "The Concept of the Carolingian Renaissance" *Journal of the History of Ideas* 34 (1973) pp. 3–26.

⁴ Peter Cramer, *Baptism and Change in the Early Middle Ages, c.200–c.1150* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

early Middle Ages.⁵ Others have examined the social and political implications of baptism for the early medieval world, particularly godparenthood and spiritual kinship.⁶ An exploration of the different contexts within which Carolingian thinkers considered and applied baptism deepens our understanding of the coordinating significance of the *sacramentum*. Tracking the connections between the social, liturgical, theological, and political contexts of baptism and following the infrastructure supporting the administration of baptism allows us to assess the depth and breadth of its implications for interpreting the Carolingian Renewal and of medieval society more generally.

Third, I locate my work in the study of rituals in history. The work (and scholarly engagement) of Phillip Buc and Geoffrey Koziol suggests ways in which to understand the importance of baptism as a ritual to Carolingian culture.⁷ The meaning of words, even about rituals, should be analyzed separately from the meanings of actions. Rituals' meanings are not fixed and their effects and consequences are not under anyone's full control. Thinking about ritual as an explanatory analytical category tends to reductionism. It is important to probe why actors engaged in rituals. Evidence for early medieval rituals is nearly exclusively textual. Thus almost all evidence is already an interpretation. Baptism is a particularly rich ritual to analyze because of the wide range of interpretations that survive from the early medieval period, the ubiquity of the ritual, and the ritual's central role in early medieval interpretations of other rituals. Discussions of the *sacramentum* of baptism survive in a variety of genres from saints' *vitae*, liturgical *ordines*, letters, theological treatises, annals, capitularies, and liturgical commentaries. Furthermore, sources describe how various Carolingian agents wanted baptism to be interpreted,

⁵ Brian D. Spinks, *Rituals and Theologies of Baptism: From the New Testament to the Council of Trent* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006); Glenn C.J. Byer, *Charlemagne and Baptism: A Study of Responses to the Circular Letter of 811/812* (Lanham, MD: International Scholars Pub., 1999); Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Rites of Initiation: Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999); J.D.C. Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West: A Study in the Disintegration of the Primitive Rite of Initiation* (London: S.P.C.K., 1965).

⁶ Bernhard Jussen, *Spiritual Kinship as Social Practice: Godparenthood and Adoption in the Early Middle Ages* (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 2000); Joseph H. Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship: Ritual Sponsorship in Anglo-Saxon England* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998); idem, *Godparents and Kinship in Early Medieval Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); Arnold Angenendt, *Kaiserherrschaft und Königstaupe: Kaiser, Könige und Päpste als geistliche Patrone in der abendländischen Missionsgeschichte* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1984).

⁷ Philippe Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Geoffrey Koziol, *Begging Pardon and Favor: Ritual and Political Order in Early Medieval France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992); see especially chapter nine "How Does Ritual Mean?" On their conflict see Geoffrey Koziol, "Review Article: The Dangers of Polemic: Is Ritual Still an Interesting Topic of Historical Study?" *Early Medieval Europe* 11:4 (2002) pp. 367–88 and the rejoinder, Philippe Buc, "The Monster and the Critics: A Ritual Reply" *Early Medieval Europe* 15:4 (2007) pp. 441–52. Also insightful is the contribution to the debate in Christina Pössel, "The Magic of Early Medieval Ritual" *Early Medieval Europe* 17:2 (2009) pp. 111–25.

how they understood it had been interpreted in the past, and how they intended to influence others to interpret the *sacramentum*. Not only did early medieval authors show their awareness that baptism's meaning was neither obvious nor fixed, they offered robust discussion of how and why they interpreted it as they did.

Fourth, because I examine a phenomenon that bridges ritual and its explanations, my work addresses language. The intelligibility of words and concepts to groups and the ability of one to explain and convince another about the importance of key concepts is essential to my case for organization in the Carolingian Renewal. I am indebted to careful scholarship on a number of fronts having to do with language. The importance of literacy in Frankish Europe is well studied, especially at the instigation of Rosamond McKitterick, who has probed the technical as well as the more literary or ideological efforts of Carolingian authors.⁸ Vivian Law has written lucidly about early medieval interest in and approaches to language.⁹ Still others have cultivated appreciation for how literacy enabled people to establish "textual communities" through oral, written, and ritual communications.¹⁰ The language and vocabulary of the *sacramentum* of baptism received particular scrutiny in the early Middle Ages. Consensus coalesced around its key features and ideas and allowed for meaningful discussions of larger religious and cultural phenomena related to the *sacramentum*.

Chapter One explores *sacramentum* as an ordering concept for Latin authors from Antiquity to the early Middle Ages. Ultimately, Carolingian thinkers, aware of both secular and religious contexts, used the word to describe the establishment of relationships that were at once legally binding and theologically meaningful. The chapter begins with a selective survey of the legal and

⁸ On the former see *The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Rosamond McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). For the latter consult Rosamond McKitterick, *Charlemagne: Formation of the European Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); idem, *Perceptions of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006); idem, *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

⁹ Vivian Law, *Grammar and Grammarians in the Early Middle Ages* (London: Longman, 1997); idem, *The Insular Latin Grammarians* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1982). See also the essays in *History of Linguistic Thought in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Vivien Law (Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1993).

¹⁰ Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983). While Stock focuses on the eleventh and twelfth centuries, he does selectively reach back into the early Middle Ages to help set the stage for his discussion. Importantly, he treats discussion of the eucharist at the monastery of Corbie and focuses on the coordinating importance of *sacramentum*. See Stock, *Implications*, pp. 252–72. On the relationship between language and communication with special attention to early medieval contributions is Martin Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture: "Grammatica" and Literary Theory, 350–1100* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), see especially pp. 272–404.

political uses of *sacramentum* in classical Roman authors. It continues with pagan and Christian authors in Late Antiquity, who drew on the earlier Roman definitions as they confronted contemporary intellectual challenges and expanded the range of concepts ordered by the word. Then it maps how Carolingian authors took advantage of overlapping senses of the word *sacramentum* to interpret legal and theological commitments. Finally, the chapter examines how early medieval approaches to baptism reflect and underscore the utility of *sacramentum* for organizing political, theological, and cultural agendas. Intellectuals reflecting on baptism as a *sacramentum* offered a technical vocabulary which became paradigmatic for scholars while at the same time becoming familiar to broader audiences through catechetical teachings. Viewing baptism as a *sacramentum* offered Carolingian leaders an intellectual rationale for the project of the Carolingian Renewal and, bridging the realm of theology and the realm of law, suggested a way to build their *imperium christianum*.

Chapter Two establishes how baptism helped Carolingian leaders order their approaches to public life. *Sacramenta*, especially baptism, helped leaders think in ways ideologically consistent, publicly available, and socially useful. Through the letters concerning the Adoptionist Controversy taken up at the Council of Frankfurt, leaders from Gaul, Spain, and Italy presented their understandings of the rationale and scope of religious authority in Europe. The arguments in the letters written at Charlemagne's court contrasted sharply with those in the letters from the other powers of Christian Europe, such as the Spanish bishops or the pope. Charlemagne's supporters viewed the king as the head of a polity defined by the *sacramentum* of baptism. Consequently, he enjoyed jurisdiction over all who fell under the pledge, or oath, of baptism. Beginning with the *Admonitio generalis* (789), which set the agenda for the Carolingian Renewal, capitularies and canonical decrees issued under the Carolingians consistently foregrounded baptism. Carolingian thinkers viewed the *sacramentum* of baptism as a religious, cultural, and political bedrock for Christendom, the society of the Carolingian Renewal. Non-baptized people too were expected to participate in and respect a society governed by *sacramenta*. Controversies concerning the position of the Jews in Carolingian Europe throw into sharp relief the importance of *sacramenta* to the Carolingians as well as the limits of the *imperium christianum*.

Chapter Three traces baptism's hold on Carolingian ideas of people and society—theologically, socially, politically, and culturally. It focuses on the example of Alcuin of York, an advisor to Charlemagne and a chief architect of the Carolingian Renewal, who worked to implement a sacramental society through baptism. In his theological writings, Alcuin maintained that *sacramenta* established one's relationship with God and with others. He ardently believed in the necessity of baptismal instruction to make clear to new Christians that sacramental relationships existed and had concrete implications. Through his grappling with missionary challenges in Saxony and Bavaria, Alcuin refined his

approach to baptism. He then disseminated his ideas on Christian formation through his extensive network of personal contacts in positions of influence across the Carolingian world.

Chapter Four tracks the depth and endurance of Carolingian consensus. Carolingian leaders around and after Alcuin assumed that baptism was central to the Carolingian Renewal and insisted on this view in a variety of ways. Through the first decades of the ninth century, ecclesiastical leaders and Emperor Charlemagne himself manifested clear concern for Christian formation across Europe and, in particular, for the administration of the *sacramentum* of baptism. The chapter turns on a consideration of a circular letter released by Charlemagne in 811/812. The letter asked each metropolitan bishop to canvass his archdiocese, ascertain how his suffragans conducted baptismal formation, and report their findings back to the court. Responses from across the empire testify to the success of the letter, both in eliciting replies from archbishops and in encouraging archbishops to conduct surveys of their dioceses. Redactions of the circular letter and its replies appear in ninth-century manuscripts from across Europe, testifying to broad discussion and vigorous interest in implementation.

Chapter Five assesses the internalization of sacramental thinking conveyed by baptism throughout the *imperium christianum* of the ninth century. Two representative lay instruction manuals, by Jonas of Orléans and Dhuoda of Septimania, advised important aristocrats on how to achieve success in life—both here and hereafter. Both manuals differ from earlier Carolingian offerings because they were explicit about the mechanisms by which Carolingians ought to learn. Both singled out baptism as the foundation for Carolingian life, describing the role of the godparent as educator. They also developed ideas of penance and confirmation, rites whose theology they derived from baptism, as tools for the continued formation of the Carolingian laity. Evidence surviving from other lay aristocrats complements Jonas and Dhuoda by employing similar sacramental analysis of contemporary crises. Nithard, a noble in Charles the Bald's retinue, depended upon the *sacramentum* of baptism when analyzing the political, social, and theological dimensions of the moral decrepitude of Louis the Pious' sons. Rudimentary Latin prayerbooks, homilies, and—more significantly—vernacular texts confirm wide participation in a sacramentally grounded society of the kind laid out by Jonas and Dhuoda and scrutinized by Nithard. By the mid-ninth century leaders of the Carolingian Renewal had ceased to argue for and come to assume that the *sacramentum* of baptism was the foundation for their Christian society.

The conclusion summarizes my arguments and evidence and makes the following two points. First, concrete Carolingian political aspirations for an *imperium christianum* fizzled out. By the end of the ninth century, the Carolingian World was permanently fractured and its early guiding principles a bitter memory. Second, political frustrations conceal the deeper achievement of the

Carolingian Renewal. The ironic and satirical laments about Carolingian decline that appear at the end of the ninth century turn on the hold that the *sacramentum* of baptism had on the thought and practice of medieval Europeans. An indelible mark was left on the medieval world. People had come to think of European society as a community of the baptized. This basic Carolingian assumption formed the foundation of medieval European life.

Sacramentum: An Ordering Concept from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages

But the holy man (Martin) chose to serve the heavenly God rather than to fight under an earthly emperor; he who was specially chosen to carry the flag of the holy cross in the western parts of the world, and who exchanged the *sacramenta* of the military for evangelical edicts: not to contend with secular arms for the Roman Empire, but to enlarge the Christian empire (*imperium christianum*) with particular teachings; and not to throw wild peoples under the hard yoke of the Romans, but to put the light yoke of Christ on the necks of many nations.¹

So wrote Alcuin of York (d. 804) at the pivotal moment of decision in his version of the *Life of St. Martin of Tours*. In this dense quotation, an influential author crystalized several key elements of the Carolingian Renewal in a famous historical and religious figure: the centrality of *sacramentum*, a vision of an *imperium christianum*, and the importance of proper Christian formation, especially in the context of the *sacramentum* of baptism.

Alcuin was born in the mid-eighth century and educated at the celebrated cathedral school of York, where he subsequently became master.² After meeting Charlemagne on a journey to Rome, he was lured to the Carolingian court, where he taught, wrote, and advised the king. Alcuin became an influential voice at court, working on a Carolingian vision of reform in such fundamental

¹ Alcuin of York, *Vita Martini* 2, PL 101.0659. “*Sed vir sanctus magis elegit Deo coelesti servire, quam sub imperatore militare terreno; qui specialiter electus est, ut vexillum sanctae crucis occiduas orbis portaret in partes, et militiae sacramenta evangelicis mutaret edictis: non pro regno armis saecularibus certare Romano, sed specialibus doctrinis Christianum dilatare imperium; nec dura Romanorum lege populos subjicere feroces, sed leve Christi jugum plurimarum collo injicere gentium.*”

² On the life, work, and legacy of Alcuin see the magisterial Donald A. Bullough, *Alcuin: Achievement and Reputation* (Leiden: Brill, 2004). See also the earlier biographies of Eleanor Shipple Duckett, *Alcuin: Friend of Charlemagne, His World and His Work* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1951) and C.J.B. Gaskoin, *Alcuin: His Life and His Work* (London: C.J. Clay and Sons, 1904).

statements such as the *Admonitio generalis* and *De litteris colendis*.³ Charlemagne gave him numerous gifts during his time at court. In 796, Alcuin semi-retired to one of these offerings, the famous monastery of St. Martin at Tours, where he continued to have a hand in Frankish politics and ecclesiastical life, especially through his correspondence with luminaries across the Carolingian world.

Bishop Martin of Tours (336–97) founded a monastery in Tours after his episcopal election in 371. He became one of the most popular saints in Gaul, which cemented the prestige of his foundation. He was a Roman soldier who left the army to take up a simple Christian life and eventually was elevated to the episcopacy. The most well-known story about St. Martin concerns his cloak. One very cold day, Martin met a shivering and half-naked beggar at the gates of the city of Amiens. Moved with compassion, he divided his coat into two parts and gave one to the poor man, who then revealed himself to be Christ. The part Martin kept for himself became a famous relic preserved in the oratory of the Frankish kings. The earliest hagiographical account of St. Martin was written by Sulpicius Severus (d. c.420), who met Martin in 393 or 394 and wrote the work in 396, shortly before Martin's death.⁴ Martin's cult grew, perhaps unevenly, to become a significant presence across the Frankish world.⁵ Periodically, new *vitae* reinterpreted and celebrated the saint for new audiences, such as a version by the poet Venantius Fortunatus in the late sixth century.⁶

Alcuin presented Martin's story anew to Frankish Christians at the end of the eighth century, just as Charlemagne was establishing Frankish control across most of Europe. Alcuin's personal prestige combined with his subject's wide celebrity made the writing of this *vita* a compelling opportunity for the new abbot to spell out his vision of reform. His specific rendition of Martin's conversion foregrounded essential concepts guiding the Carolingian Renewal, most especially the importance of *sacramentum*. While previous *vitae* of Martin

³ For Alcuin's influence on programmatic Carolingian reform documents see Bullough, *Alcuin*, pp. 379–86. On the *Admonitio generalis* specifically see *Die Admonitio generalis Karls des Grossen*, eds. Hubert Mordek, Klaus Zechiel-Eckes, and Michael Glatthaar (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2012) pp. 47–63 and, earlier, Friedrich-Carl Scheibe, "Alcuin und die *Admonitio generalis*" *Deutsches Archiv* 14 (1958) pp. 221–29. For the *Epistola de litteris colendis* see the comments and new edition in T. Martin, "Bemerkungen zur 'Epistola de litteris colendis'" *Archiv für Diplomatik* 31 (1985) pp. 227–72.

⁴ For Sulpicius Severus' work see Sulpice Sévère, *Vie de Saint Martin*, ed. and trans. Jacques Fontaine, 3 vols., SC 133–5 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1967–69).

⁵ Alan Scott McKinley, "The First Two Centuries of Saint Martin of Tours" *Early Medieval Europe* 14 (2006) pp. 173–200; Sharon Farmer, *Communities of Saint Martin: Legend and Ritual in Medieval Tours* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

⁶ Venantius Fortunatus, *Vie de Saint Martin*, ed. Solange Quesnel (Paris: Les Belle lettres, 1996). On the work's distinctiveness see Michael Roberts "The Last Epic of Antiquity: Generic Continuity and Innovation in *Vita Sancti Martini* of Venantius Fortunatus" *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 131 (2001) pp. 257–85.

contained gripping accounts of Martin's conversion to Christianity, and each reported basically the same facts, the accounts of neither Sulpicius Severus nor Fortunatus included the details supplied by Alcuin. First, Alcuin juxtaposed contexts within which the *sacramentum* was operative, contrasting the Roman centurion's military oath with a Christian's baptismal commitment. He pointed to an underlying continuity in Carolingian understanding of the word *sacramentum*, capitalizing on both classical legal and early Christian theological usage. The comparison was not new with Alcuin, but was used in an original way to describe the nature of Martin's conversion. Even as the move differentiated contexts, it tied together the theological and political dimensions of Alcuin's work on reform. Ultimately, even as Alcuin distinguished Martin's allegiance to the Christian community against his allegiance to a Roman military community, he posited a deeper continuity in the coordinating significance of a *sacramentum* for framing an individual's life and for establishing the unity of a community. As *sacramentum* organized religious, social, and political relationships for Martin, so would it for Carolingian thinkers like Alcuin.

The selection of *sacramentum* was not *ex nihilo*. The scope of the word's impact on the Carolingian imagination becomes visible through a survey of the word's history and semantic range. Examples available to Carolingian intellectuals from ancient Roman and early Christian usage provided the vocabulary and concepts that could be reimagined and freshly applied as conceptual glue for the society of the Carolingian Renewal. Through Late Antiquity and into the early Middle Ages the word appeared in many different contexts. Most basically, *sacramentum* symbolized the intimate bonds which established a group of people as a community. Carolingians have long been recognized as voracious consumers and transmitters of texts. They collected, read, absorbed, and transmitted most of the texts presently surviving from the classical and patristic eras.⁷ As a result of both inherited tradition and careful study, the term *sacramentum* came to provide a supple category which Carolingian authors exploited as they explored the implications of their ambitious program of cultural renewal. While Carolingians recognized myriad *sacramenta*, they described one as especially significant, the *sacramentum* of baptism, which they understood as primary in two important ways. First, this *sacramentum* was the entry point into religion, into society, and into politics. Second, it was

⁷ Rosamond McKitterick, "The Carolingian Renaissance of Culture and Learning" *Charlemagne: Empire and Society*, ed. Joanna Story (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005) pp. 151–66. On the court libraries of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, as well as manuscripts more generally and classical texts more specifically see the essays in Bernhard Bischoff, *Manuscripts and Libraries in the Age of Charlemagne*, trans. and ed. Michael Gorman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). A comprehensive review of Charlemagne's library, emphasizing Carolingian interest in patristic texts over classical works, is provided by Donald A. Bullough, "Charlemagne's Court Library Revisited" *Early Medieval Europe* 12 (2003) pp. 339–63.

the fundamental paradigm for understanding other and subsequent *sacramenta* which organized Carolingian life. An understanding of the ways in which Carolingian thinkers understood baptism to work as a *sacramentum* illuminates the peculiarities—and the ingenuity—of Carolingian thought, which established the intellectual foundation for Christendom and paved the way for social and political renewal. An overview of the traditions inherited by Carolingian intellectuals will throw into sharp relief what knowledge they had and how they turned it to their own purposes.

1.1. SACRAMENTUM IN ROMAN ANTIQUITY

In antiquity, the word *sacramentum* first appeared in a legal context, though it would be widely used to interpret relationships in many contexts, including social and religious. The earliest evidence defined it as an oath sworn by both parties to a civil suit in support of their claims.⁸ The word also indicated the sum of money staked by the parties to back their claims, thus joining them together in a legal process. In either case, a *sacramentum* bound two parties together, albeit on opposite sides, in a public legal procedure. It is in this legal context that the oldest surviving definition appears in Varro (116–27 BC), *On the Latin Language*.⁹ The *Institutes of Gaius*, compiled in the second century AD, witnesses to the endurance of this use, when it described the five forms of Roman statute process, the first of which was the *sacramentum*.¹⁰ The *Institutes* explained how it was the default legal mechanism when the law did not explicitly prescribe another process. In a *sacramentum*, two parties involved in a dispute put up a sum of money as a stake. Then the local authority decided the case and the losing party paid the stake as a penalty.¹¹ Descriptions in other sources attest to this procedure and suggest that it was not uncommon. In *On*

⁸ The Roman legal use of the word *sacramentum* is widely acknowledged. Daniel G. Van Slyke, “*Sacramentum* in Ancient Non-Christian Authors” *Antiphon* 9.2 (2005) pp. 167–206, 182–9. Alan Watson, *Rome of the XII Tables: Persons and Property* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975) pp. 125–33. H.F. Jolowicz and Barry Nicholas, *Historical Introduction to the Study of Roman Law*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972) pp. 180–7. For another discussion of the use of the term *sacramentum* in Antiquity, see Dimitri Michaélidès, *Sacramentum chez Tertullien* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1970) pp. 23–36.

⁹ Varro, *De lingua Latina* 5.180, eds. G. Goetz and F. Schoell (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1910), pp. 54–5. “[si is] ea pecunia quae in iudicium venit in litibus, sacramentum a sacro; qui[s] petebat et qui infitabatur, de aliis rebus uterque quingenos aeris ad pontem deponebant, de aliis rebus item certo alio legitimo numero assum; qui iudicio vicerat, suum sacramentum e sacro auferebat, victi ad aerarium redibat.”

¹⁰ Gaius, *Institutiones* 4.12, eds. E. Seckel and B. Kübler (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1969) p. 195. “*Lege autem agebatur modis quinque: sacramento, per iudicis postulationem, per conductionem, per manus iniunctionem, per pignoris captionem.*”

¹¹ Gaius, *Institutiones* 4.13–16, pp. 195–9.

the *Commonwealth*, Cicero (106–43 BC) described its use in Rome when “some fifty-four years after the establishment of the republic, the consuls Sp. Tarpeius and A. Aternius carried in the centuriate assembly a law concerning penalties and the *sacramentum*.”¹²

The vast majority of references to *sacramentum* in Latin literature, although not the earliest, appear in a military context, specifically the oath of allegiance that bound soldiers together under their leader and established a military community.¹³ From the last century BC through the first centuries AD, numerous writers including Julius Caesar (d. 44 BC), Livy (d. AD 17), Tacitus (d. AD 117), and Suetonius (d. AD 122), all used the term in this fashion. While each author emphasized the *sacramentum*’s concrete legal implications, each also indicated that the bonds established held for many a deeply personal significance.¹⁴ In Book One of *The Histories*, Tacitus provided an account of a military mutiny against the new emperor Galba in January AD 69. Galba’s violent seizure of rule following Nero’s death inaugurated an infamous power struggle remembered as the Year of the Four Emperors.¹⁵ Tacitus reported that uncertainty over Galba’s legitimacy and his intentions led the legions in Lower Germany to swear the *sacramentum* only hesitatingly.¹⁶ Under the empire legions would typically swear the *sacramentum* in the name of the emperor.¹⁷ In stark contrast, Tacitus mentioned that some legions, who wished to be seen as loyal to Rome even as they contested Galba, took the *sacramentum* using an archaic moniker, swearing allegiance to the government of the Roman Republic. “And lest they be seen to set aside respect for the empire, they now invoked in the *sacramentum* the obsolete names of the Senate and of the People of Rome.”¹⁸ This protest *sacramentum* helpfully highlights the importance of the oath both in its personal nature as understood by the soldiers, they wanted to swear to something in which they believed, and its communal significance, they felt the need to swear the widely known oath. Later in the same work, Tacitus placed the *sacramentum* at the center of an episode of tension between German and Roman soldiers serving the Roman army. Mucianus, a leading Roman statesman and general

¹² Cicero, *De Republica* 2.60, ed. K. Ziegler (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1929), p. 74. “*Gratamque etiam illam legem quarto circiter et quinquagesimo anno post primos consules de multa et sacramento* Van Slyke, “*Sacramentum*,” p. 167. J.B. Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army 31BC–AD235* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984) pp. 19–32. J. Vendrand-Voyer, “Origines et développement du ‘droit militaire’ romain” *Labeo* 3 (1982) pp. 259–77.

¹³ Van Slyke, “*Sacramentum*,” p. 168–82.

¹⁴ Gwyn Morgan, 69 A.D. *The Year of Four Emperors* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) and Kenneth Wellesley, *The Year of the Four Emperors*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2000).

¹⁵ Tacitus, *Historiae* 1.55, ed. C. Heraeus (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1877), p. 85. “*Inferioris tamen Germaniae legiones sollemni kalendarum Ianuariarum sacramento pro Galba adactae multa cunctatione*.”

¹⁶ Van Slyke, “*Sacramentum*,” p. 175.

¹⁷ Tacitus, *Historiae* 1.55, p. 86. “*Ac ne reverentiam imperii exuere viderentur, senatus populique Romani oblitterata iam nomina sacramento advocabant*.”

swept up in the tumultuous Year of the Four Emperors, assembled all the German soldiers into a single corps. Fearing that they were being sorted out for treachery, perhaps even a massacre, the Germans began to panic. Mucianus soothed their nerves with reference to the soldiers' common *sacramentum*, stressing the inviolability of the community bound by the military oath. The soldiers "implored first Mucianus, then the absent emperor, lastly heaven and the gods, until Mucianus advanced against their false fear calling them all 'soldiers of the same *sacramentum*, of the same emperor.'" ¹⁹ That the *sacramentum* bound soldiers to a particular leader by name here stressed its deeply personal aspect. Any transfer of allegiance was a dangerous and destabilizing proposition with the potential to undermine the morale of the unit and threaten the stability of the state. *Sacramentum* served Tacitus as a crucial ordering concept for soldiers and leaders during periods of strife, especially civil wars, underscoring personal convictions and identifying the boundaries of communities, in this case, the Roman army.

By analogy to the military oath, Roman authors used *sacramentum* to organize ideas about convictions and communities in more general contexts. Some Roman writers understood the *sacramentum* to hold a typological or symbolic meaning, expanding its usefulness beyond legal and military contexts and into social and religious realms. ²⁰ Petronius (d. AD 66), Quintilian (AD 35–95), and Apuleius (d. c. AD 180) all used the word *sacramentum* in this more ambiguous, perhaps vulgar, way. Petronius' *Satyricon*, the earliest surviving work of Latin prose fiction, now exists only as a series of lengthy fragments which preserve the escapades of a former gladiator, his boyfriend, and two others, an itinerant teacher and a poet-conman. ²¹ The surviving sections describe the group's encounters with colorful figures along their journey and detail the erotic rivalry of Encolpius, the former gladiator, with the other travelling companions as they jockeyed for the affection of Giton, the boyfriend. During one episode, when Encolpius passed out drunk, Ascyrtos, the itinerant teacher, bedded Giton. Upon awaking, Encolpius flew into a rage and began to attack Ascyrtos. Giton then pleaded with the two men not to battle each other and offered his own life, lamenting "I ought to die, I who destroyed the *sacramentum* of friendship." ²² The

¹⁹ Tacitus, *Historiae* 4.46, p. 146. "*Modo Mucianum modo absentem principem, postremo caelum ac deos obtestari, donec Mucianus cunctos eiusdem sacramenti, eiusdem imperatoris milites appellans falso timori obviam iret.*"

²⁰ Van Slyke, "Sacramentum," pp. 189–97. Geoffrey MacCormack, "Formalism, Symbolism and Magic in Early Roman Law" *Revue d'histoire du droit* 37 (1969) pp. 439–68. See also H. von Petrikovits, "Sacramentum" *Rome and Her Northern Provinces*, ed. B. Hartley and J. Wachter (Gloucester: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1983) pp. 179–201.

²¹ Petronius, *Satyricon*, eds. and trans. R. Bracht Branham and Daniel Kinney (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996) ix–xxx; P.G. Walsh, *The Roman Novel: The Satyricon of Petronius and the Metamorphoses of Apuleius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970) pp. 67–140; J.P. Sullivan, *The Satyricon of Petronius. A Literary Study* (London: Faber and Faber, 1968).

²² Petronius, *Satyricon* 80, ed. K. Mueller (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1995), pp. 78–9. "*Ego mori debeo, qui amicitiae sacramentum delevi.*"

dramatic force of the statement depended on a deep analogy to the military oath. The personal nature of sexual encounter and high stakes of perceived betrayal echo defining features of the military *sacramentum*. The use of such an important term accentuated the intimacy of the relationships damaged by Giton's infidelity. Such treachery demanded the strictest punishment.

Perhaps the most important witness to *sacramentum* as it was used in Late Antiquity and available to early Christian authors is Apuleius. Writing about a century after Petronius, Apuleius' corpus displays *sacramentum* organizing ideas across both literary and philosophical genres popular at the time. Apuleius' work emerged from the same North African context of paradigm-setting early Christian authors such as Tertullian and his work was well known to and engaged by later influential Christian writers like Augustine.²³ The *Metamorphoses*, or the *Golden Ass*, is the only Latin novel to survive complete from Antiquity.²⁴ Part bawdy entertainment, part fable, the story follows the adventures of Lucius, a virile young Roman aristocrat with an insatiable interest in things magical. Lucius' pursuit of the supernatural led him unintentionally to be transformed into a donkey. As a beast of burden, he lived and served among the slaves and destitute freemen working for a wealthy Roman family. In Book Three, Apuleius testified to a common use of *sacramentum* playing on the idea of the military oath, similar to Giton's plea in the *Satyricon*. After being impressed by a shape-shifting magician named Pamphile, Lucius rubbed a magic ointment over his body intending to become a bird. Much to his dismay he was transformed into an ass. After it was explained to him that the process could not be reversed until morning, he was led to the stable and quartered next to his own horse and another ass. The frustrated Lucius ruefully remarked "I also thought, if there is any silent or natural *sacramentum* in mute animals, that my horse would offer me lodging and hospitality out of a certain knowledge and compassion."²⁵ The *sacramentum*, for Apuleius, was a bond of community out of which ought to spring social obligations. The irony of the situation highlighted that a community based on a *sacramentum* had a deeply personal or intimate character, here signalled by Lucius' disappointment that his own horse would not receive him.

Apuleius also bears witness to the endurance of legal *sacramenta* in Late Antiquity and their importance in ordering communities. Early in Book Three

²³ See the brief survey in Carl C. Schlam, "Apuleius in the Middle Ages" *The Classics in the Middle Ages*, eds. Aldo S. Bernardo and Saul Levin (Binghamton, New York: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1990) pp. 363–9. See also James Gollnick, *The Religious Dreamworld of Apuleius' Metamorphoses: Recovering a Forgotten Hermeneutic* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1999) p. 23; Jack Tatum, *Apuleius and the Golden Ass* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979) pp. 99, 112, 142–5; Walsh, *The Roman Novel*, pp. 185–89, 229; John Ferguson, "Apuleius" *Greece & Rome* 8:1 (1961) pp. 61–74.

²⁴ P.G. Walsh, *Apuleius: The Golden Ass* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994). Walsh, *The Roman Novel*, pp. 141–223.

²⁵ Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 3.26, ed. R. Helm (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1968), p. 71. "Atque ego rebar, si quod inesset mutis animalibus tacitum ac naturale sacramentum, agnitione ac miseratione quadam inductum equum illum meum hospitium ac loca lautitia mihi praebiturum."

of the *Metamorphoses*, Apuleius used *sacramentum* in the context of a legal action.²⁶ At the very end of Book Two, Lucius in drunken confusion slew what he believed to be three bandits attempting to break into a home. Book Three then began with Lucius being roused from his bed and arrested by city officials for murdering three citizens of Hypata. An elderly prosecutor explained the case to an assembly, noting “but by the providence of the gods, which permits nothing unpunished to criminals, before that one (Lucius) could slip away on his secret journey, I stood ready early in the morning to lead him to the most heavy *sacramentum* of your judgment.”²⁷ Apuleius set the legal action in the context of a public assembly. The idea behind the author’s legal conceit was the action of a unified community against an outsider. The prosecutor addressed the assembly as “most august citizens” and encouraged them to “resolutely deliver a sentence against this foreign man in this crime which you would punish severely in your fellow citizen.”²⁸ Apuleius’ use of *sacramentum* ratcheted up the dramatic stakes through its emphasis on the integrity of the community.

The earliest extant application of the word to the vibrant and evolving religious scene of Late Antiquity also appeared in Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses*. In Book Eleven, Lucius, still an ass, exhausted and depressed by his many unsuccessful attempts to restore his human form, began to pray for a solution and received a vision. In a dream, the goddess Isis appeared to him and revealed that he would be restored to a human body and live a life of service to her. Lucius immediately joined her cult and was restored to human form. Following Lucius’ restoration, a priest of Isis recounted Lucius’ trials, extolled Isis’ power, and invited Lucius to commit himself to the cult.

Yet, that you may be the safer and the surer, enroll your name in this army of holiness, to which you were but a short time past pledged by *sacramentum*. Dedicate yourself to the service of true religion, and voluntarily bend your neck to the yoke of this service. For when you have begun to serve the goddess, you will feel the full fruitfulness of your liberty.²⁹

²⁶ That this legal context is more general than technical is discussed by Rudolf Theodore van der Paardt, *L. Apuleius Madaurensis. The Metamorphoses: A Commentary on Book III with Text and Introduction* (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1971) p. 45.

²⁷ Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 3.3, p. 54. “*Sed providentia deum, quae nihil impunitum nocentibus permittit, priusquam iste clandestinis itineribus elaberetur, mane praestolatus ad gravissimum iudicii vestri sacramentum eum curavi perducere.*”

²⁸ Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 3.3, p. 54. “*Quirites sanctissimi . . . constanter itaque in hominem alienum ferte sententias de eo crimine, quod etiam in vestrum civem severiter vindicaretis.*”

²⁹ Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 11.15, pp. 277–78. “*Quo tamen tutior sis atque munitior, da nomen sanctae huic militiae, cuius non olim sacramento etiam rogabar, teque iam nunc obsequio religionis nostrae dedica et ministerii iugum subi voluntarium. Nam cum coeperis deae servire, tunc magis senties fructum tuae libertatis.*” Mohrmann points out the significance of this text in her article, Christine Mohrmann, “Sacramentum dans les plus anciens textes chrétiens” *Harvard Theological Review* 47:3 (1954) p. 146. See also Van Slyke, “Sacramentum,” p. 200. Michaélidès, *Sacramentum chez Tertullien*, p. 27.

Apuleius used *sacramentum* to mean a kind of sacred oath offered in something of a liturgical context by an initiate into a religious cult. He organized his understanding of a religious community by analogy to the military *sacramentum*. It provided entrance into a community defined by religious adherence. Further, he implied that the commitment and discipline required by this religious cult could most clearly be understood in terms similar to those demanded by the Roman army.

Apuleius also witnessed to the penetration of *sacramentum* into philosophical discussions. In his treatise *On the God of Socrates* he considered four topics: the distinction between gods and men, the nature of gods, the specific gods of Socrates, and an exhortation to follow Socrates' moral example. In the final section, Apuleius raised the importance of living well. He argued that shame was not related to economic success. There was no shame in being a poor painter or poor pipe-player; rather, shame was to be found in not living well. He concluded with an appeal to the reader for a deep and sincere commitment to philosophy, lamenting how the reader must often see people who give too little consideration to the most important things in life and simultaneously lavish attention on the inconsequential. He wrote "so daily you examine their debts: you find much poured out in wasteful fashion and nothing on themselves—I say—on the cultivation of their god, which cultivation is nothing other than the *sacramentum* of philosophy."³⁰ Here the word was used in the sense of a deliberate and deeply personal commitment to a way of life. This use again depended on an analogy to the military oath. But rather than accenting the legal obligations of the military *sacramentum*, it capitalized on the intimacy and fidelity associated with the word. Into the second century, the word *sacramentum* was an important organizing concept. It accommodated technical uses in legal and military contexts, but also included more "vulgar" uses that explored personal commitment and the identification of communities, sometimes religious. Early Christian authors quickly seized on this idea and capitalized on its religious overtones.

1.2. SACRAMENTUM IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY

Early Latin Christian writers adopted the term *sacramentum* as an organizing concept, adapted it and expanded its range of uses. As chronological and

³⁰ Apuleius, *De deo socratis* 170, ed. C. Moreschini (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1968), p. 35. "Igitur cotidiana eorum aera dispungas: inuenias in rationibus multa prodige profusa et in semet nihil, in sui dico daemonis cultum, qui cultus non aliud quam philosophiae sacramentum est." This use of *sacramentum* was not unique to Apuleius. Other Roman authors from the early centuries attested to this religious or sacred idea of the sacrament. For example, also in the second century, Sextus Festus Pompeius explained "By sacrament is said what is done in the making sacred of an oath." Sextus Pompeius Festus, *De verborum significatione quae supersunt cum pauli epitome*, ed. W.M. Lindsay (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1913) pp. 466–67. "sacramento dicitur quod iuris iurandi sacratione interposita actum est . . . sacramentum dicitur, quod iurisiurandi sacratione interposita geritur."

textual intermediaries between classical authors and the Carolingians, these early Christian writers drew on late classical understandings of the word to develop theories of sacred oaths and Christian liturgical celebrations such as baptism and the eucharist. Studies of the language of the earliest North African writers, especially Tertullian (d. c.225), Cyprian (d. 258), and Optatus of Milevis (d. c.387), reveal a continuing evolution of the word in light of an antique inheritance.³¹ In his treatise *Against Marcion*, Tertullian used *sacramentum* to describe oaths, rites, and mysteries. In each case the oath, the rite, or the mystery explained a Christian's relationship to God or to his fellow believers. When commenting on the superscription to 1 Corinthians, Tertullian contrasted this Christian salutation with Jewish salutations. "Now, when he (Paul) announces these blessings as 'from God the Father and the Lord Jesus,' he uses titles that are common to both, and which also correspond to the *sacramentum* of our faith; and I do not think it is possible to discover what is declared to be God the Father and the Lord Jesus, except by the attributes more suited to them severally."³² Tertullian argued that Jewish greetings

³¹ Scholarly discussion of early Christian treatments of *sacramentum* across the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries broke into two distinct concerns. First, many scholars went through great lengths to plot the boundaries between Christian and pagan religion, with the *sacramentum* serving as either a bridge or a boundary. Second, other scholars explored the relationship of Christians to the military, where *sacramentum* became the principle category for discussion.

With respect to the first division and for a wide overview of the early Christian use of the word *sacramentum* see, J. De Ghellinck, É. De Backer, J. Poukens, and G. LeBacqz, *Pour l'histoire du mot "sacramentum."* I. *Les antécédents* (Louvain: Spicilegium sacrum Lovaniense, 1924); A.D. Nock, "Hellenistic Mysteries and Christian Sacraments" *Mnemosyne* 4:5 (1952) pp. 177–213, reprinted in Arthur Darby Nock, *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World*, ed. Zeph Stewart, Volume 2 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972) pp. 791–820. Examples of specific studies with the same concerns include C.J. Becker, *The Doctrine of Saint Cyprian on the Sacraments* (Würzburg: Universitäts-Druckerei, 1924). Optatus is treated in L. Malunowiczóna, "Signification du mot sacramentum chez saint Optat de Milève" *Roczniki Teologiczno-Kanoniczne* 19:4 (1972) pp. 163–71. Especially important is the long study of Tertullian's terminology in Dimitri Michaélidès, *Sacramentum chez Tertullien*. Michaélidès insistence on consistent precision in the use of the word precluded acknowledgment of nuance in Tertullian's use of *sacramentum* or change in the meaning and semantic range of the word over time, a position which drew sharp criticism. See the summary of the debate in Robert D. Sider, "Approaches to Tertullian: A Study of Recent Scholarship" *Second Century* 2 (1982) pp. 228–60. For an extremely spartan overview from early Christianity to the modern era see, Bruce Harbert "Sacramental Language" *New Blackfriars* 77 (1996) pp. 40–52.

With respect to the second division see Hanns Christof Brennecke, "An fidelis ad militiam converti posuit [Tertullian, *De idolatria* 19,1]?" *Frühchristliches Bekenntnis und Militärdienst im Widerspruch?* *Die Weltlichkeit des Glaubens in der Alten Kirche: Festschrift für Ulrich Wickert zum siebzigsten Geburtstag*, ed. Dietmar Wyrwa (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1977) pp. 45–100; Adolf Harnack, *Militia Christi: The Christian Religion and the Military in the First Three Centuries*, trans. David McInnes Gracie (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981); John Helgeland, "Christians and the Roman Army from Marcus Aurelius to Constantine" *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt* 23:1 (1979) pp. 725–834.

³² Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*, 5.5.2 CCSL 1 ed. A Kroymann (Turnhout: Brepols, 1954) pp. 675–76. "*Haec cum a deo patre nostro et domino Iesu adnuntians communibus nominibus utatur, competentibus nostro quoque sacramento, non puto dispici posse, quis deus pater et dominus Iesus praedicetur nisi ex accidentibus, cui magis competant.*" Of course, Tertullian's text of Paul is a *Vetus Latina* edition.

focused on a wish for physical health, while Christian ones, following Paul, grounded their good wishes in God. To this end, the *sacramentum* was the touchstone of the Christian community, an oath of allegiance or a vow to God, which both established the community and organized its view of the world. In the same work, Tertullian offered the earliest characterization of the rites of baptism and the eucharist as *sacramenta*.³³ Amid vigorous polemic against Marcion's negative attitude to divorce which pitted Jesus' teaching against Moses', Tertullian explained how the two positions were consonant in permitting divorce under specific circumstances. He asked trenchantly "if, however, you deny that divorce is in any way permitted by Christ, how is it that you on your side destroy marriage, not uniting man and woman, nor admitting to the *sacramentum* of baptism and of the eucharist those who have been united in marriage anywhere else, unless they should agree together to repudiate the fruit of their marriage, and so against the fruit of marriage, so also against the very Creator Himself?"³⁴ He presented participation in baptism and the eucharist as central activities of a Christian community. Those who were frozen out of these rites were placed outside of the community. Throughout his writings Tertullian explicitly deployed *sacramentum* to distinguish his community against those from whom he drew the term. In a passage directed against the cult of Mithras from *The Prescription against Heretics*, Tertullian argued that there existed no fundamental difference between idolatry and heresy. In both ancient institutions sacred texts were twisted by diabolic malice. He inveighed against the devil "who copies aspects of the divine *sacramenta* in the mysteries of idols."³⁵ Against Roman military service, Tertullian turned to the idea of the *sacramentum* in his *On Idolatry*. He stressed diabolic distortion in his depiction of a Christian serving in the army. "The divine *sacramentum* and the human do not come together, the sign of Christ and the sign of the devil, the camp of light and the camp of darkness, one soul cannot be bound to two, to God and to Caesar."³⁶ Tertullian originated this contrast later used by Alcuin for Martin of Tours. For Tertullian, baptism and the eucharist were *sacramenta* because they were at a most fundamental level

³³ The ambiguity of Pliny's use of the word *sacramentum* in his letter to Trajan concerning Christians is discussed in A.D. Nock, "The Christian Sacramentum in Pliny and a Pagan Counterpart" *The Classical Review* 38:3/4 (1924) pp. 58–9.

³⁴ Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*, 4.34.5, p. 636. "Aut si omnino[non] negas permitti diuortium a Christo, quomodo tu nuptias dirimis, nec coniungens marem et feminam nec alibi coniunctos ad sacramentum baptismatis et eucharistiae admittens, nisi inter se conjuraverint aduersus fructum nuptiarum, ut aduersus ipsum creatorem?"

³⁵ Tertullian, *De praescriptione haereticorum*, 40.2 CCL 1 ed. R.F. Refoulé (Turnhout: Brepols, 1954) p. 220. "qui ipsas quoque res sacramentorum diuinorum idolorum mysteriis aemulatur." This passage is cited in Mohrmann "Sacramentum," p. 144, and discussed by Michaélidès, *Sacramentum chez Tertullien*, pp. 235–41.

³⁶ Tertullian, *De idololatria* 19.2, CCL 2, eds. A. Reofferscheid and G. Wissowa (Turnhout: Brepols, 1954), p. 1120. This passage, typical of Tertullian's approach, is discussed in Harnack, *Militia Christi*, pp. 54–5 and 76–7. Brennecke, "An fidelis ad militiam," pp. 45–100.

pacts made with God, signs of the total allegiance to God which ordered the Christian community.³⁷

Tertullian also witnessed an important Latin Christian development in the use of *sacramentum*. He consistently used the word to render the Greek word *mysterion* into Latin. This convention in translations of Paul was present from the earliest Latin biblical translations as seen in Tertullian, Cyprian, and others.³⁸ The decision was a conscious and consistent one. When commenting on Paul's letter to the Ephesians, Tertullian wrote

now, to what good will most suitably belong all those things which relate to 'that good pleasure, which God has displayed in the *sacramentum* of His will, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might recapitulate' (if I may so say, according to the exact meaning of the Greek word) 'all things in Christ, which are in heaven and which are on earth (Eph. 1:9-10),' that is to return to the beginning or to gather up from the beginning; unless all things of his are from the beginning, and the beginning itself, by whom are time and the fulfillment of time and the dispensation of fulfillment, according to which all things up to the very first are gathered up in Christ?³⁹

Most likely, Latin writers mechanically translated the Greek *mysterion* into Latin.⁴⁰ The custom was certainly not an innovation of Tertullian, but probably grew out of the everyday Latin usage common to his Christian community, which saw a double nuance, both sacral and legal, in the word *sacramentum*.

³⁷ Arnold Ehrhardt, "Christian Baptism and Roman Law" *Festschrift Guido Kisch*, ed. Karl S. Bader (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1955) pp. 147–66. John Crehan, *Early Christian Baptism and the Creed: A Study in Ante-Nicene Theology* (London: Burns, Oates, and Weshbourne, 1950) pp. 96–110.

³⁸ The majority of surviving *Vetus Latina* texts routinely use *sacramentum* to render the Greek *mysterion*. However, the *Vetus Latina* tradition in Italy was less consistent in using *sacramentum* to render *mysterion*. For the Ephesians passage cited by Tertullian see *Vetus Latina. 24/1 Epistola ad Ephesios*, ed. Hermann Josef Frede (Freiburg: Herder, 1962) p. 20. For a brief discussion of this tradition in biblical interpretation see *Vetus Latina* 24/1, 33–5. The most important witness to the Italian tradition is Ambrose of Milan (c.340–97), who was not hesitant to employ the terms *mysterium* and *sacramentum* interchangeably. Nowhere was this clearer than in the recensions of his addresses to neophytes given during Easter week. The addresses were first gathered in a type of stenographic record of his preaching and copied under the title *On the Sacraments*. Later, these addresses were revisited by Ambrose, polished, reworked in a more literary manner, and published with the title *Concerning Mysteries*. For a full and recent discussion of this relationship see Craig Alan Satterlee, *Ambrose of Milan's Method of Mystagogical Preaching* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2002) pp. 20–9. For a slightly earlier treatment, see the introduction in *Ambrose de Milan: Des Sacrements; Des Mystères; Explication du Symbole*, ed. Bernhard Botte, SC 25 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1980). On Ambrose's approach to sacraments more generally see Joseph Huhn, *Die Bedeutung des Wortes Sacramentum bei dem Kirchenvater Ambrosius* (Fulda: Druck und Verlag der fuldaer Actiendruckerei, 1928).

³⁹ Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*, 5.17.1, pp. 712–13. "Cui ergo competet secundum boni existimationem, quam proposuerit in sacramento uoluntatis suae, in dispensationem adimpletionis temporum—ut ita dixerim, sicut uerbum illud in Graeco sonat—recapitulare—id est ad initium redigere uel ab initio recensere—omnia in Christum, quae in caelis et quae in terris, nisi cuius erunt omnia ab initio, etiam ipsum initium, a quo et tempora et temporum adimpletio et adimpletionis dispensatio, ob quam omnia ad initium recensentur in Christo?"

⁴⁰ Mohrmann, "Sacramentum dans les plus anciens texts chrétiens," p. 148.

Christine Mohrmann has attempted to solve this equation of Greek *mysterion* with Latin *sacramentum* by suggesting that Christians did not wish to use words already strongly associated with pagan cults, the way *mysteria* was associated with certain pagan cultic practices.⁴¹ While certainly very compelling, this explanation does not rule out other possible reasons for choosing the word *sacramentum*. For example, in the passage above, the use of *sacramentum* presented a gathering up in Christ as a culmination or a fulfillment. Thus it underscored the relationship established between God and his creation. Because *sacramentum* conveyed a sense of allegiance and community, as seen in Tacitus and Apuleius, it provided a more fitting translation of *mysterion* than other common Latin alternatives such as *mysterium* or *arcanum*.

Augustine of Hippo's (354–430) decisive voice anchored use of the word *sacramentum* among subsequent Christian authors as a tool for organizing ideas of allegiance and community. On a practical level, *sacramenta* came to define communities for Christians in Augustine's North Africa. *Sacramenta*, whether civil or ecclesiastical, were necessary for establishing trust, ensuring justice, and preserving society. Augustine's own episcopal career coincided with a slow accommodation of Christian theology and practice to the social reality of oath-swearing in the late Roman World.⁴² For Augustine the term *sacramentum* applied to words, actions, events, and even institutions that established communities on the basis of trust and fidelity. Its formal, binding, and liturgical character in North African social and political life connected in Augustine's mind with ecclesiastical practice. On a theoretical level, a *sacramentum* was essentially a sign, something visible and external, which identified an invisible, inner, or spiritual reality.⁴³ In numerous places, Augustine described specifically

⁴¹ Christine Mohrmann, "Sacramentum dans les plus anciens textes chrétiens" pp. 141–52, esp. 143–4. This was first suggested in a 1951 lecture given at l'Institut de linguistique de l'Université de Paris, printed as "Christine Mohrmann, L'Étude de la latinité chrétienne: état de la question, methods, resultants" *Latin vulgaire, Latin des chrétiens, Latin médiéval* (1955) pp. 17–35, esp. 31. Mohrmann disagreed with the ideas of the German Benedictine liturgist Odo Casel, who argued that it is precisely because *sacramentum* took on the meaning of *mysterium* that it was adopted by early Christian authors. Odo Casel, "Neue Zeugnisse Für das Kultmysterium" *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* 13 (1933) pp. 99–171; idem, "Mysteriengegenwart" *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* 8 (1928) pp. 145–224; idem, "Das Mysteriengedächtnis der Messliturgie im Lichte der Tradition" *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* 6 (1926) pp. 113–204.

⁴² Kevin Uhalde, *Expectations of Justice in the Age of Augustine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007) pp. 77–104. On the broader paradigms through which Augustine analyzed the interaction of the religious and the secular see Robert A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970) along with his reconsiderations in Robert A. Markus, *Christianity and the Secular* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006).

⁴³ *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1999) p. 742. B. Studer, "Sacramentum et exemplum' chez Saint Augustine" *Studia Patristica* 16 (1985) pp. 570–88. André Mandouze, "A propos de 'Sacramentum' chez S. Augustine polyvalence lexicologique et foisonnement théologique" *Mélanges offerts à Mademoiselle Christine Mohrmann* (Anvers: Spectrum Editeurs, 1963) pp. 222–32. C. Couturier, "Sacramentum' et 'mysterium' dans l'oeuvre de saint Augustin" *Études Augustiniennes* (1953) pp. 161–274.

Christian liturgical practices, especially baptism, with *sacramentum*. In *On Christian Doctrine* when considering liberation from enslavement to the letter, Augustine analyzed the importance of religious rites. After a treatment of Hebrew worship, he described the significance of the *sacramenta* of baptism and the eucharist. The *sacramentum* was a sign which signified the community to which Christians belonged. On the one hand, it was a rite that bound together a community defined by spiritual freedom and faithfulness to traditions passed on from Jesus through the Apostles. On the other hand, it was the symbol by which people recognized the reality of that community.

But the Lord himself and apostolic discipline handed down a few signs instead of many and these most easy to perform and most majestic to understand and most virtuous to observe, as is the *sacramentum* of baptism and the celebration of the Lord's body and blood. When anyone receives these, having been given instruction the people know to what they are referred, so that they venerate things not in carnal servitude, but rather in spiritual freedom.⁴⁴

Sacramentum also organized teachings on scripture and on liturgy in Augustine's widely read discourses on the Psalms. In his explanation of Psalm 73, Augustine evaluated the relationship of the old covenant to the new. He here used *sacramentum* to characterize the discontinuity between the exterior signs of the old and new covenants, even as an interior continuity remained. "If we separate the two testaments, the old and the new, the *sacramenta* are not the same, neither are the promises, yet the majority of the commandments are the same."⁴⁵ Augustine's equally popular sermons also took advantage of the word. The North African bishop provided a frank explanation of the *sacramentum* of the eucharist in sermon 272. He elucidated how the term pointed to a double significance of the eucharist confected in a liturgical rite through which visible bread and wine become the Lord's Body and Blood. Again, an accent was placed on the community which possessed the *sacramenta*. The sermon was directed toward his Christian community and explained what characterized the group as Christian. "Brethren, these things are called *sacramenta* because in them one thing is seen and another is understood. What is seen has corporeal form. What

⁴⁴ Augustine, *De doctrina christiana* 3.9.13, CCSL 32, ed. J. Martin (Turnhout: Brepols, 1962) p. 86. "*sed quaedam pauca pro multis eademque factu facillima et intellectu augustissima et observatione castissima ipse dominus et apostolica tradidit disciplina, sicuti est baptismi sacramentum et celebratio corporis et sanguinis domini. Quae unusquisque cum percepit, quo referantur imbutus agnoscit, ut ea non carnali servitute, sed spiritali potius libertate ueneretur.*"

⁴⁵ Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*. 73.2, CCSL 39, eds. D. Eligius Dekkers and J. Fraipont (Turnhout: Brepols, 1956) p. 1005. "*Si enim discernimus duo Testamenta, Vetus et Nouum, non sunt eadem sacramenta, nec eadem promissa; eadem tamen pleraque praecepta.*" Augustine's use of the word *sacramentum* is sketched out in greater detail in C. Couturier, "*Sacramentum*" pp. 161–274. See also the explanatory footnotes in Augustine, *Expositions of the Psalms* 73–98 3/8, trans. Maria Boulding (Hyde Park, New York: New City Press, 2002) p. 15.

is understood has spiritual fruit.”⁴⁶ Augustine’s fascination with semiotics directed him to distinguish between the visible exterior and the invisible interior and to plumb their relationship.

Sacramentum helped the bishop of Hippo analyze many of the theological controversies in which he was embroiled. His detailed considerations of the rites of baptism and of the eucharist strongly influenced subsequent Christian thinkers. Around the year 400, Augustine offered sustained attention to the use and meaning of the *sacramentum* of baptism in treatises *On Baptism* and *Against Faustus the Manichee*, composed against the Donatists and the Manicheans respectively. In these works he developed technical explanations of *sacramenta* as liturgical rites. He frequently drew on inherited definitions of the word as he ruminated on its significance to the Christian religion. Christian liturgical celebrations were a particular and special type of *sacramentum*, signs that ordered individuals’ allegiance and drew them together into a community in a very fundamental way. Baptism, in particular, helped Augustine draw lines around the edges of the Christian community. In *On Baptism* he argued for a distinction between validity and fruitfulness with regard to a *sacramentum*’s effect on individual Christians. He began with an analysis of how the schism between Donatist and Catholic Christians in North Africa affected both those who were baptized and those who did the baptizing. He concluded that ordained priests could lose holiness or even good standing in the church without their priestly character being lost. He wrote “just as the baptized person, if he withdraws from the unity [of the Church], does not lose the *sacramentum* of baptism, so also he who is ordained, if he departs from the unity (of the Church), does not lose the *sacramentum* of conferring baptism.”⁴⁷ In this context, a *sacramentum* was a sign which marked individuals as part of a community from which one could not ever completely be removed and enabled one to perform valid activities specific to the community.

Still, Augustine’s writings were not perfectly consistent and they did not develop in a straight line. For example, Augustine sometimes used *sacramentum* and *mysterium* as synonyms. In a passage from the *Tractates on John*, he employed both words in exclamations of insight into the deity. In an explication of Jesus’ washing the feet of the disciples (Jn 13:6–10), Augustine cited a passage from the Song of Songs (5:2–3), which described foot washing. In order to signal that an Old Testament passage was an appropriate lens through which to interpret the episode in John, Augustine exclaimed, “O Wonderful

⁴⁶ Augustine, *Sermones* 272, PL 38.1247. “Ista, fratres, ideo dicuntur Sacramenta, quia in eis aliud videtur, aliud intelligitur. Quod videtur, speciem habet corporalem, quod intelligitur, fructum habet spirituale.”

⁴⁷ Augustine, *De baptismo libri septem*, 1.2 CSEL 51, ed. M. Petschenig (Vienna: F. Tempsky, 1908) p. 146. “Sicut autem baptizatus, si ab unitate recesserit, sacramentum baptismi non amittit, sic etiam ordinatus, si ab unitate recesserit, sacramentum dandi baptismi non amittit.”

Sacramentum! O Great *Mysterium!*”⁴⁸ In another example, the bishop of Hippo described baptism as both a *mysterium* and a *sacramentum*: “with the *mysterium* and *sacramentum* of baptism completed.”⁴⁹ While Augustine did at times follow his predecessors in using *sacramentum* and *mysterium* interchangeably, he tended to prefer *sacramentum* when referring to Christian liturgical rites and *mysterium* when referring to obscure revelations.⁵⁰

Viewing *sacramenta* at the intersection of legal, social, religious, and other aspects of human community of Late Antiquity was not restricted to episcopal intellectual titans. Sometime between 383 and 450 Publius Vegetius Renatus composed an *Epitome of Military Science*, a survey of Roman knowledge on the materials and rules of warfare.⁵¹ Little is known about the author beyond what is contained in the *Epitome* and what is preserved in another work on horse and cattle ailments—which helps us understand why much of his analysis of military custom adopted a medical point of view. Vegetius’ works were widely read and studied across the Middle Ages and into the Early Modern Period.⁵² The prefaces to both works clearly indicate the author’s Christian allegiance, while the texts reveal an affinity for classical Latin literature, especially Vergil and Salust. Vegetius’ *sacramenta* depended upon both religious and military ideas, revealing an integration of expectations and obligations along the lines pursued by Christian leaders from Tertullian to Augustine. His description of the military *sacramentum* involved the name of the emperor, as it had in earlier times, but now also featured the persons of the Trinity. God was drawn into the legal and personal commitments of the Roman soldier. Moreover, Vegetius derived the disposition a soldier ought to have toward the emperor from the disposition a Christian ought to have toward God. “They [soldiers] swear *sacramenta* of the military moreover through God and Christ and the Holy Spirit and through the majesty of the emperor, which next to God should be loved and worshipped by the human race.”⁵³ Conceptions of authority and response

⁴⁸ Augustine, *In Johannis evangelium tractatus* CXXIV. 57.2, CCSL 36, ed. D. Radbodus Willems (Turnhout: Brepols, 1954) p. 470. “O admirabile sacramentum! o grande mysterium!”

⁴⁹ Augustine, *Sermones* 99, PL 38.601. “Impleto Baptismatis mysterio et sacramento, ne hominum putaretur donum Spiritus sancti, non exspectatum est, sicut tunc, ut venirent Apostoli, sed continuo venit Spiritus sanctus.”

⁵⁰ C. Couturier, “Sacramentum” pp. 161–274, esp. 269–74. In his citations of Paul, however, he consistently followed the North African convention of translating *mysterion* as *sacramentum*. For example see the discussion in *Vetus Latina* 24/1, p. 32.

⁵¹ Flavius Vegetius Renatus, *Epitoma rei militaris*, ed. Carl Lang (Leipzig, B.G. Teubner, 1869).

⁵² Christopher Allmand, *The De Re Militari of Vegetius: The Reception, Transmission and Legacy of a Roman Text in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Compellingly, a wide range of Carolingian authors know, cite, and edit Vegetius, in addition to Allmand’s wide-ranging discussion, see for example, Ernst Dümmler, “Rabanus Maurus, ‘De procinctu Romanae miliciae’” *Zeitschrift für Deutsches Altherthum* 15 (1872) pp. 443–51.

⁵³ Vegetius, *Epitoma rei militaris* II.5, p. 37. “. . . militiae sacramenta . . . iurant autem per deum et Christum et sanctum Spiritum et per maiestatem imperatoris, quae secundum deum generi humano diligenda est et colenda.”

to authority were intertwined and the vocabulary of fidelity and service applied both to earthly and heavenly authority and in the same way. Vegetius continued, “for, since he received the title ‘Augustus,’ the emperor should be given faithful allegiance, unceasing service devoted to him just as a present and corporeal God. Indeed both the private person and the soldier serves God when he faithfully loves him who rules with authority from God.”⁵⁴ The rudimentary Trinitarian theology offered by Vegetius served as a preamble to a statement about basic relational ideas of love, fidelity, and service—basic concepts in religious and political notions of community described by people like Augustine—and applies both to the deity and to the emperor.

Sacramenta remained pivotal organizational concepts for the post-Roman world.⁵⁵ Gregory of Tours, Isidore of Seville, and the Venerable Bede bridged Christian Late Antiquity and the Carolingian world both in the sense that they were widely read by Carolingian authors, who interpreted and transmitted their ideas, and in the sense that they occupied the chronological period between the Latin Fathers and the Carolingian reformers. Gregory of Tours (538–94) testifies to the enduring importance of the word *sacramentum* in Merovingian Europe.⁵⁶ In his *Ten Books of Histories*, Gregory used *sacramentum* to organize his thoughts on community in four different contexts. First, he witnessed to a certain continuity with the Roman past through his display of the legal context of *sacramentum* in sixth-century Europe. Gregory employed the word on several occasions in the familiar sense of the military oath. Early in Book Two, for example, Gregory reported on Roman encounters with early warrior Franks. Concerning these engagements, he transmitted the otherwise lost writings of Sulpicius Alexander’s *Historia* from the late fourth century. He recounted the desperate straits of the Roman legion commanded by Emperor Valentinian, who retreated to a palace at Vienne and handed over control of the army and the civil administration to the Frankish leader, Arbogast. Gregory related how

⁵⁴ Vegetius, *Epitoma rei militaris* II.5, p. 37. “Nam imperator cum Augusti nomen accepit, tamquam praesenti et corporali Deo fidelis est praestanda deuotio, inpendendus peruigil famulatus. Deo enim uel priuatus uel militans seruit, cum fideliter eum diligit qui Deo regnat auctore.”

⁵⁵ With a focus on the political and legal developments, see Stefan Esders, “Faithful believers’: Oaths of Allegiance in Post-Roman Societies as Evidence for Eastern and Western ‘Visions of Community’” *Visions of community in the post-Roman world: the West, Byzantium and the Islamic world, 300–1100*, ed. Walter Pohl, Clemens Gantner, and Richard E. Payne (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012) pp. 357–74; idem, “Les origines militaires du serment dans les royaumes barbares (Ve–VIIe siècles)” *Oralité et lien social au Moyen Âge (Occident, Byzance, Islam): parole donnée, foi jurée, serment*, ed. Marie-France Auzépy (Paris: Association des amis du Centre d’histoire et civilisation de Byzance, 2009) pp. 19–26; idem, “Fidelität und Rechtsvielfalt: Die sicut-Klausel der früh- und hochmittelalterlichen Eidformulare” *Hiérarchie et stratification sociale dans l’Occident médiéval, 400–1100*, ed. François Bougard, Dominique Iogna-Prat, and Régine Le Jan (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008) pp. 239–56.

⁵⁶ Scholarly work on Gregory is immernse. On the importance of Gregory of Tours specifically to Carolingian readers see Janet Nelson, “The Merovingian Church in Carolingian Retrospective” *The World of Gregory of Tours*, ed. Kathleen Mitchell and Ian Wood (Leiden: Brill, 2002) pp. 241–59.

unenthusiastic the Roman soldiers were with this development. “No one of those bound by the *sacramenta* of the military was found who dared to obey the private words or the public commands of the Emperor.”⁵⁷ The passage shows that Gregory and his readers were well familiar with the Roman practice of requiring soldiers to swear the *sacramentum* to their leaders. Moreover, the passage connected the military oath to both the private and public wishes of the leader, reflecting the informal as well as formal responsibilities characteristic of late antique usage. In another passage, Gregory revealed knowledge of the word’s significance in a legal context. A princess and nun, Clotilde incited a rebellion at St. Radegund’s Holy Cross convent in Poitiers aimed at seizing control over the foundation for herself. In this case she bound conspirators to herself by means of a *sacramentum*. “A great scandal arose indeed in the monastery at Poitiers through the devil’s instigation in the heart of Clotilde, who once was claiming that she was the daughter of [King] Charibert. That one—believed as if from royal parents—extracted *sacramenta* from the nuns, so that having charged Abbess Leuovera with crimes, could substitute her as leader.”⁵⁸ Gregory used the word to indicate a sworn conspiracy revolving around a legal challenge against an abbess. The *sacramentum* bound the nuns together in treachery. Gregory showed a third wrinkle in the early medieval use of *sacramentum* when he described the formalization of a peace treaty. He recounted a heated political and military struggle waged around Clermont in the early 530s. Following vivid accounts of battles, which depleted army strength and destroyed valuable property, he described two active and ambitious Frankish rulers coming to an agreement that would enable them to attack other lesser regional powers. “Theodoric and Childebert made a treaty, and giving a *sacramentum* to each other that neither would attack the other, they took hostages from each other, in order that their agreement might be more secure.”⁵⁹ Here the *sacramentum* was an exchange of promises which established a new political relationship between parties within a commonly understood legal framework. Fourth, Gregory identified certain Christian liturgical rites as *sacramenta*. As with Augustine, these episodes often explored notions of allegiance or community—often particularly highlighting the ways in which liturgical *sacramenta* simultaneously held both theological and social implications for early medieval Christians. At one point, he recounted how fervently Bishop Avitus worked and prayed for the

⁵⁷ Gregory of Tours, *Libri Historiarum* X 2.9, eds. B. Krusch and W. Levison, MGH SRM 1.1 (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1951) p. 55. “Nullusque ex omnibus sacramentis militiae obstrictis reperiebatur, qui familiari principis sermoni aut iussis obsequi auderet.”

⁵⁸ Gregory of Tours, *Libri Historiarum* X 9.39, p. 460. “In monasterio vero Pectavinse, insidiante diabolo in corde Chrodielidis, qui se Chariberthi quondam regis filiam adserebat, orto scandalo, ipsa quoque quasi de parentibus confisa regibus, exacta sacramenta sanctimonialibus, ut, iniectis in abbatissem Leuoveram criminibus, eam monasterium deiecta, ipsam substituerent.”

⁵⁹ Gregory of Tours, *Libri Historiarum* X 3.15, p. 112. “Theudericus vero et Childeberthus foedus inierunt, et dato sibi sacramento, ut nullus contra alium moveretur, obsedes ab invicem acciperunt, quo facilius firmarentur quae fuerant dicta.”

conversion of his city's Jewish population. Much effort led to no success until one Easter a Jewish man expressed his desire for Christianity. The conversion triggered a bitter response when one Jew dropped rancid oil on the convert, leading to violent retribution by the city's Christian residents. The individual convert, pried by faith from his community was "reborn in God through the *sacramentum* of baptism."⁶⁰ Gregory referred to the well-known ritual of Christian initiation (and perhaps the lesser known ritual of excommunication by rancid oil), and set the rite at the center of a complex set of community identities only fully evident when the *sacramentum* was viewed as ordering one's allegiance on multiple levels. In this instance, baptism was a highly charged change of allegiance which required a change in community not only in a theological sense but also in a social one.

Isidore of Seville (c.560–636) provides a second important chronological and textual connection between the antique world and Carolingian Europe.⁶¹ In his encyclopedic *Etymologies*, Isidore used *sacramentum* to order notions of allegiance and community in both civil and legal senses familiar from Antiquity. Isidore knew that *sacramentum* had a military context. In *Etymologies* 9.3, which treated royal power and the terms of military service, he remarked that there were three ways of entering military service, the first of which was a *sacramentum*. The other types were a summons and an alliance.⁶² A military *sacramentum* was that "in which after selection each soldier swears not to withdraw from the military, except after his service is completed, that is, the time of military service."⁶³ Isidore also recognized a civil dimension to the *sacramentum*, which at once highlighted its legal importance, but also emphasized a personal aspect. In a section *On legal instruments*, Isidore made explicit an integral sense of fidelity along the lines alluded to earlier by Tacitus as he wrote "a *sacramentum* is the pledge of a promise; it is called *sacramentum* because to violate what one promises is perfidy."⁶⁴ For Isidore, the language of fidelity was as central to the *sacramentum*'s legal meaning as it was to its theological usage.

From his Christian forerunners, Isidore recognized *sacramentum* as operative also in the context of Christian liturgy. In the section entitled *On Offices*, Isidore identified specific rites as *sacramenta*: baptism, chrismation, and the

⁶⁰ Gregory of Tours, *Libri Historiarum* X 5.11, p. 205. ". . . renatusque Deo per baptismi sacramentum."

⁶¹ The bibliography on Isidore is vast. For a basic introduction to Isidore see Jacques Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*. 3 vols. (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1983). For the importance of Isidore in the Carolingian world see Jacques Fontaine, "La figure d'Isidore de Séville à l'époque carolingienne" *L'Europe héritière de l'Espagne wisigothique*, ed. Jacques Fontaine and Christine Pellistrandi (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 1992) pp. 195–211.

⁶² Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* 9.3.52–3, ed. W.M. Lindsay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911) "Tria sunt militiae genera, sacramentum, evocatio, coniuratio."

⁶³ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* 9.3.53. "Sacramentum, in quo post electionem iurat unusquisque miles se non recedere a militia, nisi post completa stipendia, id est, militiae tempora."

⁶⁴ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* 5.24.31. "Sacramentum est pignus sponsionis; vocatum autem sacramentum, quia violare quod quisque promittit perfidia est."

Body and Blood (of the Lord).⁶⁵ In language reminiscent of Augustine, Isidore described *sacramentum* as a type of sign. In his discussion of the liturgical *sacramenta*, he explained “a *sacramentum* is in any celebration, when the thing is done thus so that it is understood to signify something, which ought to be accepted as holy.”⁶⁶ Isidore derived this definition from his understanding of the connection between *sacramentum* and *mysterion* seen in the biblical translations from Late Antiquity. He weighed in on the translation issue, and sought to provide an explanation for it when he explored how both *mysterium* and *sacramentum* convey the sense of “secret” or “concealed” in Latin.⁶⁷ This move, in turn, enabled Isidore to evaluate the widely varied contexts in which Church Fathers used the word. For example, in another passage from the section *On Offices*, Isidore used the word *sacramentum* to indicate fundamental Christian teachings. He reported that baptism “contains the confession of the Trinity and the unity of the Church and every *sacramentum* of Christian doctrine.”⁶⁸

Most illuminating, and perhaps influential, for subsequent Christians is the bishop of Seville’s synthetic explanation of the working of the *sacramentum* of baptism. He viewed the legal and theological contexts as complementary. For Isidore, baptism’s theological significance was grounded in a legal understanding of testimony. After a citation of Jesus’ commission to the Apostles at the close of Matthew’s Gospel, he explained why Christians were baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. He reported that any statement’s truth was usually established by three witnesses, which in the case of baptism meant the three persons of God witnessed and confirmed the validity of the *sacramentum*.⁶⁹ Simultaneously secular and theological contexts used to frame *sacramentum*’s interpretive significance is also on display in Isidore’s treatment of Melchizedek, the mysterious king of Salem, who offered bread and wine in Genesis, and whose efforts were recalled in the Letter to the Hebrews.⁷⁰ He wrote that Melchizedek was called a “just king.” He was called “a ‘king’ because afterwards he ruled Salem and ‘just’ because discerning the *sacramenta* of the Law and of the Gospel, he offered in sacrifice not sacrificial sheep, but a gift of bread and wine.”⁷¹ Isidore identified Melchizedek’s significance as both

⁶⁵ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* 6.19.39. “Sunt autem sacramenta baptismum et chrisma, corpus et sanguis.”

⁶⁶ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* 6.19.39. “Sacramentum est in aliqua celebratione, cum res gesta ita fit ut aliquid significare intelligatur, quod sancta accipiendum est.”

⁶⁷ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* 6.19.42–3. “unde et Graece mysterium dicitur, quod secretam et reconditam habeat dispositionem.”

⁶⁸ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* 6.19.58. “Continet autem confessionem Trinitatis et unitatem Ecclesiae et omne Christiani dogmatis sacramentum.”

⁶⁹ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* 6.19.46–7. “Sicut enim in tribus testibus stat omne verbum, ita hoc sacramentum confirmat ternarius numerus nominum divinorum.”

⁷⁰ Gen 14: 18–19 and Heb. 5–7. See also Ps. 110.

⁷¹ Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* 7.6.25–6. “Melchisedech rex iustus. Rex, quia ipse postea imperavit Salem. Iustus, pro eo quod discernens sacramenta Legis et Evangelii, non pecudum victimas, sed oblationem panis et calicis in sacrificio obtulit.”

political and theological. He was a king, but through his understanding and his action with respect to *sacramenta*, he distinguished himself. Isidore concluded that this king's theological insight into bread and wine foreshadowed the eucharist and anchored his relationship with God.

Finally, Bede (673–735), a monk at the Anglo-Saxon double-monastery of Wearmouth-Jarrow, was a famous teacher and prolific author whose voice resounded across the early medieval world.⁷² Bede was aware of classical contexts for the word *sacramentum*, especially the idea of the military oath. Early in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Bede selectively chronicled the history of Roman Britain. In one chapter, he briefly described the rise of Maximus, a Roman general in Britain, to challenge for imperial power in 377. Bede noted “Maximus, an able and vigorous man, worthy to be an Augustus, except that he rose through tyranny against the faith of the *sacramentum*, was elected Emperor by the army in Britain almost against his will, and he crossed into Gaul at its head.”⁷³ Bede clearly knew of the military *sacramentum*, its importance in Roman martial culture and its constitutive significance for military allegiance and community. He associated fidelity with it and by this measure Maximus was found wanting. Otherwise depicted in a positive light, Maximus's betrayal of the *sacramentum* rendered him unfit for imperial rank. The final outcome of Maximus' campaign was death at the hands of the Emperor Valentinian. Bede's narrative stressed the importance of the *sacramentum* and of fidelity to sacramental commitments by presenting ignominious death as a fitting outcome for an otherwise praiseworthy man.

Bede then portrayed the development of the Christian community in England using the notion of allegiance central to the military *sacramentum* and the connected importance of faith. He marked the incorporation of different peoples into a new group, the church, through their acceptance of *sacramenta*, accenting the implications of liturgical action. In Book Two, Bede described the conversion of the East Angles: “So great was Edwin's zeal for the worship of truth that he persuaded King Eorpwald, son of Redwald, King of the East Angles, to abandon the superstition of idols and accept the faith and *sacramenta* of

⁷² Studies of Bede are legion. For the now long-acknowledged influence of Anglo-Saxon culture on the Continent, especially Bede, see the magisterial Wilhelm Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946). More recently see J.E. Cross, “Bede's Influence at Home and Abroad: An Introduction” *Beda Venerabilis: Historian, Monk and Northumbrian*, ed. L.A.J.R. Houwen and A.A. MacDonald (Groningen: E. Forsten, 1996) 17–29. For a more specific examination of Bede's influence among the Carolingians see George H. Brown, “The Preservation and Transmission of Northumbrian Culture on the Continent: Alcuin's Debt to Bede” *The Preservation and Transmission of Anglo-Saxon Culture*, ed. Paul E. Szarmach and Joel T. Rosenthal (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University Press, 1997) pp. 159–75.

⁷³ Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, 3 vols., ed. Michael Lapidge, SC 489–91 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2005) I.ix.2, p. 144. “Maximus, uir quidem strenuus et probus atque Augusto dignus nisi contra sacramenti fidem per tyrannidem emersisset, in Britanniam inuitus propemodum ab exercitu imperator creatus in Galliam transiit.”

Christ with his whole province.”⁷⁴ Other conversions, such as of the Middle Angles and those on the Isle of Wight, were framed in similar terms. For the former, Bede noted “about this time the *Middilengli*, that is the Middle Angles, ruled by their king Peada, son of Penda, accepted the faith and *sacramenta* of truth.”⁷⁵ For the latter, he wrote that Abbot Cynibert of Hreutford

sought out the king, who was then hidden in the same region recovering from wounds inflicted on him while fighting in the Isle of Wight, and begged him that, if it was necessary for the boys to die, he might first be allowed to instruct them in the *sacramenta* of the Christian faith. The king consented to this, and when Cynibert had instructed them in the word of truth, he baptized them in the fount of salvation, and assured their entry into the kingdom of heaven.⁷⁶

In the context of Christian mission, Bede employed the same vocabulary as he did earlier for the Roman legion and, more importantly, similarly analyzed communities established by *sacramenta* insofar as fidelity or faith was essential for success.

Bede emphasized the importance of allegiance established by *sacramenta* and secured by faith through examples of betrayal or infidelity. He recorded how rejection of a *sacramentum* ruptured his own beloved Northumbria in 633. After the death of the Northumbrian King Edwin, Osric inherited the kingdom of Deira (which Bede explained was one of the two provinces of Northumbria) and Eanfrid inherited the crown of Bernicia (the other province). Bede wrote “each king, as soon as he had obtained control of his earthly kingdom, however, apostatized from the *sacramenta* of the heavenly kingdom by which he was consecrated, and polluting and destroying himself, revived the ancient filth of idol worship.”⁷⁷ When treating the lapse of the East Saxons in 665, he noted “while the plague was causing a heavy death-toll in the province, Sighere and his people, having abandoned the *sacramenta* of the Christian faith, turned to rebellion against God.”⁷⁸ Political unity and stability depended upon *sacramenta* and on fidelity which reflected the unseen heavenly kingdom

⁷⁴ Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, II.xv.1. pp. 372–4. “*Tantum autem deuotionis Eduini erga cultum ueritatis habuit, ut etiam regi Orientalium Anglorum Earpualdo filio Redualdi persuaderet relictis idolorum superstitionibus fidem et sacramenta Christi cum sua prouincia suscipere.*”

⁷⁵ Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, III.xxi.1. p. 116. “*His temporibus Middilengli, id est Mediterranei Angli, sub principe Peada filio Pendan regis fidem et sacramenta ueritatis perceperunt.*”

⁷⁶ Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, IV.xvi.9. pp. 276–8. “*uenit ad regem, qui tunc eisdem in partibus occultus curabatur a uulneribus quae ei inflicta fuerant proelianti in insula Vecta, postulauitque ab eo ut, si necesse esset pueros interfici, prius eos liceret fidei Christianae sacramentis imbui. Concessit rex, et ipse instructos eos uerbo ueritatis ac fonte saluatoris ablutos de ingressu regni aeterni certos reddidit.*”

⁷⁷ Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, III.i.1. p. 16. “*Qui uterque rex, ut terreni regni infulus sortitus est, sacramenta regni caelestis, quibus initiatus erat, anathematizando prodidit, ac se priscis idolatriae sordibus polluendum perendumque restituit.*”

⁷⁸ Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, III.xxx.1. pp. 182–4. “*Quae uidelicet prouincia cum praefatae mortalitatis clade premeretur, Sigheri cum sua parte populi, relictis Christianae fidei sacramentis, ad apostasiam conuersus est.*”

in the visible earthly one. The paradigmatic significance of *sacramenta* for Bede's narrative depended upon apprehension of the multiple contexts within which they simultaneously operated. When Osric and Eanfrid were both brutally slain by Caedwalla, king of the Britons, Bede recorded that Osric was killed with "just retribution" even if by "an unrighteous hand."⁷⁹ The ends met by these leaders, especially in comparison with Maximus, highlighted the fundamental significance of *sacramentum* to Bede. The betrayal of *sacramenta* warranted death, even at the hands of a pagan. Caedwalla would not convert until shortly before his death in 689. Bede concluded his account by presenting both men as enduring examples of the importance of the *sacramentum* and the consequences of infidelity. "Up to today that year remains inauspicious and hateful to all good men, as much on account of the apostasy of the English kings who cast aside the *sacramenta* of faith, as on account of the wild tyranny of the British king."⁸⁰ Sighere and the East Saxons were subject to Mercia under the Christian King Wulfhere. When Sighere returned to his observance of Christianity, he suffered no ill effects, or at least none Bede felt compelled to record. A priest from the retinue dispatched by King Wulfhere "led the people and aforementioned king [Sighere] back to the way of justice."⁸¹ Bede shows a consistency of language and concepts in applying *sacramentum* to analyze relationships in a variety of contexts with the political and religious closely coordinated.

Throughout his *Ecclesiastical History*, Bede juxtaposed secular and religious contexts within which *sacramenta* operated to develop the notion of a Christian identity which—in part—drove his narrative. He pointedly contrasted the community bounded by Christian *sacramenta* with pagan communities. This can be seen in instances ranging from Earpwald's abandoning idolatry for *sacramenta* to Osric's and Eanfrid's betrayal of their *sacramenta* for idolatry. Bede's use of *sacramentum* implied a deep connection between political community and theological community. He routinely used the language of kingship and kingdom when expressing the group into which Christian *sacramenta* provided admission. Again in the example of Osric and Eanfrid, Bede distinguished the terrestrial kingdoms they inherited from the celestial kingdom secured by Christian *sacramenta*. Likewise, Abbot Cynibert's instruction on the Isle of Wight led to baptisms which ensured entry into the kingdom of heaven. Most significantly, in Bede's dramatic and well-known account of the Synod of Whitby in 664, where the Northumbrian king Oswy embraced Roman Christianity over its Irish incarnation, discussion revolved around *sacramentum*. More than

⁷⁹ Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, III.i.2. p. 16. "*iusta ultione*" and "*impia manu*."

⁸⁰ Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, III.i.2. p. 18. "*Infaustus ille annus et omnibus bonis exosus usque hodie permanet, tam propter apostasiam regum Anglorum, qua se fidei sacramentis exuerant, quam propter uaesanam Brettonici regis tyrannidem*."

⁸¹ Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, III.xxx.2. p. 184. "... *populum et regem praefatum ad uiam iustitiae reduxit*."

simply dividing Christians from non-Christians, Bede used *sacramentum* to organize and validate allegiances within Christianity. Bede reported that Oswy's opening and agenda-setting observation at the council was "that all who served the One God should observe one rule of life, and they should not differ in celebrating the heavenly *sacramenta*, since they all hoped for the one kingdom in heaven."⁸² Here the *sacramentum* referred to a liturgical activity, but one imbued with theological, social, and political ramifications insofar as it identified the community of the next life and connected it to that same community on earth. On the one hand, *sacramenta* constituted Christian communities against non-Christians. On the other hand, they established legitimate Christian community, preserving it from internal division.

Early Christian authors consciously massaged the semantic range of the word *sacramentum*. They accessed legal, civil, social, and religious contexts for the word, often integrating them in their analyses of the courses of human communities. They played secular and religious meanings off against one another complicating and nuancing the meaning of the word *sacramentum*. They deepened theological dimensions of the *sacramentum* through attention to how Christians organized their allegiance and community, especially through probing earlier uses such as for the Roman military oath. Early medieval authors then transmitted a synthesized sense of the word with varied meanings and a complicated relationship to political and religious life. Carolingian scholars addressed their own questions, both legal and theological, with the rich inheritance of this organizing concept.

1.3. SACRAMENTUM IN CAROLINGIAN EUROPE

Carolingian thinkers established the conceptual underpinnings of the Carolingian Renewal by creatively reworking inherited definitions and earlier concepts of *sacramentum*. Alcuin's description of St. Martin's conversion brings into sharp focus how Carolingians played with the word's semantic range. They used the word to identify, organize, and coordinate allegiances and communities simultaneously political and theological. Legal obligations stemming from a *sacramentum* with the king included theological implications. Likewise, participation in a religious *sacramentum* carried legal consequences. Careful elaboration on the *sacramentum* took advantage of multiple contexts in developing their ideas of religion and politics for—in their words—an *imperium*

⁸² Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica*, III.xxv.5. pp. 148–50. "... quod oporteret eos qui uni Deo seruirent unam uiuendi regulam tenere, nec discrepare in celebratione sacramentorum caelestium, qui unum omnes in caelis regnum expectarent."

christianum.⁸³ Throughout the late eighth and early ninth centuries, capitulary legislation highlighted the analytical and synthetic value of *sacramentum* for the Carolingian Empire. Individual authors offered interpretations underscoring the broad hold of *sacramentum* on many areas of Carolingian thought. Alcuin often exploited the word *sacramentum*. The *Life of Martin* is typical of his views. Later, in the ninth century, Paschasius Radbertus provides an example of an abbot, theologian, and political agent recognizing and exploiting the full range of the word's meanings.

Capitulary legislation, especially for Charlemagne's imperial *sacramentum*, reveals the scope of *sacramentum*'s organizing potential for Carolingian society. *Sacramentum* identified conceptual boundaries for Carolingian society, providing a foundation and suggesting sweeping implications for an *imperium christianum*. Capitulary legislation throughout Charlemagne's reign consistently emphasized the gravity of *sacramenta*. They were not to be taken lightly. The Capitulary of Herstal, an early and influential group of Charlemagne's laws issued in March 779, prescribed the following: "Concerning the *sacramenta* of those who form sworn associations of brotherhood, that no one presume to do it. Although they may make pacts in another way concerning their almsgiving or fire or shipwreck, let no one presume to swear in it."⁸⁴ This chapter prohibited *sacramenta* other than for the most fundamental relationships in society, the royal oath and liturgical *sacramenta* aligned one with the king and with God. Even for important causes, ones touching on life and death or even salvation, associations were to be made by means of an agreement less significant than a *sacramentum*.⁸⁵ As Charlemagne emphasized the legal jurisdiction secured by *sacramenta* sworn within his realm, he also recognized the theological stakes involved, acknowledging a connection between religious character and civil consequences. Amid the long, violent, and difficult conquest of the Saxons toward the end of the eighth century, Charlemagne promulgated his *Capitulatio de*

⁸³ Alcuin is especially vigorous promoting this ideal: see Mary Alberi, "The evolution of Alcuin's concept of the Imperium christianum" *The Community, the Family, and the Saint: Patterns of Power in Early Medieval Europe*, eds. Joyce Hill and Mary Swan (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998) pp. 3–17. More generally, see Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003) pp. 434–61, J.M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983) pp. 186–88, and Walter Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship* (London: Meuthen, 1969).

⁸⁴ *Capitulare Haristallense* c. 16, ed. A. Boretius MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I (Hanover: Hahnsche, 1883) p. 51. "De sacramentis per gildonia invicem coniurantibus, ut nemo facere praesumat. Alio vero modo de illorum elemosinis aut de incendio aut de naufragio, quamvis conventias faciant, nemo in hoc iurare praesumat."

⁸⁵ Such a distinction appears also later in c. 10 and c. 11 of the Capitulary of Thionville (805). See Janet Nelson, "Peers in the Early Middle Ages" *Law, Laity, and Solidarities: Essays in Honour of Susan Reynolds*, ed. Pauline Stafford, Janet Nelson, and Jane Martindale (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001) pp. 27–46, at p. 38.

partibus saxoniae.⁸⁶ The capitulary prescribed rules for the integration of the Saxons into the Carolingian world. Several chapters mentioned *sacramenta* as tools for anchoring relationships. “If anyone owes a *sacramentum* to any man, let him make his *sacramenta* to that one at a church on an appointed day; and if he despises to swear, let him make faith, and let he who is contumacious appear and pay fifteen solidi, and then make full repair in the matter.”⁸⁷ The chapter presented *sacramenta* as promises or obligations made from one person to another. Importantly, the legal relationships were given a theological dimension insofar as every *sacramentum* was required to be sworn in a church.

Carolingian royal and imperial *sacramenta* assumed a thorough integration of religion and politics. They also applied universally. Charlemagne ordered everyone under his rule—laity and clergy—to swear the oath of fidelity to him. These oaths were to be kept current, so several versions survive. When he changed titles or increased his holdings, Charlemagne issued a new oath affirming the changes. Instructions to the *missi*, officials specially chosen to be Charlemagne’s personal agents, routinely administered the royal *sacramentum* throughout the empire, emphasizing that all officials—ecclesiastical and lay—were expected to take the oath. A capitulary for *missi*, issued at Regensburg in 793, clarified the scope of the royal *sacramentum*. “How that *sacramentum* ought to be sworn by bishops and abbots, or counts and royal vassals, and also administrators, archdeacons and canons.”⁸⁸ After the imperial coronation in 800, another effort required *missi* to gather *sacramenta* from people across the Frankish world.⁸⁹ One example among many is the *General Capitulary for the Missi*, issued in 802, which recorded that “he (Charlemagne) has ordered that every man in his entire realm, whether ecclesiastic or layman, each according to his vow and way of life, who has previously promised fidelity to him in the name of the king, is now to make that promise in the name of Caesar; and those who have not yet made that promise are now to do likewise, all of twelve years and

⁸⁶ Yitzhak Hen rehearses the history of the dating of this capitulary in Yitzhak Hen, “Charlemagne’s Jihad” *Viator* 37 (2006) pp. 33–51, at 37. The key voices are Louis Halphen, *Études critiques sur l’histoire de Charlemagne* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1921) pp. 171–73 and Martin Lintzel, “Die Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der alten Sachsen XV” *Sachsen und Anhalt* 13 (1937) pp. 65–77.

⁸⁷ *Capitulatio de partibus saxoniae* c. 32, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 70. “Si cuilibet homini sacramentum debet aliquis, aframeat illum ad ecclesiam sacramenta ad diem statutum; et si iurare contempserit, fidem faciat, et solidos quindecim componat qui iactivus apparuit, et deinceps causam pleniter emendare faciat.”

⁸⁸ *Capitulare missorum* c. 2, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I. “Quomodo illum sacramentum iuratum esse debeat ab episcopis et abbatis sive comitibus vel bassis regalibus necnon vice-domini, archidiaconibus adque canonicis.”

⁸⁹ On the importance of 802 for Charlemagne and on the numerous surviving sources see Matthew Innes, “Charlemagne, justice and written law” *Law, custom, and justice in late antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Alice Rio (London: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2011) pp. 155–203.

older.”⁹⁰ This imperial *sacramentum* explicitly included both civil and ecclesiastical officials together in the same bonds of fidelity to the ruler. While the chapter distinguished between different vows or ways of life, it did not distinguish between people’s obligations to the emperor. Charlemagne consistently required *sacramenta* be sworn by all to him specifically.

The particular language of the royal, then imperial, *sacramentum* in Carolingian capitularies drew from earlier Roman and Christian traditions.⁹¹ In the *Double Edict of Commission*, promulgated by Charlemagne from his capital at Aachen on March 23, 789, we read “concerning the matter of the *sacramentum* of fidelity, which people ought to swear to us and to our sons, which ought to be declared with these words: Thus I _____ promise to my lord king Charles and to his sons that I am faithful and I will be through the days of my life without fraud or wicked trickery.”⁹² Charlemagne required his subject to swear loyalty to him and his sons in a very personal and specific formula, reminiscent of the Roman military *sacramentum*. Other instances of specific formulae in capitularies confirm the importance of a personal and specific commitment to Charlemagne and his family. An alternative formula administered throughout Europe by Charlemagne’s *missi*, likely also in 802, provides another rich and substantial perspective. On the one hand, the notion of the *sacramentum* as a promise of fidelity to a specific person is in evidence. On the other hand, greater detail reveals how the specific context of Frankish Europe at the turn of the ninth century frames Carolingian understanding of the oath.

How in the *sacramentum* I promise anew: I am faithful to the most pious lord emperor Charles, son of king Pippin and Bertrada, as a man ought rightfully to be to his lord with regard for his kingdom and his right. And I will keep this oath which I have sworn and I intend to keep it, in so much as I know and understand, from this day forward, so help me God, who created heaven and earth, and the protection of the saints.⁹³

⁹⁰ *Capitulare missorum generale* c.2, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 92. “Precepitque, ut omni homo in toto regno suo, sive ecclesiasticus sive laicus, unusquisque secundum votum et propositum suum, qui antea fidelitate sibi regis nomine promisissent, nunc ipsum promissum nominis caesaris faciat; et hii qui adhuc ipsum promissum non perfecerunt omnes usque ad duodecimo aetatis annum similiter facerent.”

⁹¹ Lines of continuity in the practice of oaths through the Merovingian Franks are traced in Matthias Becher, *Eid und Herrschaft: Untersuchungen zum Herrscherethos Karls des Grossen* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1993) pp. 94–110. See also the example and comments in *The Formularies of Angers and Marculf: Two Merovingian Legal Handbooks*, ed. and trans. Alice Rio (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008) pp. 175–6 and Alice Rio, *Legal Practice and the Written Word in the Early Middle Ages: Frankish Formulae, c. 500–1000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) pp. 24–5.

⁹² *Duplex legationis dictum* c. 18, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 63. “De sacramentis fidelitatis causa, quod nobis et filiis nostris iurare debent, quod his verbis contestari debet: ‘Sic promitto ego ille partibus domini mei Caroli regis et filiorum eius, quia fidelis sum et ero diebus vitae meae sine fraude et malo ingenio.’”

⁹³ *Capitularia missorum specialia*, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 102. “Sacramentale qualiter repromitto ego: domno Karolo piissimo imperatori, filio Pippini regis et Berthane, fidelis sum, sicut homo per dicitum debet esse domino suo, ad suum regnum et ad suum rectum. Et illud sacramentum quod iuratum habeo custodiam et custodire volo, in quantum ego scio et intellego, ab isto die inantea, si me adiuvet, quo coelum et terram creavit, et ista sanctorum patrocinia.”

The invocation provided theological reinforcement which grounded the *sacramentum*, and also suggested a Christian hermeneutic for interpreting ideas key to the oath, such as faithfulness. The language also echoed catechetical imperatives associated with baptism and championed by the court leaders like Alcuin.⁹⁴ The reference to God identified him with a creedal formula as the creator and individuals confessed they were expected to know and to understand what they promised, a requirement central to the project of the Carolingian Renewal and an often repeated requirement for catechesis and preaching.⁹⁵ Similar to what was implied by Augustine and articulated by Vegetius, the formula accesses terminology at once civil and religious. Moreover, mention of the aid of the saints likely identified the venue as a church, as with the *sacramenta* in other capitularies. The saint—present in his relics—served with God as both witness and guarantor, a tactic reminiscent of Isidore's treatment of the *sacramentum* of baptism.

More than just sacramental formulae, the capitularies often contained instruction akin to basic catechesis of their *sacramentum*'s meaning. In the *General Capitulary for the Missi*, a sequence of chapters considered the intertwined religious and theological dimensions of the *sacramentum* and explained how this concept established a firm foundation for their societal renewal. The capitulary preserves the longest and fullest surviving discussion of the imperial *sacramentum*. It began with the topic of the fidelity to be promised to the Lord Emperor and provided a series of provisions explaining its significance.⁹⁶ The first topic in the imperial *sacramentum* was God. The chapter grounded the *sacramentum* of fidelity to Charlemagne in each person's obligations to God. "First, one is personally to strive, to the best of his understanding and ability, to maintain himself fully in God's holy service, according to God's command and his own promise; for the Lord Emperor cannot himself provide the necessary care and discipline for each one individually."⁹⁷ The subsequent stipulations alternated between obligations to Charlemagne and obligations to God. After establishing that fidelity to Charlemagne flowed from fidelity to God, the *sacramentum* flipped the

⁹⁴ See Chapter Three.

⁹⁵ See Chapter Five.

⁹⁶ On the generalized swearing of oaths under Charlemagne see Janet Nelson, "Charlemagne and Empire" *The Long Morning of Medieval Europe: New Directions in Early Medieval Studies*, eds. Jennifer R. Davis and Michael McCormick (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008) pp. 223–34, at pp. 228–32. For wider discussions of fidelity and oaths under the Carolingians see Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) pp. 84–105; C.E. Odegard, *Vassi and Fideles in the Carolingian Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1955). Under Charlemagne especially see Becher, *Eid und Herrschaft*; Thomas F.X. Noble, "From Brigandage to Justice: Charlemagne 785–794" *Literacy, politics, and artistic innovation in the early medieval West*, ed. Celia Chazelle (Latham, MD: University Press of America, 1992).

⁹⁷ *Capitulare missorum generale* c. 3, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 92. "Primum, ut unusquisque et persona propria se in sancto Dei servitio secundum Dei preceptum et secundum sponsonem suam pleniter conservare studeat secundum intellectum et vires suas, quia ipse dominus imperator non omnibus singulariter necessariam potest exhibere curam et disciplinam."

order and identified Charlemagne first and God second, emphasizing the emperor's dominion over religious things of the world. For example, the second provision required those swearing the imperial *sacramentum* to preserve imperial property.⁹⁸ The third provision paralleled protection of people and things belonging to God.⁹⁹ The alternation underscored a very deliberate correspondence cultivated by Carolingian leaders between civil and religious obligations anchored in the *sacramentum*.

The writings of influential Carolingian thinkers like Alcuin reinforce the centrality of the *sacramentum* to interpreting the capitularies. Alcuin stood very consciously in a long Christian tradition of viewing *sacramentum* as a basic ordering concept for individuals and communities. He attributed a complicated, nuanced, and fundamental importance to the word throughout his writings and across a wide range of contexts. In an example which displays both the hold of the word on Alcuin's imagination and the deep thought he put into developing his ideas, he described the significance of the eucharist as a *sacramentum* in a letter to a community of monks in Septimania. He envisioned a liturgical and religious context for his idea. He set his idea in a tradition drawing on earlier Christian authors, and he identified the social consequences as well as the theological implications of the *sacramentum*. The central effect of the eucharist was the binding together of the people individually to Christ and together into the Church. In a move reminiscent of Isidore, Alcuin classified the sacrifice offered by Melchizedech as a type of the eucharist.¹⁰⁰ He argued that each element of the liturgy was a visible sign of an invisible effect, similar to the views of Augustine and Isidore. He concluded "when, in the *sacramenta*, water, wheat and wine are mixed, the faithful people are joined to Christ."¹⁰¹ Through the concept of the *sacramentum*, Alcuin also studied the community of God, the hidden unity of the Trinity. In the year 793, he wrote against Spanish Adoptionism in a letter to Felix of Urgel. Again, placing himself within a larger Christian tradition, he cited Chromatius' commentary on the Gospel of Matthew where he treated the eight beatitudes. Alcuin employed the text as an exposition of the unity of the Trinity. "The perfect faith of the Trinity is revealed when the Father

⁹⁸ *Capitulum missorum generale* c. 4, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 92. "Secundo, ut nullus homo neque cum periuri neque alii ullo ingenio vel fraude per nullius umquam adolationem vel praemium neque servum domni imperatoris neque terminum neque terram nihilque quod iure potestativo permaneat nullatenus contradicat neque abstrahere audeat vel celare; et ut nemo fugitivos fiscales suos, qui se iniuste et cum fraudes liberas dicunt, celare neque abstrahere cum periurio vel alio inienio presumat."

⁹⁹ *Capitulum missorum generale* c. 5, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 93. "Ut sanctis ecclesiis Dei neque viduis neque orphanis neque peregrinis fraude vel rapinam vel aliquit iniuriae quis facere presumat; quia ipse dominus imperator, post Domini et sanctis eius, eorum et protector et defensor esse constitutus est."

¹⁰⁰ See Isidore, *Etymologiae* 7.6.25–6.

¹⁰¹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 137, ed. Ernst Dümmler, MGH *Epistolae* 4 (Berlin: Weidmannos, 1895) p. 212. "dum in sacramentis aqua tritico vel vino miscetur, fidelis populus Christo incorporatur et iungitur."

testifies that Christ, our Lord and God, is his son, and the Holy Spirit, that is the Paraclete, in so great a *sacramentum* of faith is joined to the Father and to the Son, so that we believe in three persons—true Father, true Son, and true Holy Spirit, but one divinity of Trinity and one substance.”¹⁰² Here the word operates in the context of Christian revelation, an insight into the godhead. This truth communicated to each person was the perfect faith which marked those who belong to the Church. The theological force of the statement depended upon the intimacy and connectedness of a community bound by a “*sacramentum* of faith,” the same expression employed in the imperial *sacramenta*.

Alcuin also applied sacramental thinking in legal and political forums. In a letter from the summer of 799, Alcuin advised Arn, the Archbishop of Salzburg, concerning the trouble between Pope Leo III (r. 795–816) and the Roman aristocracy who wanted Leo deposed.¹⁰³ His warnings to Arn assumed that *sacramenta* ordered jurisdictional obligations within a community. Alcuin wrote

I understand that there are many rivals of the Pope who wish to depose him by scheming accusations, seeking charges of adultery or perjury against him and then ordering that he should clear himself by swearing a most solemn *sacramentum*, their secret intention being that he should resign his office without taking the oath and retire to the same monastery. He is under no obligation at all to do this, nor should he agree to take any *sacramentum* or resign his see. I would reply for him, if I stood at his side: Let him who is without sin among you cast the first stone (Jn 8:7).¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Alcuin, *Epistola* 23, p. 64. “*Perfecta ergo fides est trinitatis ostensa, cum et pater Christum dominum ac Deum nostrum filium suum esse testatur, et Spiritus sanctus, id est paraclytus, in tanto fidei sacramento patri filioque coniungitur, ut verum patrem, verum filium, verum etiam Spiritum sanctum crederemus tres personas, sed unam divinitatem trinitatis, unamque substantiam.*” See Chromatius of Aquileia, *Tractatus in Matthaeum* 13.2.3, CCSL 9A, eds. R. Étaix and J. Lemarié (Turnhout: Brepols, 1974) p. 249.

¹⁰³ See the brief discussion and bibliography in Thomas F.X. Noble, “The Papacy in the eighth and ninth centuries” *New Cambridge Medieval History II c.700–c.900*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 563–86, esp. pp. 568–70. Also see Rudolf Schieffer, “Das Attentat auf Papst Leo III” *Am Vorabend der Kaiserkrönung: Das Epos “Karolus Magnus et Leo papa” und der Papstbesuch in Paderborn 799*, ed. Peter Godman, Jörg Jarnut, and Peter Johanek (Berlin: Akademie, 2002) pp. 75–85; Thomas F.X. Noble, *The Republic of St. Peter: The Birth of the Papal State, 680–825* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984) pp. 199–210, 292–4; Othmar Hageneder, “Das crimen maiestatis, der Prozeß gegen die Attentäter Papst Leos. III. und die Kaiserkrönung Karls des Großen” *Aus Kirche und Reich. Studien zu Theologie, Politik und Recht im Mittelalter*, ed. Hubert Mordek (Singmaringen: Thorbecke, 1983) pp. 55–79; Max Kerner, “Der Reinigungseid Leos III. vom Dezember 800. Die Frage seiner Echtheit und frühen kanonistischen Überlieferung. Eine Studie zum Problem der päpstlichen Immunität im früheren Mittelalter” *Zeitschrift des Aachener Geschichtsvereins* 84/85 (1977/78) pp. 131–60.

¹⁰⁴ Alcuin, *Epistola* 179, p. 297. “*Intelligo quoque multos esse aemulatores eiusdem praedicti domni apostolici; deponere eum quaerentes subdola suggestione; crimina adulterii vel periurii illi inponere quaerentes; et tunc, sacramento gravissimi iurisiurandi ab his se purgaret criminibus, ordinantes; sic consilio secreto suadentes, ut deponeret sine iuramento pontificatum, et quietam in quolibet monasterio ageret vitam. Quod omnino fieri non debet, nec ille ipse consentire, se quolibet sacramento constringere aut sedem suam amittere. Responderem pro eo, si ex latere eius stetissem: Qui sine peccato est vestrum, primus in illum lapidem mittat.*”

This passage interpreted the political struggles of Pope Leo III through a Gospel lens, but the stakes are clearly broader than Alcuin's exegetic instinct. The *sacramentum* referred to here was a legal oath demanded by the pope's adversaries that Alcuin draws into a broader discourse. The basic concept of the *sacramentum* remained the same, while the specific context suggested the particular application in this case. Any legal proceedings occurring within the papal household of the early Middle Ages may have been tied to canon law or even theological questions, but in this passage, the *sacramentum* was a legal instrument having to do with criminal charges, though not without religious and even theological ramifications. Alcuin's negative evaluation of the action revolved around the community in which the pope lived. He did not want the pope to subject himself to others' judgement, nor did he want the pope to be involved with corrupt Roman aristocrats.

Later Carolingian theologians similarly exploited *sacramentum* in sophisticated analyses of allegiance and community. In a particularly lucid passage from the mid-ninth century, Paschasius Radbertus (d. 860) considered the theological and secular implications of the different contexts within which *sacramenta* operate. Paschasius' life prepared him to see the polysemy of the word.¹⁰⁵ He was raised by nuns at Soissons under Charlemagne's cousin Theodrada. He then professed as a monk at Corbie under another cousin of Charlemagne, Adalhard. Although a monk, he was active in politically charged endeavors beyond the walls of Corbie, including an 822 mission among the Saxons to establish the daughter monastery of Corvey, and in 826, a delegation sent to Aachen to secure the appointment of Adalhard's successor, Wala. In the early 830s, Paschasius Radbertus composed his celebrated treatise *On the Body and Blood of the Lord*. Written for students at Corvey and dedicated to its abbot, Warin, the work interpreted the eucharistic liturgy for its monastic audience. Paschasius concentrated, in a way not dissimilar from Alcuin, on the implications of *sacramenta* for communities, specifically for incorporation.¹⁰⁶ Theologically, the work uses baptism, viewed as a *sacramentum*, as the key for unpacking how the eucharist should be understood from a sacramental perspective.¹⁰⁷ At the beginning of the treatise, Paschasius echoed Augustine and Isidore, focusing on the sign value of a *sacramentum* as representative of an interior action, and defined *sacramenta* as "anything handed down to us in any divine celebration as a pledge of salvation, where the thing done visibly is far

¹⁰⁵ For a general introduction to Paschasius Radbertus see Henri Peltier, *Pascale Radbert, Abbé de Corbie, contribution à l'étude de la vie monastique et de la pensée chrétienne aux temps carolingiens* (Amiens: L.-H. Duthoit, 1938).

¹⁰⁶ For a specific treatment of Paschasius, including pointed comparisons with Ratramnus of Corbie see Owen M. Phelan, "Horizontal and Vertical Theologies: 'Sacraments' in the Works of Paschasius Radbertus and Ratramnus of Corbie" *Harvard Theological Review* 103:3 (2010) pp. 271–89.

¹⁰⁷ Phelan, "Horizontal and Vertical Theologies," pp. 278–9.

different from what is worked invisibly within, which should be received in a holy manner.”¹⁰⁸ Then, strikingly, he identified different contexts within which *sacramenta* functioned in the Carolingian world. First, he named the crucial liturgical activities of the Church, beginning with baptism. Second, he identified *sacramenta* in legal and political life. Third, *sacramenta* were theological insights gained from exploring the Bible. He began “Christ’s *sacramenta* **in the church** are baptism, chrismation, and the body and blood of the Lord.”¹⁰⁹ He continued “it is a *sacramentum* **of the law** in which after the choosing of sides each one swears what he declared in his pact.”¹¹⁰ Finally, he added that “**in the Scriptures** it is a *sacramentum* wherever the Holy Spirit accomplishes something in them inwardly speaking.”¹¹¹ His indebtedness to earlier traditions, both Roman and early Christian, in working out the taxonomy of sacramental thought is evident throughout. Paschasius often followed Isidore’s summaries. For example, both explained that the word *sacramentum* was partly derived from the word sacred. “Whence also is a *sacramentum* called because a secret invisible faith is held through a consecration of the invocation of God or of something sacred from that which, in public, either by seeing or by hearing, the voice of the one swearing is understood.”¹¹² Paschasius’ definition included the earlier elements *sacramenta* most commonly seized upon by Carolingian thinkers: an accent on faith, a dependence on God, a public action, and effort toward ensuring understanding. No matter what the context—liturgical, legal, or hermeneutical—the *sacramentum* provided a basic organizing tool.

Further examples from Paschasius’ writings plot the boundaries of his view. He clearly understood *sacramentum* to be theologically constitutive of community. Near the end of his biography the *Life of Saint Adalhard*, as Adalhard prepared for his death, Radbertus had his predecessor echo the words of Simeon from the Gospel of Luke. “Now dismiss your servant, Lord, in peace, according to your word, for I have received all the *sacramenta* of your mystery. Now what remains except for me to come to you?”¹¹³ Paschasius

¹⁰⁸ Paschasius Radbertus, *De corpore et sanguine domini* 3, ed. Beda Paulus, CCCM 16 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969) p. 23. “. . . quicquid in aliqua celebratione diuina nobis quasi pignus salutis traditur, cum res gesta uisibilis longe aliud inuisibile intus operatur quod sancte accipiendum sit.”

¹⁰⁹ Paschasius Radbertus, *De corpore* 3, p. 24. “Sunt autem sacramenta Christi in ecclesia baptismus et chrisma, corpus quoque Domini et sanguis.” Emphasis added.

¹¹⁰ Paschasius Radbertus, *De corpore* 3, p. 24. “Est sacramentum iuris in quo post electionem partium iurat unusquisque quod suo pactu decreuerit.” Emphasis added.

¹¹¹ Paschasius Radbertus, *De corpore* 3, pp. 24–5. “Est autem et sacramentum in Scripturis diuinis ubicumque Sacer Spiritus in eisdem interius aliquid efficaciter loquendo operatur.” Emphasis added.

¹¹² Paschasius Radbertus, *De corpore* 3, p. 24. “Vnde et sacramentum dicitur quod secretius fides inuisibilis per consecrationem inuocationis Dei uel alicuius sacri teneatur ex eo quod foris uisu uel auditu uox iurantis sentitur.”

¹¹³ Paschasius Radbertus, *De uita sancti Adalhardi* 80, PL 120.1547. “Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine, secundum verbum tuum in pace, quia percepi omnia tui mysterii sacramenta. Et nunc quid superest, nisi ut ad te veniam?”

viewed a *sacramentum* as creating a union or a bond between the recipient and God. Having been brought into community with God by means of *sacramenta*, the only deepening of community which remained for the saint was to be with God face to face in eternal life. Paschasius, of course, was certain of Adalhard's heavenly reward insofar as he counted the abbot a saint. He emphasized the closeness to God brought about by the *sacramentum* of the eucharist, when he depicts Adalhard's last action as reception of Holy Communion.¹¹⁴

Paschasius employed *sacramentum* in his analysis of the political and social discord which rocked the Carolingian world during the second quarter of the ninth century. In biographical works on two of his predecessors, Adalhard and Wala, Paschasius explored the useful semantic range of the *sacramentum* in analyzing difficult social and political conflicts.¹¹⁵ Both of his predecessors had tumultuous tenures at the head of the monastery of Corbie. Both men were members of the ruling family and deeply involved in the political and cultural tumult of the mid-ninth-century Frankish world. Throughout both works, Paschasius Radbertus used the idea of the *sacramentum* to underscore the unity of important communities. The sometime abbot of Corbie saw an implicit analogy between political and religious communities established by a *sacramentum*. In the *Epitaph for Arsenius*, or *Life of Wala*, when Paschasius considered political treachery, *sacramentum* provided central concept for interpreting a political community. In one scene he described, using pseudonyms, how the emperor was betrayed by his comrades. "Honorius, long a partner with his father and recognized by all as emperor, was removed from power, was expelled from partnership. *Sacramenta* which had been made to him were dissolved by

¹¹⁴ Paschasius Radbertus, *De uita sancti Adalhardi* 82, PL 120.1548. The importance of the eucharist to community with Christ is further explored by Patricia McCormick Zirkel, "Why Should it be Necessary that Christ be Immolated Daily?"—Paschasius Radbertus on Daily Eucharist" *American Benedictine Review* 47 (1996) pp. 240–59.

¹¹⁵ Paschasius' sympathetic portrayals are no doubt motivated in part by his own turbulent career. For a brief introduction to the lives and careers of Adalhard and Wala, as well as treatment of Paschasius' lives see David Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1990) pp. 22–30. For a discussion of the political turmoil in which Paschasius depicted Adalhard and Wala see Steven A. Stofferahn, "A New Majesty: Paschasius Radbertus, Exile, and the Masters' Honor" *Medieval Monks and Their World: Ideas and Realities: Studies in Honor of Richard E. Sullivan*, eds. David Blanks, Michael Frassetto, and Amy Livingstone (Leiden: Brill, 2006) pp. 49–69; David Ganz, "The *Epitaphium Arsenii* and Opposition to Louis the Pious" *Charlemagne's Heir. New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814–840)*, eds. Peter Godman and Roger Collins (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990) pp. 537–50. The best and most recent study of Adalhard is Brigitte Kasten, *Adalhard von Corbie: Die Biographie eines Karolingischen Politikers und Kloostervorstehers* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1986). Wala, in particular, has been studied for his political activities. Lorenz Weinrich, *Graf, Mönch und Rebell. Die Biographie eines Karolingers* (Lübeck und Hamburg: Matthiesen, 1963). Henry Mayr-Harting, "Two Abbots in Politics: Wala of Corbie and Bernard of Clairvaux" *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society. Fifth Series* 40 (1990) pp. 217–37.

the authority of his father.”¹¹⁶ Paschasius here presented the *sacramentum*—in the sense of oath—as the fundamental building block of a political community.¹¹⁷ The political sense and theological sense of the word worked in the same way and informed each other.

In his *Life of Saint Adalhard*, Paschasius not only alluded to the deep continuity of *sacramenta*, but explicitly acknowledged it. He described a letter which Adalhard wrote to Louis the Pious in which he used *sacramentum* in a way which, like Alcuin, assumed simultaneous religious and political meaning. “O Prince, you know that good faith has often prevailed amid bloodshed and clash of savage arms even among pagans. You know that this is so in order that each may commit himself more profoundly to *sacramenta* of faith. How much stronger should be the agreement of a Christian pledged in truth?”¹¹⁸ Paschasius’s *sacramenta* depended upon a fundamental analogy between political and religious arenas. In this passage, instead of establishing a religious *sacramentum* by analogy to a military one, the political *sacramentum*’s power was drawn from the analogy to a religious one. The movement we saw in Late Antiquity now ran in both directions. To remove any ambiguity about the statement, Paschasius underscored how secure was a bond wrought between individuals through a *sacramentum* as he continued: “On the basis of such statements it is clear beyond doubt that it would be easier to violate chains of iron than for the faithful promises of this man to be ruined.”¹¹⁹ For Paschasius, the relationships established by *sacramenta* ought to be unbreakable. Through the deep continuity of meanings attendant to *sacramentum*, Paschasius viewed theological and political contexts as inseparable in his lives of Adalhard and Wala. This idea of *sacramentum* offered an organizing concept to Carolingian leaders, one that encompassed thinking about individuals and communities.

¹¹⁶ Paschasius Radbertus, *Radbert’s Epitaphium Arsenii* 10, ed. Ernst Dümmler (Berlin: Verlag der Königl. Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1900) p. 74. “Honorius, qui erat longe diu consors a patre, et ab omnibus procreatus imperator, removetur a potestate, repellitur a consortio; sacramenta universorum, quae illi facta fuerant, auctoritate paterna violantur.” Dümmler’s edition is rare. The text is more easily accessed at PL 120.1623.

¹¹⁷ For a survey of the evidence on oaths, with an emphasis on its institutional significance in the Carolingian World, see Becher, *Eid und Herrschaft*; Francois Ganshof, “Charlemagne’s use of the oath” *The Carolingians and the Frankish Monarchy. Studies in Carolingian History*, trans. Janet Sondheimer (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971) pp. 111–24, originally published as “Charlemagne et le serment” *Mélanges d’histoire du Moyen Age dédiés à la mémoire Louis Halpen* (Paris, 1951) pp. 259–70; Charles E. Odegaard, “Carolingian Oaths of Fidelity” *Speculum* 16 (1941) pp. 284–96; idem, “The Concept of Royal Power in Carolingian Oaths of Fidelity” *Speculum* 20 (1945) pp. 279–89; idem, *Vassi and Fideles in the Carolingian Empire* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1945) repr. (New York: Octagon Books, 1972); Ferdinand Lot, “Le serment de fidélité à l’époque franque” *Revue belge de philologie et d’histoire* 12 (1933) pp. 569–82.

¹¹⁸ Paschasius Radbertus, *De uita sancti Adalhardi*, 18. PL 120.1518. “Quid putas, inquit, o princeps, si fides saepe inter cruores et saevientium arma, etiam inter paganos tantum valuit, ut quisque se committeret alterius fidei sacramentis: quantum valere debeat foedus Christiani in veritate promissum?”

¹¹⁹ Paschasius Radbertus, *De uita sancti Adalhardi*, 18. PL 120.1518. “Talibus dictis procul dubio liquet, quod facilius fuerit ferri violari vincula, quam hujus viri fidei contaminari promissa.”

Paschasius' use of *sacramentum* along with that of Alcuin and that of capitularies enriches our understanding of its value as an organizing concept to leading Carolingian thinkers. It establishes the range of applications seen by Carolingian leaders and confirms for us that their appreciation was not superficial, arbitrary, or merely literary. It was deeply embedded in their thinking while they actively reflected on it and sought to apply it to their world. This brief survey also prepares us to survey the broad importance of the *sacramentum* of baptism to the Carolingians.

1.4. BAPTISM AS SACRAMENTUM UNDER THE CAROLINGIANS

Preliminary observations on Carolingian treatments of baptism as a *sacramentum* reveal how they viewed the foundational Christian liturgical rite as an interpretive key for a variety of complicated contexts. Carolingian thinkers repeatedly described three issues characteristic of *sacramenta* standing at the heart of baptism: the establishment of faith in the newly baptized, their incorporation into a single unified community, and the new moral obligations incumbent upon the baptized. Rich capitulary evidence and the interpretive instincts of Carolingian thinkers like Alcuin and Paschasius Radbertus witnessed to the complicated significance of baptism for the Carolingian Renewal. Carolingian authors generally characterized baptism as the "*sacramentum* of faith" as Alcuin does in the mid-790s in several letters considering the baptism and the conversion of the Avars in correspondence directed to Charlemagne, Bishop Arn of Salzburg, and chancellor Meginfrid.¹²⁰ In the letter to Charlemagne, Alcuin, in language borrowed from Jerome, described baptism as a *sacramentum* of faith, just as the imperial oath would be described. Alcuin elucidated the meaning of Jesus' commissioning of the Apostles at the end of Matthew's Gospel to baptize all the nations and wrote, "He [Jesus] instructed the apostles first to teach all peoples, and then to imbue them with the *sacramentum* of faith."¹²¹ The *sacramentum* was the foundation for a new life in the Church. In his massive commentary on Matthew, Paschasius Radbertus similarly described baptism as a *sacramentum* of faith, which the abbot tellingly used to describe both religious and civic commitments. Paschasius drew a conclusion similar to Alcuin's in identifying baptism with faith. "So then when they

¹²⁰ This correspondence will receive detailed treatment in Chapter Three.

¹²¹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 110, p. 158. "*Iussit apostolis, ut primum docerent omnes gentes, deinde fidei tingere sacramento et post fidem ac baptisma, quae essent observanda, praeciperent.*" Bede, *Opera*, ed. D. Hurst, CCSL 122 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955) p. 235. Jerome, *Opera*, ed. D. Hurst and M. Adriaen, CCSL 77 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969) p. 282.

[the catechumens] have been instructed, the *sacramenta* of faith are to be handed over and thus a man should be imbued by baptism so that the whole man is renewed in the same *sacramentum*.”¹²² Baptismal *sacramenta* point not only to baptism itself, but to the many things which accompany baptism: theological convictions, the spiritual relationships, or the moral laws which framed Christian life. Pluralizing *sacramentum*, indicating the multiple elements or teachings undergirding baptismal commitment, underscored the complexity of his conception. For Paschasius, baptism offered the context within which faith is first instilled in a person and it conveyed concomitant benefits and obligations.

The way Carolingian authors wrote about baptism drew on widely applied concepts of *sacramenta*. It was as much about establishing a disposition as it was communicating a dogma. As clerical leaders expounded the necessity of infant baptism, they often referred to this orientation or commitment of faith established by baptism. Because Carolingians were not breaking new ground, discussions of infant baptism not only highlight the wide conceptual range of *sacramentum*, they also underscore Carolingian engagement with earlier traditions about *sacramenta*. The basic theology and sacramental foundation for infant baptism was found in the writings of Augustine, who articulated just this point about the faith of children in a celebrated letter to Pope Boniface.¹²³ That Augustine’s thinking was well known to Carolingians is clear; for instance, Amalarius of Metz (780–850), the noted Carolingian liturgical commentator, cited this letter in his own discussion of baptism. Children, he wrote, “have faith on account of the *sacramentum* of faith, just as we read in the letter of Augustine to bishop Boniface.”¹²⁴ Alcuin also referenced children to advance a position commonly held by Carolingian theologians. To Charlemagne, Alcuin wrote, “infants not able to use reason, guilty by the sins of another, are able to be saved by the faith and confession of another through the *sacramentum* of baptism.”¹²⁵ Many Carolingians thinkers taught that because all were damned by Adam’s original sin, children were allowed to be brought into the

¹²² Paschasius Radbertus, *Expositio in Matheo libri XII* 12.5399–5312.5401, ed. Beda Paulus, CCCM 56B (Turnhout: Brepols, 1984) p. 1433. “Deinde his ita instructis tradenda sunt sacramenta fidei et si <c> baptismo tingendus homo ut renascatur in eodem sacramento totus.”

¹²³ Augustine, *Epistola* 98.9, ed. A. Goldbacher, CSEL 34 (Vienna: F. Tempsky, 1895) p. 531. “. . . sacramentum fidei fides est. nihil est autem aliud credere quam fidem habere. ac per hoc cum respondetur paruulus credere, qui fidei nondum habet affectum, respondetur fidem habere propter fidei sacramentum et conuertere se ad deum propter conuersionis sacramentum, quia et ipsa responsio ad celebrationem pertinet sacramenti . . .”

¹²⁴ Susan A. Keefe, *Water and the Word: Baptism and the Education of the Clergy in the Carolingian Empire*, Vol. II (University of Notre Dame Press: Notre Dame, 2002) p. 348. “. . . fidem habere propter fidei sacramentum, sicut legimus in agustini epistola bonifacium episcopum . . .”

¹²⁵ Alcuin, *Epistola* 110, p. 158. “Igitur infantes—ratione non utentes, aliorum peccatis obnoxii—aliorum fide et confessione per baptismi sacramentum saluari possunt.”

Body of Christ and receive the beneficial effects of baptism through the profession of their sponsors or godparents. Alcuin here analyzed the liturgical *sacramentum* as establishing bonds analogous to a Roman military *sacramentum* with its deeply personal aspect and strong obligations on both parties. Furthermore, he imagined baptism being administered like the old Roman legal *sacramentum*, as explained by Isidore, which depended on the notion of surety, when one person took responsibility for another, and witnessed to another's commitment.

The *sacramentum* of baptism helped Carolingian authors organize their thoughts on polity, which often intertwined secular and theological ideas, and carried broad implications for Carolingian understanding of social and political life. The notion of incorporation into the Body of Christ typified this instinct. Paschasius began his treatise *On the Body and Blood of the Lord* with a careful description of the importance of the *sacramentum*, and identified baptism and the eucharist as among the most important gifts of Christ to the church. "For Christ left to his church in a mystery nothing greater than this (the eucharist) and the *sacramentum* of baptism, as well as the Holy Scriptures."¹²⁶ For Paschasius, the significance of baptism—as well as the eucharist and the Bible—was defined by unity. He wrote that *sacramenta*, especially baptism and the eucharist, guaranteed that "participation in Christ may be granted to men in the unity of his body."¹²⁷ Paschasius understood baptism to be foundational: the *sacramentum* was intrinsically important, but also paradigmatic for thinking about the person and the community. He continued, "thenceforth in Christ's members, through that same rebirth freed from evil, we may be made one body."¹²⁸ For the great scholar of Corbie, the essential connection between baptism and the eucharist lay in unity. Baptism brought one into the unity of the Body of Christ, while the eucharist strengthened that body's unity.

Sacramenta helped Carolingian thinkers both to distinguish their community from that of others and to understand the distinctiveness of their own group. Even as it provided a general model for Carolingian thought, the distinctiveness of its theological character remained pivotal. In his *Dialogue Concerning Rhetoric and Virtues*, written specifically for Charlemagne, Alcuin characterized the *sacramentum* as the essential difference between modern Christian thinkers and ancient pagan philosophers. In the middle of a section concerning the philosophic idea of moral duty and its relationship to Christianity, Alcuin added a telling exchange. Charlemagne inquired "what is the

¹²⁶ Paschasius Radbertus, *De corpore* 1, p. 17. "Nihil enim Christus ecclesiae suae maius aliquid in mysterio reliquit quam hoc baptismique sacramentum, necnon et Scripturas Sanctas."

¹²⁷ Paschasius Radbertus, *De corpore*, 1, p. 18. "participatio Christi in unitate corporis concedatur.

¹²⁸ Paschasius Radbertus, *De corpore*, 3, p. 25. "Porro baptismi sacramento intrandi ad eandem adoptionem ostium credentibus panditur, ut deinceps in membris Christi per eandem renascentiam liberati a malo unum corpus efficiamur."

difference between such a philosopher and the Christians?" Alcuin replied "faith and baptism."¹²⁹ Faith and the *sacramentum* of baptism distinguished Carolingian Christians from earlier heathen communities and framed how Carolingians ought to relate to each other. Carolingian descriptions of new Christian life highlighted and developed the importance of new relationships contracted through the *sacramentum* of baptism. Alcuin's famous student Hrabanus Maurus, abbot of Fulda and archbishop of Mainz during the first half of the ninth century, synthesized in baptism both theological and social ideals in his treatise on priestly formation. Early in *On the Training of Clergy*, he explained that "the faithful partaking in the *sacramentum* enter into a pact of society and peace: by virtue of the *sacramentum*, however, all the members joined and united to their head will rejoice in eternal glory."¹³⁰ Hrabanus pointed to the new community established by baptism. He used political and legal terminology, drawn from Roman antiquity and now central to the Carolingian efforts in Europe. The concept of a social pact, the ideal of peace, and the qualification of fidelity speak to the mutually reinforcing theological and social dimensions that Carolingian intellectuals saw in the *sacramentum* of baptism.¹³¹ The goal of a society rooted in *sacramentum* was directed toward eternal glory characterized by unity with Christ. Theological convictions behind the *sacramentum* were to be incarnated—rendered visible—in social and political action.

Many thinkers also highlighted the moral demands placed on new Christians as members in the community of the church. In his *Commentary on Ecclesiastes*, Alcuin offered a sober warning to the followers of the Antichrist who left the graces of baptism behind and returned to immorality. He emphasized not only the new community established by the *sacramentum*, but also the moral imperative for members of the community. "These are the ones who are reborn through the grace of the Holy Spirit and the *sacramentum* of baptism into the kingdom, but not remaining in it, returning to vices, they therefore waste away, consumed with want."¹³² The theological stakes of immoral behavior were heightened by reference to the political community which one exited through the betrayal of one's *sacramentum*. Nowhere were the Carolingian

¹²⁹ Alcuin, *The Rhetoric of Alcuin and Charlemagne*, ed. and trans. Wilbur S. Howell (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941) pp. 146–7. "Karlus. Quid tunc distat inter philosophum talem et Christianos? Albinus. Fides et baptismus."

¹³⁰ Hrabanus Maurus, *De institutione clericorum* 1.31, ed. Detlev Zimpel (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996) p. 331. "in sacramento fideles quique communicantes pactum societatis et pacis ineunt: in virtute autem sacramenti omnia membra capiti suo coniuncta et coadunata in aeterna claritate gaudebunt"

¹³¹ For a more detailed presentation see Jean Chélini, *L'aube du Moyen Âge*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Picard, 2000).

¹³² Alcuin, *Expositio in ecclesiasten*, PL 100.0687. "Hi sunt qui nascuntur per gratiam sancti Spiritus, et sacramentum baptismi in regnum, sed non permanent in eo, revertentes ad vitia, ideo consumpti inopia tabescent."

assumptions concerning the moral imperatives of baptism clearer than in capitulary legislation. The First Saxon Capitulary again provides a crucial window into the importance of baptism as a *sacramentum* under the Carolingians, especially for Charlemagne and his court intellectuals. Its laws were designed in a general way to force integration of the conquered Saxons into the Carolingian world. One of its key mechanisms of integration was coercion. The capitulary dealt with this issue in two passages. The first appeared amid a series of capital offenses revolving around fidelity to God, such as sacrificing a person to the devil or conspiring with pagans against Christians, and the second around fidelity to political leaders, such as being unfaithful to the king or raping the lord's daughter. Refusal to integrate oneself into Christian Carolingian society carried the highest penalty: "Hereafter if anyone among the people of the Saxons, lurking among them unbaptized, wishes to conceal himself and avoids coming to baptism and wishes to remain a pagan, let him be put to death."¹³³ The law's concerns closely resemble those addressed by the oaths to Charlemagne, namely, basic social/political integration and a personal commitment by which one could be held accountable.

Baptism appears a second time amid legislation dealing with others in Carolingian society, such as paying the tithe or contracting marriage. Refusal to facilitate the integration of others carried a substantial penalty, though short of capital punishment. "Similarly it was decided to write down these decrees that every infant be baptized within a year, and we establish that if anyone disdains to offer an infant for baptism within the course of a year without the counsel or the permission of a priest, if he is of noble birth he will pay 120 solidi to the fisc, if he is freeborn sixty, if a litus thirty."¹³⁴ The basic issue revolves around the social implications of theologically grounded commitments. In this case the direct concern revolves around responsibilities not to God or the king but to others and so carried steep, but not lethal, penalties. That the *sacramentum* of baptism appeared twice in this capitulary and in different circumstances shows its centrality to the Carolingians for organizing allegiance and creating community.

In conclusion, Alcuin's description of Martin's conversion with which this chapter began rested on a long tradition of ordering approaches to personal and communal life by means of the *sacramentum*. Alcuin draws upon a rich inheritance from Roman Antiquity and Early Christianity to fashion a tool for the construction of a new project in Europe. He wrote

¹³³ *Capitulatio de partibus saxoniae* c.8, *MGH Capitularia regum francorum I* ed. A.p. 69. "Si quis deinceps in gentibus Saxonorum inter eos latens non baptizatus se abscondere voluerit et ad baptismum venire contempserit paganusque permanere voluerit, more moriatur."

¹³⁴ *Capitulatio de partibus saxoniae* c.17, *MGH Capitularia regum francorum I* p. 69. "Similiter placuit his decretis inserere, quod omnes infants infra annum baptizantur; et hoc statuimus, ut si quis infantem intra circulum anni ad baptismum offerre contempserit sine consilio vel licentia sacerdotis, si de nobile generi fuerit centum viginti solidos fisco componant, si ingenuus sexaginta, si litus triginta."

But the holy man (Martin) chose to serve the heavenly God rather than to fight under an earthly emperor; he who was specially chosen to carry the flag of the holy cross in the western parts of the world, and exchanged the *sacramenta* of the military for evangelical edicts: not to contend with secular arms for the Roman Empire, but to enlarge the Christian empire with particular teachings; and not to throw wild peoples under the hard yoke of the Romans, but to put the light yoke of Christ on the necks of many nations.¹³⁵

Alcuin's juxtaposition of Martin's military oath to the emperor with his baptismal pledge to God underscored what he believed to be the deep continuity between Martin's military service and his career as a *miles Christi* which rested on an underlying conceptual framework of *sacramenta*. Even as he set the Roman *sacramentum* against Christian liturgical ones—here baptism—which are the *sacramenta* of the army of the Christian empire, the paradigmatic features of the *sacramentum* remained constant: visible exterior/invisible interior activity, allegiance to a community, and the fundamental importance of faith and fidelity. Importantly, the theological context shaped the political and social implications. He depicted Martin as applying the same means to a new end, elaborating on the implications of Christian *sacramenta*, and identifying two aspects central to Carolingian project of renewal. First, a Christian soldier expanded the *imperium christianum* through missionary preaching, through the teaching of Christian doctrine. Second, a Christian soldier brought wild people into social order through the application of Christian moral instruction. For Alcuin, Martin's baptism was the defining *sacramentum*. It ordered his world at the most fundamental level. It framed his relationship to God, identified his primary community, and defined his responsibilities within that community.

¹³⁵ Alcuin, *Vita Martini* 2, PL 101.0659. "*Sed vir sanctus magis elegit Deo coelesti servire, quam sub imperatore militare terreno; qui specialiter electus est, ut vexillum sanctae crucis occiduas orbis portaret in partes, et militiae sacramenta evangelicis mutaret edictis: non pro regno armis saecularibus certare Romano, sed specialibus doctrinis Christianum dilatare imperium; nec dura Romanorum lege populos subicere feroces, sed leve Christi jugum plurimarum collo injicere gentium.*"

The Articulation of Polity: Baptism as the Foundation of an *Imperium Christianum*

That Christianity figured prominently in Carolingian expressions of political identity has long been appreciated.¹ Less emphasized is the particularly fundamental role that the *sacramentum* of baptism played in Carolingian understandings of polity at the end of the eighth century and into the ninth. Perhaps it should come as no surprise that a regime presenting itself as a *populus Dei* should think about community in terms of the privileges and obligations flowing from baptismal commitments.² This self-understanding appeared in Carolingian legal materials as early as a 742 capitulary from a council convoked by Charlotman, son of Charles Martel, and presided over by Boniface.³ Across the second half of the eighth century, Charlemagne adopted and developed the idea of the *populus Dei*.⁴ He used it throughout his reign in important documents, such as the preface to the *Admonitio generalis*.⁵ As the *sacramentum* which first

¹ Mayke de Jong, "The State of the Church and Early Medieval State Formation" *Der frühmittelalterliche Staat—europäische Perspektiven*, eds. Walter Pohl and Veronika Wieser (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009) pp. 214–54; idem, "Ecclesia and the Early Medieval Polity" *Staat im frühen Mittelalter*, eds. Stuart Airlie, Walter Pohl, and Helmut Reimitz (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2006) pp. 113–32; Janet Nelson, "Kingship and Royal Government" *New Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. 2, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 383–430, esp. pp. 422–30; see also the helpful summary and condensed bibliography covering the major themes of twentieth-century scholarship concerning the Carolingian state and its unique relationship with the religious establishment, Richard E. Sullivan, "The Carolingian Age: Reflections on Its Place in the History of the Middle Ages" *Speculum* 64 (1989) pp. 267–306, esp. pp. 273–8.

² Walter Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship* (London: Methuen and Co., 1969) pp. 21–3.

³ *Capitula maiorum domus c. 5*, ed. A. Boretius, *MGH Capitularia regum francorum I* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1883) p. 25.

⁴ Mary Garrison, "The Franks as the New Israel? Education for an Identity from Pippin to Charlemagne" *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, eds. Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 114–61.

⁵ *Die Admonitio generalis Karls des Grossen*, eds. Hubert Mordek, Klaus Zechiel-Eckes, and Michael Glatthaar (Hannover: Hahnsche, 2012) p. 180.

established Christian identity, baptism became a justification for authority and a principle by which to measure and structure relationships under that authority. Thus ideas associated with baptism became principal tools Carolingian thinkers used to organize and analyze questions of community identity. And this occurred not only with an eye toward religious or theological implications, but quite clearly with political ramifications. Careful attention to three examples makes clear the coordinating value of the *sacramentum* for Carolingian approaches to government. First, the discussions surrounding the Council of Frankfurt in 794, and the decisions issued by the council, demonstrate how Charlemagne and his court built a case for secular and ecclesiastical authority on the *sacramentum* of baptism. Divergent opinions on the nature of Charlemagne's authority offered by other religious and political leaders underscored the distinctiveness of the court position. Second, scrutiny of the treatment of baptism in Carolingian capitularies across the late eighth and early ninth centuries reveals a coherent and consistent commitment to a publicly available and widely intelligible practice of baptism—one that would help instill sacramental thinking in the people of Frankish Europe. Finally, Carolingian engagement with Judaism reveals how deep-seated and broadly applied a sacramental perspective rooted in baptism was for Carolingian leaders, even in exceptional cases.

2.1. BAPTISM AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHARLEMAGNE'S AUTHORITY AT THE COUNCIL OF FRANKFURT

In 794 Charlemagne convoked a synod at Frankfurt. The meeting is of major import because of its sweeping nature. It refined most of the themes and ideas present in the capitularies from Charlemagne's early reign, manifesting his imperial ambition. The capitulary issued at Frankfurt ruled on the most burning and most high profile issues facing the Carolingians in the early 790s. The synod fathers grappled with a heresy arising out of Spain, so-called Spanish Adoptionism—a Christological theory that held Jesus was an “adopted” son of God from the point of view of his human nature.⁶ The

⁶ For a full exposition of the theological controversy see John C. Cavadini, *The Last Christology of the West: Adoptionism in Spain and Gaul 785–820* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993); see also James B. Williams, *The Adoptive Son of God, the Pregnant Virgin, and the Fortification of the True Faith: Heterodoxy, the Cult of the Virgin Mary, and Benedict of Aniane in the Carolingian Age* (Ph.D. Diss., Purdue University, 2009) and Florence Close, *Uniformiser la foi pour unifier l'empire: Contribution à l'histoire de la pensée politico-théologique de Charlemagne* (Bruxelles: Classe des Lettres, Académie royale de Belgique, 2011). Cullen Chandler usefully explores the political context of the controversy in “Heresy and Empire: The Role of the Adoptionist Controversy in Charlemagne's Conquest of the Spanish March” *The International History Review* 24:3 (2002) pp. 505–27.

controversy first brewed in the Iberian Church, coming to the attention of the Carolingians at the end of the eighth century when Felix of Urgel promulgated the doctrine at the southern edge of the Frankish world. The synod fathers also ruled on images, drawing a line in the sand against the eastern Romans and the rise of Iconoclasm.⁷ This controversy arose in Byzantium over the proper role of images in Christian life: should they be adored, eschewed, or something in between. Charlemagne's court theologians had been laboring on this issue for several years, as evidenced both by interaction with Rome and by Theodulf of Orléans' work on the *Opus caroli regis*.⁸ The synod also dealt with the issue of Bavaria, incorporating it into the Frankish world and deposing Tassilo, its duke.⁹ Although Tassilo was a cousin of Charlemagne, Bavaria had been an obstacle to Charlemagne's European hegemony through the early years of his reign. The Agilolfings, a firmly entrenched ducal family, maintained an independent Christian polity in Bavaria with its own long-standing ties to the papacy and the Lombards. From the early seventh century, Agilolfing rulers had asserted a degree of autonomy from the Franks and established for themselves a cogent argument for rule thorough legal texts such *Lex baiuvariorum* and diplomatic relationships with other European powers. Less specifically, but just as sweeping in scope, the capitulary issued at Frankfurt adjusted—and even expanded—an ambitious vision for the Frankish world set out in the *Admonitio generalis*.¹⁰ The capitulary addressed numerous practical matters. For example, several chapters treated estate administration, which figured prominently in other capitularies, such as the *Capitulare de villis* issued at the end of the eighth century, which outlined rules for the network of royal estates sprawling across Europe.¹¹ While no minutes survive from the synod, various Carolingian annals and histories described the council's work and

⁷ For a discussion of the theological controversy see Thomas F.X. Noble, *Images, Iconoclasm, and the Carolingians* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

⁸ Noble, *Images*, pp. 145–9, 158–69.

⁹ Carl I. Hammer, *From Ducatus to Regnum: Ruling Bavaria under the Merovingians and Early Carolingians* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007). Stuart Airlie, "Narratives of Triumph and Rituals of Submission: Charlemagne's Mastering of Bavaria" *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Sixth Series* 9 (1999) pp. 93–119. Matthias Becher, *Eid und Herrschaft: Untersuchungen zum Herrschertum Karls des Grossen* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1993).

¹⁰ An important collection of essays on the event characterizes Frankfurt as the "christalization point" of Carolingian culture. The essays survey the many political, ecclesiastical, theological, and cultural dimensions of the synod of Frankfurt. *Das Frankfurter Konzil von 794: Kristallisationspunkt karolingischer Kultur*, ed. Rainer Berndt (Mainz: Selbstverlag der Gesellschaft für mittelhochdeutsche Kirchengeschichte, 1997).

¹¹ *Capitulare de villis*, *MGH Capitularia regum francorum I*, pp. 83–91. Darryl Campbell, "The *Capitulare de villis*, the *Brevium exempla*, and the Carolingian Court at Aachen" *Early Medieval Europe* 18:3 (2010) pp. 243–64; Rosamond McKitterick, *Charlemagne: The Formation of European Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) pp. 240–3.

significance. Most importantly, the capitulary itself survives as do a group of letters composed in the run-up to the synod.¹²

Carolingian annals rendered varied opinions on the significance of the Synod of Frankfurt, showing that its importance for the ninth century was not uniformly understood or accepted. The *Annales regni francorum* (ARF) stressed its grand nature, naming it a “great synod” and identifying participants as coming from Gaul, Germany, and Italy, including papal legates.¹³ While the initial version of the ARF focused primarily on the Council’s condemnation of Felix, the revised version also incorporated the Council’s work against Byzantine Iconoclasm.¹⁴ Written by a source close to the court in the early ninth century, the revised ARF likely reflected that Felix was alive and under house arrest in Lyon until his death in 818, while relations with the Greeks remained tense amid vigorous diplomacy across the late eighth and early ninth centuries. The Carolingian court’s rejection of Eastern religious authority is evident in the revised ARF’s characterization of II Nicaea, at which the Byzantines rejected iconoclasm, as a “pseudosynod”—contrasting markedly with the “great synod” of Frankfurt.¹⁵ Likewise, the *Annales Mosellani*, associated with communities in Metz or Gorze, confirmed that in the early ninth century the council was remembered for its stand against both Adoptionism and the worship of images.¹⁶ That concern about Spanish Adoptionism and tension with the Greek East continued into the ninth century, even as any realistic threat from the Agilolfings had subsided, helps to explain the emphases placed on Frankfurt in many annals compiled in the ninth century. The comparatively early *Annales Laure-shamenses*, tied to the middle Rhine region around 800, offered a somewhat fuller depiction. It mentioned not only the action against Adoptionism and Iconoclasm, but also the proceedings against Tassilo.¹⁷ Textual evidence

¹² The MGH edition prints the letters with the capitulary, which may give the impression of a dossier. The introductions to the letters and the capitulary make clear that they did not travel together in the manuscripts. See *MGH Concilia aevi karolini I*, ed. A. Werminghoff (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1906) pp. 110–65.

¹³ *Annales regni francorum*, ed. F. Kurze, *MGH SRG in usum scholarum* 6 (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1895) p. 94. For a treatment of the circumstances surrounding the composition of the annals see Rosamond McKitterick, *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) pp. 101–13, see also Roger Collins “The ‘Reviser’ Revisited: Another Look at the Alternative Version of the *Annales regni francorum*” *After Rome’s Fall: Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History: Essays Presented to Walter Goffart* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998) pp. 191–213.

¹⁴ *Annales regni francorum*, p. 94.

¹⁵ *Annales regni francorum*, p. 94. “... synodus magna ... pseudosynodus Grecorum ...”

¹⁶ *Annales mosellani*, ed. G.H. Pertz, *MGH SS 16 Annales aevi suevici* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1859) p. 498. See McKitterick, *History and Memory*, p. 108.

¹⁷ *Annales laureshamenses*, ed. G.H. Pertz, *MGH SS 1 Annales et chronica aevi carolini* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1826) pp. 35–6. For a discussion of the frustrating uncertainty of the annals’ origin see Roger Collins, “Charlemagne’s Imperial Coronation and the Lorsch Annals” *Charlemagne: Empire and Society*, ed. Joanna Story (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005) pp. 52–70. See also the comments in McKitterick, *History and Memory*, pp. 105–6.

strongly suggests that Carolingians viewed the synod as standing in continuity with the directions of the *Admonitio generalis*: not only are there substantial linguistic and topical similarities, but also the two texts travel together in surviving manuscripts, including three instances in which they are found one after the other.¹⁸

Associated with the synod is a number of letters. Six letters concerning Adoptionism, some composed as many as two years before the synod, survive from leading figures involved in the dispute: one from the bishops of Spain to the Frankish bishops, one from the bishops of Spain to Charlemagne, one from Pope Hadrian to the bishops of Spain, one from Paulinus of Aquileia representing the bishops of Italy to Charlemagne, one from the Frankish bishops to the bishops of Spain, and one from Charlemagne to Elipandus and the bishops of Spain. The letters, in actuality theological-political position papers, reveal the various perspectives of the parties involved with the synod. Charlemagne's letter to Elipandus helpfully connected the letters to the Council itself, as he listed the different responses to the Spanish position presented at Frankfurt. He mentioned a letter from the Roman church, a letter from the learned teachers and priests of Italy, a little book from the holy fathers, bishops, and venerable men of Germany, Gaul, Aquitaine, and Britain, and his own letter.¹⁹

The letters, while not part of the synod per se, were composed by different parties leading up to the synod and offer a unique lens through which to view Charlemagne's and his advisors' understanding of Carolingian authority on the eve of the synod. All the letters concern the theology of Spanish Adoptionism. They were composed by parties on all sides of the debate during the years prior to the council. While each letter centered on an appraisal of the theological worthiness of Adoptionist Christology, each also offered a peripheral analysis of the larger context of the Adoptionist question. For our purposes, they included valuable information on the standing of the parties involved. Each letter characterized the authority of its own author(s) and the authority of the addressee. More to the point, each letter identified Charlemagne's standing in the debate and classified his importance to Christianity in Europe. Whereas the letters from the Carolingian court anchored Charlemagne's authority in the *sacramentum* of baptism, the other letters offered widely divergent views on the exact nature and extent of Charlemagne's political and religious power.

¹⁸ Textual connections between the two documents are explored in Hubert Mordek, "Aachen, Frankfurt, Reims: Beobachtungen zu Genese und Tradition des 'Capitulaire Francofurtense' (794)" Rainer Berndt, ed., *Das Frankfurter Konzil von 794*, pp. 125–48. The three manuscripts are Paris, BN Lat. 4628A, Paris, BN Lat. 4631, and Paris, BN Lat. 10758. The latter is a ninth-century copy known both to Hincmar of Rheims and Hincmar of Laon, see *Bibliotheca capitularium regum Francorum manuscripta. Überlieferung und Traditionszusammenhang der fränkischen Herrschererlasse*, ed. Hubert Mordek (Munich: MGH, 1995) pp. 488–501, 507–16, 587–604.

¹⁹ *Capitulaire Francofurtense*, ed. A. Werminghoff, *MGH Concilia aevi karolini I* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1906) p. 160.

Comparing each letters' descriptions of Charlemagne's authority starkly illuminates both the distinctiveness of the Carolingian position in the early 790s and the centrality of baptism to the Carolingian court's understanding of the king's authority.

The Frankish letters display Carolingian assumptions about their Christian polity. Both the letter from the Frankish bishops and the letter from Charlemagne described the Frankish kingdom as a Christian kingdom. More pointedly, the letters used the image of baptism to assert that their kingdom is *the* Christian kingdom. Alcuin of York stood behind both documents, if he was not the primary author.²⁰ The Frankish bishops' letter set out its political assumptions in the carefully crafted salutation and first paragraph. The letter announced its authority by describing its origin in a holy synod composed of all the bishops of Germany, Gaul and Aquitaine, including "the whole clergy of catholic peace."²¹ The salutation declared that a large group of clerical leaders had authored a letter directed at a smaller group of Christians. The letter was addressed "to the bishops of Spain and others in that place having the name of Christian [greetings] in the Lord God, and in the true and only son of God, Jesus Christ."²² The Frankish bishops marginalized their opponents by addressing not only the episcopal leadership of Spain, whom they suspected of heresy, but also all orthodox Christians residing in Spain. The move depended on widely held ideals of catholicity, contrasting a regional view of some in Iberia with the multi-regional broad consensus of other Christians. Because this salutation announced the Frankish bishops reaching out to the Christians of Spain, in essence threatening to circumvent the Spanish bishops, the wording put additional pressure on the Spanish episcopate, and the Iberian Church generally, to embrace the orthodoxy espoused by the Franks. Further, geographic terms indicated the relative sizes of the communities as well as their relative weights in the discussion. The qualifying language used in the salutation underscored this point. The authors of the Frankish letter described themselves with terms such as "all" or "whole," even as they addressed "those in that place." Frankish assumptions of authority rested on the unity of faith in the church brought about by baptism.

The two letters emanating from the Frankish court, especially the bishops' letter, emphasized the sacramental underpinning of the community. Baptism

²⁰ Donald Bullough, *Alcuin: Achievement and Reputation* (Leiden: Brill, 2004) pp. 421–2. Bullough confirmed the earlier assessment of Luitpold Wallach. See Luitpold Wallach, "Alcuin as the Author and Editor of Official Carolingian Documents" *Alcuin and Charlemagne: Studies in Carolingian History and Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959) pp. 147–77. This study reproduces much of what Wallach previously set out in "Charlemagne and Alcuin. Diplomatic Studies in Carolingian Epistolography" *Traditio* 9 (1953) pp. 127–54.

²¹ *Epistola episcoporum Franciae*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 143. "sancta synodus et venerabiles in Christo patres cum omnibus episcopis Germaniae, Galliae, et Aequitaniae et toto catholicae pacis . . ."

²² *Epistola episcoporum Franciae*, p. 143. "praesulibus Hispaniae et ceteris ibidem chrisitanitatis nomen habentibus in domino Deo, Dei filio vero et proprio, Iesu Christo."

appeared as both a theological foundation for Christianity itself and as the basis of the Frankish Christian polity—in this case, as a justification for Frankish ecclesiastical authority over Spanish Christians. Both letters used baptism to introduce the concept of unity and elaborate on the implications of that unity, specifically expectations of faith and morals. In the first paragraphs after the salutation, the letter of the Frankish bishops quoted Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and in us all (cf. Eph 4:5–6)."²³ This quotation bridged two theological concepts offered in the opening paragraph: that the "truth of the orthodox faith" should be the same for all Christians and that holiness of life with its hope of eternal reward depended on true faith.²⁴ For Carolingian theologians, baptism established faith in new Christians and rendered them morally clean and able to live lives of holiness. This introduction set the stage for deeper theological scrutiny and for the theological-political claims of the synod of Frankfurt.

The political assumptions of the Frankish bishops' letter included not only the ecclesiastical authority of the Frankish episcopate, but also the religious authority of the king. Charlemagne figured prominently in the theological proceedings. The letter identified the king as an instructor and presider at the synod.²⁵ Charlemagne was the only participant at the assembly identified by name at the beginning of the letter. His position at the synod of Frankfurt reinforced his possession of legitimate authority over the bishops of Spain. Significantly, the letter introduced Charlemagne as working "to renew the state of the holy church of God with the counsel of peaceful unanimity."²⁶ Baptismal imagery suffused Carolingian ideas of renewal. The letter explicitly connected renewal to the theological issue of Adoptionism when quoting Augustine's interpretation of Paul: "in the interior man, therefore, is that similitude which is renewed in the knowledge of God according to his knowledge, who created him."²⁷ The *sacramentum* of baptism renewed individuals, a formation which refashioned individuals and instilled in them a renewed understanding of God and oneself.

²³ *Epistola episcoporum Franciae*, p. 143. "Unus dominus, una fides, unum baptisma, unus Deus et pater omnium, qui super omnia et in omnibus nobis."

²⁴ For the former see *Epistola episcoporum Franciae*, p. 143. "... orthodoxae fidaei veritatem . . . quae una decet esse omnium Christianorum." For the latter see *Epistola episcoporum Franciae*, p. 143. "in hac [the quote from Paul] omnis sanctitatis vitae, omnis spes remunerationis eterne, sine qua nihil sanctum, nihil Deo acceptabile, nihil vivum."

²⁵ *Epistola episcoporum Franciae*, p. 143. "praecipiente et praesidente piissimo et gloriosissimo domino nostro Carolo rege."

²⁶ *Epistola episcoporum Franciae*, p. 143. "ad renovandum cum consilio pacificae unanimitatis sanctae Dei ecclesiae statum."

²⁷ *Epistola episcoporum Franciae*, p. 147. "In interiore igitur homine ista similitudo est, qui renovatur in agnitione Dei secundum agnitionem eius, qui creavit eum." Augustine, *Epistola 92, Epistolae I* ed. A. Goldbacher, CSEL 34 (Vienna: F. Tempsky, 1895) p. 439. "in interiore igitur homine ista similitudo est, qui renouatur in agnitione Dei secundum imaginem eius, qui creavit eum." Cf. Col. 3:10.

Subsequent discussions of baptism in the Frankish letter emphasized the broad implications of *sacramentum* for analyzing Carolingian Europe in ecclesiological categories. Near the end of the letter, the Frankish bishops exhorted the Spanish bishops to reconsider their Adoptionist confession. They warned that unorthodox belief brought two negative consequences, one political and one theological. Politically, the profession of an unorthodox creed rent the community. Theologically, it endangered individual prospects for eternal life.

Understand that in this profession [of Adoptionism] lies hidden the double deceit of diabolical treachery; namely, that it would split you, who were redeemed by baptism, from the unity of the catholic church and withdraw you from the way of eternal salvation into the trap of schismatic error; and would close off the beginnings of the Christian faith from the peoples among whom you dwell, since you preach our Lord Jesus Christ as a slave and adopted, whom we worship and adore as God.²⁸

Implicitly, Charlemagne's responsibility for church unity encompassed both the theological and the political dimensions of the Christian community. The letter confirmed the importance of political considerations in Carolingian assessments of Spanish orthodoxy when it lamented the perceived ramifications of a Christian doctrinal controversy within the Islamic world, most especially posing impediments to religious and political conversion. The letter reiterated the difficult situation in which Adoptionism placed proponents of a Frankish *imperium christianum* in the face of the Muslim power that dominated the Iberian Peninsula at the end of the eighth century. "Consider what a stumbling block it is among the pagan nations that it is asserted that the Christians' God is a slave or adopted."²⁹ Adoptionism was not only an abstract theological issue for the Carolingians, but a theological view with broad political and social implications in the Frankish world and beyond.

The second court letter, purportedly from Charlemagne—though most likely through Alcuin's pen—also used the *sacramentum* of baptism as a justification for ecclesiastical authority. Charlemagne mentioned baptism prominently at the outset, following the salutation. His initial statement set the subsequent admonition in an ecclesiological frame. "Christian duty rejoices to extend the double wings of both divine and fraternal charity through the wide breadth of the lands, so that she keeps warm with maternal affection those to

²⁸ *Epistola episcoporum Franciae*, p. 156. "Intelligite in hac professione vestra duplices diabolicae fraudis latuisse dolos, hoc est, ut vos, qui gratia baptismi redempti estis, ab unitate catholicae disiungeret ecclesiae et scismatici erroris laqueo a via salutis aeternae retraheret et gentibus, inter quas habitatis, Christianae fidaei initia interclauderet, dum et dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, quem Deum colimus et adoramus, servum praedicatis et adoptivum."

²⁹ *Epistola episcoporum Franciae*, p. 157. "Considerate, quale est hoc scandalum inter paganas gentes, ut dicatur Deum Christianorum servum esse vel adoptivum."

whom she gave birth by holy baptism.”³⁰ On one level, baptism anchored the letter’s discussion of Christian unity. On another level, it established Charlemagne’s authority as theologically superior to that of the Spanish prelates in the wider context of evaluating Adoptionist Christology. Charlemagne’s rulership was divinely instituted for the protection of theological orthodoxy. The first sentence also built on a theme introduced in the letter’s salutation, one Charlemagne used in other correspondence and that connected his rule to the favor of God: “Charles, by the grace of God, king of the Franks and the Langobards and patrician of the Romans, son and defender of the holy church of God.”³¹ Not only did Charlemagne govern by the grace of God—which he normally indicated when introducing himself in letters—but also ruled as a son and defender of the holy church of God, making explicit the basis of his authority to his Spanish readers. Charlemagne did not present himself as over the church, but certainly as over the Spaniards by reason of the church within which he handled important responsibilities. While he did not portray himself as an ordained minister or church official, the common *sacramentum* of baptism justified for Charlemagne a role in the church analogous to his role in the world as king.

The sentiments expressed in the Frankish letter and the letter from Charlemagne contrasted starkly with other surviving letters from the run up to Frankfurt. None of the other letters considered—or even mentioned—the *sacramentum* of baptism, much less its broad ecclesiological implications.³² The Spanish bishops’ letter to the Frankish episcopate, drafted sometime before the council, presented the Spanish clergy as equal in stature to the Frankish clergy. This letter offered a far less discrete vision of ecclesiastical authority than that seen in the letters issued from the Frankish court. Elipandus most likely stood behind both the letter to the Frankish bishops and the letter to Charlemagne, neither of which was written specifically for the synod of Frankfurt, but rather in response to

³⁰ *Epistola Karoli Magni ad Elipandum et episcopos Hispaniae*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 158. “*Gaudet pietas Christiana divinae scilicet atque fraternae per lata terrarum spatia duplices caritatis alas extendere, ut materno foveat affectu quos sacro genuerat baptismate*.”

³¹ *Epistola Karoli Magni ad Elipandum et episcopos Hispaniae*, p. 158. “*Carolus gratia Dei rex Francorum et Langobardorum ac patricius Romanorum, filius et defensor sanctae Dei ecclesiae . . .*” For a detailed discussion of titles consult, Herwig Wolfram, *Intitulatio 1. Lateinische Königs- und Fürstentitel bis zum Ende des 8. Jahrhunderts. Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, Ergänzungsband 21* (Graz: Hermann Böhlau Nachf., 1967) pp. 236–44, and Herwig Wolfram, “Lateinische Herrschertitel im neunten und zehnten Jahrhundert” *Intitulatio 2. Lateinische Herrscher- und Fürstentitel im neunten und zehnten Jahrhundert. Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, Ergänzungsband 24*, ed. Herwig Wolfram (Vienna: Hermann Böhlau Nachf., 1973) pp. 19–58. See also the illuminating comments on the ideological ramifications of the title in Ildar H. Garipzanov, *The Symbolic Language of Authority in the Carolingian World c.751–877* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

³² The debate over Adoptionism included exegesis on the baptism of Christ in the Jordan and the accompanying theophany, but nowhere do those discussions lead back to ecclesiology or politics. For example, see the exegesis of baptism in the *Epistola episcoporum Franciae*, p. 145.

condemnations of Adoptionism issued at Regensburg in 792.³³ Neither letter conceded spiritual superiority to the Franks. Furthermore, Elipandus distinguished sharply between spiritual and temporal authority, acknowledging the spiritual rank of the Frankish bishops and the temporal might of Charlemagne. The letter to the Frankish bishops greeted the Franks with a humility topos, but also characterized them as brothers.³⁴ It recognized the legitimacy of the Frankish episcopate without yielding to them any greater authority or jurisdiction. The Spanish letter began with a much more collegial greeting than the Frankish letter when it addressed “our brothers of Gaul and Aquitaine and to the other priests of Austrasia.”³⁵ The authors of the Spanish letter then immediately described the doctrine accused of being “a viperous speech of pestilential teaching” and listed the many patristic authorities that they would cite in their defense.³⁶ The letter did not evidence any awareness of larger political or ecclesiological stakes involved in the Adoptionist controversy, only the theological debate.

The letter addressed to Charlemagne presented another angle from which to view the Spanish bishops’ idea of Frankish authority. The Spanish bishops did not set their theological opinion within any larger framework of Christian hierarchy or politics. The letter addressed Charlemagne as a powerful secular magnate. The author of the Spanish letter identified the king as one who ruled over “diverse nations.”³⁷ However, the salutation did not ascribe to Charlemagne himself or to his rule any special religious charism or specific theological authority. The letter also did not assume any theological interest on the part of the recipient. Unlike the letters from the Frankish court, the two Spanish letters did not provide introductory paragraphs establishing the authority of the author or the ecclesiological problems posed by heterodoxy. Both letters from Spain launched immediately into their theological assessment of the Adoptionist controversy.

The characterizations of politics and religion found in the final two letters, from Pope Hadrian and from the bishops of Italy, further highlighted the distinctive understanding of Charlemagne’s authority advanced by the Carolingian

³³ Although neither Spanish letter mentions Elipandus as the author, both the papal letter and the letter from the bishops of Italy assume Elipandus’ authorship. See the comments confirming the dating given in the MGH by John Cavadini, *The Last Christology of the West: Adoptionism in Spain and Gaul, 785–820* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993) p. 24, n. 11. Also see, Wilhelm Heil, *Alkuinstudien. Zur Chronologie und Bedeutung des Adoptionismusstreites* (Düsseldorf: L. Schwann, 1970) p. 66.

³⁴ *Epistola episcoporum Hispaniae ad episcopos Franciae*, p. 111. “*Domini in Christo reverentissimis fratribus Galliae adque Equitanie adque Austrie cunctis sacerdotibus nos indigni et exigui Spanie praesules et ceteri Christi fideles in Domino aeternam salutem. Amen.*”

³⁵ *Epistola episcoporum Hispaniae ad episcopos Franciae*, p. 111. “. . . fratribus Galliae adque Equitanie adque Austrie cunctis sacerdotibus . . .”

³⁶ *Epistola episcoporum Hispaniae ad episcopos Franciae*, p. 111. “. . . pestiferi dogmatis sermo vipereus . . .”

³⁷ *Epistola episcoporum Hispaniae ad Karolum Magnum*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 120. “*Domino inclito adque glorioso diversarum gentium principi m. in domino patre et domino Iesu Christo, filio eius, et Spiritu sancto aeternam salutem. Amen.*”

court. These last letters reflected neither perspectives from the Carolingian court nor from the scrutinized group. Pope Hadrian sent his letter to the bishops of Gaul and Spain, but referred in the letter to Charlemagne. The pope provided a clear idea of his own spiritual authority through his salutation. The greeting recognized the common Christianity and even Christian leadership exercised by other clerics, as the pope addressed “his most beloved brothers and fellow priests,” who ruled the churches of Gaul and Spain. Hadrian balanced this recognition against his own claim of primacy over other Christian powers when he described himself as “bishop of the holy catholic and first apostolic see.”³⁸ After the salutation, Hadrian appealed to the unity of the church. This move was similar to the one made by the Frankish letters, but different in scope and justification. Hadrian’s claim differed from that of Charlemagne insofar as he argued for an impersonal religious pre-eminence based on the authority of the Petrine see. Charlemagne felt that he enjoyed individual election by God.

It is not at all clear that the pope envisioned Charlemagne sharing in this spiritual power and legitimacy, even in a subordinate way. Pope Hadrian referred to “our most beloved son and spiritual co-father, the lord and venerable prince Charlemagne, king of the Franks and the Langobards, and patrician of the Romans.”³⁹ The acknowledgement of Charlemagne as co-father did not indicate any concession of spiritual authority on the part of the pope. Rather, Hadrian acknowledged his own obligation and position as godfather to Charlemagne’s son, Carloman, who at that time was renamed Pippin.⁴⁰ The pope and king became co-parents of Pippin—Charlemagne because he was Pippin’s natural father and Hadrian because he received Pippin from the womb of baptism in 781. In addition to—in fact, before—acknowledging Charlemagne as a co-father, the pope addressed him as “son,” assuming a superior posture toward the Frankish king. The pope’s characterization of Charlemagne matched the

³⁸ *Epistola Hadriani I. papae ad episcopos Hispaniae directa*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 122. “Adrianus papa, sanctae catholicae atque apostolicae primaeque pontifex sedis, dilectissimis fratribus et consacerdotibus nostris, Gallaciis Spanisque ecclesiis praesidentibus, in roseo Christi sanguine salutem.”

³⁹ *Epistola Hadriani I. papae ad episcopos Hispaniae directa*, p. 122. “. . . dilectissimus filius noster et spiritalis conpater, domnus Carolus Magnus et vererabilis princeps, rex Francorum ac Langobardorum seu patricius Romanorum . . .”

⁴⁰ For an in-depth treatment of the terminology and practice of spiritual kinship during the early Middle Ages, see Joseph H. Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship in Early Medieval Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986). Charlemagne and Hadrian, in particular, are considered at pp. 255–6. See also Arnold Angenendt, *Kaiserherrschaft und Königstaufer. Kaiser, Könige und Päpste als geistliche Patrone in der abendländischen Missionsgeschichte* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1984) pp. 148–64. For discussion over the internal Carolingian political significance of Carloman’s name change see the remarks and bibliography in Janet Nelson, “Charlemagne—pater optimus?” *Am Vorabend der Kaiserkrönung: Das Epos “Karolus Magnus und Leo papa” und der Papstbesuch in Paderborn 799*, eds. Peter Godman, Jörg Jarnut, and Peter Johanek (Berlin: Akademie, 2002) pp. 269–81, at 273–4.

greeting used by Charlemagne in his pre-800 correspondence except for one point. In his letters, Charlemagne introduced himself as “Charles *by the grace of God* king of the Franks and Langobards and patrician of the Romans” (emphasis added).⁴¹ Whereas Charlemagne, in order to underscore his religious authority, recorded that his rule was “by the grace of God,” Hadrian merely acknowledged Charlemagne’s royal title, omitting any statement about the source of Charlemagne’s power. Still, the pope recognized Charlemagne’s interest in things religious. Hadrian commented on how he often received theological writings from Charlemagne, “courses of Catholic writing with a great refreshment of sweetness.”⁴² The pope, however, consistently characterized these religious writings as subordinate to his own spiritual authority. He described the writings as “satisfying” or “presented to our gaze.”⁴³ Most importantly, Hadrian depicted Charlemagne as “happily bound by his love of blessed Peter,” suggesting that the pope viewed Petrine authority as superior to any authority advanced by Charlemagne or his court.⁴⁴

The final letter, the so-called *Libellus* of the bishops of Italy, purported to report the opinion of the Italian ecclesiastical leaders beyond the suburbicarian dioceses. The list of sees mentioned in the work included Aquileia, Western Italy, Milan, Liguria, Austria, and Emilia. Only two bishops are named, Paulinus of Aquileia and Peter of Milan. Paulinus acknowledged that he was the author of the letter.⁴⁵ This admission is important because of Paulinus’ close relationship to the Carolingian leadership. Paulinus maintained regular contact with Alcuin and the court and on occasion served as a proponent of court policies, including as a *missus*, though he was not among the court’s inner circle.⁴⁶ It is not surprising that the letter presented an extremely positive view of Charlemagne’s position from a person speaking for a group of bishops not centered in the Carolingian court.

The opening line of the *Libellus* revealed Paulinus’ affection for Charlemagne and his desire to be closely allied with his court. Paulinus credited Charlemagne with wielding vast temporal and tremendous spiritual authority. The patriarch noted that Charlemagne’s power covered a large geographical area when he described how the king’s commands were distributed through the many

⁴¹ For example, Alcuin, *Epistola* 144, MGH *Epistolae* IV (Berlin: Weidmannos, 1895) p. 288. “CAROLUS GRATIA DEI REX FRANCORUM ET LANGOBARDORUM AC PATRICIUS ROMANORUM . . .” On intitulation generally see note 31.

⁴² *Epistola Hadriani I. papae ad episcopos Hispaniae directa*, p. 122. “*catholicae fidae epulas . . . multa refectionis dulcedine*”

⁴³ *Epistola Hadriani I. papae ad episcopos Hispaniae directa*, p. 122. “. . . satiari . . .” “. . . obtutibus praesentari . . .”

⁴⁴ *Epistola Hadriani I. papae ad episcopos Hispaniae directa*, p. 122. “. . . beati Petri amore feliciter obstrictus . . .”

⁴⁵ On Paulinus see the essays collected in *Paolino d’Aquileia e il contributo italiano all’Europa carolingia*, ed. Paolo Chiesa (Udine: Forum, 2003).

⁴⁶ Paulinus’ relationship to Alcuin and to the court is discussed in Bullough, *Alcuin*, pp. 449–54.

provinces under his control.⁴⁷ Paulinus left no doubt about his assessment of the length and breadth of Charlemagne's earthly rule when he characterized Charlemagne as the "lord of the earth."⁴⁸ Charlemagne also had standing to address theological issues and the authority over bishops necessary to summon them into council. Paulinus highlighted Charlemagne's zeal for the catholic faith as a spiritual force and asserted that the Holy Spirit himself inspired the king to take action against the Adoptionists.⁴⁹ Paulinus also made it clear that Charlemagne convoked the council of bishops at Frankfurt, and described both the ruler's spiritual impetus and his earthly authority with extravagantly flowery language.⁵⁰

Paulinus, however, did not see baptism as standing at the heart of the authority enjoyed by Charlemagne. After some introductory remarks, Paulinus included a brief explanation of the stakes of the Adoptionist Controversy. The frame for his argument was theological, similar to the frame for the letters from the Carolingian court, but rather than casting the issue as one of ecclesiastical unity grounded in the common baptism of all Christians, he focused on right doctrine as a matter of faith and foundation for the church. For Paulinus it was not the common society of the baptized that commissioned Charlemagne to act, but rather the faith of the church. He depicted the struggle with Spanish Adoptionists as one in which the enemy sought to upset the firm foundation of the Catholic Faith.⁵¹ The idea of a Christian soldier, presented with rich battle imagery, provided a secondary theme for the discussion.⁵² Paulinus continually returned to the importance of faith as the foundation of the church, often emphasizing his points with scriptural references.⁵³

⁴⁷ *Libellus sacrosyllabus episcoporum Italiae*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, pp. 130–1. "... imperii eius decreta per diversas provincias regni eius ditioni subiectas summa celeritate praecurrentia ..."

⁴⁸ *Libellus sacrosyllabus episcoporum Italiae*, p. 130. "... Caroli regis, domini terrae ..."

⁴⁹ *Libellus sacrosyllabus episcoporum Italiae*, p. 130. "Sancto incitante Spiritu ac zelo fidaei catholicae scintillatim ..."

⁵⁰ *Libellus sacrosyllabus episcoporum Italiae*, p. 131. "... multitudo antistitum sacris obtemperando praeceptis in uno collegio adgregata convenit."

⁵¹ *Libellus sacrosyllabus episcoporum Italiae*, p. 131. "... contra eorum vesanias, qui rectae fidaei sunt adversarii, respondere non formidamus, cum sit sancta et universalis ecclesia super firmam nihilominus immobiliter fundata petram et portae inferi nequeant prevalere adversus eam."

⁵² *Libellus sacrosyllabus episcoporum Italiae*, p. 132. "Non enim Christi miles impetum inruentis belli debet enerviter expavescere nec effugii latibula inhermis palando appetere, sed armis militiae suae praecinctus inrumpentium hostium pectora spiritalibus iaculis ex arcu intorquens scribaturarum intrepide perforare, quatenus et semetipsum fidaei clypeo munitus inlaesum custodiat et inimicorum latera spiculis cruentet acutis."

⁵³ *Libellus sacrosyllabus episcoporum Italiae*, p. 132. "Nam quia super fidaei fundamentum omnium virtutum fabricam persistere non ignorat, ipsam fidaei malitiae suae manu eradicare soliditatem festinat, quemadmodum de eius satellitibus, id est malignis spiritibus, per psalmistam dicitur: Qui dicunt: Exinanite, exinanite usque ad fundamentum in ea (cf. Vulgate LXX Ps. 136:7)." And, *Libellus sacrosyllabus episcoporum Italiae*, p. 132. "Sciunt utique nihil esse boni omne, quod videtur bonum, nisi fuerit super fidei fundamentum firmiter radicatum. Sine fide enim impossibile est Deo placere. Firmum autem fundamentum Dei stat, habet signaculum hoc: novit Dominus qui sunt eius (cf. Heb. 11:6 and 2Tim. 2:19)."

Paulinus' presentation revealed two important elements of the Carolingian approach to polity at the end of the eighth century. First, ecclesiastical leaders beyond the Carolingian court recognized the broad claims of spiritual and temporal jurisdiction made by Charlemagne. Second, baptism offered the Carolingians, but not necessarily others, a reason to view the spiritual and temporal expressions of Charlemagne's authority as fundamentally related. Paulinus' work attributed to Charlemagne both spiritual and temporal power, unparalleled by other earthly authorities. He sketched out Charlemagne's close relationship to God through the Holy Spirit and his authority over God's earthly representatives, the bishops. Paulinus' depiction of Charlemagne's earthly authority was equally clear. He had no match and no competitor. While Paulinus, like the Carolingian court, ascribed vast authority to Charlemagne, Paulinus did not—as the Carolingian court letters did—clearly connect the spiritual and temporal authority exercised by Charlemagne. For the letters issued by the Carolingian court, baptism served as a single source for both aspects of Charlemagne's manifold authority.

The decisions issued at Frankfurt confirm the impression left by the letters. The fifty-six chapters promulgated by the synod are notable for the wide range of topics treated, and also for the grouping of the first topics. The order and content reinforced the theological-political ideology of the Frankish letters. At the outset, the capitulary ruled on the legitimacy of three competing ideas of Christianity and establishes the Carolingian hierarchy, together with Charlemagne, as the arbiter of Christian orthodoxy.⁵⁴ The first three canons dealt with Elipandus and Felix, with the Greeks, and with Tassilo, respectively. They received not only primacy of place in the capitulary, but are also distinguished by their rhetorical frame. All three presented the will of "all the bishops and priests of the kingdom of the Franks and of Italy, Aquitaine and Provence in synodal council" with "the most gentle king" present.⁵⁵ The subsequent fifty-three canons, which

⁵⁴ While England was not subject to Carolingian rule, the documents preserved from the council of Frankfurt show that the Carolingians thought English Christianity conformed to Carolingian orthodoxy. *Epistola Karoli Magni ad Elipandum et episcopos Hispaniae*, p. 160. "Post haec tertius tenet libellus orthodoxam sanctorum patrum episcoporum et virorum venerabilium fidem, qui in Germaniae, Galliae, Equitaniae et Britanniae partibus dignis Deo deseruiunt officii, vestrisque obiectionibus sanctorum scripturarum testimoniis roboratas obtinet responsiones." This quotation refers to the letter of the Frankish bishops, who do not write that they include the bishops of Britain.

⁵⁵ *Capitulare Francofurtense*, p. 165. "Coniugentibus, Deo favente, apostolica auctoritate atque piissimi domni nostril Karoli regis iussione anno XXVI. principatus sui cunctis regni Francorum seu Italiae, Aquitaniae, Provinciae episcopis ac sacerdotibus synodali concilio, inter quos ipse mitissimus sancto interfuit conventui . . . statuerunt." This feature of the capitulary has been commented upon in Thomas F.X. Noble, "Tradition and Learning in Search of Ideology: The Libri Carolini" *The Gentle Voices of Teachers. Aspects of Learning the Carolingian Age*, ed. Richard E. Sullivan (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1995) pp. 234–5, and also Hans Barion, *Das fränkisch-deutsche Synodalrecht des Frühmittelalters*, *Kanonistische Studien und Texte* 5–6 (Bonn: L. Röhrscheid, 1931) pp. 252–3, 265–6.

dealt with a variety of internal concerns, from the maximum price of corn (canon four) to the proper financing of church roofs (canon twenty-six), were framed differently. Many were introduced as the decrees of “the most pious lord king,” that is, as Charlemagne’s own decisions.⁵⁶ The presentation of these first three canons highlighted the elevated stakes involved in the decisions regarding Spain, Byzantium, and Bavaria. It is tempting to view the three issues as distinct and unrelated and certainly each enjoys a particular complexity and import in its own right. Modern disciplinary concerns invite us to distinguish the problems in ways counterintuitive to Charlemagne and his advisors. Adoptionism and Iconoclasm seem to be theological disputes, while the issue of Tassilo in Bavaria appears to be primarily an issue of political intrigue. However, the layout and language of the capitulary suggests that in 794 the synod fathers viewed these varied problems as unified, at least insofar as they understood their responsibility to weigh in on them. Carolingian thinkers preferred to view theological and political discussions as intertwined topics of discourse rather than distinct areas of disputation. In the capitulary of Frankfurt, each issue involved a question of authority framed in religious vocabulary arising from discrete geographical areas. The first chapter discussed the “heresy of Elipandus of the episcopal see of Toledo and of Felix of Urgel, and their followers.”⁵⁷ The people were identified by their geographical location. The judgment on Adoptionism was then rendered that “this heresy be completely eradicated from the holy church.”⁵⁸ The second chapter ran similarly. It identified a group of people and their place. In this case, the capitulary named a “new synod of Greeks” and placed it in Constantinople.⁵⁹ The fathers of Frankfurt determined that the Greek decisions ought to be “despised” and “condemned.”⁶⁰ The third chapter began by identifying a certain “Tassilo who was formerly the duke of Bavaria.”⁶¹ The synod then convicted him of being a “violator of his faith,” by which was indicated the Carolingian charge that Tassilo disregarded the *sacramentum* he swore to Charlemagne.⁶² Charlemagne was interested in expanding his authority in southern France and northern Spain, where the proponents of Adoptionist Christology were based. Charlemagne also wanted to establish the legitimacy of his Christian kingdom in the face of the older and more prestigious Byzantine power based in Constantinople. He sought to do this through the establishment

⁵⁶ *Capitulare Francofurtense*, c. 4, p. 166. “Statuit piissimus domnus noster rex . . .”

⁵⁷ *Capitulare Francofurtense*, c. 1, p. 165. “. . . erese Elipandi Toletane sedis episcopi et Felicis Orgellitanæ eorumque sequacibus . . .”

⁵⁸ *Capitulare Francofurtense*, c. 1, p. 165. “. . . hanc heresim funditus a sancta ecclesia eradicandam . . .”

⁵⁹ *Capitulare Francofurtense*, c. 2, p. 165. “. . . de nova Grecorum synodo, quam de adorandis imaginibus Constantinopolim fecerunt.”

⁶⁰ *Capitulare Francofurtense*, c. 2, p. 165. “contempserunt . . . condempnaverunt.”

⁶¹ *Capitulare Francofurtense*, c. 3, p. 165. “. . . de Tassiloni . . . qui dudum Baioariae dux fuerat.”

⁶² *Capitulare Francofurtense*, c. 3, p. 166. “. . . fraudator fidei suae . . .” See Becher, *Eid und Herrschaft*, pp. 72–3.

of a Frankish theology of images against the Greek position as transmitted to the Carolingians through Latin translations of II Nicaea. The third issue, the fate of Tassilo, was similar. The Agilolfings were potential rivals to the ascending Carolingian monarchy, perhaps even actively exploring political opposition through diplomacy with the Avars and Lombards.⁶³ One of the pillars of Bavarian autonomy was an ecclesiastical hierarchy independent from its Frankish counterpart. Tassilo had had his own son baptized by the pope and accounts of Carolingian *missi* in Rome reveal frustration at the intense lobbying efforts of Tassilo's own Roman agents.⁶⁴ During the struggle over the legitimacy of Charlemagne's Bavarian conquest, Tassilo had appealed directly to the pope for aid against the Frankish aggressors. Moreover, a letter surviving from Clemens Peregrinus addressed to Tassilo indicates that the Agilolfings may have been cultivating a theological justification for rule not unlike that of Charlemagne and the Carolingians.⁶⁵ In 794, Tassilo III was required again to renounce his claims to the Bavarian duchy, which had been conquered by the Franks six years previously. And even after the conquest, Charlemagne had questions about the loyalty and intentions of Tassilo. On sacramental grounds the great synod held at Frankfurt in 794 asserted Carolingian authority over three rival European powers. The theological-political strategy of the synod is harder to see for modern scholars who distinguish the theological issues from political one much more sharply than did the Carolingians. Hindsight certainly also obscures the ambition of the Carolingian position, as in retrospect only over the Bavarians was their assertion the last word.

The Frankish letters and the council decisions themselves highlight baptism's centrality to the Carolingian court's understanding of Charlemagne's authority. His temporal and religious authority flowed from the *sacramentum* with implications for Christians across Europe. The letters from Spain, the papacy, and Italy contrasted sharply with the distinctive position taken in the court's letters. The Spanish bishops failed to see any specifically applicable authority adhering to the Frankish leader. The pope and Paulinus acknowledged Charlemagne's authority, but imagined that power based on quite different grounds than the court. The first three chapters from the decrees of Frankfurt, viewed in context, assumed for the king a unified political and religious authority resting on the *sacramentum* of baptism.

⁶³ Charles R. Bowlus, "Italia-Bavaria-Avaria: The Grand Strategy behind Charlemagne's *Renovatio Imperii* in the West" *Journal of Medieval Military History* 1 (2002) pp. 43–60.

⁶⁴ Record of the baptism is transmitted via the sixteenth-century humanist, Aventinus, who claimed to be examining a now lost Bavarian history; see S. Riezler, "Ein verlorenes bairisches Geschichtswerk des achten Jahrhunderts" *Sitzungsberichte der königlichen bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-philologisch-historische Klasse I* (1881) pp. 247–91.

⁶⁵ Mary Garrison, "Letters to a king and biblical exempla: the examples of Cathuulf and Clemens Peregrinus" *Early Medieval Europe* 7:3 (1998) pp. 305–28. See also Joanna Story, "Cathuulf, Kingship, and the Royal Abbey of Saint-Denis" *Speculum* 74:1 (1999) pp. 1–21.

2.2. BAPTISM AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF CHRISTENDOM

The *sacramentum* of baptism provided the basic ordering concept for the Carolingian Renewal. Narrative accounts of the baptisms of key individuals such as Charlemagne himself have shaped scholarly opinions of the political and social cachet mediated by the *sacramentum*.⁶⁶ Baptismal relationships and spiritual kinship figured prominently in early medieval diplomacy (especially in missionary areas) for the Carolingians, the papacy, and the Eastern Roman Empire.⁶⁷ Baptism was long a key mechanism for consolidating Carolingian relationships with the papacy. In 781, when Charlemagne travelled to Rome to have his son baptized by Pope Hadrian I, the pontiff also stood as the boy's sponsor and anointed him king of Italy.⁶⁸ Rather than contrasting with narrative accounts, normative instruction provided by capitularies and other legal sources nuance narrative accounts and allow for deeper insights into Carolingian thought, especially as scholars better understand the carefully constructed ideologies of sources such as Carolingian annals.⁶⁹ Carolingian interest in baptism appears not only as an element of diplomatic wranglings, but as a vital conceptual tool in establishing an *imperium christianum* in Europe. Capitularies consistently envisioned the *sacramentum* of baptism providing a theologically coherent, conceptually simple, consistently applied, publicly available, and politically constitutive approach to society.

Careful analysis of capitularies issued under the Carolingians, especially how they discussed the *sacramentum* of baptism, further refines interpretation of Carolingian annals and other narrative sources. Legislative material echoed the theological works that trumpeted the importance of baptism. This is hardly

⁶⁶ Arnold Angenendt, *Kaiserherrschaft und Königstaufe: Kaiser, Könige und Papste als geistliche Patrone in der abendländischen Missionsgeschichte* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1984); Arnold Angenendt, "Das geistliche Bündnis der Päpste mit den Karolingern (754–796)" *Historisches Jahrbuch* 100 (1980) pp. 1–94; Arnold Angenendt, "Taufe und Politik im frühen Mittelalter" *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 7 (1973) pp. 143–68.

⁶⁷ Ian Wood, *The Missionary Life: Saints and the Evangelization of Europe, 400–1050* (Harlow: Longman, 2001); Joseph H. Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship*; Reinhard Schneider, "Karl der Grosse—politisches Sendungsbewusstsein und Mission" *Kirchengeschichte als Missionsgeschichte II: Die Kirche des früheren Mittelalters*, ed. Knut Schäferdiek (Munich: Chr.-Kaiser, 1978) pp. 227–48; Richard E. Sullivan, "Early Medieval Missionary Activity: A Comparative Study of Eastern and Western Methods" *Church History* 23:1 (1954) pp. 17–35; idem, "The Carolingian Missionary and the Pagan" *Speculum* 28:4 (1953) pp. 705–40.

⁶⁸ *Annales regni francorum*, p. 56.

⁶⁹ Rosamond McKitterick, *Perceptions of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006); idem, *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Helmut Reimitz, "Ein karolingisches Geschichtsbuch aus Saint-Amand: Der Codex Vindobonensis palat. 473" *Text, Schrift und Codex. Quellenkundliche Arbeiten aus dem Institut für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, eds. Christoph Egger und Herwig Weigl (Vienna: Oldenbourg, 1999) pp. 34–90.

surprising as the same theological leaders, such as Alcuin of York and Theodulf of Orléans, who advised Charlemagne on the issues of Spanish Adoptionism and Byzantine Iconoclasm, also advised him on imperial governance and likely stood behind many of the capitularies.⁷⁰ Charlemagne often chose leading ecclesiastics along with leading nobles to serve as *missi*, officials who represented the king out in the field.⁷¹ Many of the literate court functionaries were clerics of one level or another, or if lay, they were trained by clerics, perhaps in monastic schools.⁷² Detailed legislation concerning baptism underscored the *sacramentum*'s fundamental role as an organizing principle for Carolingian leaders. The importance of baptism to the Carolingians is found not only through analysis of theological discussions and historical narratives, but also through the evaluation of nuts-and-bolts discussions provided by Carolingian legal sources. Capitularies directed Carolingian leaders, both ecclesiastical and lay, to devote sustained attention to the practice of baptism across the empire. Royal and imperial capitularies, synodal materials, and episcopal capitularies issued under the early Carolingians displayed in their treatments of baptism striking consistency in specific details across a long period of time.⁷³ They left

⁷⁰ For example, on Alcuin's influence on Charlemagne's *Admonitio generalis* see Donald A. Bullough, *Alcuin: Achievement and Reputation* (Leiden: Brill, 2004) pp. 379–84. On Theodulf's thought in the *Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae* see Yitzhak Hen, "Charlemagne's Jihad" *Viator* 37 (2006) pp. 33–51.

⁷¹ Most generally, see F.L. Ganshof, *Frankish Institutions under Charlemagne*, trans. Bryce and Mary Lyon (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1968) pp. 23–6. On *missi* and capitularies see Rosamond McKitterick, "Charlemagne's *Missi* and Their Books" *Early Medieval Studies in Memory of Patrick Wormald*, eds. Stephen Baxter, Catherine Karkov, Janet Nelson, and David Pelteret (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009) pp. 253–67. That *missi* had religious concerns see Martin Gravel, "Du rôle des *missi* impériaux dans la supervision de la vie chrétienne. Témoignage d'une collection de capitulaires du début du IXe siècle" *Mimimi* 11 (2007) pp. 99–130. For accounts of the many hats worn by one important ecclesiastic, pupil of Alcuin, and agent of Charlemagne see the treatments of Arn of Salzburg in Warren Brown, *Unjust Seizure: Conflict, Interest, and Authority in an Early Medieval Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001); Kathy Lynne Roper Pearson, *Conflicting Loyalties in Early Medieval Bavaria: A View of Socio-Political Action, 680–900* (Brookfield: Ashgate Press, 1999) and more generally Jürgen Hannig, "Zur Funktion der karolingischen *missi dominici* in Bayern und in den südöstlichen Grenzgebieten" *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte. Germanistische Abteilung* 101 (1984) pp. 256–300.

⁷² Rosamond McKitterick, "Introduction: Sources and Interpretation" *New Cambridge Medieval History II c.700–c.900*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 3–17; M.M. Hildebrandt, *The External School in Carolingian Society* (Leiden: Brill, 1991); Michel Banniard, "Language and Communication in Carolingian Europe" *New Cambridge Medieval History II c.700–c.900*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 695–708; Rosamond McKitterick, *Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) pp. 35–7, 126, 212–27; Pierre Riché, *Écoles et enseignement dans le Haut Moyen Âge* (Paris: Aubier, 1979) pp. 287–313.

⁷³ For a chronological and topical introduction to Carolingian synodal activity see Wilfried Hartmann, *Die Synoden der Karolingerzeit im Frankenreich und in Italien* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1989). For basic work on the capitularies, see Francois Louis Ganshof, *Recherches sur les capitulaires* (Paris: Sirey, 1958). On assessing their ecclesiastical significance of capitularies see Rosamond McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms, 789–895* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977) pp. 1–79.

detailed instructions on the *who, when, where, and what* of baptism. Capitulary evidence consistently reinforced several positions on baptism. The *sacramentum* of baptism was to be familiar to everyone. It was to be conducted at set times of the year. It was to happen in churches in a public setting. And it was to have consistent features across the Carolingian world, including particular content and specific preparations. Reading the annals against the capitularies lifts out the significance of the *sacramentum* of baptism. The legal term *sacramentum* appears as a pivotal concept in Carolingian annals, and it focuses attention on the ways in which normative materials defined and described baptism.

The foundation and structural significance of baptism for the Carolingians is clearest in documents such as the infamous *Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae*, often used to establish the dark depth of Charlemagne's commitment to Christianization.⁷⁴ The capitulary devoted two chapters to baptism. Chapter eight declared that anyone rejecting baptism and wishing to remain a pagan was to be put to death. "If, henceforth, anyone from the people of the Saxons, lurking unbaptized among them, wishes to conceal himself, and scorns to come to baptism, and wishes to remain a pagan, he is to be put to death."⁷⁵ Chapter nineteen instructed that not only adults, but also children were to be baptized. It levied stiff fines on anyone who did not baptize his child within one year.

Likewise, it has been pleasing to insert in these decrees that all infants shall be baptized within a year; and we established this, so that if anyone will have despised to present an infant to baptism within the course of a year without the advice or permission of a priest, if he is from the nobility he shall pay 120 solidi to the fisc, if he is a freeman 60, if a *litus* 30.⁷⁶

It is important to note here that the chapter treats withholding a child from baptism as a crime and not as an ecclesiastical offense. The convicted pay their fine to the treasury and not to the church. Other details serve to nuance what begins as a shockingly harsh law to modern eyes. Reasonable flexibility was provided to local authorities through the phrase "without the advice or permission of a priest," which could account for added delay, perhaps when formation or catechesis was not complete—an interpretation supported by the second chapter to consider baptism. Chapter nineteen required that children be

⁷⁴ One scholar, for example, labeled it the "terror capitulary." Lawrence G. Duggan, "For Force is Not of God? Compulsion and Conversion from Yahweh to Charlemagne" *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages*, ed. James Muldoon (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1997) pp. 49–62, at 49.

⁷⁵ *Capitula de partibus Saxoniae*, c. 8, ed. A. Boretius, *Capitularia regum francorum I* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1883) p. 69. "Si quis deinceps in gente Saxonorum inter eos latens non baptizatus se abscondere voluerit et ad baptismum venire contempserit paganusque permanere voluerit, morte moriatur."

⁷⁶ *Capitula de partibus Saxoniae*, c. 19, p. 69. "Similiter placuit his decretis inserere, quod omnes infantes infra annum baptizantur; et hoc statuimus, ut si quis infantem intra circulum anni ad baptismum offerre contempserit sine consilio vel licentia sacerdotis, si de nobile generi fuerit centum viginti solidos fisco componant, si ingenuus sexaginta, si litus triginta."

baptized within their first year, which would allow for each child to be baptized at the public celebrations of Easter or Pentecost. Conclusive analysis of the capitulary has proven elusive, largely because of the problems posed by dating it securely. Traditionally, scholars have dated it to sometime in the late 770s or early 780s.⁷⁷ More recently, the 790s, perhaps even 795, has been proposed.⁷⁸ This revised placement tries to account for the strict, almost impatient, nature of the capitulary's approach to the Saxons. The former interprets the *Capitulatio* as an initial outburst of fury, the latter as a release of frustration and pent up anger from years of futile military and missionary effort among the Saxons. Whether the capitulary was issued pre- or post-790, annal entries looking back on engagement with the Saxons offer an optic though to see the centrality of *sacramenta* in Carolingian analysis of failure among the Germans. Thus the capitulary is drawn into a period of intense Carolingian reflection on the importance of the *sacramentum* of baptism to Carolingian aspirations for Saxony.

Reports in Carolingian annals, looking back on the 790s, became relatively prolix in their treatments of the Saxons, consistently emphasizing two points: first, the Carolingian leadership's increasing frustrations with the Saxons and, second, the basis of this frustration was the seeming inability of the Saxons to abide by sacramental commitments. The entry for 792 in the *Annales Laureshamenses* is typical, in general, for Carolingian annals on this issue and especially important, in particular, because of the source's demonstrably early date and its close geographical proximity to the events.⁷⁹

But, as summer approached, convinced that the Avars would take vengeance on the Christians, the Saxons bared for all to see what had long been hidden in their hearts. Like the dog that returns to its vomit (cf. Prov. 26:11) they returned to the paganism that they had long since renounced, again abandoning Christianity, lying as much to God as to the lord king. But also, dispatching their legates to the Avars, they attempted to rebel, first against God, then against the king and the Christians; they demolished or burned down all the churches in their land; they chased out the bishops and priests set over them, attacking some and murdering others; and they altogether reverted to idolatry.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Hen, "Charlemagne's Jihad," p. 37.

⁷⁸ Hen, "Charlemagne's Jihad," pp. 33–51.

⁷⁹ Portions of the annals survive, though not this entry, from c.800 in Vienna, ÖNB lat. 515. See Rosamond McKitterick, *Perceptions of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006) p. 76.

⁸⁰ *Annales Laureshamenses*, p. 35. "Sed et propinquante aestivo tempore Saxones, aestimantes quod Avarorum gens se vindicare super christianos debuisset, hoc quod in corde eorum dudum iam antea latebat, manifestissime ostenderunt; quasi canis qui revertit ad vomitum suum, sic reversi sunt ad paganismum quem pridem respuerant, iterum relinquentes christianitatem mentientes tam Deo quam domno rege, qui eis multa beneficia prestatit, coniungentes se cum paganas gentes, qui in circuitu eorum erant. Sed et missos suos ad Avaros transmittentes conati sunt in primis rebellare contra Deum, deinde contra regem et christianos; omnes ecclesias que in finibus eorum errant, cum destructione et incendio vastabant, reiicientes episcopos et presbyteros qui super eos erant, et aliquos comprehenderunt, nec non et alios occiderunt, et plenissime se ad culturam idolorum converterunt."

The author's aggravation at the Saxon rebellion is clear both from his scriptural reference and his comment that the Saxons had long harbored mutinous fantasies in their hearts. Characteristic Carolingian approaches to sacramental commitments also appear in the entry. Twice in quick succession the Saxons were described as lying or rebelling first against God and then against the king, betraying first their commitment to the baptismal *sacramentum* to God and second their commitment to the royal *sacramentum* to Charlemagne. The account also accented a consolidated hierarchy of authority insofar as the rebellion against God and king targeted local authority figures, bishops and priests. On the one hand, this certainly reflected the ecclesiastical interests of the annals' monastic authors. On the other hand, this throws open a window onto leading figures of the Christian "Carolingianization" of Saxony, especially since bishops and priests functioned as critical points of contact with newly conquered peoples.

Similarly, the *Annales regni francorum* depicted relations with the Saxons coming to a head in 795 when it recorded with disgust that

when he [Charlemagne] heard that the Saxons had, as usual, broken their promise to accept Christianity and keep faith with the king, he entered Saxony with an army and reached the Elbe at Lüne. At that time, Witzin, the king of the Obdorit-
ites, was slain there by the Saxons.⁸¹

The author's report featured twin *sacramenta*: baptism for God and the oath to Charlemagne. The Reviser is more explicit, framing the same episode with the observations that

the Saxons gave hostages in the preceding summer and swore *sacramenta*, as they were ordered to, but the king did not forget their perfidy . . . this event further persuaded the king to beat down the Saxons promptly and made him hate the perfidious people even more.⁸²

The authors' profound dissatisfaction is unmistakable. All the annals depicted Charlemagne as exasperated, moving to invade Saxony with the aim of beating down the natives. The Reviser very specifically identified the source of the frustration as the Saxon's inability to abide by *sacramenta*. Moreover, he explained that these *sacramenta* had two aspects, identified explicitly in the ARF account. The implications of the *sacramentum* in the Reviser's mind were highlighted by the characterization of the Saxons as perfidious, the language used by Isidore in his *Etymologies* to describe one who violates his

⁸¹ *Annales regni francorum*, p. 96. "Audiens vero, quod Saxones more solito promissionem suam, quam de habenda christianitate et fide regis tenenda fecerant, irritam fecissent, cum exercitu in Saxoniam ingressus est et usque ad fluvium Albim pervenit ad locum, qui dicitur Hliuni; in quo tunc Witzin Abodritorum rex a Saxonibus occisus est."

⁸² *Annales regni francorum*, p. 97. "Quamquam Saxones aestate praeterita et obsides dedissent et, secundum quod iussi errant, sacramenta iurassent, rex tamen illorum perfidiae non inmemor . . . Quod factum animo regis ad Saxones citius debellandos velut quosdam stimulos addidit et in odium perfidiae gentis amplius excitavit."

promises.⁸³ First and foremost, the Saxons violated the *sacramentum* by which they accepted Christianity. Second, and relatedly, they violated the *sacramentum* by which they were to keep faith with the king.

Throughout his reign, Charlemagne continually emphasized the need for and responsibility of bishops to monitor baptismal practices across his realm and Carolingian laws consistently reiterated the importance of wide exposure to the *sacramentum* of baptism.⁸⁴ Capitularies, statutes, and other Carolingian legislation described baptism as comprehensive and integrative, both in terms of who ought to carry out baptism and who ought to be baptized. The task of Christianizing and administering baptism, while perhaps conducted locally by priests, remained a responsibility that Charlemagne wanted monitored at a higher level. Already at the beginning of his rule, he included baptism in his so-called first capitulary (c. 769). Chapter eight described those things for which bishops must hold priests accountable. "Always during Lent he [every priest] should render and show to the bishop the reason and purpose of his ministry, whether concerning baptism, or concerning the catholic faith, or concerning the prayers and order of the Mass."⁸⁵ Two decades later, Charlemagne reiterated this concern. Episcopal responsibility for baptism appeared in the programmatic *Admonitio generalis* issued in 789.

That bishops are diligently to examine the priests throughout their dioceses as to their doctrinal beliefs, baptisms and celebration of Mass, to see that they hold the right beliefs and observe catholic baptism and properly understand the prayers of the Mass, and that the psalms are sung in proper accordance with the divisions of the verses and they both understand the Lord's prayer themselves and preach it so that it may be understood by all . . .⁸⁶

After two more decades had passed, Charlemagne's concern for baptism endured and became, if anything, more detailed. In 811/812 he issued a circular questionnaire on baptism to all the metropolitan bishops of the Frankish world in which he instructed them to evaluate and report on the practice of baptism in their dioceses.⁸⁷ Charlemagne followed this action with a series of five reform councils held

⁸³ See the discussion in Chapter One and Isidore, *Etymologiae* 5.24.31, ed. W.M. Lindsay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911).

⁸⁴ On evolving notions of episcopal responsibilities in the Frankish world see Steffen Patzold, *Episcopus. Wissen über Bischöfe im Frankenreich des späten 8. Bis frühen 10. Jahrhunderts* (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke, 2008).

⁸⁵ *Capitulare primum* c. 8, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 45. ". . . semper in quadragesima rationem et ordinem ministerii sui, sive de baptismo sive de fide catholica sive de precibus et ordine missarum, episcopo reddat et ostendat."

⁸⁶ *Admonitio generalis*, c. 68, p. 220. "Ut episcopi diligenter discutiant per suas parrochias presbiteros, eorum fidem, baptisma et missarum celebrationes, ut fidem rectam teneant et baptisma catholicum observent et missarum preces bene intellegant. Et ut psalmi digne secundum divisiones versuum modulentur et dominicam orationem ipsi intellegant et omnibus praedicent intellegendam . . ."

⁸⁷ Susan A. Keefe, *Water and the Word: Baptism and the Education of the Clergy in the Carolingian Empire*, Vol. II (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002) pp. 261–3

in 813.⁸⁸ He concluded his inquiries with a capitulary issued in 813, which began with the requirement “that every archbishop earnestly and carefully strive to remind his suffragans that each one not neglect simply to investigate his priests, how they perform the *sacramentum* of baptism and how they teach them earnestly by this so that it happens in an orderly manner.”⁸⁹ Strikingly, there is ample evidence of bishops picking up on this reform impulse and incorporating it into their own diocesan strategies. Numerous episcopal responses survive to Charlemagne’s questionnaire on baptism issued in 811 or 812.⁹⁰ Baptism was also prominently featured in many episcopal capitularies issued during the early ninth century from all across the Frankish world.⁹¹ On the topic of overseeing baptism, episcopal capitularies echoed Charlemagne’s concerns. In the Frankish heartlands of the early eighth century, Theodulf of Orléans in his *First Episcopal Capitulary* laid out reform expectations concerning baptism, specifically, that everyone learn the Creed and the Paternoster.⁹² From further east, a capitulary issued by Haito of Basel devoted no fewer than four canons to the *sacramentum* of baptism.⁹³

Carolingian leaders wanted baptism to be a widely accessible and public event. The *Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae* offered perhaps the most dramatic presentation of Carolingian interest in the reception of baptism. However, surviving evidence from across Carolingian Europe over several decades shows a striking continuity of concern for broad exposure to baptism. Not limited to a missionary impulse, the *sacramentum* of baptism was envisioned for wide audiences of adults and infants. Baptism was to be celebrated publicly. In 798 the Council of Reisbach weighed in with interesting detail. Canon four, which treated priests, and required—among other things—that bishops ensure their priests were not unlearned, specifically mentioned baptism. “He [the priest] should conduct a public baptism at the established times at two points each year—at Easter and at Pentecost, and he ought to conduct it according to the order of the Roman tradition.”⁹⁴ The canon demanded compliance in three

⁸⁸ Hartmann, *Die Synoden der Karolingerzeit*, pp. 128–40; see also Patzold, *Episcopus*, pp. 72–83.

⁸⁹ *Capitula e canonibus excerpta* c. 1, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 173. “ut unusquisque archiepiscopus suos suffraganeos diligenter ac studiosae admonere studeat, ut unusquisque suos presbiteros puriter investigare non neglegat, baptismatis sacramentum qualiter agant, et hoc eos studiose doceant ut ordinabiliter fiat.”

⁹⁰ I will treat the circular letter and its responses more fully in Chapter Four.

⁹¹ On the episcopal capitularies generally, see Carine van Rhijn, *Shepherds of the Lord. Priests and Episcopal Statutes in the Carolingian Period* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007). On the geographical distribution of surviving capitularies see especially pp. 229–31.

⁹² Theodulf of Orléans c. 22, *First Episcopal Statute*, ed. P. Brommer, MGH *Capitula episcoporum* I (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1984) p. 119.

⁹³ Haito of Basel, *Episcopal Statute* c. 5, 6, 7, 25, MGH *Capitula episcoporum* I pp. 210–11 and 219.

⁹⁴ *Concilium Rispacense* c. 4, ed. A. Werminghoff, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I p. 198. “. . . Baptismum publicum constitutis temporibus per II vices in anno faciat, in Pascha, in Pentecosten; et hoc secundum ordinem traditionis Romanae debet facere.”

areas, that baptisms be held in public, that they be held during principal celebrations of the Christian calendar—when audiences would be the largest—and that they conform in some way to the model offered by the Roman Church. Half a century later, in 845 at the Council of Meaux, bishops reiterated that baptisms be performed in designated public areas at specific times, emphasizing the public dimension of the *sacramentum*.⁹⁵ While it may be tempting sometimes to bracket the discussion of baptism as an ecclesiastical issue in which Charlemagne had some interest, his consistent concern for baptism in high profile and wide-ranging capitularies such as the *Admonitio generalis* suggest that he did not so distinguish topics. That bishops were given the responsibility need not itself indicate a hard distinction. Charlemagne addressed the importance of baptism in instructions issued to secular and ecclesiastical officials alike. Examples include not only the *Admonitio generalis*, but also texts such as his *Capitula tractanda cum comitibus episcopis et abbatibus*. This capitulary, issued in 811, addressed counts, bishops, and abbots together.⁹⁶

Specific times commonly agreed upon as suitable for baptisms underscore the high visibility Carolingian leaders sought for the *sacramentum*. Conciliar canons often identified holy days, almost always including Easter and Pentecost, when the *populus Dei* were encouraged to go to church and when clerics were required to give sermons.⁹⁷ The prescription that baptisms be held on the important feasts of Easter and Pentecost showed that Carolingian leaders wanted the ceremonies to occur in churches filled with observers.⁹⁸ Moreover, episcopal capitularies from across the Carolingian world were uniform in their agreement on this point. Around the end of the first decade of the ninth century, Hatto of Basel recognized the importance of Easter and Pentecost as times for baptism, while at the same time stressing that baptisms ought to be widely celebrated among Christians. He instructed his priests to

⁹⁵ *Meaux-Paris, June 845 and February 846*, c. 48, MGH *Die Konzilien der karolingischen Teilreiche 843–859*, ed. W. Hartmann (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1984) p. 108. “*Ut nemo presbiterorum baptizare praesumat, nisi in vicis et ecclesiis baptismalibus atque temporibus constitutis, nisi causa egritudinis vel certae necessitatis, sicut sacra canonum docet auctoritas, et vici auctoritatem et privilegia debita et antiqua retineant.*”

⁹⁶ *Capitula tractanda cum comitibus episcopis et abbatibus, Capitularia regum francorum I*, pp. 161–2. Chapter six of the capitulary treats baptism.

⁹⁷ For example, see *Concilium Moguntinense c. 36*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini I*, pp. 269–70.

⁹⁸ For a study of the planning and execution of baptism on specific days, see Michael Sierck, *Festtag und Politik: Studien zur Tagewahl karolingischer Herrscher* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1995) pp. 177–97. In addition to providing time to conduct a catechumenate program (see Chapter Three), the tradition of holding baptisms on Easter and Pentecost was long observed in the Western Church, since at least the time of Tertullian. For a rehearsal of this tradition see *The Study of the Liturgy*, eds. Cheslyn Jones et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978) pp. 97–9 and W.J. Conway, *The Time and Place of Baptism. A Historical Synopsis and a Commentary* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1954) pp. 4–20.

know the lawful times in the year for baptizing, that is the holy Easter Sunday, so that the triple immersion in baptism made famous by the resurrection imitates the three day long death of the Lord. And therefore up to the eighth day the sacred regeneration itself will be celebrated by the whole Christian people. Another time however is to be celebrated on the holy Sunday of Pentecost. If necessity compels, one in danger is to be assisted at any time, because necessity is hardly subject to law.⁹⁹

Similarly, sometime at the end of the eighth or early ninth century, Theodulf of Orléans instructed that every priest ought to be carefully examined “lest he presume to baptize a healthy person under pretense of illness, except on the established days of Easter and Pentecost.”¹⁰⁰ The same rules appeared in other canonical collections from the ninth century. For example, a manuscript written at Mainz around 825 preserved a “council memorandum.”¹⁰¹ It stated “that no one should baptize except on Easter and Pentecost, unless the person is sick.”¹⁰² General agreement existed that baptisms ought to be celebrated on these two principal feasts of the Christian calendar. In each example, an additional detail was provided, which at once underscored the sincerity of the theological interest in the *sacramentum* and simultaneously accented its public celebration. Baptism should be administered immediately to one in danger of death. This caveat—seen in Haito and Theodulf and universally present in discussions of the timing of baptism—shows that Carolingian thinkers wanted everyone to have immediate access to the saving benefits believed to be conveyed by the *sacramentum*. It also underlined Carolingian interest in the public and symbolic importance of the *sacramentum*: only extreme circumstances warranted removing its celebration from a well-prepared setting. Baptism under the Carolingians was intended to be a public affair, highly visible and with a meaning accessible to all.

Attention to audience further emphasized Carolingian interest in accessibility of meaning, especially in distinguishing between the needs of different ages, adults and children. Adults were addressed in the surviving records in two ways. First, they were envisioned as catechumens, people to be baptized themselves.

⁹⁹ Haito of Basel, *Episcopal Statute* c. 7, MGH *Capitula episcoporum* I, p. 211. “ut sciant tempora legitima ad baptizandum in anno, id est sabbato sancto paschae, ut illa triduanam mersio in baptismo imitetur triduanam mortem domini clarificata resurrectione. Et idcirco usque ad octavum diem ipsa regeneratio sacra ab omni populo christiano celebrabitur. Aliud vero tempus baptismatis sabbato sancto pentecosten celebrandum est. Si vero necessitas contigerit, omni tempore in periculo subveniendum est, quia necessitas vix habet legem.”

¹⁰⁰ Theodulf of Orléans, *Second Episcopal Statute* c. 3, MGH *Capitula episcoporum* I, p. 149. “. . . ne aliquem sub optentu infirmorum sanum baptizare praesumat nisi diebus statutis pascha pentecosten.”

¹⁰¹ Vatican, BAV Pal. Lat. 289, folio 2r. See Mordek, *Bibliotheca capitularium regum Francorum manuscripta*, pp. 769–71.

¹⁰² *Quibus de rebus in synodo quadam provinciali tractandum sit* c. 10, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 237. “Ut nullus baptizare praesumat nisi in pascha et pentecosten, excepto infirmo.”

Second, they were seen as godparents, those involved in baptism on behalf of others. Legislation treating godparents reveals that baptism was not a discreet transaction between a baptizand and God, but rather part of a larger social fabric.¹⁰³ Carolingian legislation indicated that a large segment of the community participated in or was present at baptismal ceremonies. While it is true that infant baptism increasingly became the norm across Europe, Carolingian legislation tended to focus on the role of adults. The *Capitulatio de partibus saxoniae* required adults to bring their children to baptism. Laws prohibiting parents from standing as godparents for their own children testified to Carolingian concerns about regulating Christian families as well as the political and social importance of distributing spiritual kinship in early medieval society.¹⁰⁴ A synod held at Mainz in 813, one of five related reform synods held that year required that “no one, therefore, should receive his own son or daughter from the font of baptism, nor should he take for a wife his goddaughter or godmother, nor a woman whose son or daughter he led to confirmation. Where this has been done, let them be separated.”¹⁰⁵ Episcopal statutes contained similar provisions.¹⁰⁶ Of course, not all evidence pointed to social and political concerns. Legislation also indicated the spiritual well-being of children as a motive. At the turn of the ninth century, Theodulf of Orléans fit children explicitly into the exception for the infirm. “If a sick child is brought to any priest for the grace of baptism from whatever parish, let the *sacramentum* of baptism be in no way denied to him. If anyone refuses to grant this gift to one seeking it and that little one dies without the grace of baptism, he knows that he, who did not baptize him, will have to give a reason for his soul.”¹⁰⁷ The bishop of Orléans skillfully managed theological concerns along with the political and social interests bound up in the *sacramentum*.

¹⁰³ For a full discussion of this aspect of baptism see, Joseph H. Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship: Ritual Sponsorship in Anglo-Saxon England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998); idem, *Godparents and Kinship*.

¹⁰⁴ Briefly, see Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003) pp. 454–5; more substantially, consult Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship*, pp. 219–84; Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship*, pp. 189–228.

¹⁰⁵ *Concilium Moguntinense* c. 55, *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 273. “Nullus igitur proprium filium vel filiam de fonte baptismatis suscipiat nec filiolum nec commatrem ducat uxorem nec illam, cuius filium aut filiam ad confirmationem duxerit. Ubi autem factum fuerit, separentur.”

¹⁰⁶ Carine van Rhijn, *Shepherds of the Lord: Priests and Episcopal Statutes in the Carolingian Period* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007) pp. 118–19. Representative is *Capitula Treverensia* c. 8, *MGH Capitula episcoporum* I, p. 56. “Similiter, qui commatres habent ad coniugium, quarum infantes de fonte susceperunt, vel eas, quarum filios tenuerunt ad manem episcopi ad confirmationem vel illarum filias, quas ad baptismum susceperunt seu ad manum habuerunt episcopi; eos atque eas nobis notafacite.”

¹⁰⁷ Theodulf of Orléans, *First Episcopal Statute* c. 17, *MGH Capitula episcoporum* I, p. 114. “Si parvulus aegrotans ad quemlibet presbyterum baptismi gratia de cuiuslibet parrochia allatus fuerit, ei baptismi sacramentum nullo modo negetur. Si quis hoc munus petenti concedere detrectaverit et ille parvulus absque baptismatis gratia mortuus fuerit, noverit se ille, qui eum non baptizavit, pro eius anima rationem redditurum.”

Carolingian sources also acknowledged the importance of baptism through their concern for where and how baptisms took place. Carolingians established and endowed specific sites for baptism, and designated some churches as baptismal churches. At the Council of Meaux churches approved to host baptisms were termed “baptismal churches.” Glimpses provided through Charlemagne’s diplomas testify to the importance and value of these churches. An immunity issued by Charlemagne in 782 applied specifically to “monasteries or xenedocia or baptismal churches or other possessions.”¹⁰⁸ A confirmation from 783 repeated the same list.¹⁰⁹ Baptismal churches appeared as the central elements of disputes in Carolingian Europe. In 801, Charlemagne issued a diploma to settle a dispute between the bishop of Bologna and the abbot of St. Sylvester’s at Nonatola over control of a baptismal church.¹¹⁰ Legislation also encouraged the establishment of these churches. An insecurely dated capitulary from Charlemagne’s reign confirmed the close connection between certain churches and the *sacramentum* of baptism, urging “that they restore the churches, who in that place use them for sacred baptism.”¹¹¹ The *Statutes of Reisbach, Freising, and Salzburg*, issued in 800, offered a clearer statement. Chapter thirty-two required that “through all dioceses legal baptisteries are established and holy fonts are honorably built there.”¹¹² Presumably, the bishops of Bavaria also devised a procedure for the establishment of a baptismal church, though the details do not survive.¹¹³ The issue appeared again before the Bavarians in 803 or 804 when a capitulary dealt with the tithes specially connected to these baptismal churches.¹¹⁴ What, exactly, baptismal churches were or how they should be interpreted remains difficult to determine.¹¹⁵ What can be said with certainty is that these churches were

¹⁰⁸ #147, *MGH Diplomatum karolinorum I*, ed. E. Mühlbacher (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1906) p. 200. “. . . monasteria vel exsinodochia seu ecclesias baptismales vel reliquas possessiones . . .”

¹⁰⁹ #150, *MGH Diplomatum karolinorum I*, p. 204. “. . . monasteria vel senodochia quamque ecclesias baptismales seu reliquas possessiones . . .”

¹¹⁰ #197, *MGH Diplomatum karolinorum I*, ed. E. Mühlbacher (Hannover, 1906) pp. 265–6.

¹¹¹ *Capitula de rebus ecclesiasticis c. 1*, *MGH Capitularia regum francorum I*, p. 185. “Primum de ecclesiis. 1. Ut ecclesias restituant qui ibidem sacro utuntur baptismo.”

¹¹² *Statuta Rhispaceusia, Frisingensia, Salisburgensia c. 32 (27)*, *MGH Concilia aevi karolini I*, p. 211. “Ut per omnes dioceses legalia baptisteria constituentur et sacra fons ibidem honorifice aedificetur.”

¹¹³ *Statuta Rhispaceusia, Frisingensia, Salisburgensia c. 32*, *MGH Concilia aevi karolini I*, p. 206. *De legalia baptisteria constituenda.*”

¹¹⁴ *Capitula Ecclesiastica ad Salz Data c. 2*, *MGH Capitularia regum francorum I*, p. 119. “De decimis: ubi antiquitus fuerunt ecclesiae baptismales et devotio facta fuit, iuxta quod episcopus ipsius parochiae ordinaverit omnimodis fiant donatae.”

¹¹⁵ John Blair offers some discussion of the baptismal churches in an Anglo-Saxon context, and contrasts insular usage to Continental. He identifies a three-tier hierarchy in Gaul: the cathedral, the baptismal church, and the oratory. John Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) p. 73; see also Susan Wood, *The Proprietary Church in the Medieval West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) pp. 66–74.

distinguished by their use for baptisms, typically under the control of an ecclesiastical official, and were desirable to possess.

In addition to specific places, Carolingian legal materials identified specific ways baptism ought to be conducted. Many authors showed a concern for the administration of baptism, identifying rules or procedures for this *sacramentum*. First, Carolingians had concerns about the form of baptism. Priests were to model baptism on the Roman custom. While the canons were silent on what features defined the Roman custom, all the canons on baptism agreed that those customs must be adopted.¹¹⁶ For example, as early as the *Double Edict of Commission*, promulgated in 789, Charlemagne presented the Roman model as the ideal. “That bishops listen to the baptism of priests, so that they baptize according to the Roman custom.”¹¹⁷ Ecclesiastical declarations, such as the one previously mentioned from 798 at Reisbach, placed baptism in the context of a larger goal of liturgical reform aimed at spreading the Roman tradition.

And the bishop should investigate this, so that his priests are not unlearned, but they read and understand the sacred scriptures, so that they can instruct according to the tradition of the Roman church and they ought to deliver the catholic faith and teach the people entrusted to them, to celebrate the Mass according to the custom, just as the Roman tradition is handed to us. He should conduct a public baptism at the established times at two points each year—at Easter and at Pentecost, and he ought to conduct it according to the order of the Roman tradition.¹¹⁸

The chapter succinctly ties a reform emphasis on knowing and understanding to teaching and public presentation using Roman customs.

Carolingian leaders were also clear that these public and widely accessible baptisms be used to instill specific content. Unsurprisingly, baptism was often mentioned generally in the context of educational reform.¹¹⁹ And again, legislation offers a window into the composition of education surrounding baptism:

¹¹⁶ The Carolingian understanding of the Roman custom of baptism I will consider in Chapter Four.

¹¹⁷ *Duplex legationis edictum* c. 23, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 64. “*Ut audient episcopi baptisterium presbyterorum, ut secundum morem Romanum baptizent.*” By using the word *baptisterium*, which technically refers to the baptistery or baptismal font itself, the canon indicates that the bishop should investigate not only the intinction of catechumens, but all the ceremonies involved with baptism.

¹¹⁸ *Concilium Rispacense* c. 4, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini*, p. 198. “*Et hoc consideret episcopus, ut ipsi presbyteri non sint idiotae, sed sacras scripturas legant et intellegant, ut secundum traditionem Romane ecclesiae possint instruere et fidem catholicam debeant ipsi agere et populos sibi commissos docere, missas secundum consuetudinem caelebrare, sicut Romana traditio nobis tradidit. Baptismum publicum constitutis temporibus per II vices in anno faciat, in Pascha, in Pentecosten; et hoc secundum ordinem traditionis Romanae debet facere.*”

¹¹⁹ Religious instruction associated with baptism has been helpfully explored by Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship*, pp. 305–32. I will revisit this topic more fully in Chapters Four and Five.

the catechumenate program. In the *Admonitio generalis*, Charlemagne required his bishops to ensure that their priests understood Christian doctrine, could perform various rites, and could preach credibly.¹²⁰ He contemplated not only priests who properly understood what they were doing, but also who could communicate that understanding clearly to others. In the *Capitulary Concerning Examining Churchmen*, which Charlemagne issued in 802 connected to a synod convoked at Aachen, chapter three treated the instruction that was to be given to catechumens: "In what way they [bishops, abbots, or priests] should be accustomed to instruct catechumens concerning the Christian faith, and then how they know reasonably to change special masses for the dead or also for the living according to either sex in singular number or in plural."¹²¹ Episcopal capitularies emphasized the same ideas. Chapter eight from the contemporary *Third Capitulary* of Ghaerbald of Liège, released between 802 and 809, demanded that all priests be prepared to administer baptism at all times in case someone infirm should require it.¹²² Neither Charlemagne nor Ghaerbald made reference to massive coordinated missionary programs. Neither specified the ages of the individuals involved, though consistent emphasis on instruction suggests an adult audience.

During the administration of the *sacramentum* of baptism, people were instructed about fundamental relationships. Whether from one's own baptism or one's presence at the baptism of others either through participation as a godparent or as a witness at the public celebrations during Easter and Pentecost, the *sacramentum* of baptism was something with which everyone ought to have been familiar. Capitulary and canonical material concerning the baptism of infants highlighted the pedagogical stakes involved. Unsurprisingly, they foregrounded the baptismal obligations of godparents. A canon from the Council of Arles, one of the five reform councils held in 813, is representative: "That parents desire very much to educate their children and godparents their godchildren, whom they received from the font of washing, the former, because they gave birth to them and were given by God to them, the latter, because they step forward as

¹²⁰ *Admonitio generalis* c. 68, p. 220. "Ut episcopi diligenter discutiant per suas parrochias presbiteros, eorum fidem, baptismum et missarum celebrationes, ut fidem rectam teneant et baptismum catholicum observent et missarum preces bene intellegant. Et ut psalmi digne secundum divisiones versuum modulentur et dominicam orationem ipsi intellegant et omnibus praedicent intellegendam..."

¹²¹ *Capitula de examinandis ecclesiasticis* c. 3, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 110. "Quomodo catechuminos de fide christiana instruere soleant, ac deinde quomodo missas speciales sive pro defunctis vel etiam pro vivis sciant commutare rationabiliter secundum utrumque sexum sive in singulari numero sive in plurali."

¹²² Ghaerbald of Liège, *Third Episcopal Statute* c. 8, MGH *Capitula episcoporum* I, p. 39. "Ut unusquisque presbyter omni hora sive die sive nocte ad officium suum explendum paratus sit, ut, si fortuitu aliquis infirmus ad baptizandum venerit, pleniter possit implere officium suum; et ab ebrietate se caveat, ut propter ebrietatem non valeat adimplere officium suum neque titubet in eo."

guarantors (*fideiussores*) for them.”¹²³ Several points emerge. Education and formation of children was of paramount importance to reform-minded Carolingians. Responsibility for education was placed on both the parents and the godparents. The parents’ interests were depicted as natural and God-given. The godparents’ role was explained in legal terms. The godparents stood as *fideiussores* for the children before the community. Because infants could not make the profession of faith on their own, godparents spoke for them on behalf of the larger Christian community and shouldered religious and theological as well as legal and social responsibilities.¹²⁴

Carolingian capitularies and canons were uniform in their demand for a period of formation during which people were instructed in the significance of the *sacramentum*, in faith, and in morals. This period of formation was often called the catechumenate.¹²⁵ Canons treated the items that newly baptized adults must know, and also indicated that catechetical instruction was not only for the adult convert.¹²⁶ Some specifically instructed godparents in what to teach their godchildren if the newly baptized were too young to learn at the time.¹²⁷ Theodulf of Orléans’ *First Diocesan Capitulary* captured both these points in chapter twenty-two.

Let all the faithful be reminded that generally everyone from the youngest to the oldest learn the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed. And it ought to be told to them, that the whole foundation of the Christian faith rests on these two maxims. And unless

¹²³ *Concilium Arelatense* c. 19, *MGH Concilia aevi karolini*, p. 252. “*Ut parentes filios suos et patrini eos, quos de fonte lavacri suscipiunt, erudire summopere studeant, illi, quia eos genuerunt et eis a Domino dati sunt, isti, quia pro eis fideiussores existunt.*”

¹²⁴ Lynch, *Christianizing Kinship*, pp. 93–98. The word *fideiussor* has a long history, but like the word *sacramentum*, took on a distinctive importance in the context of the Carolingian renewal as it coordinated theological and political concerns. Sponsors had been spoken of as legal guarantors in the Latin tradition as early as Tertullian and in the Greek with John Chrysostom. Carolingians could also find this language in the sermons of Caesarius of Arles.

¹²⁵ The Capitulary concerning Examining Churchmen refers specifically to catechumens. *Capitula de examinandis ecclesiasticis* c. 3, *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 110. “*Quomodo catechuminos de fide christiana instruere soleant, ac deinde quomodo missas speciales sive pro defunctis vel etiam pro vivis sciant commutare rationabiliter secundum utrumque sexum sive in singulari numero sive in plurali.*” See also the canons of the Council of Rheims, *Concilium Remense* c. 7, *MGH Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 254. “*Baptisterii et caticumenorum ventilata est ratio, ut sacerdotes plenius intellegent, qualiter condignis ordinibus efficerent Christianum.*” That children could also be considered catechumens, see Waltaud of Liège, *Episcopal Statute* c. 1, *MGH Capitula episcoporum* I, p. 45. “*De ordine baptisterii, qualiter unusquisque presbiter scit vel intellegit vel qualiter primo infans caticuminus efficitur vel quid sit catecuminis . . .*”

¹²⁶ *Capitula tractanda cum comitibus episcopis et abbatibus*, c. 6, *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 161. “*Quid sit, quod unusquisque christianus in baptismo loquitur, vel quibus abrenunciet.*”

¹²⁷ Ghaerbald of Liège, *Second Episcopal Statute* c. 3, *MGH Capitula episcoporum* I, p. 26. “*Ut, si patrini vel matrinae, qui infantes de fonte suscipiunt sive masculos sive feminas, si ipsum symbolum et orationem dominicam sciunt, et filios et filias suas spirituales, quos et quas de fonte susceperunt, pleniter instructos habeant de fide, de qua pro eis fideiussores exstiterint.*”

anyone holds these two maxims in their memory and believes them with all his heart and repeats them most often in prayer, he is not able to be catholic. For it is established that no one is anointed or baptized nor is anyone received from the washing of the font and neither does he hold anyone in the presence of the bishop for confirmation, unless he holds in his memory the Creed and the Lord's Prayer except for those, who by reason of their young age someone leads in speaking.¹²⁸

Other canons reminded the priests of their responsibility to instruct those coming to baptism.¹²⁹ Education was central to the Carolingian practice of baptism, and when those being baptized were infants—not infrequently the case—attention turned to godparents.

The doctrinal material mentioned specifically in Carolingian legal sources focused on the central tenets of the Christian Faith enshrined in the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. Of the information in these expressions of faith, normative texts most often singled out two elements: God and Satan. The canonical material issued under Charlemagne stressed especially the promises made to God and the renunciation of Satan. A capitulary issued in 811 for bishops and abbots ordered special attention to

what everyone promises to Christ in baptism or renounces for what reasons; so that, although it ought to be considered by every Christian, nevertheless it ought to be especially sought by ecclesiastics, who ought to offer in their own life an example to the laity of their promise and renunciation. This is to be most diligently considered and most clearly distinguished, what each one of ours by following or disregarding his very promise and renunciation either preserves or makes useless; and who is Satan or that adversary, whose works or pomp we renounce in baptism. This however ought to be determined, lest anyone by doing evil things in whatsoever things of ours follow him whom we renounced a long time ago in baptism.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Theodulf of Orléans, *First Episcopal Statute* c. 22, *MGH Capitula episcoporum* I, p. 119. "Commonendi sunt fideles, ut generaliter omnes a minimo usque ad maximum orationem dominicam et symbolum discant. Et dicendum eis, quod in his duabus sententiis omne fidei christianae fundamentum incumbit. Et nisi quis has duas sententias et memoriter tenuerit et ex toto corde crediderit et in oratione saepissime frequentaverit, catholicus esse non poterit. Constitutum namque est, ut nullus chrismetur neque baptizetur neque a lavacro fontis alium suscipiat neque coram episcopo ad confirmandum quemlibet teneat, nisi symbolum et orationem dominicam memoriter tenuerit exceptis his, quos ad loquendum aetas minime perduxit."

¹²⁹ Theodulf of Orléans, *Second Episcopal Statute* c. 3, *MGH Capitula episcoporum* I, p. 149. "Baptisterium qualiter peragant et qualiter verbis enuntiare possint et de negligentia in baptizandis infirmis, ne aliquem sub optentu infirmorum sanum baptizare praesumat nisi diebus statutis pascha et pentecosten." See also, *Capitula de examinandis ecclesiasticis*, c. 3 and c. 14, *MGH Capitularia regem francorum* I, p. 110.

¹³⁰ *Capitula de causis cum episcopis et abbatibus tractandis* c. 9, *MGH Capitularia regem francorum* I, p. 163. "Quid unusquisque Christo in baptismo promittat vel quibus causis abrenunciat; ut, quamvis unicuique christiano considerandum sit, specialiter tamen ab ecclesiasticis inquirendum, qui laicis ipsius promissionis et abrenunciationis in sua vita exemplum praebere debet. Hic diligentissime considerandum est et acutissime distinguendum, quae sectando vel neglegendo unusquisque nostrum ipsam suam promissionem et abrenuntiationem vel conservet vel irritam faciat; et quis sit ille Satanias sive adversarius, cuius opera vel pompam in baptismo renunciavimus. Hic autem conspiciendum est, ne perversa unusquisque faciendo illum quislibet nostrum sequatur, cui iamdudum in baptismo renunciavimus."

This chapter touched upon many familiar dimensions of *sacramentum*, including allegiance, fidelity and the identification by name. It then connects these to important features of the Carolingian Renewal as reflected in baptism. It focused on education, requiring that people know certain things. It linked promises or oaths to behavior cast in a moral framework of good and evil. It noted that clerics should serve as models for behavior, which it expected the laity to emulate. Conciliar material echoed these concerns. The Council of Arles (813) similarly connected baptism and the mystery of the faith. Canon three demanded that archbishops monitor their priests to ensure that “in their own parishes each [bishop] does not neglect that priests completely and ardently teach and instruct the whole people about the mystery of the faith and about the *sacramentum* of baptism, because ignorance is the mother of all errors.”¹³¹ Formation in the fundamental concepts of Christianity, specifically including baptism identified as a *sacramentum*, was essential for successful reform.

Moral behavior resting on the *sacramentum* was another focus of baptismal formation. Many canons and chapters linked dogmas to behavior in specific ways for the Christians living under Carolingian rule. Some canons stressed how the corporate entity benefited from the Christian faith. The Council of Mainz (813) stated

that peace and concord and unity are in the Christian people, because we have one God and Father in heaven and one mother church, one faith, one baptism. Therefore we ought to live harmoniously in one peace and unity, if we hope to arrive at the one and true inheritance of the heavenly kingdom, because God is not disunity, but peace, as he himself says: Happy are the peacemakers for they will be called sons of God.¹³²

The virtuous state of the newly baptized was cast as a civic advantage for the Frankish world explained in terms central to the intellectual and political goals of Carolingian Renewal. The peace, concord and unity that will be enjoyed in the heavenly kingdom could first be lived on earth in the *imperium christianum*. Chapter eighteen of the Council of Tours, another of the 813 reform councils, clarified that the baptismal renunciations of Satan and his pomps were renunciations of capital sins and principal vices. It outlined a hierarchical vision of moral reform and its implementation by citing specific

¹³¹ *Concilium Arelatense* c. 3, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 250. “. . . et de mysterio sanctae fidei et de sacramento baptismatis unusquisque illorum in propria parroecia perfecte studioseque presbyteros et universum populum docere et instruere non neglegat, quia ignorantia mater cunctorum est errorum . . .”

¹³² *Concilium Moguntinense* c. 5, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 261. “De pace et concordia et unanimitate. V. Ut pax et concordia sit atque unanimitas in populo Christiano, quia unum Deum patrem habemus in caelis et unam matrem ecclesiam, unam fidem, unum baptismum. Ideo in una pace et unanimitate concorditer vivere debemus, si ad unam et veram hereditatem regni caelestis cupimus pervenire, quia non est dissensionis Deus, sed pacis (cf. 1Cor. 14:33), ut ipse ait: Beati pacifici, quoniam filii Dei vocabuntur (cf. Mt. 5:9).”

examples of bad behavior through its interpretive reading of the triple renunciation offered at baptism.

The great concern of bishops should be to hand over to their priests the *sacramentum* of baptism and what in that *sacramentum* ought to be renounced or what ought to be believed. He renounces then the devil and his works. For the works of the devil are understood to be the works of the flesh, which are homicide, fornication, adultery, drunkenness, and many other things similar to these, which are without doubt first imagined in the thinking of the mind at the inspiration of the devil, and are then accomplished in deeds. The pomps of the same indeed are pride, arrogance, self-exaltation, vainglory, haughtiness, and a great many other things, which seem to arise from these.¹³³

The explicit characterization of baptism as a *sacramentum* at the outset of the chapter pointed readers to the broader sacramental framework organizing societal relationships, here concretized in a litany of moral hazards. Canon two of the *Concord of Bishops*, promulgated in 813, summarized the points made at each of the individual councils and underscored the broad hold of these ideas on Carolingian thinkers as they reflected on the functioning of an *imperium christianum*—the same Christian ecclesiological analysis Charlemagne earlier employed as a justification for his authority over Christian Europe when he addressed the Adoptionist controversy at the Council of Frankfurt.¹³⁴

Of paramount importance to the Carolingians was the formational aspect of baptism. The *sacramentum* was to be explained and modelled to everyone. The events surrounding the baptismal liturgy, as indicated by the canons and capitularies, provided the critical educational context. The content suggested by the canons armed those witnessing the baptismal ceremonies with conceptual tools for understanding faith and morals and seeing their implications for an *imperium christianum*. The canons issued under Charlemagne, either by Charlemagne himself, his councils, or his bishops all offered a vision of baptism that included everyone in the Carolingian world, Christian and pagan, child and adult, women and men, in public places, at widely acknowledged times, to convey a specific content in a fixed, public, and predictable setting. The high stakes and sweeping importance of baptism in the eyes of the Carolingians inform the recollections and reasoning in the Carolingian annals and contextualize the harshness evident in some capitularies like the *Capitulatio de*

¹³³ *Concilium Turonense* c. 18, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, pp. 288–89. “*Episcoporum sit magna sollicitudo presbyteris suis tradere baptismi sacramentum et quid in eodem renuntiandum quidve credendum sit. Renuntiatur ergo diabolo et operibus eius. Opera enim diaboli opera carnis esse intelleguntur, quae sunt homicidia, fornicationes, adulteria, ebrietates, et multa alia his similia, quae nimirum diabolico instinctu prius cogitatione mentis concipiuntur quam opere perpetrentur. Pompe vero eiusdem sunt superbia, iactantia, elatio, vana gloria, fastus et alia quamplurima, quae ex his oriri videntur.*”

¹³⁴ *Concordia Episcoporum* c. 2, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 297. “*De sacramento baptismatis, de pace et concordia ita continendum decrevimus, sicut in capitulare dominico et in omnibus synodis continetur.*”

partibus Saxoniae. Baptism was a basic element in a broader program of social, political, and religious organization.

2.3. ESTABLISHING ORDER THROUGH SACRAMENTUM: THE POSITION OF THE JEWS IN THE CAROLINGIAN WORLD

An analysis of the position and image of Jews under the Carolingians provides a useful vantage over the importance of *sacramenta*—particularly baptism to Carolingian ideas of society. Three significant caches of sources testify to Carolingian engagement with Judaism. The largest body appears in exegetical and theological texts. Next, capitulary and other legal materials offer an indication of the importance of the Jews in the Carolingian world. Finally, letters concerning the Jewish community at Lyon document a third encounter with early medieval Judaism, that, although very specific, nonetheless reveal general Carolingian perceptions of the world. All of the evidence treating Jews underscores the centrality of *sacramenta* for defining and managing community in Carolingian Europe.

The majority of Carolingian references to Jews were “theological” or “hermeneutical” devices and do not reflect real people.¹³⁵ Still, an examination of the ideological significance of Jews touches on the sacramental thinking so essential to the Carolingian Renewal. The writings of the prolific abbot of Fulda and archbishop of Mainz, Hrabanus Maurus (780–856) supply representative examples. Throughout numerous commentaries on the Bible, Hrabanus routinely characterized the Jews as perfidious. In his commentary on the Book of Kings he asserted “as you see, the proud minds of the Hebrews, who for the most part at the coming of the Redeemer remained in *perfidia*, had no fruit. They refused to follow the beginnings of faith.”¹³⁶ Hrabanus’

¹³⁵ Johannes Heil, “Labourers in the Lord’s Quarry: Carolingian Exegetes, Patristic Authority, and Theological Innovation, a Case Study in the Representation of Jews in Commentaries on Paul” *The Study of the Bible in the Carolingian Era*, eds. Celia Chazelle and Burton Van Name Edwards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003) pp. 75–95. This essay is drawn from his larger project, idem, *Kompilation oder Konstruktion? Die Juden in Den Pauluskommentaren des 9. Jahrhunderts* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1998). See also idem, “‘Nos nescientes de hoc velle manere’—‘We Wish to Remain Ignorant about This’: Timeless End, or: Approaches to Reconceptualizing Eschatology after A.D. 800 (A.M. 6000)” *Traditio* 55 (2000) pp. 73–103, at 98. Similar observations are advanced in Bat-Sheva Albert, “Anti-Jewish Exegesis in the Carolingian Period: The Commentaries on Lamentations of Hrabanus Maurus and Paschasius Radbertus” *Biblical Studies in the Early Middle Ages*, eds. Claudio Leonardi and Giovanni Orlandi (Florence: SISMEL, 2005) pp. 175–92, at 185.

¹³⁶ Hrabanus Maurus, *Commentaria in libros VI regum*, PL 109.73. “*Superbiae quippe Hebraeorum mentes primitivi fructus non fuerunt, qui in Redemptoris adventu ex parte maxima in perfidia remanentes, primordia fidei sequi noluerunt.*”

analysis is important because of its originality. To be sure, Hrabanus drew most of his words from earlier sources. He made use of older Christian exegesis connecting the blindness of the Jews to their rejection of Christ, which resulted in a triple punishment: loss of firstborn rights, loss of statehood, and loss of liberty.¹³⁷ However, his reasoning and conclusions resonated with broader religious, social, and political activities of the Carolingians. “Perfidy” is not a condemnation peculiar to the Jews, but rather is consistent with a wider Carolingian vocabulary of contempt for foes. This point bears mention because while Hrabanus’ condemnations of Jews were pronounced, they were still quite different from both earlier and later exegesis using the same (or similar) vocabulary.¹³⁸ This insight further emphasized, on an ideological level, the close connection between Carolingian theological outlooks and political rationales. It also underscored the sophisticated way in which key terms had simultaneously theological and political meanings. The perfidy which precipitated a theological and political catastrophe befalling the Jews paralleled the fate of Tassilo as ordered by the Synod of Frankfurt. The result of Tassilo’s perfidy was the transfer of political control of Bavaria from the Agilolfings to the Carolingians, the loss of Bavarian independence, and Tassilo’s own personal loss of liberty. Hrabanus’ emphasis on perfidy with respect to the Jews remained consistent through his exegesis of the New Testament. In his commentaries on the Pauline epistles, for example, in explanation of Romans 11:20, he inveighed “‘You, however, stand by faith.’ Because the Jews fell through mistrust, he says that these stand by faith. Because when earlier they laid down by reason of perfidy, they began to stand by believing.”¹³⁹

In addition to the hypothetical Jews frequenting early medieval exegesis, real Jews lived in the Carolingian World. A careful review of eighth- and ninth-century sources finds Jews, sometimes even identified by name, occupying high-profile and important positions in Carolingian government. A prominent figure in Charlemagne’s embassy to Harun-al-Rashid, the Muslim Caliph in Baghdad, was a Jew named Isaac.¹⁴⁰ Arn—Alcuin’s friend, Charlemagne’s

¹³⁷ Bat-Sheva Albert, “Adversus Iudaeos in the Carolingian Empire” *Contra Iudaeos: Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews*, ed. Ora Limor and Guy G. Stroumsa (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1996) pp. 119–42.

¹³⁸ Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: Volume 3*, trans. E.M. Macierowski (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publ. Co., 2009) pp. 73–146, esp. 116–36.

¹³⁹ Hrabanus Maurus, *Enarrationum in epistolas beati pauli libri triginta*, PL 111.1532. “Tu autem fide stas. Quia Iudaei per diffidentiam lapsi sunt, hos fide dicit stare; quia cum prius perfidiae causa jacerent, credendo stare coeperunt. Noli altum sapere, sed time; id est noli superbus esse, sed cave ne et tu offendas.”

¹⁴⁰ *Annales regni francorum*, p. 116. “Ipsius anni mense Octobrio Isaac Iudeus de Africa cum elefanto regressus Portum Veneris intravit; et quia propter nives Alpes transire non potuit, in Vercellis hiemavit.” For discussion, see Bernard S. Bachrach, *Early Medieval Jewish Policy in Western Europe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977) p. 74.

trusted agent in Bavaria, and the first archbishop of Salzburg—was friendly with a Jewish physician and scholar.¹⁴¹ As intriguing as these individuals are, throughout the early Middle Ages Jews are most visible in the sources as participants in the economic affairs of Europe.¹⁴² Extensive networks of trade organized by Jewish communities across the Mediterranean world, and in Europe, ensured a constant stream of imports and exports, particularly in southern Gaul. Most prominent in long distance trade were the Radanites, likely based in the Rhone Valley.¹⁴³ The importance of Jews to the economic stability of the Frankish world was not lost on early medieval leaders.

Legal sources testify to the status and protections afforded to Jews in order to ensure that they could conduct commerce unmolested. Jews were important enough and maintained a high enough profile that Charlemagne and his son, Louis the Pious, promulgated imperial decrees guaranteeing privileges for leading Jewish families. Two decrees specifically concerning the Jews survive from the reign of Louis the Pious.¹⁴⁴ One privilege concerned a rabbi Domatus and his son Samuel. The second concerned a Jew named David, another named Joseph, and their community living in Lyon. Both documents afforded the Jews a series of protections and privileges, and set the stage for the most infamous outbreak of anti-Jewish literature from the ninth century. Importantly, while only two privileges survive, the fact that both were preserved in a formulary collection suggests that such privileges were not rare. The precepts protected Jews from calumnies, provided them with tax and toll breaks, permitted them to hire Christians, allowed them to adjudicate their own legal cases, prevented others from baptizing their slaves, provided legal standing in cases against Christians, and prevented authorities from punishing Jews beyond what was permitted in Jewish laws.

¹⁴¹ Bachrach follows Blumenkranz in lifting this detail out of a Carolingian formulary from Salzburg. *Formulae salzburgensis*, ed. K. Zevmer *MGH Formulae merowinici et karolini aevi*, (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1886) p. 448. Bachrach, *Jewish Policy*, p. 72. Bernhard Blumenkranz, *Juifs et Chrétiens dans le Monde Occidental, 430–1096* (Paris: Moutin & Co., 1960) pp. 21–2.

¹⁴² For an introduction to the history and situation of Jewish life in the early Middle Ages, see Christof Geisel, *Die Juden im Frankreich. Von den Merowingern bis zum Tode Ludwigs des Frommen* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996) pp. 487–711. The clearest exposition of the sources on Judaism under the Carolingians is Bachrach, *Jewish Policy*, pp. 66–105. For a more recent assessment, largely in agreement with Bachrach, see Kenneth R. Stow, *Alienated Minority: The Jews of Medieval Latin Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992) pp. 41–64. See also J.M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983) pp. 390–403. Earlier and influential are several essays from *The World History of the Jewish People: Second Series: Medieval Period, Volume 2: The Dark Ages*, ed. Cecil Roth (London: Jewish History Publications, 1966), consult especially, C. Roth, “Economic Life and Population Movements” pp. 13–48, B. Blumenkranz, “The Roman Church and the Jews” pp. 69–99, and S. Schwarzfuchs “France and Germany under the Carolingians” pp. 122–42.

¹⁴³ Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communication and Commerce, A.D. 300–900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) pp. 688–93. See also Bachrach, *Jewish Policy*, pp. 72–4; Roth, “Economic Life,” p. 24.

¹⁴⁴ *Praeceptum Iudeorum*, *MGH Formulae merowinici et karolini aevi*, ed. K. Zevmer (Hannover, 1886) pp. 309–10.

Such rights and privileges as they had, Jews accessed through *sacramenta*. To be sure, Jews did not undergo baptism and consequently were not exposed to the Christian formation offered with baptism. Presumably, also, Jews did not swear the imperial *sacramentum* to Charlemagne. Still, surviving canons testify not only to the presence of Jews, but also to the possibility that they participated in the legal affairs of the *imperium christianum* through *sacramenta*.¹⁴⁵ The ninth century *Capitulary concerning the Jews* presented a series of laws regulating Jewish participation in the economic life of the empire.¹⁴⁶ Among the laws were a group of *sacramenta* through which Jews could have engaged in legal proceedings involving Christians, just as authorized by Louis the Pious' privileges.¹⁴⁷ Like Christians, Jews were required to take *sacramenta* in order to participate in Carolingian legal proceedings.¹⁴⁸ Also, like those for Christians, these *sacramenta* were religiously grounded. But instead of being grounded in the faith of Christ, these *sacramenta* were grounded in Carolingian Christian perceptions of the Jewish religion, reinforced by Carolingian knowledge of the Old Testament and theories about how Jews understood the scriptures.

The *Capitulary concerning the Jews* contained two sample *sacramenta* for Jews to swear. They share several features. Both referred to Moses, to Naaman, and to Dathan and Abiram. The references to Moses invoked his importance as a lawgiver and highlighted the gravity with which Carolingians wanted Jews to view this *sacramentum* as a legal instrument. The first *sacramentum* began "may God who gave the law to Moses on Mount Sinai help me" and the second one echoed "I swear to you through the living and true God, and on that holy

¹⁴⁵ Carolingian government may have had a position set up for relations with the Jews. See the remarks on the *magister Iudaeorum* in Bachrach, *Jewish Policy*, pp. 99–101.

¹⁴⁶ The precise context of the capitulary remains uncertain. The text survives in two related manuscripts. Heiligenkreuz, Stiftsbibliothek, 217 (fols. 218v–282r) is a late tenth century manuscript from southeastern Germany, see Mordek, *Bibliotheca capitularium*, pp. 158–72. The other manuscript is Munich, BSB Lat. 3853 (261v–262r), dated to the second half of the tenth century, perhaps from Augsburg, see Mordek, *Bibliotheca capitularium*, pp. 287–305. In both manuscripts the text sits among a series of Carolingian capitularies from the eighth and ninth centuries. Identified in both manuscripts as *De capitulis domni Karoli imperatoris Hlvdovuici*, Mordek suggested it be regarded as spuria. Importantly, a very similar *sacramentum* is transmitted independently in Wölfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Blankenb. 130, a manuscript written in northern Italy during the third quarter of the ninth century, where it is an addendum to a series of capitularies and *leges*, see Mordek, *Bibliotheca capitularium*, pp. 920–43. While likely not an imperial capitulary, the tradition of Jewish *sacramenta* is firmly established in the ninth century, and is not unique.

¹⁴⁷ Similar to the hermeneutic Jews of Carolingian exegesis, the Jewish oath of the *Capitula de Iudeis* differs markedly from the oaths administered to Jews during the High Middle Ages. For a larger discussion with helpful bibliography, see Joseph Ziegler, "Reflections on the Jewry Oath in the Middle Ages" *Christianity and Judaism*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1992) pp. 209–20. The questions surrounding the manuscript witnesses to the *Capitula de Iudeis* and the absence of a substantial Jewish corpus of writings hinder efforts to more fully contextualize this work.

¹⁴⁸ Bachrach views these *sacramenta* as a testament to the flexibility of the Carolingian position and a clear pragmatism in wanting to accommodate Jews. Bachrach, *Jewish Policy*, p. 169.

law which the Lord gave to blessed Moses on Mt. Sinai.”¹⁴⁹ The formulation of the *sacramentum* betrays a simplistic understanding of Jewish legal culture. The *sacramenta* also reflect deep-seated Carolingian fascination with Old Testament law, especially as a model for the present.¹⁵⁰ Both *sacramenta* carefully connected Moses to the idea of law. Carolingian thinkers recognized the exalted place enjoyed by Moses among Jews and grounded their *sacramenta* in the fact that Jews credited Moses with writing down the Torah received from God. The second *sacramentum* increased its dramatic force by including a clause mentioning the pact made by God with Abraham—perhaps an oblique reference to the pact of baptism, signalling an analogy while underscoring a distinction.¹⁵¹ In any case, the *sacramentum* sought to find an analogy between the religious law given by God to Moses and the theological underpinning of Carolingian law.

The references to Naaman enhanced the *sacramentum* in Carolingian eyes by offering a backhanded compliment to the Hebrew Bible, while asserting the supremacy of Christianity. The story of Naaman appears in the Old Testament (Vulgate) book of IV Kings.¹⁵² Naaman, general of the Syrian army, was described as a great and honourable man, valiant and rich. But Naaman was a leper. The story related how the king of Syria at the suggestions of a Hebrew maid sent Naaman to the king of Israel for a cure. The king of Israel panicked because he could not heal Naaman. The prophet Elijah consoled the king and explained that he was a prophet and could heal the general. When Naaman arrived at Elijah’s home, the prophet instructed him to wash seven times in the Jordan River. At first Naaman, sceptical and angry, left. Later, on the advice of some servants who argued that if he was prepared to complete a difficult task in order to be healed, why would he not complete a simple one, Naaman then bathed in the Jordan. Miraculously healed, he returned to Elijah and declared his belief in the God of Israel.

Naaman exemplified the Carolingians’ belief that God reached out to non-Jewish people. More importantly, in the context of this *sacramentum*, the reference to Naaman challenged the Jewish oath-taker on several levels. God’s power worked for the benefit of the Gentiles and not the Jews, a point made

¹⁴⁹ *Capitula de Iudaeis* c. 4 and c. 5, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 259. “Si me Deus adiuuet, ille Deus qui dedit legem Moysi in monte Synai . . .” and, “adiuro te per Deum vivum et verum, et in illam legem sanctam quam Dominus dedit ad beatum Moisen in monte Sinai . . .” For the account of Moses on Mt. Sinai see Exodus 19.

¹⁵⁰ On general Carolingian interest in the Old Testament see Garrison, “The Franks as the New Israel?,” pp. 114–61; Garrison, “Letters to a King and Biblical Exempla,” pp. 305–28. See also Mayke de Jong, “Old Law and New-found Power. Hrabanus Maurus and the Old Testament” *Centers of Learning. Learning and Location in Pre-Modern Europe and the Near-East*, eds. J.-W. Drijvers and A. MacDonald (Leiden: Brill, 1995) pp. 161–74.

¹⁵¹ *Capitula de Iudaeis* c. 5, MGH *Capitularia regum francorum* I, p. 259. “. . . et per pactum Abrae quod Deus dedit filii Israel . . .”

¹⁵² The story of Naaman is recounted in IV Kings 5:1–27, 2Kings 5 in other familiar versions.

strikingly by Jesus in the Gospel of Luke. While Naaman's story appeared in the Hebrew Scriptures, Luke's Gospel mentioned the story of Naaman and provided a clue as to why Carolingian officials included it in these *sacramenta*. In chapter four, Jesus taught at the synagogue of Nazareth and berated his audience.¹⁵³ He explained that a prophet was never accepted in his own country. For an example, Jesus recounted the story of Naaman and explained that although there were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elijah, only Naaman the Syrian was cleansed. While the Carolingians recognized that Jews worshiped the same God, the authors of the Jewish *sacramenta* emphasized that the full truth of Christianity superseded Judaism. Moreover, Christian authors had long seen the washing of Naaman in the Jordan as prefiguring the *sacramentum* of baptism.¹⁵⁴ Carolingian authors were no different. As Naaman washed in the Jordan cleansing him from his physical illness, Christians were washed in baptism cleansing them from their spiritual illness of sin. Thus the invocation of Naaman served as both a warning and an invitation.

Finally, both *sacramenta* mentioned the names Dathan and Abiram. These brothers and sons of Core appeared in chapter sixteen of the Book of Numbers.¹⁵⁵ The brothers, along with their father and the rest of their family, disagreed with Moses' decisions concerning the people. They rebelled against the Hebrews' God-given leaders, Moses and Aaron. In response, God instructed Moses to make an example of the brothers and their families. Moses gathered the people around the brothers and their families to watch as the ground opened up and swallowed them and all their possessions. The inclusion of the names Dathan and Abiram levelled a rather bald threat at the Jew taking this oath that each ought to respect and obey God-given authority, which the Carolingians believed was given to the Christian ruler. The episode of Dathan and Abiram was a story well known to Carolingian authors. In his *Life of Louis the Pious*, Thegan used the same punishment as a threatening lament to his contemporaries, much in the same way it was used in the Jewish oath. "And you, O land, which sustained him at that time, why did you not open your mouth to devour him [Bishop Ebbo of Rheims, Louis' prosecutor] as you once did to Dathan and Abiron?"¹⁵⁶

These legal instruments testified both to the importance of Jews in the Carolingian Empire and to the tension with which that importance was managed. In the

¹⁵³ Luke 4:24–7.

¹⁵⁴ The connection appears, for example, in the widely circulated sermons of Caesarius of Arles. See, for example, Caesarius of Arles, *Sermo cxxix*, ed. D. German Morin, CCSL 103 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1953) pp. 531–5, at 533. "Unde nisi ad exemplum Naaman humanum genus consilium Helisei audisset, et per Christi gratiam donum baptismatis humiliter accepisset, ab originali et actuali lepra liberari non posset."

¹⁵⁵ Numbers 16:12–35.

¹⁵⁶ Thegan, *Gesta Hludowici Imperatoris* 44, ed. E. Tremp, MGH SRG in usum scholarum 64, (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1995) p. 234. "Et tu, terra, quae eum sustinuisti illo in tempore, quare non aperuisti os tuum, ut devorares eum, sicut iam olim fecisti Dathan et Abiron?"

second quarter of the ninth century, in the prestigious and affluent city of Lyon, these tensions boiled over when the local bishop Agobard interpreted privileges obtained by Jewish merchants—and the accompanying prestige—as impinging upon the sacramental logic of the Carolingian Renewal.¹⁵⁷ The comparatively strong position of the Jews in the region conflicted with his theological construction of a Christian society. Agobard wove together theological and political invective against Louis' preferential treatment of the Jews, based on his idea of empire and connecting arguments about Christian theology, law, and history.

The *sacramentum* of baptism stood at the heart of Agobard's problem with the Jewish privileges ordered by Louis the Pious. Sometime during the year 826, Agobard wrote a letter to Adalhard of Corbie, Count Wala, and Helisachar of St-Riquier to express his distress over the privileges Louis the Pious afforded the Jews, specifically over the prohibition of baptizing slaves belonging to the Jews.¹⁵⁸ In this letter, Agobard focused on the issue of baptism and did not consider or even mention other protections enjoyed by the Jews under Louis. Agobard's concerns centered not on economic issues, but on where Louis' policies frustrated the bishop's Christian assumptions about the sacramental unity of an *imperium christianum*. His criticism concerning the Jews of Lyon appear to be a specific instance of his larger critique of Louis' rule, especially concerning emperor's succession plans for dividing the Carolingian world.¹⁵⁹ The first letter focused on the

¹⁵⁷ The most important general works on Agobard of Lyon remain Egon Boshof, *Erzbischof Agobard von Lyon: Leben und Werk* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1969) and Allen Cabaniss, *Agobard of Lyon: Churchman and Critic* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1953). For important comments on the content and context of Agobard's anti-Jewish writings, see Heinz Schreckenberg, *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld (1.-11. Jh.)* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1982) pp. 491–9; Bernhard Blumenkranz, *Les Auters Chrétiens Latins du Moyen Age: sur les Juifs et le Judaïsme* (Paris: Moutin & Co., 1963) pp. 152–68; idem, *Juifs et Chrétiens*. J. Heil has argued convincingly for the gritty immediacy of Agobard's problems with the Jews. The Jews were not an abstract theological construct, but a community with whom a series of Lyonnaise bishops battled over property; see Johannes Heil, "Agobard, Amulo, das Kirchengut und die Juden von Lyon" *Francia: Forschungen zur Westeuropäischen Geschichte* 25 (1998) pp. 39–76. On an analysis of Agobard's ideas as broadly reflective of Carolingian habits and concerns see Anna Beth Langenwaller, *Agobard of Lyon: An Exploration of Carolingian Jewish Christian Relations* (Ph.D. Diss., University of Toronto, 2009). She identifies "oaths" as a central feature of Agobard's analysis of the problems of the 830s at pp. 191–4.

¹⁵⁸ Agobard of Lyon, *De baptismo mancipiorum iudaeorum (ad adalardum, walam et helisacharum)*, ed. L. Van Acker, CCCM 52 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1981) pp. 115–17.

¹⁵⁹ My frame of analysis is much indebted to the very nuanced and elegant evaluation set out in Jeremy Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law: Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999) pp. 123–45. He notices that Agobard's trenchant anti-Judaism is confined to his writing concerning Lyon and do not spill over in his other works, in some of which he sounds a sympathetic note for Judaism. This leads Cohen to interpret the anti-Jewish efforts in the light of Agobard's other criticisms of Louis the Pious, particularly surrounding the *Ordinatio imperii* of 817. Others note that among Agobard's key concerns was the retraction of the *Ordinatio imperii*; see Albert, "Anti-Jewish exegesis," 183. For a larger picture of Agobard's fulminations against Louis see Courtney Booker, *Past Convictions: The Penance of Louis the Pious and the Decline of the Carolingians* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) pp. 129–82.

conflict of Louis' orders with Agobard's goal of missionizing pagan slaves, some of whom were purchased by Jews. "First, what is very necessary for me, and I think, for all to know, that you deign to give a policy, which agrees with the divine work about what should be done about the Jews' pagan slaves, whom they bought."¹⁶⁰ Agobard did not argue for missionizing Jews. His concern was for pagans whom Jewish masters had purchased to serve as slaves. Further, Agobard's interest was in how these pagans should fit into a community of people defined by the Christian faith. Perhaps as important as the question of whether or not Agobard himself was anti-Jewish, is that his rhetorical strategy to garner support among leading figures around Louis featured the notion of a Christian Empire. All of his addressees were influential officials with political and theological stakes in the unity of the empire and crucial players in the civil war triggered by Louis' retraction of the *Ordinatio imperii*. Helisachar was the abbot of the royal monastery of St-Riquier and a long-time supporter of Louis from his time as king of Aquitaine, and who subsequently served as archchancellor in Louis' imperial administration.¹⁶¹ Adalhard and Wala were brothers, children of the youngest son of Charles Martel, and trusted advisors to Charlemagne. Both were forced out of the political arena after the accession of Louis the Pious in 814, but eventually moved back to prominence before Adalhard's death in 827 and Wala's political missteps in 830.¹⁶² At the time Agobard wrote, all three men would have been in positions to influence Louis.

Agobard advanced a threefold argument. First, he appealed to ecclesiological ideals. He offered the example of past Christians and their desire to bring about the unity of a people under one Lord through baptism. He wrote

all the holy preachers, allies of the apostles, teaching all the nations and baptizing (cf. Mt 28:19-20), did not await the permission of carnal lords to baptize servants, as if it was not appropriate to be baptized, unless it was permitted to them, but knowing and preaching that servants and lords have one Lord, God in heaven, they baptized all, brought all together in to one body, and they taught that all are brothers and sons of God, thus nevertheless, so that each one in that way he was called remained in this, not by zeal, but by necessity, but also if they are able to become free, they should make greater use of it (cf. 1Cor. 7:20-1).¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰ Agobard of Lyon, *De baptismo mancipiorum iudaeorum*, p. 115. "Primum, quod summopere mihi necesse est scire, et, ut existimo, etiam omnibus, ut dare dignemini consilium, quod diuino congruat operi, quid faciendum sit de mancipiis Iudaeorum ethnicis, quae illi comparauerunt."

¹⁶¹ Mayke de Jong, *The Penitential State: Authority and Atonement in the Age of Louis the Pious, 814-840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) pp. 21-2.

¹⁶² De Jong, *The Penitential State*, pp. 102-11.

¹⁶³ Agobard of Lyon, *De baptismo mancipiorum iudaeorum*, p. 116. "... omnes sancti praedicatores, socii apostolorum, docentes omnes gentes et baptizantes, non expectauerunt dominorum carnalium licentiam, ut seruos baptizarent, quasi non eos oporteret baptizari, nisi eis permittentibus, sed scientes et praedicantes, quod serui et domini unum habeant Dominum Deum in caelis, omnes baptizauerunt, omnes in uno corpore redigerunt, omnesque fratres et filios Dei esse docuerunt, ita tamen, ut unusquisque in quo uocatus est, in hoc permaneret, non studio, sed necessitate, sed et si qui possent liberi fieri, magis uterentur."

The ideal of the Christian Empire drove the bishop's concern. As a bishop and successor to the Apostles, Agobard described his keen interest in baptizing non-Christians. He used a reference to Matthew's Great Commission to emphasize not the salvific aspects of baptism, but rather the ecclesiological aspects. Interpretation of Matthew's Great Commission at the close of his Gospel became a key text for Carolingian thinkers.¹⁶⁴ Baptism drew people into the one community defined by Christianity. The discussion of the relative position of the heavenly Lord to earthly lords threw a none-too-subtle jab at Louis. He should not restrict access to the Christian community and should respect the analogy of the earthly to the heavenly painstakingly developed by his father.

Second, Agobard appealed to the ideal of a Christian emperor as well as past Carolingian precedent, remarking that bringing Christianity to pagans had characterized imperial domination in the past.

We think that it ought to be considered that when a religious emperor moves a force against a people, who were alien to the name of Christ, and victorious makes them subject to Christ and unites them to religion, the work is of duty and worthy of praise: how is it to be neglected, if among such subjects those exist who desire baptism?¹⁶⁵

Agobard's second point built on the first. The unity of the faithful through baptism served the political and social interest of the *imperium christianum*, and, moreover, it was a Christian emperor's responsibility to promote baptism among pagans. Turning from implied criticism of Louis, Agobard highlighted the clear advantages—in his mind—of enlarging the number of Christians. The religious rationale of the Christian empire required it and it should bring praise as well as a larger constituency to Louis.

Finally, Agobard emphasized that his point was not to punish the Jews. He stated that he attempted to purchase the converted slaves at a fair price, but suggested that because the Jews enjoyed Louis' privilege, they tried to extort higher prices from him.¹⁶⁶ While it is impossible to know the specifics of the negotiations that took place between Agobard and the Jews of Lyon, or if they even took place, by the inclusion of this sentiment, Agobard tried—rhetorically at least—to focus not on the Jews themselves, but rather on the slaves of the Jews. He was concerned that laws issued by Louis the Pious were undermining the

¹⁶⁴ See the discussion in Chapter Three.

¹⁶⁵ Agobard of Lyon, *De baptismo mancipiorum iudaeorum*, p. 116. “. . . illud putamus esse considerandum, quia, si religiosus imperator aduersus gentes, quae a Christi nomine alienae sunt, arma mouet, et uictor effectus subicit eos Christo et sociat religioni, opus est pietatis et laude dignum: quomodo neglegendum est, si inter subiectos tales existant, qui desiderent baptismum?”

¹⁶⁶ Agobard of Lyon, *De baptismo mancipiorum iudaeorum*, p. 116. “Neque hoc dicimus, ut Iudaei perdant pretia, quae in talibus dederunt, sed quia offerimus pretia secundum statuta priorum, et illi non recipiunt, putantes sibi fauere magistratus palatii, et melius illis cupere quam caeteris, qui supradicta asserunt.”

Christian character of the Carolingian Empire, a character defined by the *sacramentum* of baptism.

When Agobard's first objection prompted no change in imperial policy, he drafted another letter along similar lines. Addressing himself to Hilduin and Wala, Agobard again appealed to the unity provided by baptism and the imperial responsibility of Louis; however, this letter did not provide explicit relief for the Jews who would lose their slaves. Agobard adopted a more aggressive posture, that the needs of Christ and the church should be the only concerns of imperial law. He wrote that God was the creator and governor of all.¹⁶⁷ He continued explaining that God had created man in his own image.¹⁶⁸ Here he closely associated God's role as creator of man with God's role as a virtuous leader. He then quoted Paul's Letter to the Colossians:

strip off the old man with his deeds and put on the new, one that is being renewed unto perfect knowledge 'according to the image of his Creator.' Here there is not 'Gentile and Jew,' 'circumcised and uncircumcised,' 'barbarian and Scythian,' 'slave and freeman,' but Christ is all things in all.¹⁶⁹

He drew baptismal imagery into his discussion of rule by contrasting the old man with the new before concluding with a reminder to his readers that the *sacramentum* of baptism provided a model for God's plan as Creator and Governor.

When therefore those who come to baptism through the recognition of the Creator in the interior man, who is free from every condition of servitude, they are renewed—which reason is able to do—so that servants are forbidden to follow without the permission of their lord. Is it not allowed for them to serve God, unless they are given permission by men?¹⁷⁰

Agobard's theological analysis framed his evaluation of the emperor's responsibilities. He employed a biblically derived notion of man within a Christian anthropology to argue that God wanted all people to be baptized. Unity conferred by the *sacramentum* of baptism provided the basis for his analysis of government

¹⁶⁷ Agobard of Lyon, *Contra praeceptum impium de baptismo iudaicorum mancipiorum* (ad hilduinum et walam), ed. L. Van Acker, CCCM 52 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1981) p. 187. "... unus omnipotens Deus, omnium conditor et moderator iustissimus ..."

¹⁶⁸ Agobard of Lyon, *Contra praeceptum impium de baptismo iudaicorum mancipiorum*, p. 187. "... qui primum hominem de terrae limo formavit et de costa eius adiutorium illi simile sibi fecit, quique ex eis omne genus humanum, quasi ex uno fonte et una radice, propagavit ..."

¹⁶⁹ Agobard of Lyon, *Contra praeceptum impium de baptismo iudaicorum mancipiorum*, p. 187. "Expoliantes uos ueterem hominem cum actibus eius, et induentes nouum eum, qui renovatur in agnitionem secundum imaginem eius, qui creauit eum, ubi non est gentiles et Iudaeus, circumciso et preputium, barbarus et Scyta, seruus et liber, sed omnia et in omnibus Christus."

¹⁷⁰ Agobard of Lyon, *Contra praeceptum impium de baptismo iudaicorum mancipiorum*, p. 187. "Cum ergo hi, qui ad baptismum ueniunt per agnitionem Creatoris in interiore homine, qui ab omni seruitutis conditione liber est, renouentur, quae ratio esse potest, ut id serui absque permissu dominorum suorum consequi prohibeantur, nec seruire eis Deo liceat, nisi licentiam ab hominibus impetrauerint?"

responsibility. To Louis the Pious, who styled himself a Christian emperor, Agobard posed a theological argument with clear administrative ramifications.

In the same letter, Agobard recast his challenge to Louis in an historical-political form through a comparison of Louis to the infamous Roman Emperor Nero.

For we read at the end of the letter to the Philippians thus: 'All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household' (cf. Phil. 4:22). No one doubts that this was the most impious Nero, whose servants and ministers of the palace hall were converted by apostolic preaching. They would never be able to be sanctified by the grace of baptism if they awaited his wish or permission in this matter, for he discouraged especially by the terror of persecution not only the unbelieving—lest they come to the faith—but also insisted that the believers shed their faith. Whence also in the final atrocity of his rage, he massacred the leaders and teachers of the Christian faith, whose teaching he saw subjugating the whole world to the Christian faith against his will.¹⁷¹

Nero was among the most reviled characters for Christian thinkers in Antiquity and through the Middle Ages. Not only was Nero seen as a failure as an emperor, but he was also a ferocious persecutor of Christians, which earned him a place in Christian thought next to Judas Iscariot.¹⁷² The comparison made by Agobard was code recognized by his contemporaries who knew popular pseudonyms used for criticizing fellow Carolingians, though there is no doubting Agobard's boldness here.¹⁷³ So that there was no confusion about his intent, Agobard characterized Nero as "impious," which pointedly contrasted with Louis, whose royal titlature styled him as "most pious."¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ Agobard of Lyon, *Contra praeceptum impium de baptismo iudaicorum mancipiorum*, p. 186. "Legimus namque in fine epistolae ad Phylipenses ita: Salutant uos omnes sancti, maxime autem qui de Caesaris domo sunt. Quem impiissimum Neronem fuisse, nemo quis dubitet; cuius domesticos et ministros aulae regiae nullus ambigit praedicatione apostolica conuersos, numquam baptismi gratia sanctificari potuisse, si eius super hac re uoluntas aut permissio expectaretur, qui maximo persecutionis terrore non solum incredulos, ne ad fidem uenirent, deterrebat, sed etiam credentes a fide deicere insistebat. Vnde et ipsos duces ac magistros fidei christianae, quorum doctrina totum poene orbem contra sua scita uidebat Christi fidei subiugatum, nouissima furoris sui atrocitate trucidauit."

¹⁷² On the depiction of Nero in early Christianity, see Brian E. Daley, *The Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) pp. 8, 126, and 163; for Late Antiquity see also Edward Champlin, *Nero* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003) pp. 17–21 and 121–6; for the early Middle Ages see Paul E. Szarmach, "Alfred's Nero" *Source of Wisdom: Old English and Early Medieval Latin Studies in Honour of Thomas D. Hill*, ed. Charles D. Wright, Frederick M. Biggs and Thomas N. Hall (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007) pp. 147–67.

¹⁷³ See, for example, Paschasius Radbertus, *Epitaphium Arsenii*, ed. E. Dümmler (Berlin: Abhandlungen der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1900) and the brief description in Booker, *Past Convictions*, pp. 42–50.

¹⁷⁴ For example, in a letter Agobard addresses Louis "Christianissimo et vere piissimo, et Christo uictori ac triumphatori Hludouuico imperatori felicissimo . . ." Agobard of Lyon, *De insolentia iudaeorum* (ad Hludovicum), ed. L. Van Acker, CCCM 52 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1981) p. 191. See Rudolf Schieffer, "Ludwig 'der Fromme': Zur Entstehung eines karolingischen Herrscherbeinamens" *Frümittelalterlichen Studien* 16 (1982) pp. 58–73.

Agobard's continued frustration at Louis' lack of appreciation for the sacramental problem posed by the pagan slaves of the Jews led him to ratchet up his anti-Louis rhetoric, which in this case took a decidedly anti-Judaic turn. Unlike his previous letter, Agobard did not this time show sympathy for the potential loss of property faced by a Jew whose slave converted to Christianity. In fact, Agobard suggested that the loss of property could serve as an explanation or even a warning to Jews. He cited the example of Philemon and Onesimus in Paul's letter to Philemon.

Philemon is injured by his slave Onesimus, whom the Apostle Paul—placed in chains—converts to the faith of Christ and washes in the font of sacred baptism. Philemon is not consulted about this but is admonished, so that he now receives him, a believer and baptized, just as the heart of the apostle.¹⁷⁵

The concerns of the Jews, whom Agobard must have felt were successfully pressing their case with Louis, ought not only to be ignored, but perhaps even reprimanded by the emperor just as Paul rebuked Philemon.

After this second exchange, Agobard pivoted from demanding that Louis uphold a sacramentally responsible position in imperial legislation and advanced a more pernicious anti-Judaic position, highlighting the dangers posed by Jews to the *imperium christianum*. He wrote three more pieces concerning the Jews, a letter to Louis the Pious, a treatise concerning Jewish superstitions, and a letter to Bishop Nibradius of Narbonne urging him not to allow Christians to eat with Jews.¹⁷⁶ Agobard's sense of episcopal duty and his conception of the proper sacramental order of the empire moved him to question Louis' policy with regard to Jews. Repeated frustration over Louis' lack of interest in addressing Agobard's concerns drove the bishop of Lyon's increasingly trenchant criticism first of Louis and then of the Jews. Whatever the final position of Agobard with regard to the place of Jews and Judaism, the initial problem he presented focused on the *sacramentum* of baptism and the status of the Jews' pagan slaves within the *imperium christianum*.

Baptism, particularly as a *sacramentum*, helped Frankish leaders organize and manage their approaches to building and maintaining an *imperium christianum*. In ways which drew upon and stretched inherited ideas of *sacramentum*,

¹⁷⁵ Agobard of Lyon, *Contra praeceptum impium de baptism iudaicorum mancipiorum*, p. 188. "*Lesus est Philemon a seruo Onesimo, quem Paulus apostolus in uinculis positus ad Christi fidem conuertit, sacri baptismatis fonte abluit, nec super his Philemon consulitur sed, ut iam credentem atque baptizatum quasi uiscera apostoli suscipiat, admonetur.*"

¹⁷⁶ Agobard of Lyon will later exploit this connection in his discussion of Jewish superstitions in Agobard of Lyon, *De iudaicis superstitionibus et erroribus*, CCCM 52, ed. L. Van Acker (Turnhout: Brepols, 1981) p. 217. "*Populus autem ille, qui totus est positus in maligno, quique Dei uirtutem et Dei sapientiam non cognouit, ac per hoc in malignitatis et erroris uetustate remansit, pro nihilo in conspectu omnium credentium est habendus, nec pecuniae aut diuitiarum suarum causa cuiquam honorandus, sed ob earum potius cupiditatem lepra Naamam aspersus, ab omni fidelium populo, per uerum Heliseum aquis baptismatis expiato, ut uere sordidissimus atque immundissimus execrandus; insuper uero et anathema ei semper et ubique dicendum uoce apostoli . . .*"

Carolingian thinkers viewed baptism as a tool to order their world in a politically useful, publicly accessible, and ideologically consistent manner. The Carolingian court position in the lead up to and at the Council of Frankfurt, especially in contrast to other views, reveals the *sacramentum* of baptism as a foundational concept for the court's understanding of Charlemagne's authority in Europe. Numerous capitularies and canonical decrees reiterated Frankfurt's vision, emphasizing how baptism—as a *sacramentum*—was the religious, cultural, and political bedrock for Frankish society. Surviving documentation testifies to Carolingian interest in the *sacramentum* as theologically coherent, conceptually simple, consistently applied, publicly available, and politically constitutive. Consideration of Judaism at the end of the eighth and first half of the ninth century confirms and nuances the picture. Baptism offered a paradigm for analysing not just theological concepts, but also economic, social, and legal aspects of the Carolingian world. Even as *sacramenta* remained the basic tool for Carolingian analysis, Agobard feared a schism had been introduced between administrative and religious practices while the actions of Louis the Pious suggest that there were practical limits to, or at least disagreements about, baptism within a broad consensus about the *sacramentum*'s scope. This broad sketch from the late eighth century across the early ninth demonstrates the centrality of baptism as a crucial concern both ideologically and administratively for the empire. A closer look at the genesis and installation of sacramental formation, particularly through the work of Alcuin of York, will explain more fully why and how the *sacramentum* became so important.

The Carolingian Subject: The *Sacramentum* of Baptism and the Formation of Identity in Alcuin of York

The writings of Alcuin of York, an influential voice at the Carolingian court and architect of key documents such as the *Admonitio generalis* and the *De litteris colendis*, played a pivotal role in the understanding and presentation of Christianity under the Carolingians.¹ Alcuin's active participation in the theological, political, and social controversies of late eighth-century Europe supplied the context for his careful elaboration of Christian identity. Against an uneven backdrop of Carolingian power, he reflected on how successfully to instill a Carolingian Christian identity in the people of Carolingian Europe.² Inspired—or concerned—by the Carolingian conquest of the Avars in 796, Alcuin designed and advocated an approach to Christian formation based on the *sacramentum* of baptism. After consideration of the political, social, and religious

¹ See especially Donald A. Bullough, *Alcuin: Achievement and Reputation* (Leiden: Brill, 2004) pp. 379–86. For the *Admonitio generalis*, see *Die Admonitio generalis Karls des Grossen*, eds. Hubert Mordek, Klaus Zechiel-Eckes, and Michael Glatthaar (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2012) pp. 47–63 and also Friedrich-Carl Scheibe, “Alcuin und die *Admonitio generalis*” *Deutsches Archiv* 14 (1958) pp. 221–9. For the *Epistola de litteris colendis* see the comments and new edition in T. Martin, “Bemerkungen zur ‘*Epistola de litteris colendis*’” *Archiv für Diplomatik* 31 (1985) pp. 227–72.

² Carolingian authority over Europe can be difficult to generalize about and has benefitted from scholarly scrutiny. The widely varied nature of Carolingian rule is surveyed in the monumental *New Cambridge Medieval History*. For a perspective from the center see Paul Fouracre, “Frankish Gaul to 814” *New Cambridge Medieval History II c.700–c.900*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 85–109. For a perspective on the periphery see Julia Smith, “Fines imperii: the Marches” *New Cambridge Medieval History II c.700–c.900*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 169–89. For a perspective focusing on local evidence see Chris Wickham, “Rural Society in Carolingian Europe” *New Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. 2, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 510–37. Other scholars in other surveys tend to emphasize similar themes; for example, see Timothy Reuter, “Charlemagne and the World beyond the Rhine,” *Charlemagne: Empire and Society*, ed. Joanna Story (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005) pp. 183–94.

dimensions of Christian mission at the end of the eighth century, he set baptism as the foundation for both doctrinal and moral teachings. He came to view the *sacramentum* of baptism, on the one hand, as theologically constitutive for Christians, but also, on the other hand, as pedagogically instrumental in forming Christians. Across the last decade of the eighth century, Alcuin refined his ideas through consideration of Christian mission. He built a distinctive approach to Christianization on this basis and sketched a program for the liturgy of baptism which would implement his hard-won insights into the *sacramentum*. Then he spread his theories across Europe through his friends, students, and contacts via his heavy traffic in theological and moral advice.

3.1. ALCUIN'S MISSIONARY THEORY

Alcuin poured considerable effort into missionary policy during the mid-790s and his resulting clarity of vision set baptism as a *sacramentum* at the very heart of the theological, political, and social project of the Carolingian Renewal in Europe. Recently returned from a stint home in England, Alcuin dropped himself into the most burning concerns of the Carolingian court, such as how to deal with Spain, Byzantium, and Bavaria.³ A further critical area was Christian mission.⁴ The Carolingian conquest, conversion, and integration of the Saxons was a long running catastrophe of theological, political, and social dimensions for the Franks.⁵ The added impetus of fashioning a missionary policy applicable to the

³ See Chapter Two.

⁴ The bibliography of early medieval mission is vast. A fine introduction, including discussion of the Carolingians is Richard Fletcher, *The Barbarian Conversion: From Paganism to Christianity* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1998). Important is Lutz E. von Padberg, *Mission und Christianisierung. Formen und Folgen bei Angelsachsen und Franken im 7. und 8. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1995). For a thought-provoking study which focuses on the centrality of literacy and communication to the Carolingian's missionary efforts, though not specifically Alcuin's letters concerning the Avars, see Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom*, 2nd ed. (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2003) pp. 434–61. For focused reading of missionary *vitae* and an accompanying emphasis on the political contexts of early medieval missionary activity, which considers Alcuin's efforts toward the Avars, see Ian Wood, *The Missionary Life: Saints and the Evangelisation of Europe 400–1050* (London: Longman, 2001). Alcuin's contribution, including his letters on the Avars, is considered at pp. 79–99.

⁵ For a brief synopsis of Charlemagne's problems with the Saxons see Fouracre, "Frankish Gaul to 814," pp. 85–109, at 102–5. On the theological significance of the Saxons, among others, to the Carolingians specifically, see, for example, James Palmer, "Defining paganism in the Carolingian world" *Early Medieval Europe* 15 (2007) pp. 402–25; on the political and social stakes Carolingians saw in the Saxons see Henry Mayr-Harting, "Charlemagne, the Saxons, and the Imperial Coronation of 800" *English Historical Review* 111 (1996) pp. 1113–33. Earlier studies sketching the broad outlines of missionary thinking are Alain Dierkens, "Pour une typologie des Missions carolingiennes" *Propagande et Contre-Propagande religieuses*, ed. Jacques Marx (Bruxelles: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1987) pp. 77–93; Richard E. Sullivan, "Carolingian Missionary Theories" *Catholic Historical Review* 42 (1956) pp. 273–95; idem, "The Carolingian Missionary and the Pagan" *Speculum* 28 (1953) pp. 705–40.

newly conquered Avars in central Europe forced Alcuin's hand and resulted in a series of letters outlining his vision of how to develop Christian identity within the expanding Carolingian world, wherein he adroitly balanced philosophical and theological concerns with political and social ones.⁶ Alcuin reworked inherited doctrinal and moral themes into a cohesive program of conversion applicable to Carolingian expansion in the last decade of the eighth century.⁷ He developed a three-step conversion plan, which placed the *sacramentum* of baptism at the center of a program of Christian formation in faith and morals. Alcuin's mature approach to Christian formation appears in three letters penned during the summer of 796.⁸ The letters reveal how Alcuin envisioned Carolingian society through the *sacramentum* of baptism. Baptism had been important to Alcuin in establishing his administrative vision, through works like the *Admonitio generalis*, and in describing orthodoxy in the face of controversy, such as the row over Spanish Adoptionism, thus identifying for himself and others the theological stakes of Carolingian civilization.⁹ These three letters show how Alcuin, reflecting on the Saxon missteps and planning for the Avar project, realized that

⁶ For a brief synopsis of the Avar conquest, see Charles Bowlus, *Franks, Moravians, and Magyars: The Struggle for the Middle Danube, 788–907* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995) pp. 46–60; for the larger context of Avar history consult Walter Pohl, *Die Awaren: Ein Steppevolk im Mitteleuropa, 567–822 n. Chr.* (Munich: Beck, 1988) pp. 308–22.

⁷ Alcuin's deep-seated concern for working within "tradition" has been admirably described by John Cavadini, see "A Carolingian Hilary" *The Study of the Bible in the Carolingian Era*, eds. Celia Chazelle and Burton Van Name Edwards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003) pp. 133–40; idem, "The Sources and Theology of Alcuin's 'De Fide sanctae et individuae trinitatis'" *Traditio* 46 (1991) pp. 123–46; and idem, "Alcuin and Augustine: De Trinitate" *Augustinian Studies* 12 (1981) pp. 11–18. Others, too, have noticed a similar phenomenon: see John Marenbon, *From the Circle of Alcuin to the School of Auxerre: Logic, Theology and Philosophy in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) p. 31, and Owen M. Phelan, "Catechising the Wild: The Continuity and Innovation of Missionary Catechesis under the Carolingians" *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 61:3 (2010) pp. 455–74.

⁸ These letters have been well studied, though most often for their points of agreement. On their theological content, for example, their use of Augustine or their attention to preaching the faith, see Donald A. Bullough, "Alcuin and the Kingdom of Heaven: Liturgy, Theology, and the Carolingian Age" *Carolingian Essays*, ed. Uta-Renate Blumenthal (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1983) pp. 1–69, at 42–3 and Sullivan, "Carolingian Missionary Theories," pp. 273–95. For their importance in establishing Alcuin's political views, see Mary Alberi, "The Evolution of Alcuin's Concept of Imperium christianum" *The Community, the Family, and the Saint: Patterns of Power in Early Medieval Europe*, eds. Joyce Hill and Mary Swan (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998) pp. 3–17 and, interestingly, Yves Congar, *Lecclesiologie du haut Moyen âge: de saint Grégoire le Grand à la désunion entre Byzance et Rome* (Paris: Éditions de Cerf, 1968) pp. 124–5. For a larger view of the political stakes Alcuin saw in the Avar mission, including discussion of these letters see Heinz Löwe, *Die karolingische Reichsgründung und der Südosten* (Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, 1937) pp. 116–29. On the practicality of Alcuin's approach to mission, especially the importance of pre-baptismal catechesis, see Kate Rambridge, "Alcuin's Narratives of Evangelism: The Life of St. Willibrord and the Northumbrian Hagiographical Tradition" *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300–1300*, ed. Martin Carver (Rochester: Boydell and Brewer, 2003) pp. 371–81 and the earlier Sullivan, "Carolingian Missionary Theories" pp. 273–95, at pp. 277–84.

⁹ See the discussion surrounding the Council of Frankfurt in Chapter Two.

the *sacramentum* of baptism was formative in two ways. Not only was it theologically constitutive of members of an *imperium christianum*, but it also held the promise of being pedagogically instrumental in bringing about a positive and stable political outcome. In his estimation, the conversion of the Avars served as a study or test for the efficacy of baptism in effecting a Carolingian Renewal. Alcuin carefully shaped his rhetoric and packaged his vision of baptism in a way that allowed him to distinguish between the concerns of secular and ecclesiastical powers, while simultaneously highlighting a single method that would meet the needs of both. In his letters concerning the Avars, Alcuin outlined a model of Christian formation and described how conversion, centered on baptism, benefited individual Christians, Carolingian society, and the universal church.

Alcuin saw the successful religious conversion of the Avars as both a duty of and a boon to Carolingian Europe. At least a dozen surviving letters from the last years of the eighth century testify to Alcuin's keen interest in Christian missionary activity among the Avars.¹⁰ The majority were written to Arn, bishop of Salzburg (archbishop from 798). Letters to Charlemagne, Paulinus of Aquileia, and Meginfrid, the royal chamberlain, also survive. Alcuin identified three basic elements of mission, namely, effective preaching, fruitful baptism, and sustainable moral life. He viewed the *sacramentum* of baptism as the principle tool of Carolingian expansion and integration of new peoples. He showed interest in the conversion of this pagan people even as they were being overcome and saw successful conversion of the Avars as a crucial test for the success of a Christian Carolingian society. Two early letters, one to Paulinus and another to Arn, show Alcuin beginning to identify themes and concepts soon to be organized into a coherent program. In late 795 or early in 796, he wrote a letter to Paulinus of Aquileia in which he described the strength of his conviction and began to work out a plan for converting the Avars.¹¹ Paulinus, patriarch since 787, was on the front lines of the assault on the Avars. His close association with Duke Eric of Friuli led to his involvement in the Avar mission; not surprising considering that both Paulinus and Eric were Frankish appointees to the important Lombard frontier march soon after Charlemagne took control of northern Italy.¹² The

¹⁰ See Alcuin, *Epistola* 99, ed. Ernst Dümmler, *MGH Epistolae IV* (Berlin: Weidmanns, 1895) pp. 143–4; idem, *Epistola* 107, pp. 153–4; idem, *Epistola* 110, pp. 157–9; idem, *Epistola* 111, pp. 159–62; idem, *Epistola* 112, pp. 162–3; idem, *Epistola* 113, pp. 163–6; idem, *Epistola* 146, pp. 235–6; idem, *Epistola* 161, pp. 259–60; idem, *Epistola* 165, pp. 267–8; idem, *Epistola* 184, pp. 308–10; idem, *Epistola* 185, pp. 310–11; idem, *Epistola* 194, pp. 321–2.

¹¹ Dümmler dates the letter to 796, Dümmler, *Epistolae IV*, p. 143. Bullough argues for late 795, Bullough, *Alcuin*, p. 446.

¹² On Eric generally see James Bruce Ross, "Two Neglected Paladins of Charlemagne, Eric of Friuli and Gerold of Bavaria" *Speculum* 20 (1945) pp. 212–35. On Paulinus importance to Carolingian control of Lombard Italy see Nick Everett, "Paulinus, the Carolingians and Famosissima Aquileia" *Paolino d'Aquileia e il contributo italiano all'Europa carolingia*, ed. Paolo Chiesa (Udine: Forum, 2003) pp. 115–54.

letter contained all the elements that Alcuin would soon refine into a plan for Christian mission. Alcuin's sensitivity to the need for coordination between secular and ecclesiastical figures is already in evidence, since at about the same time he had written a brief note to Eric, encouraging the duke to listen to Paulinus' advice and work in cooperation with him on an Avar mission.¹³ In early 796 Eric directed a raid on the Avar stronghold known as "the Ring" and its success led to a second larger campaign under the direction of King Pippin of Italy, whereby the Avars were overcome and the Ring destroyed.¹⁴ Alcuin's letter outlined for Paulinus the significance of the imperial conquest of the Avars, explaining how it was God's hand that had brought about victory, and emphasizing that the Avar leadership had already sworn the twin *sacramenta* of fidelity to God and to the king.¹⁵ "He [Charlemagne] is the strength and wisdom of God, in whose power and grace he has marvellously triumphed over the Avar nation. Their emissaries to the lord king were drawn up, promising peaceful submission and the faith of Christianity."¹⁶ Further, Alcuin made clear his baptismal aspirations for Paulinus' work. He imbued his letter with water imagery calling to mind the baptismal destiny that he imagined for the Avars. He addressed the Patriarch "and especially you, holy father, from whose heart the font of true charity pours out and from his side will flow the stream of living water."¹⁷ Alcuin envisioned Paulinus directing activities on the ground among the Avars, activities which should culminate in the *sacramentum* of baptism for the whole people, not just their political leaders.

Alcuin continued to let his ideas on baptism percolate. He mentioned to Paulinus the importance of preaching, the necessity of order in religious formation, and the necessity of rejecting the devil. He drew on ideas long important and well known to reform-minded Carolingians and which he had already advanced through documents such as the programmatic *Admonitio generalis*

¹³ Alcuin, *Epistola* 98, p. 142.

¹⁴ See note 6.

¹⁵ The notion of God's selection of one group over another, common in the Western historiographical tradition, poses a formidable problem to modern scholars both because of its ubiquity and its ontological assumptions. A sensitive approach to the history of divine election and its role in Western historiography is Mary Garrison, "Divine Election for Nations—a Difficult Rhetoric for Medieval Scholars" *The Making of Christian Myths in the Periphery of Latin Christendom c.1000–1300*, ed. Lars Boje Mortensen (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum, 2006) pp. 275–314.

¹⁶ Alcuin, *Epistola* 99, p. 143. "Qui est virtus et sapientia Dei, in cuius potentia et gratia mirabiliter de Avarorum gente triumphatum est. Quorum missi ad dominum regem directi sunt subiectionem pacificam et christianitatis fidem promittentes."

¹⁷ Alcuin *Epistola* 99, p. 143. "et maxime tu, pater sancte, de cuius corde fons verae emanat caritatis et de ventre eius flumina fluent aquae vivae."

of 789.¹⁸ After Alcuin reminded Paulinus about what a divine gift the Avars were to the Carolingians, he exhorted him to work for their conversion and encouraged Paulinus in his preaching. Again using water imagery, Alcuin described the results of fine preaching before speaking about the purpose of preaching, namely, eternal salvation.¹⁹ “For the work is difficult, but with the Truth itself witnessing, we know that all things are possible for one who believes (cf. Mk 9:22). And he [the Truth] who with care made a preacher from a persecutor and lifted the pauper from filth to seat him with prince, is able to bring forth from the dryness of my heart rivulets of living water and fountains to eternal life.”²⁰ This language echoed Alcuin’s description of Paulinus in a letter to Eric written about the same time.²¹ Here Alcuin introduced the Holy Spirit’s significance to the project, another element which soon would be featured in his baptismal program. To Paulinus, he presented the Spirit as essential to successful preaching both as the subject and the agent. “Accordingly the most certain counsel for salvation ought to be hoped for through his mouth, in whose breast the sevenfold Spirit of counsel is seen to be a resident.”²² He also introduced the challenge posed by Satan. Toward the end of the letter, when Alcuin requested a report about what steps Paulinus was taking to ensure his mission would be successful, he urged the patriarch to work against the devil and promote service to Christ. “Since with divine grace anticipating them, who of the servants of God ought to withdraw himself from such devout and praiseworthy work, so that the savagery of the devil will be overthrown and the service of Christ grow?”²³ The idea of rejecting Satan’s lordship and embracing the rule of God anchored Alcuin’s thinking on conversion and would be prominently featured in his assessment of formation during the scrutinies.²⁴ The idea was pregnant with theological, social, and political implications.

¹⁸ See the *Admonitio generalis*, especially c. 60, p. 210; c. 72, p. 226; and c. 80, pp. 234–8. See also Bullough, *Alcuin*, pp. 379–84. Alcuin’s consistent interest in preaching, especially in these letters concerning the Avars, is long acknowledged: see Wood, *The Missionary Life*, pp. 83–6 and Sullivan, “Carolingian Missionary Theories,” pp. 279–84.

¹⁹ For a discussion of the focus on salvation in Alcuin’s approach to Christian mission, see Phelan, “Catechising the Wild,” pp. 455–74, and Sullivan, “Carolingian Missionary Theories,” pp. 273–95.

²⁰ Alcuin *Epistola* 99, pp. 143–4. “*Opus enim arduum est, sed ipsa attestante veritate omnia scimus esse possibilia credenti. Et qui de persecutore fecit praedicatorem et de stercore erigit pauperem, ut sedeat cum principibus, ipse potest de arida cordis mei caute rivulos vivi fontis et in vitam salientis producere aeternam.*”

²¹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 98, p. 142. “*Plura tibi, vir venerande, de christianae pietatis observatione forte scripsissem, si tibi doctor egregius et pius caelestis vitae praeceptor Paulinus meus praesto non esset; de cuius corde emanat fons viventis aquae in vitam salientis aeternam.*”

²² Alcuin *Epistola* 99, p. 144. “*Certissimum itaque consilium salutis per os illius sperari debet, cuius pectoris septiformis spiritus consilii inhabitator esse dinoscitur.*”

²³ Alcuin *Epistola* 99, p. 143. “*Et si hoc, divina eos praeveniente gratia, verum est, quis se servorum Dei tam pio et laudabili labori subtrahere debet, ut diaboli diruatur saevitia et Christi dei crescat servitium?*”

²⁴ See the discussion in Section 3.2.

Alcuin returned to the urgent matter of the Avars and their incorporation through baptism in a letter from May or June 796 to Arn, bishop of Salzburg.²⁵ The letter suggests a Carolingian political obligation toward the Christianization of the Avars, clarifying Alcuin's understanding of the Avars' political significance for the Carolingians.²⁶ Alcuin then pondered the effects of baptism, especially how it affected individual moral behavior, but he did not yet offer a specific process for formation. After the greeting, Alcuin indicated that Arn was on a journey among the Avars and pressed him for information on what was transpiring out East. He explained how God overcame the powerful kingdom of the Avars and why it was this same God who wished for them to be converted. "But he is stronger who conquered it (the kingdom of the Avars); in whose hand is every power of kings and kingdoms; and he raises whomsoever he wishes, and he visits, illumines, and converts to his service the heart of whomsoever he wishes. And if his grace will provide for the kingdom of the Huns (the Avars), who is it, who would dare to withdraw himself from the ministry of their salvation?"²⁷ It was incumbent upon the Christians, especially Arn, to ensure that the Avars were properly prepared for conversion.

Alcuin realized that worldly concerns could derail even the most noble spiritual aspirations. Repeated failures of the Saxon mission highlighted for Alcuin the need for careful preparation among pagan peoples before Christianity could be fully realized.²⁸ He used the example of the Saxons to identify for Arn potential obstacles for the Avars. He focused sharply on an issue that stood at the intersection of faith and politics for the Carolingians: tithing. That Alcuin raised the topic of money in the midst of his discussion of conversion highlights how

²⁵ Arn was a trusted confidant of both Alcuin and Charlemagne, and his authority in Bavaria encompassed both the religious and political realms. On Arn's relationship with Alcuin, see Maximilian Diesenberger and Herwig Wolfram, "Arn und Alkuin 790 bis 804: zwei Freunde und ihre Schriften" *Erzbischof Arn von Salzburg*, ed. Meta Niederkorn-Bruck and Anton Scharer (Vienna: Oldenbourg, 2004) pp. 81–106. On Arn's importance to Charlemagne, see Warren Brown, *Unjust Seizure: Conflict, Interest, and Authority in an Early Medieval Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001) pp. 102–23. Alcuin saw Arn and Paulinus as coordinating efforts among the Avars. He makes reference to earlier correspondence likely a now-lost letter issued simultaneously with the last letter to Paulinus. Comparisons have been drawn between Eric and Paulinus in Italy and Gerold and Arn in Bavaria: see Ross, "Two Neglected Paladins," pp. 212–35. Gerold replaced the deposed Tassilo in 790/791 and when Gerold was killed in action in 799, Alcuin promptly dispatched letters of lament to Arn and (likely) to Charlemagne. News of Eric's death merited a very similar response for Paulinus at about the same time. See the comments in Bullough, *Alcuin*, p. 371. The letters are Alcuin, *Epistola* 186, pp. 311–3 and Alcuin, *Epistola* 198, pp. 327–9. On the dating of the letter, see Bullough, *Alcuin*, pp. 446–7 and 468.

²⁶ See the analysis of Alberi, "The Evolution of Alcuin's Concept," pp. 3–17.

²⁷ Alcuin, *Epistola* 107, p. 154. "*Sed fortior est qui vicit illud; in cuius manu sunt omnes regum et regnorum potestates; et quemcumque voluerit, exaltat, et cuiuscumque cor voluerit, visitat, inluminat et ad suum convertit servitium. Et si illius gratia respiciet super regnum Hunorum, quis est, qui se subtrahere audeat ministerio salutis illorum?*" Alcuin routinely referred to the Avars as the Huns throughout his correspondence.

²⁸ See note 5.

Carolingian government and Carolingian religion were deeply intertwined. He showed deep sensitivity to the interplay between temporal and spiritual goals, and to the notion that temporal conditions could block spiritual progress. Money was a principal reason for the failure of the Saxon mission. In a remark both pithy and candid Alcuin observed “tithes, so people say, undermined the faith of the Saxons.”²⁹ By means of a verbal echo of Peter’s words from the Acts of the Apostles, Alcuin criticized the economic burdens placed on the Saxons. Peter, after a long debate, rebuked the brethren for demanding that Gentiles meet the requirements of the Mosaic Law, even though all knew (should have known?) the Gentiles were cleansed by faith and saved through grace. Alcuin identified the tithe as an unreasonable requirement placed on the Saxons, one which distracted from the primary importance of establishing faith. Concerning the tithe Alcuin rhetorically asked Arn “Why is a yoke placed on the necks of the ignorant, which neither we nor our brothers were able to bear?”³⁰ Furthermore, a pedagogical solution was embedded in Alcuin’s specific articulation of the dilemma as he—at least to Arn—identified the Avars fundamentally as “unlearned” as opposed to “pagan” or “idol-worshipping.” The letter underscored that Alcuin was not naïve about how political and social sensitivity could create the conditions for missionary success. He faced squarely the political aspect of Christian mission under the Carolingians. In Alcuin’s view, money was not unambiguously bad, but when demanded from new converts, money proved counterproductive. On the other hand, when spent on new converts, money could be quite helpful. In addition to encouraging Arn not to extract money from the newly converted, Alcuin informed him that Charlemagne had agreed to redirect resources from bishops and monasteries to support Arn’s mission. “A third part of your labours in each location, whether of a bishopric or of a monastery, the king granted to you to hand over for your alms.”³¹ The conversion of the Avars was an important Christian duty, but one that was closely bound up with earthly, even governmental, concerns.

Most decisively, this early letter to Arn shows Alcuin settling on the idea that faith preceded actions. With proper preparation and administration, baptism would result in the desired moral and social effects. Alcuin explicitly connected the grace received at baptism to good works in this life saying, “we are born in sin, but we are reborn by grace, which grows in us flowing into good works and making us persevere steadily all the way to the end.”³² In other words, Alcuin argued that baptism was theologically constitutive. It enabled good works and

²⁹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 107, p. 154. “*Decimae, ut dicitur, Saxonum subverterunt fidem.*”

³⁰ Alcuin, *Epistola* 107, p. 154. “*Quid inponendum est iugum cervicibus idiotarum, quod neque nos neque fratres nostri sufferre potuerunt?*” Cf. Acts 15:10.

³¹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 107, p. 154. “*Tertiam vero partem de laboribus tuis per singula loca seu episcopatus seu monasterii concessit tibi rex in aelimosinam tuam tradere.*”

³² Alcuin, *Epistola* 107, p. 154. “*In peccatis nascimur, sed gratia renascimur; quae nos in bono opere currentes comitetur et usque ad finem firmum perseverare faciat.*”

perseverance. Alcuin believed that baptism changed a person in ways manifested through behavior. But at the same time he recognized that successful conversion was more complicated. It was not secured by baptism alone and was not a simple mechanical process, but rather a complex transformation that required attention to social and political contexts which could either prejudice or promote the desired outcome.³³ Alcuin found in Paul a rationale for bringing new converts slowly into the faith, offering some teachings at first and others later. He cited Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, concerning feeding new Christians with milk and not solid food to show that there was an order to Christianizing peoples. "Be a preacher of goodness, not an exactor of tithes, for the convert's soul must be fed on the good apostle's milk until it grows strong enough to take solid food (cf. 1 Cor. 3:2)."³⁴ Alcuin displayed an emerging interest in and attention to conversion as a process, one he would soon connect to baptism and the catechumenate.

In three letters from the middle of 796, Alcuin articulated his ideas in a clearer, more coherent, more concrete, and more consistent fashion.³⁵ He retained his notion of moving from easy teachings to harder and included analysis of Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians in each letter. He most significantly advanced his thoughts, however, with a concrete model he found in the Gospel of Matthew and adapted to his purposes for the Avars. Jerome's commentary on Matthew pointed Alcuin to the programmatic possibilities of the Gospel, almost certainly in concert with Bede's homily on the same passage. Alcuin addressed three letters to leading figures in the Carolingian world, ones with special concern for the incorporation of the newly conquered Avars. He outlined his mature approach to Christian mission in letters to Arn of Salzburg, Meginfrid, and Charlemagne. Arn of Salzburg, who as the bishop of the leading see in Bavaria, was not only among the prominent trusted Carolingian agents in Bavaria, but a high-ranking ecclesiastic in close proximity to the Avars. Meginfrid was the court chamberlain. His official position at the court gave him significant say in the allocation and maintenance of royal resources, both what would go to and what would be extracted from the Avars. Certainly, he was also socially significant at the court. He was sufficiently

³³ On the complicated nature of conversion, and especially reading texts concerning conversion, see Karl Morrison, *Understanding Conversion* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992).

³⁴ Alcuin, *Epistola* 107, p. 154. "Et esto praedicator pietatis, non decimarum exactor, quia novella anima apostolicae pietatis lacte nutrienda est, donec crescat, convalescat et roboretur ad acceptionem solidi cibi."

³⁵ Others recognize the significance of Alcuin's approach to the Avar mission and the snapshot offered by these three letters in particular, but tend to highlight the points of continuity without fully considering the subtle contours of each letter. Very helpful are Lutz E. von Padberg, *Die Inszenierung Religiöser Konfrontationen: Theorie und Praxis der Missionspredigt im frühen Mittelalter* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 2003) pp. 349–58, Wood, *The Missionary Life*, pp. 85–6, and Alberi, "Evolution of Alcuin's Concept," pp. 3–17.

important to warrant the nickname Thyrsis (the shepherd in Virgil's seventh Eclogue) by court intimates like Alcuin and Angilbert, abbot of the royal monastery of St-Riquier.³⁶ In addition to his office, Meginfrid was important on account of his personal relationship with the king.³⁷ At several points Alcuin alluded to the chamberlain's weighty influence. "These things I have written for your pleasure, venerable friend, that those who desire to hear your counsel may profit from your warning. May the most beloved David [Charlemagne's court nickname], to whom God gave both wisdom and good will, know all these things, so that he may convert many peoples to the praise and love of Christ."³⁸ Charlemagne's own interest in the Avars reflected his position, consciously and specifically, as a Christian king. While Alcuin tailored his approach in each letter to the specific concerns of the recipient, the backbone of his presentation remained constant. He began with Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians where Paul addressed the immaturity of the Christians at Corinth and how that undermined both their unity and their ability to receive Paul's teachings. He then interpreted Paul's advice through Jesus' words at the close of Matthew's Gospel and recommended a three-fold approach to forming Christians.

The principal point of departure for all three letters was Alcuin's reference to Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. Alcuin imagined successful conversion essentially as a pedagogical challenge with an emphasis on building learning first with concepts easy to accept and then moving to hard ones. Paul wrote "I gave you milk to drink, not meat: for you were not able as yet. But neither indeed are you now able: for you are yet carnal."³⁹ Alcuin believed preaching the faith and doctrines of Christianity must come first, before people were able to understand and digest difficult Christian moral teachings. For Arn of Salzburg, Alcuin associated the Corinthians' immaturity with physical immaturity, likening maturing in faith to maturing in age. This idea he linked closely with education and the understanding that comes with experience. Throughout, moral precepts were closely connected to God's law. In a fuller explanation of the same Pauline quotation he earlier proposed to Arn, Alcuin expanded:

³⁶ See Peter Godman, *Poets and Emperors: Frankish Politics and Carolingian Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987) p. 67, and Mary Garrison, "The Social World of Alcuin: Nicknames at York and the Carolingian Court" *Alcuin of York: Scholar at the Carolingian Court*, eds. L.A.J.R. Houwen and A.A. MacDonald (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1998) pp. 59–79, at 61.

³⁷ A brief discussion of Meginfrid's special influence with Charlemagne, widely acknowledged at the time, is in Bullough, *Alcuin*, p. 441.

³⁸ Alcuin, *Epistola* 111, p. 161. "*Haec tuae, venerande amice, scripsi dilectioni, quatenus tuis proficiant ammonitionibus qui a te consilium audire desiderant. Scit enim haec omnia optime dilectus meus David, cui Deus et sapientiam dedit et bonam voluntatem; ut plurimos convertit populos ad caritatem Christi et laudem.*" David, of course, is Charlemagne's nickname. See Garrison, "The Social World of Alcuin," p. 61.

³⁹ 1Cor. 3:2

For infants ought to be nourished with the sweetness of maternal milk, and the wild soul ought to be suckled with more tender precepts of divine sweetness. For solid bread is for strong men and higher precepts are for those who have an understanding trained in the law of God. Whence the Apostle, writing to certain brothers of more fragile understanding, says: 'I gave you milk for food, not solid bread, because you were not able to receive it, and you are not yet able because you are carnal (1Cor. 3:2).'⁴⁰

Such language much have resonated with Arn, Alcuin's former pupil, perhaps reminding him of Alcuin's own teaching efforts years earlier.

Alcuin adopted a similar concern with pedagogy in the letter to Meginfrid. Though, instead of the language of nurturing education used for Arn, Alcuin emphasized the perils of instructing pagans. The pedagogy and the quotation are the same, but rather than the image of children maturing into responsible thinking adults, he opted for the image of civilizing savages. Alcuin mistook the source of his citation as Galatians and not Corinthians as he explained

Whence preachers to the pagans ought to teach the faith to the people with peaceful and prudent words. The Lord knows who are his and the hearts of those he wants he opens, so that they understand what is said by the teacher. But even after the reception of faith and baptism the more gentle precepts are to be presented to the more fragile souls. For the apostle Paul writing to the tender nation of the Galatians says: 'I gave you milk to drink and not solid food' (1Cor 3:2). Solid food is for strong men, that is the greater precepts are for those who have an understanding trained for a long time in the law of the Lord. Just as milk is more suited for the fragile age, thus the more attractive precepts ought to be handed to a wild people in the beginning of the faith.⁴¹

Finally, to the king Alcuin advocated the same pedagogical progression and used the same quotation from Paul. For Charlemagne, however, Alcuin emphasized both preaching and maturity. Notable as well is the somewhat optimistic portrayal of the project among the Avars, certainly more so than for Meginfrid.

But now may your devotion, which is most wise and pleasing to God, provide to the young people dutiful preachers, upright in character, learned in the knowledge of the holy faith and imbued with the evangelical precepts, attentive to the

⁴⁰ Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 165. "*Nam infantilis aetas suavitate materni lactis nutrienda est; et rudis anima mollioribus divinae dulcedinis praeceptis alenda est. Nam solidus cibus virorum est fortium; et altiora praecepta illorum sunt, qui exercitatos habent sensus in lege Dei. Unde et apostolus quibusdam fragilioris intelligentiae fratribus scribens ait: 'Lac vobis dedi escam, non solidum cibum; quia non potuistis accipere, sed necdum potestis; quia carnales estis.'*"

⁴¹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 111, p. 160. "*Unde et praedicatores paganorum populum pacificis verbis et prudentibus fidei docere debent. Novit Dominus, qui sunt eius; et quorum cor vult, aperit; ut intellegant quae a doctore dicantur. Sed et post fidei et baptismi perceptionem molliora praecepta infirmioribus animis sunt praebenda. Nam et apostolus Paulus novellae Galatarum genti scribens ait: 'Lac vobis dedi potum, non solidum cibum.' Solidus vero cibus virorum est fortium; id est praecepta maiora illorum sunt, qui multo tempore exercitatos habent sensus in lege Domini. Et veluti lac fragili congruit aetati, ita suaviora praecepta rudi populo in principio fidei tradenda sunt.'*"

examples of the holy apostles in preaching the Word of God. They ought to provide milk—that is agreeable teachings—to their hearers in the beginning of faith, as the Apostle Paul says: ‘And I, brethren, could not speak to you as spiritual men, but as carnal ones. As if to little ones in Christ I gave you milk to drink, not meat, for you were not able and are not yet able’ (1 Cor 3:2).⁴²

Alcuin engaged Charlemagne, and Meginfrid to a lesser extent, with the language of the Carolingian Renewal familiar to the king from his own earlier exhortations, such as in the *Admonitio generalis* and *De litteris colendis*.⁴³ Preaching faith and moral doctrines were essential to the Carolingian project and should be a focus in engagement with the Avars.

Alcuin interpreted Paul’s observation in Corinthians about drinking milk first and eating solid food second through the lens of Jesus’ commission to the apostles at the end of the Gospel of Matthew (Mt. 28:19–20). Alcuin derived his inspiration ultimately from Jerome, but almost certainly was influenced by Bede’s presentation of the same idea in his homilies.⁴⁴ Jerome’s text encompassed

⁴² Alcuin, *Epistola* 110, p. 157. “*Sed nunc praevideat sapientissima et Deo placabilis devotio vestra pios populo novello praedicatores; moribus honestos, scientia sacrae fidei edoctos et evangelicis praeceptis inbutos; sanctorum quoque apostolorum in praedicatione verbi Dei exemplis intentos. Qui lac—id est suavia praecepta—suis auditoribus in initio fidei ministrare solebant; dicente apostolo Paulo: ‘Et ego, fratres, non potui vobis loqui quasi spiritalibus, sed quasi carnalibus. Tamquam parvulis in Christo lac vobis potum dedi, non escam. Nondum enim poteratis; sed necdum potestis.’*”

⁴³ Preaching and teaching have been staples of Carolingian reform language. Preaching is also a constant concern for Alcuin, who fits the topic into discussions of all sorts. For preaching in the *De litteris colendis*, see the edition of T. Martin; for the *Admonitio generalis*, for example, see paragraphs 61 and 82, *Admonitio generalis*, pp. 58 and 61–62 respectively. On Alcuin’s involvement, especially in the later paragraphs of the *Admonitio generalis* see Bullough, *Alcuin*, pp. 379–85. Alcuin envisioned Charlemagne as a *praedicator*, a preacher, when discussing Charlemagne’s royal responsibilities. See for example, Alcuin, *Epistola* 41, p. 84 and Alcuin, *Epistola* 178, p. 294. For discussion of the political significance of preaching for Alcuin see Michel Lauwers, “Le glaive et la parole. Charlemagne, Alcuin et le modèle du rex praedicator: notes d’ecclésiologie carolingienne” *Alcuin, de York à Tours. Écriture, pouvoir et réseaux dans l’Europe du haut Moyen Âge*, eds. Philippe Depreux and Bruno Judic (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2004) pp. 221–43 and Liutpold Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne: Studies in Carolingian History and Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968) pp. 5–28.

⁴⁴ Bede’s homilies were widely accessible throughout the Carolingian period. Not only were they likely known to prominent Anglo-Saxon scholars like Alcuin, but they were quickly absorbed by other leading thinkers. For example, Paul the Deacon’s celebrated homiliary makes use of thirty-four out of the fifty Gospel homilies composed by Bede. See Cyril L. Smetana, “Paul the Deacon’s Patristic Anthology” *The Old English Homily and its Backgrounds*, eds. Paul E. Szarmach and Bernard F. Huppé (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1978) pp. 75–97. For a more general picture of Bede’s influence, see J.E. Cross, “Bede’s Influence at Home and Abroad: An Introduction” *Beda Venerabilis: Historian, Monk, and Northumbrian*, eds. L.A.J.R. Houwen and A.A. MacDonald (Groningen: E. Forsten, 1996) pp. 17–29. Alcuin’s debt to Bede is well studied and acknowledged by Alcuin himself. See Peter Godman’s introduction in Alcuin, *The Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York*, ed. Peter Godman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982) pp. lxxv–lxxviii. Alcuin writes about Bede’s importance at pp. 56–63, 102–5, and 108–17. More generally, see George H. Brown, “The Preservation and Transmission of Northumbrian Culture on the Continent: Alcuin’s Debt to Bede” *The Preservation and Transmission of Anglo-Saxon Culture*, eds. P.E. Szarmach and J.T. Rosenthal (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1997) pp. 159–75.

the entire Gospel and was organized as a line-by-line commentary written at Bethlehem in March 398. He composed the work—over only two weeks!—for his friend Eusebius of Cremona, who was in search of reading materials for an upcoming voyage to Italy. The work, then, is known for its symptoms of haste, especially extreme brevity and erroneous citations.⁴⁵ This brevity Alcuin exploited as an invitation to supply the details for a thorough program of formation. Jerome's comments concentrated on the sequence and language of Jesus' instruction to the apostle. From the sequence Jerome divined a strategy of Christianization, while from the language he inferred the monotheistic essence of the Trinity. Jerome detailed

'Go (*Euntes*), therefore, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Mt. 28:19). First they teach all the nations, then they dip those they taught in water. For it is not possible that a body receive the *sacramentum* of baptism, unless the soul first receives the truth of the faith. They are, however, baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit so that whose divinity is one, is one dispensation. And the name of the Trinity is one God.⁴⁶

Jerome was caught by the sequence in Jesus' teaching and rolled his meditation into the next verse. From Jesus' words he distilled a three step approach to Christian initiation. He understood faith to be the initial step, which was the necessary prerequisite for a fruitful baptism, the second step. Finally, only with a sound faith and after a right baptism could moral instruction be delivered. Jerome twice emphasized the significance of this specific approach to training. He continued:

'teaching them to observe everything which I commanded you' (Mt 28:20). The order is particular. He orders the apostles first to teach all the nations, then to dip them in the *sacramentum* of faith and—after faith and baptism—to instruct them what things ought to be observed. But lest we think that what was ordered is trivial, he added a few things: 'everything which I commanded you,' so that those who believe, who were baptized in the Trinity, do everything which was taught.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Saint Jerome, *Commentary on Matthew*, trans. Thomas P. Scheck (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2008) p. 16.

⁴⁶ Hieronymus, *Commentariorum in Matheum libri iv*, ed. D. Hurst and M. Adriaen CCSL 77 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969) p. 282. "Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes baptizantes eos in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti. *Primum docent omnes gentes, deinde doctas intingunt aqua. Non enim potest fieri ut corpus baptismi recipiat sacramentum nisi ante anima fidei susceperit ueritatem. Baptizantur autem in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti ut quorum est una diuinitas, sit una largitio; nomenque trinitatis unus Deus est.*"

⁴⁷ Hieronymus, *Commentariorum in Matheum*, pp. 282–3. "Docentes eos seruare omnia quaecumque mandauit uobis. *Ordo praecipuus. Iussit apostolis ut primum docerent uniuersas gentes deinde fidei tingerent sacramento et post fidem ac baptismum quae essent obseruanda praeciperent. Ac ne putemus leuia esse quae iussa sunt et pauca addidit: 'omnia quaecumque mandauit uobis, ut qui crediderint, qui in trinitate fuerint baptizati, omnia faciant quae praecepta sunt.'*"

Late in his life, likely in the 720s, Bede composed a series of homilies for his brother monks at Wearmouth-Jarrow. He organized his thoughts with the Gospel readings for Sundays and important feasts throughout the liturgical year as celebrated at the monastery. In his teaching on this pericope from Matthew, Bede recommended the three-stage instruction program advocated by Jerome. However, he broadened his consideration to include the concrete purpose of such a strategy, emphasizing the importance of the program for contemporary preaching. Pushing further than Jerome, he saw two implications of the proper order of teaching. The first was in terms of causality. Faith itself allowed one to obey God's commands. This was related to but distinguishable from a proper understanding of the faith that led people to obey Christian moral teachings. To underscore his interest, he juxtaposed a passage from the Letter to the Hebrews which—in this context—framed moral life as a consequence of faith. The second implication was the ultimate goal toward which the teaching was oriented, namely, eternal life. Bede foregrounded what he saw as at stake in the whole discussion of mission and underscored his contribution by the addition of a second scriptural citation to the end of his treatment of Matthew. A passage from the Gospel of John accented why in Bede's mind Christians must get baptism right. Baptism was more than the water; it involved the Holy Spirit since it was the only way to eternal life. Bede wrote

'Go (*Euntes*),' he said, 'teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you.' This, indeed, is the most correct order of preaching and to be followed most diligently also by modern church preachers so that, first, the hearer is taught then imbued with the *sacramenta* of faith, then unconstrained and at the right time he should be instructed in keeping the Lord's commands. This is because one uninstructed and ignorant of the Christian faith is not able to be washed in the *sacramenta* of the very same faith. It does not suffice to be purified from sins by the bath of baptism, if he does not strive after baptism to persevere in good works. First, therefore, teach the nations, that is establish a knowledge of truth, and thus he orders them to baptize because 'without faith it is impossible to please God' (Heb. 11:6) and 'unless one is born again of water and of the Holy Spirit, he is not able to enter the kingdom of heaven' (Jn 3:5).⁴⁸

Bede concluded his thoughts on the "Great Commission" by reiterating the importance of getting faith well taught and baptism properly executed. Sliding a passage from the Letter of James into his analysis of Matthew, he directed the

⁴⁸ Bede, *Homeliarum evangelii libri ii*, ed. D. Hurst CCSL 122 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955) p. 235. "Euntes," *inquit*, 'docete omnes gentes baptizantes eos in nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti docentes eos servare omnia quaecumque mandavi vobis.' *Rectissimus autem ordo praedicandi et modernis quoque praedicatoribus ecclesiae diligentissime sectandus ut primo quidem doceatur auditor deinde fidei sacramentis inbuatur deinde servandis domini mandatis ex tempore liberius instruitur quia neque indoctus quisque et ignarus christianae fidei potest eiusdem fidei sacramentis abluere neque lauacro baptismi a peccatis emundari sufficit, si non post baptismum studeat quisque bonis operibus insistere. Prius ergo docere gentes, id est scientia veritatis instituere, ac sic baptizare praecipit quia et: 'Sine fide impossibile est placere Deo'; et; 'Nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et spiritu sancto, non potest introire in regnum Dei.'"*

readers' attention to living a Christian life, which connected a living faith to a rewarding afterlife.

'teaching them to observe everything which I commanded you' (Mt. 28:20). "Because just as the body without spirit is dead, thus faith without works is dead (Ja. 2:26).' He subsequently suggests how great are the rewards of a devout way of life and the kind of pledge of future beatitude remaining for the faithful in the present saying: 'Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world (Mt. 28:20).'⁴⁹

The specific context of Bede's remarks, in addition to his careful reading of the Matthean narrative, requires mention for its influence on Alcuin. Bede's sermons reflect an insular cycle of readings not common on the Continent. In Northumbria, this important passage from Matthew fell on Easter, unlike in other early medieval lectionaries where the reading was more commonly associated with Friday of Easter week.⁵⁰ As Alcuin developed his program, he closely associated his work with the liturgical dimension of Christian formation, not just the *sacramentum* of baptism, but also the celebration of Easter. That liturgical ruminations guided Alcuin's analysis is further supported by his citation from Matthew. Unlike Jerome and Bede, who began their quotation of Matthew 28:19 as the Vulgate does with "*euntes*," Alcuin consistently launched his quotations with "*ite*."⁵¹ Alcuin drew his citation from the Easter vigil consecration prayer for the blessing of the baptismal font found in both the Gelasian and Gregorian sacramentaries.⁵² Heightening the significance of Alcuin's adoption of a liturgical reading is that the abbot surely knew Jerome's Vulgate reading. Alcuin used "*euntes*" in his celebrated Tours Bibles.⁵³ Evidence of Alcuin's

⁴⁹ Bede, *Homeliarum*, p. 235. "Docentes eos seruare omnia quaecumque mandauimus uobis. Quia sicut corpus sine spiritu mortuum est ita et fides sine operibus mortua est. Quanta autem merces piae conuersationis quale pignus futurae beatitudinis etiam in praesenti fidelibus maneat subsequenter insinuat dicens: 'Ecce ego uobiscum sum omnibus diebus usque ad consummationem saeculi.'"

⁵⁰ A comparative table is supplied by Hurst in his introduction to the homilies, see Bede, *Homeliarum*, p. xiv.

⁵¹ Bullough draws attention to this example in a more general consideration of Alcuin's use of biblical quotations. See Bullough, *Alcuin*, pp. 188–9.

⁵² *Liber sacramentorum Romanae ecclesiae ordinis annis circuli*, ed. C. Mohlberg (Rome: Herder, 1981) p. 73 and *Le sacramentaire grégorien, ses principales formes d'après les plus anciens manuscrits*, Vol. 1, ed. J. Deschusses (Fribourg: Editions universitaires, 1979) pg 187. The standard general overview for early medieval sacramentaries remains Cyrille Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy: An Introduction to the Sources*, rev. and trans. William G. Storey and Niels Krogh Rasmussen (Washington D.C.: The Pastoral Press, 1986) pp. 61–106.

⁵³ Though I have not been able to consult the surviving manuscripts, the reading is accessible in the apparatus of the recent edition in which a group of Tours Bible are indicated with the siglum Φ. For Matthew 28:19 see *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgata Versionem*, 4th ed., ed. R. Weber (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994) p. 1574. On the Tours Bibles generally, see David Ganz, "Mass production of early medieval manuscripts: The Carolingian Bibles from Tours" *The Early Medieval Bible: Its Production, Decoration, and Use*, ed. Richard Gameson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) pp. 53–62; and Rosamond McKitterick, "Carolingian Bible production: the Tours anomaly" *The Early Medieval Bible: Its Production, Decoration, and Use*, ed. Richard Gameson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) pp. 63–77.

dependence on Bede's text and not just Bede's calendar also appeared in his letter to Arn where Alcuin referenced both the passage from Hebrews and the passage from John which were central to Bede's analysis.⁵⁴

In each of his three letters on the conversion of the Avars, drafted in mid-796, Alcuin approached mission with the three stages identified first by Jerome. In each he used Jerome's analysis to build upon Paul's advice to the Corinthians. Alcuin wrote to Arn

Therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ commanded his disciples saying: 'Go (*Ite*), teach all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything that I commanded you' (Mt. 28:19–20). In those very few words, he set out the order of all holy preaching. He said to teach twice and to baptize once. First, he instructed them to teach the catholic faith to all and he ordered after the faith is received to baptize in the name of the Holy Trinity; then given instruction in the faith and washed with holy baptism, he commanded to instruct with evangelical precepts.⁵⁵

Virtually the same case was made to Meginfrid. Of primary importance, again, is the consistency of Alcuin's position, resting on the interpretation of Matthew. To the chamberlain he wrote

For our Lord Jesus Christ, returning to his Father's seat in the triumph of his glory, instructed his apostles, saying: 'Go (*Ite*) teach all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything that I commanded you (Mt. 28:19–20).' First the faith ought to be taught, and then the *sacramenta* of baptism ought to be received, then the evangelical precepts ought to be handed over.⁵⁶

Finally, he presented his case to the king. Rather than summarize or recast Jerome's argument for Charlemagne, Alcuin chose just to relay the words of the famous church father, with additional emphasis on the sequence of instruction. Even when he cited Jerome verbatim, Alcuin preserved his liturgical reading of the Gospel text. He explained

And the Lord himself in the Gospel teaching his disciples said: 'Go (*Ite*), teach all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the

⁵⁴ Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 164.

⁵⁵ Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 164. "*Ideo dominus noster Iesus Christus discipulis suis mandavit dicens: 'Ite, docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eas in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti; docentes eas servare omnia, quaecumque mandavi vobis.' In istis paucissimis verbis totius sanctae praedicationis ordinem exposuit. Bis docere dixit et semel baptizare. Primo omnium fidem catholicam docere praecepit; et post fidem acceptam in nomine sanctae Trinitatis baptizare iussit; deinde fide inbutum et sacro baptisate ablutum evangelicis instruere praeceptis mandavit.*"

⁵⁶ Alcuin, *Epistola* 111, p. 160. "*Nam dominus noster Iesus Christus, cum triumpho gloriae ad paternam rediens sedem, apostolis suis praecepit dicens: 'Ite, docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eas in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti. Docentes eas servare omnia, quaecumque mandavi vobis.' Primo fides docenda est; et sic baptismi percipienda sunt sacramenta; deinde evangelica praecepta tradenda sunt.*"

Holy Spirit (Mt. 28:19).⁵⁷ Saint Jerome explains the order of this teaching thus in the commentary which he wrote on the Gospel of Matthew. First they teach all the nations, then they plunge those they taught in water. For it is not possible that a body receive the *sacramentum* of baptism, unless the soul first receives the truth of faith. They are, however, baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, so that whose divinity is one is one dispensation. And the name of the Trinity is one God. ‘. . . teaching them to observe everything that I commanded you (Mt. 28:20).’ The order is particular. He orders the apostles first to teach all the nations, then to dip them in the *sacramentum* of faith, and—after faith and baptism—to instruct them what things ought to be observed. But lest we think that what was ordered is trivial, he added a few things: ‘Everything which I commanded you (Mt. 28:20),’ so that those who believe, who were baptized in the Trinity, do everything which was commanded.⁵⁷

In all three letters from 796 Alcuin advocated an order of Christian formation drawn from Jerome and Bede.

While he proposed the same plan to each of his addressees, Alcuin tailored it to each recipient’s interests and responsibilities. To Arn, he explained how his formation program would yield solid Christians, emphasizing the religious themes of faith and salvation. To Meginfrid, he explicated how well-formed Christians would enrich the Carolingian treasury, building his argument around the idea of wealth. To Charlemagne, he described how baptism in the context of his formation program would yield good Carolingian subjects. In the letter to Arn, Alcuin pressed his case to the bishop by emphasizing Arn’s episcopal responsibility for the salvation of souls. Alcuin opened the letter with a reference to baptism and an analogy to fishing. He presented the work of baptism as fundamental to Arn’s vocation. He identified baptism as the task for which God selected Arn. Further, he reiterated to the order of Christian formation, as he wrote about first the communication of mysteries, then the holy bath of baptism, and finally a drying through the Holy Spirit. God

in the highest mercy ordained you to administer the heavenly mysteries to the people, and from the high view of celestial grace with the most sharp gaze of your

⁵⁷ Alcuin, *Epistola* 110, p. 158. “. . . et ipse Dominus in evangelio discipulis suis praeciens ait: ‘Ite, docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti.’ *Huius vero praecepti ordinem beatus Hieronimus in commentario suo, quem in evangelium sancti Mathei scripsit, ita exposuit:* ‘Primum docent omnes gentes, deinde doctas intingunt aqua. Non enim potest fieri, ut corpus baptismi accipiat sacramentum, nisi ante anima fidei susceperit veritatem. Baptizantur autem in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti, ut quorum una est divinitas, sit una largitio, nomenque trinitatis unus deus est.’ Docentes eos servare omnia, quaecumque mandavi vobis.’ Ordo praecipuus. Iussit apostolis, ut primum docerent omnes gentes, deinde fidei tingere sacramento et post fidem ac baptismum, quae essent observanda, praeciperent. Ac ne putemus levia esse, quae iussa sunt, et pauca addidit: ‘Omnia quaecumque mandavi vobis,’ ut, qui crediderint, qui in Trinitate fuerint baptizati, omnia faciant, quae praecepta sunt.’”

spiritual eyes to pluck wave-tossed fish from the ocean of this world to live and not to die, and to wash them in the holy bath of the translucent font and to dry them with the fire of the Holy Spirit at the banquet of the eternal King.⁵⁸

Alcuin emphasized preaching through an analysis of the number 153, the number of fish the Gospel of John identified in Simon's haul.⁵⁹ He broke down the number into smaller elements indicative of moral and doctrinal elements of Christianity. His point was that the two elements were related in the total sum and that salvation was the overarching purpose. "And if you divide seventeen into two, that is ten and seven, the ten signifies the commands of the Law and the seven signifies the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. Likewise, if seven is divided into two, that is three and four, three designates the faith of the Holy Trinity, in which faith all peoples ought to be saved, which is spread throughout the four regions of the world."⁶⁰ After introducing the three step order of catechizing by which he expected Arn to fulfil his duty to save the Avars, Alcuin underscored the wide possibilities for instruction connected to baptism by mentioning not only adult converts, but also the godparents of infants brought forward for baptism. Here he tied together a Christian anthropology with ideas of legal representation first laid out in Late Antiquity by theologians both eastern and western.⁶¹ As all were tarnished by Adam's original sin by virtue of their human nature and not by any action of their own, so all are able to be released from original sin by the confession of a godparent who stood in surety for every infant unable to confess on his own behalf. Addressing Arn, he wrote "you, most holy teacher, firmly maintain this order of catechizing everywhere for men of adult age, for those of more frail age Holy Mother Church grants that he who is bound to sin in paternal transgression by another, another may release him by profession in the mystery of baptism."⁶²

Alcuin acknowledged that baptism involved a metaphysical change in each person which enabled the person receiving baptism to do good, but he also came to believe that only proper Christian formation would guarantee the

⁵⁸ Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 163. ". . . te summa pietate caelestia ordinavit mysteria populis ministrare, et de alto supernae gratiae intuitu acutissimis spiritalium oculorum obtutibus fluctivagos de huius saeculi salo pisces ad vivificandum non ad mortificandum eruere, et sacro vitrei fontis lavacro abluere, et igne sancti Spiritus ad epulas aeterni regis assare."

⁵⁹ Cf. Jn 21:1–13.

⁶⁰ Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 164. "Et si hos decem et septem in duo divideris, id est denarium et septenarium, denarius legalia mandata et septenarius dona sancti Spiritus designat. Item si septem in duo divideris, id est in III et in IIII, tres enim fidem sanctae Trinitatis designant, in qua fide omnes gentes salvandae sint, quae per quadrifarias totius orbis plagas diffusae sunt."

⁶¹ Joseph Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship in Early Medieval Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) pp. 106–9 and 123–4.

⁶² Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 164. "tu ordinem, sanctissime doctor, catezizandi in adultae aetatis viris ubique firmiter obtineas, fragilliori vero aetati pia mater ecclesia concessit, ut, qui alieno in paterna praevaricatione ligatus est peccato, alterius in baptismi mysterio professione solutus sit." More on the role of sponsors, especially godparents, appears in Chapter Five.

success of baptismal renewal. This realization flowed from his reflections on Christian formation and preaching already advocated more generally for the Carolingian Renewal in documents like the *Admonitio generalis* and *De litteris colendis*.⁶³ For Arn, Alcuin refined his point about the necessity of preaching and the usefulness of a proper order for formation by meditating on the fruitfulness of the *sacramentum* at some length. He took as his point of departure the case of the Saxons, where he dwelt not on the specific obstacles to true conversion, such as the tithe, but rather the underlying problem preventing a fruitful *sacramentum*: lack of true faith. "The miserable race of the Saxons so many times wasted the *sacramentum* of baptism because they never had a foundation of faith in their heart."⁶⁴ Alcuin analyzed the Saxon difficulties as a theological problem with a practical solution. While pagans could be forced to the *sacramenta*, they could not be forced to maintain their sacramental commitments. The proper order of instruction began with sound preaching of the faith because, as Alcuin wrote to Arn, "man is able to be forced to baptism, but not to faith."⁶⁵ His experience with the Saxons pushed him to consider the conditions under which baptismal renewal could find success. The solution for Alcuin was that faith must be voluntarily embraced, not forced on people. He ruefully asked "how is a man able to be compelled to believe what he does not believe?"⁶⁶ The practical solution was effective preaching. Alcuin developed a theory of mission predicated on conversion by persuasion, not force.⁶⁷ Only persuasion could lay the foundation of faith needed to support the *sacramentum* of baptism. "It ought to be taught that man having reason and understanding is attracted by manifold preaching to know the truth of the holy faith."⁶⁸ For Alcuin effective preaching meant appealing to reason and providing the understanding that would win the hearer's consent.

The importance of preaching and the work of salvation met for Alcuin in the *sacramentum* of baptism. Preaching persuaded one to accept the faith. And only a faith willingly embraced allowed the *sacramentum* of baptism to set one on the path to eternal life. So, he emphasized equally the roles of the Holy Spirit,

⁶³ See note 42 on *De litteris colendis* and the *Admonitio generalis*. On how integral pastoral efforts, especially preaching, were to Charlemagne's capitulary legislation, see Thomas Buck, *Admonitio und Praedicatio. Zur religiös-pastoralen Dimension von Kapitularien und kapitularien-naben Texten, 507–814* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997). See especially chapter five, which locates Charlemagne's mature vision in the *Admonitio generalis* from 789 and in his *Capitulare missorum generale* from 802.

⁶⁴ Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 164. "misera Saxonum gens toties baptismi perdidit sacramentum, quia numquam habuit in corde fidei fundamentum."

⁶⁵ Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 164. "Inpelli potest homo ad baptismum, sed non ad fidem."

⁶⁶ Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 164. "Quomodo potest homo cogi, ut credit quod non credit?"

⁶⁷ On Alcuin's view in contrast to more aggressive missionary strategies proposed by other court intimates perhaps like Theodulf of Orléans, see Yitzhak Hen, "Charlemagne's Jihad" *Viator* 37 (2006) pp. 33–51.

⁶⁸ Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 164. "Docendus est itaque homo rationalem habens intelligentiam et multimoda praedicatione adtrahendus, ut sacrae fidei veritatem agnoscat."

the priest, and the convert. With a reference to John's third epistle, Alcuin summarized his epiphany for Arn:

Man co-works with the Holy Spirit in the salvation of man (cf. 3Jn 1:8), but man himself also, who is about to be baptized, ought to cooperate with both in his salvation, that is to present one's body humbly to the Holy Spirit and to the priest for the mystery of holy washing, and to present the soul voluntarily for receiving the catholic faith. All these things ought to be considered diligently by the teacher in the beginning of the faith and the *sacramentum* of baptism for the salvation of the one receiving and not to follow lazily the mystery of such a *sacramentum*.⁶⁹

Alcuin cultivated an appreciation for the psychology of conversion, particularly the importance of cooperation in the persuasion of new Christians. He saw only faith willingly embraced as able to sustain the rigors of moral conversion, particularly the casting aside of old habits and installation of new moral behavior. He sought to temper some of his contemporaries' high expectations with reference to well-known Christian difficulties with religious obligations. This insight, in turn, led him to recommend two tactics for effective work with the Avars. First, Alcuin counselled patient encouragement.

But if the proposition and rule of this consideration are to be treated diligently in people of every age, how much more so in these, who have recently converted from the error of their ingrown habits to the Christian faith? Ought it to be observed in the management of holiness, and even in those, who received from their infancy the *sacramenta* of the Christian faith? After being deceived by a diabolical fraud they followed carnal luxury by long habit or bound by the obligations of whatever other kinds of sins, they ought first to be consoled with the lighter poultice of words, lest scared by harder reprimands they shrink back from the medicine of penance.⁷⁰

Second, Alcuin advocated humility and restraint in enforcing Christian moral precepts. With an allusion to the Gospel of John, he exhorted Arn to be sensitive to the moral difficulties of new Christians and to recall his own shortcomings as he dealt with those he was certain to find among the Avars. Alcuin cast his discussion in legal terms in order to lift out the contemporary significance of his exegesis for a delicate political situation.

⁶⁹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 165. "*Cooperatur homo Spiritui sancto in salute hominis; sed et ipse homo, qui baptizandus est, cooperari ambobus debet in salute sua, id est Spiritui sancto et sacerdoti humiliter corpus praestare ad sacri mysterium lavacri et animam voluntarie ad catholicae fidei susceptionem. Haec omnia doctori in initio fidei et sacramento baptismatis ad salutem accipientis diligenter consideranda sunt; et non desidiose tanti sacramenti mysterium exsequi.*"

⁷⁰ Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, pp. 165–6. "*At si huius considerationis regula in omni aetate et proposito diligenter tractanda est, quanto magis in his, qui ab errore inolitae consuetudinis ad fidem christianam nuper conversi sunt, magno pietatis moderamine observanda est, necnon etiam et in illis, qui ab infantia christianae fidei sacramenta susceperant et diabolica fraude post decepti longa consuetudine carnales secuti sunt luxurias vel aliis quibuslibet peccatorum nexibus obligati. Levioribus primo verborum fomentis consolandi sunt, ne paenitentiae medicamenta durioribus exterriti castigationibus abhorreant.*"

For our Lord Jesus Christ himself also, when tested by the Jews concerning the adulterous woman (cf. Jn 8:6), did not immediately render legal opinion for punishment, but in an example of humility bent down and wrote on the ground to show that a teacher ought first depict the faults of his own fragility in the sand of his heart and then judge more mildly others' sins.⁷¹

Alcuin reminded Arn that success would turn on Arn's own moral example, as well as Arn's ability to target discretely the vices of the Avars. Alcuin eschewed the "one size fits all approach" and in a nod to Gregory the Great's *Regula pastoralis*, which he subsequently referenced, he advised Arn to deal with problems on a case-by-case basis with particular attention to the individual involved.⁷²

There are certain infirmities which are better healed by sweeter drinks than by bitter, and certain ones which are better cured by more bitter than by sweeter ones. Whence also a teacher of the people of God, although he ought to shine forth the lights of virtues to all in the house of God, nevertheless chiefly should exert an influence through an understanding of a most perceptive discretion, so that he knows a proposition is appropriate to each person, sex, and age and also at the right time.⁷³

Alcuin presented his basic argument structured with Paul and Matthew and then ornamented it with theological language and biblical references appropriate for his episcopal recipient.

Alcuin's letter to Meginfrid portrayed the Avar mission as a matter of "wealth." He reused the same basic argument presented in the letter to Arn, only this time decorated with language attractive to a courtier. He cleverly exploited the semantic range of words like "wealth" and "glory" to blend—instead of distinguish between—physical and spiritual goods. Alcuin first took the high road and wrote about Christian ideals. He suggested that the people who received the "wealth" of preaching ought to be involved in mission and used the term to introduce fundamental concepts explained to Arn in a much different fashion, such as proper order for formation and flexibility based on particular circumstance. "Indeed he who receives the wealth of preaching ought to consider diligently what fits the age and person, what fits the place and

⁷¹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 165. "Nam et ipse dominus Iesus Christus, dum a Iudeis temptaretur de muliere adultera, non statim legalis censuram sententiae protulit, sed humilitatis exemplo se inclinans scribebat in terra; ut designaret doctorem propriae fragilitatis culpas in pulvere sui cordis prius depingere et sic aliena mitius diiudicare peccata."

⁷² Gregory the Great's *Regula pastoralis* is explicitly recommended in the very next line. Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 166. "Quae omnia beatus Gregorius clarissimus doctor in libro pastoralis curae studiosissime exquisivit, personis distinxit, exemplis firmavit et divinarum scripturarum auctoritate roboravit."

⁷³ Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 166. "Sunt quaedam infirmitates, quae melius dulcioribus medicantur pocionibus quam amaris; et quaedam, quae melius amarioribus quam dulcibus. Unde et doctor populi Dei, dum cunctis virtutum lucernis in domo Dei clarescere debet, maxime tamen sagacissimae discretionis intellegentia pollere; ut sciat, quid cui personae sexui aetati et proposito vel etiam tempori conveniat."

time, and also in what order the preaching of Christianity ought to be started or finished.”⁷⁴ A comparison of the different gifts given by God to the people of the church underscored that spiritual priestly concerns were important but that earthly talents were also valuable to God’s work. The letter continued with a brief discussion of good works and the goal of those works, eternal “glory.” Alcuin then transitioned to the gifts given to individuals by God. He explored their significance for God and emphasized that both spiritual ones, like preaching, and temporal ones, like the management of goods, must be coordinated to increase the wealth of the Lord. He wrote that while God did not intend for the clergy to have monetary concerns, they should still have a concern for “wealth.”

But everyone ought to ponder in which rank God has placed him and with which talent the Lord has enriched him. For the Lord did not hand his money to priests or bishops alone for multiplying, but handed talents of good work to every dignity and rank, so that he is eager to direct faithfully the grace given to him and strives to pay out to his fellow servants. One receives the talent of preaching, another of wisdom, another of riches, another of whatever kind of management, a certain gift of a particular talent from God, from the distributor of all these goods.⁷⁵

Alcuin’s argument sought to assuage Meginfrid’s putative concern over the tithe by suggesting that capable preachers destroy greed. “For so great a preacher to the nations chosen specially by God acts so that he completely cuts away every occasion of avarice by preaching.”⁷⁶ The implication was that extracting money from the Avars would be made easier (and safer) in the future by good catechetical activity in the present. Rightly formed Christians would make compliant, if not necessarily generous, subjects.

Alcuin reminded Meginfrid about the failures in dealing with the Saxons and suggested that the forced extraction of the tithe played a large role in the difficulties, frustrating their embrace of the Christian faith and incorporation into the *imperium christianum*. Alcuin focused specifically on the *sacramentum* of baptism, emphasizing the connection in the minds of the Saxons (as well as the Carolingians) between the *sacramentum* and the obligations stemming therefrom. “If the light yoke and agreeable work of Christ had been preached to the most obstinate Saxon people with such urgency as was the

⁷⁴ Alcuin, *Epistola* 111, p. 160. “*Qui vero pecuniam praedicationis accipiunt, diligenter considerare debent: quid cui conveniat aetati vel personae, quid cui congruat loco vel tempori; etiam et, quo ordine praedicatio christianitatis incipienda sit vel perficienda.*”

⁷⁵ Alcuin, *Epistola* 111, p. 160. “*Sed unicuique pensandum est, in quo gradu statuisset eum Deus et quo talento ditasset eum. Non enim solis episcopis vel presbyteris pecuniam suam tradidit Dominus ad multiplicandum, sed omni dignitati et gradui talenta bonae operationis tradidit, ut datam sibi gratiam fideliter amministrare studeat et conservis suis erogare contendat. Alius est, qui talentum praedicationis accipit; alius sapientiae; alius divitiarum; alius cuiuslibet amministrationis, quidam forte alicuius artificii donum a Deo, horum omnium bonorum dispensatore.*”

⁷⁶ Alcuin, *Epistola* 111, p. 161. “*Hoc enim tantus et a Deo specialiter electus gentium praedicator egit, ut omnem radicis occasionem avaritiae praedicatoribus abscideret.*”

rendering of the tithe or the necessity of legal edicts required for the smallest particular faults, perhaps they would not shrink from the *sacramentum* of baptism.”⁷⁷ To make his point especially clear, he returned to Acts of the Apostles, this time brandishing the example of Paul and Barnabas instead of Peter, when they met the apostles and decided that they should not place hard laws upon the gentiles while evangelizing them: “but those ones [Paul and Barnabas] reporting with unanimous counsel established that no legal troubles be placed on their [the gentiles’] necks.”⁷⁸ Alcuin exhorted Meginfrid to remember that the Gospel message should come without cost and that it should not seem that Christianity entailed the extortion of funds. He twice cited Paul’s words in Acts—though mistaking the sentiment as originating in the Pauline epistles—that Paul paid for his way by his own hands. “For he [Paul] says thus in the same letter: ‘You know that these hands have provided for me and them that are with me.’”⁷⁹ In a lightly ominous warning to the court chamberlain, Alcuin concluded with an explanation of the meaning of “glory” in Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians, specifically that “glory” would be made void if the Gospel arrived with a price tag attached to it. “It is better for me to die than that any man should make my glory void (1Cor. 9:15). What is ‘my glory’? To explain the Gospel without cost.”⁸⁰

While he wrote to Arn about the duty of religion and to Meginfrid about wealth, Alcuin wrapped Charlemagne’s letter in the rhetoric of heavenly success on earth. Alcuin’s words to Charlemagne called down the blessing of God and predicted temporal glory and eternal reward for his work in building “the kingdom of Christianity.”⁸¹ In addition to this temporal reward, Alcuin emphasized the eternal reward of one who successfully prosecuted a missionary endeavor. He focused not only on the enlargement of Charlemagne’s kingdom, but paired it with the enlargement of God’s kingdom in heaven. To this end he directed the king’s attention not to the salvation of the Avars’ souls, but to the greater glory of his own soul in the next life. “How great will be your glory, O most blessed king, on the day of eternal recompense, since all these, who through your good concern were turned from the cult of idolatry to recognize the true God, will follow you in a blessed share standing before the judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ, and from all these your reward of eternal beatitude is

⁷⁷ Alcuin, *Epistola* 111, p. 161. “*Si tanta instantia leve Christi iugum et onus suave durissimo Saxonum populo praedicaretur, quanta decimarum redditio vel legalis pro parvissimis quibuslibet culpis edicti necessitas exigebatur, forte baptismatis sacramenta non abhorrerent.*”

⁷⁸ Alcuin, *Epistola* 111, p. 160. “*At illi perscribentes unanimo consilio statuerunt, ut nil molestiae legalis inponeretur cervicibus eorum.*”

⁷⁹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 111, p. 160. “*Ait enim in quadam epistola sic: ‘Vos scitis, quod mihi et his, qui mecum sunt, manus istae ministraverunt.’*” Cf. Acts 20:34

⁸⁰ Alcuin, *Epistola* 111, p. 160. “*Melius mihi mori, quam ut gloriam meam quis evacuet. Quae est gloria mea? ut evangelium sine sumptu exponam.*”

⁸¹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 110, p. 157. “*christianitatis regnum.*”

increased.”⁸² To Charlemagne, as to Arn, Alcuin counselled patience, but in this case it was with regard to money, not moral life. As with Meginfid, the tithe figured prominently in Alcuin’s presentation to the king. He argued that moral responsibilities should be added only slowly because “even we, born, nourished, and learned in the catholic faith, hardly consent willingly to payments of our wealth, how much less does the tender faith, fragile spirit and greedy mind consent to that collection.”⁸³ Alcuin then recommended more and better preaching. He urged Charlemagne that “now may your most wise consideration which is pleasing to God foresee dutiful preachers for the young people, upright in habits, learned in the knowledge of the holy faith and imbued with the evangelical precepts, eager with examples of the holy apostles in the preaching of God’s word.”⁸⁴ The connection Alcuin drew between preaching and rulership was a popular subject, one he addressed from several different angles.⁸⁵

Alcuin’s flurry of correspondence gained early traction among the Carolingians. Almost immediately after the letters were dispatched a synod held on account of the Avars proposed rules for applying Alcuin’s missionary strategy. It is not surprising to learn that the primary agents behind the gathering were Alcuin’s friends and correspondents Paulinus and Arn. By the fall of 796, Paulinus, and likely Arn, had organized a meeting on the banks of the Danube in order to present a policy on the appropriate understanding of and execution of the *sacramentum* of baptism for the conversion of the Avars, the record of which survives from Paulinus’ own hand.⁸⁶ Alcuin’s fingerprints are all over the council’s decisions.

The first topic decided by the synod was the appropriate context for conversion, which they settled upon as the *sacramentum* of baptism and its preparation. Importantly, they called for public baptisms twice each year. Except for reasons of emergency, baptisms were to be celebrated on Easter or Pentecost. “It was immediately discovered and confirmed through the sacred pages of scripture, that there were only two legitimate times, in which the *sacramentum* of baptism is rightly to be celebrated in all ways, unless a just and unavoidable necessity occurs, as we said before, indeed the most celebrated feast of Easter and

⁸² Alcuin, *Epistola* 110, p. 157. “Qualis erit tibi gloria, o beatissime rex, in die aeternae retributionis, quando hi omnes, qui per tuam bonam sollicitudinem ab idolatriae cultura ad cognoscendum verum Deum conversi sunt, te ante tribunal domini nostri Iesu Christi in beata sorte stantem sequentur et ex his omnibus perpetuae beatitudinis merces augetur.”

⁸³ Alcuin, *Epistola* 110, p. 158. “Nos vero, in fide catholica nati nutriti et edocti, vix consentimus substantiam nostram pleniter decimare; quanto magis tenera fides et infantilis animus et avara mens illarum largitati non consentit.”

⁸⁴ Alcuin, *Epistola* 110, p. 157. “nunc praevideat sapientissima et Deo placabilis devotio vestra pios populo novella praedicatores; moribus honestos, scientia sacrae fidei edoctos et evangelicis praeceptis inbutos; sanctorum quoque apostolorum in praedicatione verbi Dei exemplis intentos.”

⁸⁵ See note 43.

⁸⁶ *Conventus episcoporum ad ripas Danubii*, ed. A. Werminghoff, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1896), p. 176. “Paulinus licet indignus servorum Domini ultimus servus, vallicula sanctae et orthodoxae Aquilignensis ecclesiae sedis, horum venerabilium fratrum socius et auditor fui.” For the council in the context of Carolingian councils see Wilfried Hartmann, *Die Synoden der Karolingerzeit im Frankenreich und in Italien* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1989) pp. 116–17. For the council in the context of the Avar conquest see Pohl, *Die Awaren*, pp. 319–20.

Pentecost.”⁸⁷ According to Paulinus’ record, this decision rested on the symbolism of baptism itself. Easter was appropriate because the triple immersion of baptism recalled the three days Jesus spent in the tomb. “The triple immersion in the sacred waves of the bath not unsuitably signifies the three day burial of the Lord, and the triple elevation from the waves shows the joy of the Lord’s resurrection on the third day.”⁸⁸ Pentecost was fitting because of the Holy Spirit’s pivotal role in the feast and in the *sacramentum*. “Concerning Pentecost, St. Luke remembers that the Lord said to his disciples ‘you, however,’ he said, ‘will be baptized in the Holy Spirit, whom you are about to receive not many days hence (Acts 1:5).’”⁸⁹

The synod recognized that education was the primary paradigm for Christian formation through baptism. The synod emphasized the importance of preaching to the task of formation. The specific advice was a laundry list of topics championed by Alcuin throughout his letters concerning the Avars.⁹⁰

Indeed the very teaching of preaching ought not to be frightening through violent and human fear, but kind, persuading, and sprinkled with sweetness, certainly persuading concerning the reward of eternal life, terrible concerning the punishment of hell, not concerning the bloodthirsty point of the sword, and those compelled or unwilling should not be drawn to the bath of baptism, but whom the grace of the Holy Spirit pours through and desires salvation out of a longing of his soul.⁹¹

The report continued its analysis of cooperation and persuasion through a discussion of the eunuch evangelized by Philip in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 8:32). It applied to the text Alcuin’s reasoning of faith first then baptism, concluding that the eunuch “having been infused by the Holy Spirit, offered his assent to the faith, and freely presented to his preacher [Philip] a gift brought forth from the treasury of his heart through the food of the language of the one

⁸⁷ *Conventus episcoporum*, p. 173. “*Inventumque est protinus et per sacras scripturarum adprobata pagina, duo tantummodo legitima tempora, in quibus sacramenta baptismatis, nisi iusta et inevitabilis, ut praefati sumus, interveniat occasionis necessitas, modis omnibus iure sunt celebranda, Pascha videlicet celeberrimum festum et Pentecosten.*”

⁸⁸ *Conventus episcoporum*, p. 173. “*trina inter sacras lavacri mersio undas triduanam Domini non inconvenienter significant sepulturam, et tertia elevatio ab unda tertiae diei gaudium dominicae resurrectionis demonstrat.*”

⁸⁹ *Conventus episcoporum*, p. 173. “*De Pentecosten autem Dominum dixisse discipulis suis sanctus sic commemorat Lucas: ‘Vos autem,’ inquit, ‘baptizabimini Spiritu sancto, quem accepturi estis non post multos dies.’*”

⁹⁰ It seems not unlikely that Alcuin would have addressed a now lost letter on the conversion of the Avars to Paulinus during the summer of 796 when he was writing to his other friends and contacts. On the peculiar and not necessarily representative conservation of Alcuin’s letters see Bullough, *Alcuin*, pp. 43–102. More generally on the unsatisfactory mechanisms and rationales, sometimes apparently whimsical, through which early medieval letters arrive in the modern world see Mary Garrison, “‘Send more socks’ On Mentality and the Preservation Context of Medieval Letters” *New Approaches to Medieval Communication*, ed. M. Mostert (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999) pp. 69–99.

⁹¹ *Conventus episcoporum*, p. 175. “*Ipsa vero praedicantium doctrina non debet esse violenta humanoque pavenda timore, sed benigna, suadebilis et cum dulcedine inrorata, suadebilis nempe de praemio vitae aeternae, terribilis de inferni supplicio, non de gladii cruento mucrone, nec coacti aut inviti trahantur ad baptismi lavacrum, sed quos Spiritus sancti gratia perfuderit et ex desiderio animae suae expetierint salutem.*”

who evangelized him. Then nothing else was lacking to the eunuch except the substance of water alone, and once found, he immediately deserved to be baptized.”⁹²

Paulinus’ record of the council was quite specific with respect to the sequence of missionary work among the Avars. The record reflected Alcuin’s thinking both in its general approach to formation and in the particulars of its explanation. A citation from Matthew preserved Alcuin’s liturgical reading and the persuasive element was eternal reward in the afterlife.⁹³ It included mention of moral regeneration, an explicit discussion of the “new man,” and a clarification of the appropriate use of the notion of “adopted son of God,” drawing anti-Adoptionist instruction into the discussion.⁹⁴ As if reading an epitome of Alcuin’s principal concerns at the end of the eighth century, the Patriarch of Aquileia wrote

The Lord ordered his disciples saying ‘Go (*Ite*), teach all the nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you’ (Mt. 28:19–20), and again, ‘who believes and is baptized will be saved’ (Mk. 16:16). Indeed it is agreeable to look at the Lord’s words with watchful zeal and to pay close attention to the most sacred order in those commands. For he does not say ‘Go, baptizing all the nations teaching them,’ but first he brings in ‘teach’ and then he adds ‘baptize.’ And not who was baptized and believes, but ‘who believes and was baptized will be saved.’ And after baptism again ‘teach them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you,’ so that manifestly it was given to be understood and the faith was to be taught before baptism, and so the novice understands what the grace of baptism is, because through it sins are forgiven and a new man is regenerated, certainly with the old man with his acts having passed away among the waves of redemption, who was a son of sin may begin to be a son of God through adoption and a sharer in the kingdom of heaven and after this mortal life may obtain a blessedness of life. After baptism they ought to be taught to observe all the commands of God by which, mercifully and rightly, they ought to live in this age.⁹⁵

⁹² *Conventus episcoporum*, p. 174. “*praedicatori suo, infuso sancto Spiritu, praebens adsensum fideique munus de thesauro cordis per ferculum linguae evangelizanti libenter optulit prolatum. Nihil namque tunc aliud deerat eunuchis nisi sola aquae substantia, qua inventa protinus in ea meruit baptizari.*”

⁹³ On Alcuin’s quotation of Matthew 28 see above. On the importance of the afterlife to Alcuin’s missionary presentation see Phelan, “Catechising the Wild,” pp. 455–74.

⁹⁴ See the discussion in Section Three of this chapter.

⁹⁵ *Conventus episcoporum*, pp. 174–5. “*Dominus praecipiat discipulis suis dicens: Ite, docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine patris et filii et Spiritus sancti, docentes eos servare omnia, quaecumque mandavi vobis, et rursus: Qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit salvus erit. Intueri quippe in verbis dominicis vigilantibus studio libet et animadvertendus in praeceptis illius sacratissimus ordo. Non enim ait: ‘Ite, baptizate omnes gentes docentes eos,’ sed primum intulit: ‘Docete,’ deinde adiecit: ‘Baptizate.’ Et non qui baptizatus fuerit et crediderit, sed qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit, hic salvus erit. Et post baptismum rursus: Docete eos servare omnia, quaecumque mandavi vobis, ut in promptu daretur intellegi et ante baptismum fides esset docenda et ut intellegat novitius, quae sit baptismi gratia, quia per id peccata dimittantur et regeneratus novus homo, mortuo scilicet inter undas redemptionis vetere cum actibus suis, qui erat filius peccati, incipiat per adoptionem filius esse Dei et particeps regni caelorum et post hanc mortalem vitam aeternae vitae beatitudinem consequatur. Post baptismum vero docendi sunt servare omnia Dei mandata, quibus pie et iuste in hoc saeculo vivere debeant.*”

Out in the field, the synod pushed further the sequential formation taken over from Alcuin, via Paulinus and Arn, and developed specific proposals for implementation of a formation program. First, the synod called for a concrete period of instruction, measured not by the content disseminated but by the reception of the listeners. The synod put an upper cap on a revived catechumenate program at forty days.

An extension of duration may be stretched out up to that number of days determined by the judgment of the priest, according entirely to the manner of those hearing, how swiftly or slowly they receive the Word of God and, with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, understand the increase of their redemption. Nevertheless the greatest duration should cease before the fortieth day, lest the boiling flames of their prolonged desire uselessly cool down, thus to this extent, so that the number containing seven is not crossed in teaching.⁹⁶

At a minimum, however, the program must at least span Holy Week. "Through those seven days, in which on the evening of the Sabbath, which dawn on the beginning of the Sabbath, he is to be baptized, with a fast having been announced, the hearer is catechized daily."⁹⁷ The program envisioned by Paulinus and Arn sought to apply in the mission field the course articulated by Alcuin.

Through numerous letters concerning the Christianization of the Avars, Alcuin developed a theory of Christian formation centered on the *sacramentum* of baptism. His theory carefully charted a course between secular and ecclesiastical concerns, setting up a model of formation both true to his theological convictions and practical for the messy world of the early Middle Ages. From Jerome through Bede, Alcuin discovered a three-tiered strategy for formation which he developed and spread among his influential contacts across Carolingian Europe. He approached formation as a pedagogical challenge and focused on progression of knowledge of the faith, the rite of baptism, and instruction in Christian ethical precepts. He identified the process of Christianization with the goals of the Carolingian political leadership and the larger social aims of the Carolingian Renewal. Making good subjects who obeyed the law and paid the tithe was accomplished through the same process by which good Christians were made: proper Christian formation.

⁹⁶ *Conventus episcoporum*, p. 175. "Dilatatio autem tarditatis usque ad quem dierum numerum praetendatur, in sacerdotis arbitrio aestimari debet, iuxta mores prorsus audientium, quam velocius vel serius suscipiant verbum Dei et adspirante sancto Spiritu intellegant suae redemptionis augmentum. Infra quadragenarium tamen numerum protelationis summa persistat, ne forte longe protracti flamma desiderii eorum defervens inaniter refrigescat, ita dumtaxat, ut septenarius numerus in discedendo non trasgrediatur."

⁹⁷ *Conventus episcoporum*, p. 175. "Per septem tamen illos dies, in quibus vespere sabbati, quae in prima lucescit sabbati, baptizandus est, indicto ieiunio catacizetur cotidie."

3.2. ALCUIN'S IMPLEMENTATION OF A BAPTISMAL PROGRAM: *PRIMO PAGANUS*, A COMMENTARY ON THE RITE OF BAPTISM

At the end of the eighth century Alcuin composed a commentary on the rite of baptism that provided a concrete form to his plan for Christian formation.⁹⁸ He applied his three-step program to the liturgy of baptism, at once adapting the baptismal liturgy to fit his program and presenting the liturgy as a pedagogical tool for communicating his vision to others. The commentary, identified by its opening words *Primo paganus*, survives in two separate letters from the year 798, likely indicating a circular letter type distribution, not dissimilar from his advocacy of Jerome's (and Bede's) interpretation of the Gospel of Matthew's Great Commission.⁹⁹ The text enjoyed wide distribution and popularity across the Carolingian world. It was the most copied and cited commentary on baptism under the Carolingians.¹⁰⁰ It first appeared in a brief note to an otherwise unknown priest named Oduinus.¹⁰¹ The letter contained little more than a simple introduction and the commentary itself. The text also surfaced in a longer missive addressed as an open letter to a community of monks in southern Gaul, whom Alcuin knew through Leidrad, archbishop of Lyon from 798.¹⁰² The letter included the commentary amid a larger treatment of the dangers of Spanish Adoptionism and advice on how to combat its spread.

Primo paganus enumerated the various elements of the baptismal ceremony and offered a spiritual interpretation of each. In typically Alcuinian fashion, the

⁹⁸ The authorship of the commentary has been the subject of scholarly disagreement. Some important voices have remained non-committal, see Bullough, *Alcuin*, p. 213 and Susan A. Keefe, *Water and the Word. Baptism and the Education of the Clergy in the Carolingian Empire*, Vol. I (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002) p. 80. Others have argued against Alcuin's authorship, see Jean-Paul Bouhot, "Explications du rituel baptismal à l'époque carolingienne" *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 24 (1978) pp. 278–301 and idem, "Un florilège sur le symbolisme du baptême de la seconde moitié du viii^e siècle" *Recherches Augustiniennes* 18 (1983) pp. 151–82. I argue that Alcuin composed the work himself in Owen M. Phelan, "Textual Transmission and Authorship in Carolingian Europe: *Primo Paganus*, Baptism, and Alcuin of York" *Revue Bénédictine* 118 (2008) pp. 262–88. Earlier, Alcuin's authorship was suggested by André Wilmart, "Un florilège carolingien sur le symbolisme des ceremonies du baptême, avec un Appendice sur la lettre de Jean Diacre" *Analecta reginensia. Studi e testi* 59 (1933) pp. 153–79. Alcuin's active engagement in the liturgical life of the Frankish World is well-established by Gerard Ellard, *Master Alcuin, Liturgist. A Partner of Our Piety* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1956), even as scholarly understanding of the specifics of his impact continue to evolve. See the comments and bibliography in Yitzhak Hen, *Royal Patronage of the Liturgy in Frankish Gaul to the Death of Charles the Bald (877)* (London: Boydell Press, 2001) pp. 78–81.

⁹⁹ Unsurprisingly, the letters are transmitted in otherwise unrelated collections of Alcuin's letters, see Dümmler's introduction to Alcuin's letters in Ernst Dümmler, *Epistolae karolini aevi II, Epistolae IV* (Berlin: Weidmannos 1895) pp. 1–17. See also the discussion of major collections of Alcuin's letters in Bullough, *Alcuin*, pp. 43–102.

¹⁰⁰ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. I, p. 80.

¹⁰¹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, pp. 202–3.

¹⁰² Alcuin, *Epistola* 137, pp. 210–16. That the letter was written for circulation among clerical and monastic communities of Gothia and Provence is discussed at Bullough, *Alcuin*, p. 47.

text drew heavily on earlier authors, reworking older materials to new ends. Alcuin's liturgical ideas show similarities to other early medieval liturgical traditions, but are identical to none. For explanations of the liturgy Alcuin plundered two earlier texts, a long letter on baptism written by the sixth-century Roman, John the Deacon, to a man named Senarius, and a sermon spuriously attributed to Saint Augustine.¹⁰³

Alcuin divided his baptismal program into fourteen parts: nine pre-baptismal preparations, baptism itself, and four post-baptismal rites. First was (1) a renunciation. An (2) exsufflation followed along with an (3) exorcism. (4) Salt and then (5) the Creed were given to the catechumen before (6) scrutinies were conducted. Finally, (7) the nostrils, (8) the chest, and (9) the shoulders were anointed. After preparations were complete, the catechumen was baptized. After baptism, the new Christian was (1) clothed with white vestments before (2) his head was anointed and covered with a veil. He then received (3) the Body and Blood of the Lord. Finally, the bishop (4) imposed hands on him.

Alcuin's order was identical neither to his sources nor to Gelasian liturgies popular in Frankish Gaul from the mid-eighth century.¹⁰⁴ For example, while he drew much of his language from the letter of John the Deacon, he presented different topics.¹⁰⁵ Whereas John provided discussion of catechesis, frequent hand-laying, blessings of the Creator, touching of the ears and of bare feet, Alcuin did not. Furthermore, Alcuin addressed several topics not mentioned by John, including touching the shoulders and episcopal hand-laying. Moreover, Alcuin's work did not reflect a distinctively Roman practice. Whether looking at the Old Gelasian Sacramentary—likely composed in Rome between 628–715, but now surviving in Frankish recension c.750—or the closely related *Ordo Romanus XI*—directions for baptism redacted in Rome sometime from the mid-sixth to the late seventh century—Alcuin's time horizon varied widely as did the order and content of his

¹⁰³ John the Deacon, *Letter to Senarius*, PL 59.0399–408. For further treatment of John the Deacon's material in *Primo paganus* consult: "Epistola de Iohannis Diaconi ad Senarium" in "Un florilège carolingien sur la symbolisme des ceremonies du baptême, avec un Appendice sur la lettre de Jean Diacre" ed. André Wilmart, *Analecta Reginensia. Studi e testi* 59 (1933) pp. 170–9. The sermon is printed in Migne PL 47.1151–1152. The text is identified as spurious in *Clavis Patristica Pseudepigraphorum Medii Aevi*, Vol. 1, ed. Johannes Machielsen (Turnhout: Brepols, 1990) pp. 273–4. On the myriad problems still surrounding pseudo-Augustinian material, see *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999) pp. 530–3. On Alcuin's blending of John the Deacon and pseudo-Augustine, see Phelan, "Textual Transmission," pp. 262–88.

¹⁰⁴ The standard account of early medieval baptism remains J.D.C. Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West: A Study in the Disintegration of the Primitive Rite of Initiation* (SPCK: London, 1965) pp. 1–29. For a recent update, digesting earlier research and providing a wider liturgical context, see Hen, *Royal Patronage of the Liturgy*, pp. 28–33 and 57–61.

¹⁰⁵ Where Alcuin's order of events does match that of John the Deacon, his interpretation of the same event differs strikingly, see Phelan, "Textual Transmission," pp. 270–3.

liturgy.¹⁰⁶ The program in both the Old Gelasian and *Ordo XI* began in the third week of Lent and continued through Holy Saturday, while *Primo paganus* provided no such specific time frame.¹⁰⁷ The Roman texts spread out the scrutinies with the first scrutiny occurring before the Creed was delivered and salt being administered before the exorcism.¹⁰⁸ Both Roman descriptions called for touching of the ears, which does not appear in Alcuin's text.¹⁰⁹ Examples of dramatic liturgical differences found in other liturgical books surviving from northern Italy and southern Gaul do not appear in Alcuin's work. He made no mention of the *pedilavium*, or foot washing, which was prominent in the baptismal liturgies of the *Missale Gothicum*, the *Missale Gallicanum Vetus*, the Bobbio Missal, and the Stowe Missal.¹¹⁰

Two manuscripts deserve special note for the light they cast on the liturgical results of Alcuin's active interest in the implementation of his baptismal program. They preserve the Sacramentary of St. Martin of Tours.¹¹¹ The order of

¹⁰⁶ The Old Gelasian Sacramentary is Vatican, BAV Reg. Lat. 316 and Paris, BN Lat. 7193 most recently edited in *Liber Sacramentorum Romanae ecclesiae ordinis anni circuli* (*Sacramentarium Gelasianum*), ed. L.C. Mohlberg et al. (Herder: Rome, 1960). Vatican, BAV Reg. Lat. 316 itself is a Frankish recension copied around 750 near Paris. On the Old Gelasian, see Eric Palazzo, *A History of Liturgical Books from the Beginning to the Thirteenth Century* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1993) pp. 42–6 and Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, pp. 64–70. For *Ordo Romanus XI* see Michel Andrieu, *Les Ordines Romani du Haut Moyen-Age*, Vol. 2 (Louvain: Spicilegium sacrum lovanienne, 1948) pp. 365–447. On *Ordo XI* see Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, pp. 164–6. On the *ordines* more generally, see Palazzo, *History of Liturgical Books*, pp. 175–85. Dating of the works depends largely on which work has chronological priority, either *Ordo XI*, as Andrieu suggests, or the Gelasian, as Chavasse argues. For Chavasse's reasoning see Antoine Chavasse, *Le Sacramentaire gélasien* (*Vaticanus Reginensis 316*) *sacramentaire presbytéral en usage dans les titres romains au VIIe siècle* (Tournai, Desclée, 1958) pp. 166–8. On the Roman model offered by both texts see Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. I, pp. 42–7.

¹⁰⁷ *Liber Sacramentorum*, pp. 32–42. Andrieu, *Ordines Romani*, p. 417.

¹⁰⁸ *Liber Sacramentorum*, pp. 42–51. Andrieu, *Ordines Romani*, pp. 417–19.

¹⁰⁹ *Liber Sacramentorum*, p. 68. Andrieu, *Ordines Romani*, p. 443.

¹¹⁰ The *Missale Gothicum* is Vatican, BAV Reg. Lat. 317 most recently edited in *Missale Gothicum*, ed. Els Rose, CCSL 159D (Turnhout: Brepols, 1961). The *Missale Gallicanum Vetus* is Vatican, BAV Pal. Lat. 493 most recently edited *Missale Gallicanum Vetus*, L.C. Mohlberg (Rome: Herder, 1958). The Bobbio Missal is Paris, BN Lat. 13246 most recently edited in *The Bobbio Missal*, ed. E.A. Lowe HBS vols. 53, 38, and 61 (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1917–1924). The Stowe Missal is Dublin, Royal Irish Academy Library D.II.3 most recently edited in *The Stowe Missal*, ed. G.F. Warner HBS vols. 31 and 32 (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1906–1915). On these distinctive liturgies see Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, pp. 107–9, and Hen, *Royal Patronage of the Liturgy*, pp. 28–33. On the footwashing specifically, see Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. I, p. 112. For a discussion of the relationships between the liturgies and some comments on Alcuin's contribution through his letters, see Fisher, *Christian Initiation*, pp. 59–72.

¹¹¹ The Sacramentary of St. Martin of Tours survives in two manuscripts, Tours, Bibl. Mun. 184 and Paris, BN Lat. 9430. The rubrics of the sacramentary are printed in J. Deshusses, *Le Sacramentaire grégorien, ses principales formes d'après les plus anciens manuscrits*, Vol. 3 (Fribourg: Éditions universitaires, 1982) Though the manuscripts are dated to the late ninth and early tenth centuries, respectively, Deshusses believed both reflect Alcuin's work at St. Martin's circa 800. On this Sacramentary and its influence, see Palazzo, *Liturgical Books*, pp. 54–5.

baptism in the Sacramentary was not identical to that in *Primo paganus*, but was quite close and in ways distinctive enough to be suggestive of Alcuin's hand at work, especially considering that the earliest manuscripts date almost a century after Alcuin's death. Strikingly, the paschal *ordo* envisioned all the ceremonies conducted in a single session.¹¹² Several features and their order stood in contrast to the myriad liturgical options available in Carolingian Europe.¹¹³ The rite contained a touching of the nostrils, but not of the ears. The delivery of salt occurred after an exsufflation and an exorcism. The Creed was delivered after the salt, and after baptism a head covering was used. The Sacramentary seems to offer a pre-Hadrianic Gregorian tradition, perhaps of Frankish but maybe also English origin.¹¹⁴ The resulting picture is of Alcuin at Tours sliding around the pieces of a pre-Hadrianic Gregorian Sacramentary of some kind along the lines suggested to him by Jerome and Bede in order to support his baptismal strategy. This picture is strengthened by the example of the Sacramentary of Trent, a book associated with early ninth-century Salzburg, where Arn was (arch)bishop from 785–821.¹¹⁵ The Sacramentary of Trent offers a pre-Hadrianic Gregorian backbone revised with Mass prayers composed by Alcuin.¹¹⁶

Primo paganus concretized in liturgy the three stage approach to conversion Alcuin developed for the Avars. Consequently, the text considered more than just the act of baptizing itself. It presented as instructional moments the activities leading up to baptism, the event of baptism itself, and post-baptismal rites. Crucial to understanding the text is sensitivity to Alcuin's explanation for each ritual element. He designed *Primo paganus* as a guide for the proper instruction of catechumens, not as an abstract theological analysis of baptism or for clerics' spiritual reading. Throughout, Alcuin emphasized the education he demanded through the liturgy of baptism. For example, he wrote that each catechumen ought to understand what was happening to him. He was most explicit when discussing anointing. "Then his head is anointed with holy chrism and is covered with mystic veil, *so that he understands* that he carries the crown of the kingdom and the dignity of the priesthood" (emphasis added).¹¹⁷

¹¹² See the discussion in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. I, pp. 156–7.

¹¹³ All these features are noted by Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. I, pp. 83–4.

¹¹⁴ Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, p. 126. For Alcuin's Missal generally as reflecting use of a pre-Hadrianic Gregorian Sacramentary, see Palazzo, *Liturgical Books*, pp. 54–5 and Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, p. 101.

¹¹⁵ The Sacramentary of Trent is Museo Nazionale (Castel del Buonconsiglio) sacramentary [no number]. The most recent edition of the work is *Monumenta liturgica Ecclesiae Tridentinae saeculo XIII antiquiora*, 3 vols., eds. F. Dell'Oro and H. Rogger (Trent: Società studi trentini di scienze storiche, 1983–88). For background see J. Deshusses, "Le sacramentaire grégorien de Trente" *Revue Bénédictine* 78 (1968) pp. 261–82.

¹¹⁶ Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, pp. 97–102 and 131.

¹¹⁷ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, pp. 202–3. "Tunc sacro chrismate caput perungitur et mystico tegitur velamine, ut intellegat se diadema regni et sacerdotii dignitatem portare . . ."

Explanations given to the rite's order of events mirror Alcuin's outline for the process of becoming a Christian. The nine prebaptismal tasks taught each catechumen the faith, introducing him to fundamental elements of Christian teaching. Prebaptismal activities revolved around renunciation of the devil and embrace of the Christian God.¹¹⁸ The first three elements specifically accented removing the devil from the catechumen's life to create space for God. Alcuin explained that becoming a catechumen was first of all to renounce "the evil spirit and all his damnable pomps."¹¹⁹ The explanation of exsufflation clarifies the educational trajectory of the baptismal *ordo*. "He also blows out his breath, so that as the devil is driven away an entrance is prepared for Christ our God."¹²⁰ Exorcism then completed this preparation. "An exorcism is performed, that is the evil spirit is bound so that he withdraws and leaves giving a place for the true God."¹²¹ After the catechumen rejected the devil and prepared himself for God, he was taught about Christianity through salt and the Creed. Alcuin associated salt with the reception of wisdom into the soul, making the catechumen suitable for God. "The catechumen receives salt so that his rotten and perishable sins are cleansed by the salt of wisdom, which is a divine gift."¹²² Having rejected Satan and embraced wisdom, the catechumen was invited to know God through the reception of the Creed, "then is the faith of the apostolic symbol handed over to him so that the empty house, abandoned by its former inhabitant, is decorated by faith and a dwelling place for God is prepared."¹²³ After this initial set of instructions, Alcuin called for scrutinies, or questions, posed to the catechumen to ensure both that he had left his pagan past behind him and that he understood the Christian faith he confessed. Attention to such testing highlighted his educational concern. Alcuin was not just looking for commitment, but scrutinizing the nature and content of the commitment. "Then the scrutinies take place so that he is often tested whether after his renunciation of Satan, he completely fixed in his heart the holy words of the

¹¹⁸ Alcuin's distinctive emphasis on the apotropaic significance of pre-baptismal rituals is discussed Henry A. Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism: Ritual, Theology, and Drama* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985) pp. 204–5.

¹¹⁹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 202. "... maligno spiritui et omnibus eius damnosis pompis." Citations are drawn from *Primo paganus* as printed in the letter to Oduinus. When the copy of *Primo paganus* in the letter to the monks of Septimania differs, both readings will be given. Differences will be indicated by boldface type.

¹²⁰ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 202. "Exsufflatur etiam, ut fugato diabolo Christo deo nostro paretur introitus."

¹²¹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 202. "Exorcizatur, id est coniuratur malignus spiritus, ut exeat et recedat dans locum Deo vero."

¹²² Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 202. "Accipit caticuminus salem, ut putrida et fluxa eius peccata sapientiae sale divino munere mundentur."

¹²³ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 202. "Deinde symboli apostolici traditur ei fides, ut vacua domus et a prisco habitatore derelicta fide ornetur et preparetur habitatio Dei." Alcuin, *Epistola* 137, p. 214. "**Vera** deinde symboli apostolici traditur ei fides, ut vacua domus et a prisco habitatore derelicta fide ornetur et preparetur habitatio **Deo**."

faith which he has been given.”¹²⁴ After these questions, Alcuin called for attention to the body of the catechumen which symbolically reaffirmed his embrace of the faith and rejection of the devil, and which also pointed forward to the moral dimensions of Christianity yet to be introduced.

His nostrils are touched so that he endures in the faith which he has received as long as he draws the spirit into his nostrils. Also, his breast is anointed with the same oil, so that the entrance is closed to the devil by the sign of the holy cross. His shoulders also are signed so that he is defended on all sides. Likewise is the strength of faith and perseverance in good works sealed by the anointing of his breast and shoulders.¹²⁵

Before baptism, Alcuin envisioned a catechumenate program filled with instruction and ritual reinforcement of that instruction. The goal of this initial instruction was to introduce the candidate to the Christian faith and Creed and establish a paradigm of good vs. evil in which the catechumen has chosen the good.

Next came baptism itself, which rested on the central teaching of Christian doctrine, the Trinity. Alcuin explicitly advocated triple immersion in honor of the Trinity. “He is baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity by a triple immersion.”¹²⁶ Alcuin was explicit about this point because of his engagement with the Spanish Adoptionists, whose preference for single immersion baptism Alcuin felt reflected their insufficient Christology. In the longer letter to the monks of Septimania, Alcuin drew out more fully his concern. “Third, also, the question of baptism is brought to us from Spain—which once was the nurse of tyrants, now indeed of schismatics—against the universal custom of the holy church, for they assert that under the name of the Holy Trinity one immersion ought to be performed.”¹²⁷ Baptism, for Alcuin, revolved around the Trinity. It renewed the image of the Trinity in the catechumen, an image that Alcuin

¹²⁴ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 202. “Tunc fiunt scrutinia, ut exploretur sepius, **an** post renuntiationem satanae sacra verba datae fidei radicitus corde defixerit.” Alcuin, *Epistola* 137, p. 214. “Tunc fiunt scrutinia, ut exploretur sepius, **quam firmiter** post renuntiationem satanae sacra verba datae fidei radicitus corde defixerit.” Although infant baptism had become the norm in much of Europe, Alcuin here considers adult catechumens. Especially if Alcuin viewed this text as helpful for work in missionary areas like Bavaria, he would address the issue of adult catechumens. For discussion of a catechumenate composed of infants, see Chapters Four and Five.

¹²⁵ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 202. “Tanguntur et nares, ut quamdiu spiritum naribus trahat, in fide accepta perduret. Pectus quoque eodem perungitur oleo, ut signo sanctae crucis diabolo claudatur ingressus. Signantur et scapulae, ut undique muniatur. Item in pectoris et scapulae unctione signatur fidei firmitas et operum bonorum perseverantia.”

¹²⁶ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 202. “Et sic nomine sanctae Trinitatis trina submersione baptizatur.” Alcuin does not seem to realize that single immersion was widely practiced and accepted within Christianity, even at Rome, which Alcuin cites as his model for religious observance. See Ellard, *Master Alcuin*, pp. 68–85.

¹²⁷ Alcuin, *Epistola* 137, p. 212. “Tertia quoque nobis de Hispania—quae olim tyrannorum nutritrix fuit, nunc vero scismaticorum—contra universalem sanctae ecclesiae consuetudinem, de baptismo quaestio delata est. Adfirmant enim quidam sub invocatione sanctae Trinitatis unam esse mersionem agendam.”

believed was lost through the sinful exercise of man's free will. Here Alcuin pivoted from communicating the Christian faith to presenting Christian moral life. At once triple immersion reinforced the doctrine of the Trinity through proclamation, but it also established the image of the Trinity ontologically in the catechumen's soul yielding a new moral condition. "And man, who was formed in the image of the Holy Trinity, is restored to that same image through the invocation of the Holy Trinity, that man who through the third grade of sin—that is consent—fell unto death, lifted from the font for a third time rises through grace to life!"¹²⁸ Baptism was the moment of interior formation for an individual and also the inflection point for educational formation.

After baptism, Alcuin turned his attention to four final rites and focused his explanation on their moral significance to the new Christian. After rising from the baptismal font, the new Christian was clothed in white robes. Alcuin explained that the robes symbolized the new moral state of the Christian. "He is clothed in white vestments on account of his joy in regeneration and his chastity of life and the beauty of his angelic splendour."¹²⁹ Critically, the educational angle was not lost as Alcuin noted that the white vesture was not only on account of the Christian's new moral state, but on account of his joy over his new state. The Christian had been morally purified, and should know it, and be motivated by that knowledge. The moral instruction continued through anointing and presenting of a veil. "Then his head is anointed with sacred chrism and covered with a mystical veil, so that he understands that he carries the crown of the kingdom and the dignity of a priest according to the Apostle: 'You are a royal and priestly race, offering yourself as a holy sacrifice to the Living God and pleasing to God'" (1 Pt. 2:9; Rm. 12:1).¹³⁰ Alcuin here conflated comments by Peter and Paul to emphasize that the new Christian should be reminded to live in a manner pleasing to God. A new privileged state brought new moral responsibilities. Incorporation into the community, a stronger

¹²⁸ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 202. "Et recte homo, qui ad imaginem sanctae Trinitatis conditus est, per invocationem sanctae Trinitatis ad eandem renovatur imaginem et qui tertio gradu peccati, id est **consensu**, cecedit in mortem, tertio elevatus de fonte per gratiam resurgat ad vitam." Alcuin, *Epistola* 137, p. 214. "Et recte homo, qui ad imaginem sanctae Trinitatis conditus est, per invocationem sanctae Trinitatis ad eandem renovatur imaginem et qui tertio gradu peccati, id est **operatione**, cecedit in mortem, tertio elevatus de fonte per gratiam resurgat ad vitam." Here Alcuin refers to Gregory the Great's *Regula pastoralis*. Alcuin's affection for the pope and his interest in the *Regula Pastoralis* are well attested by Alcuin himself; see Alcuin, *Epistola* 39, p. 83 or Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 166. When commenting on how to admonish those who regret sins of deed and sins of thought Gregory writes "Moreover, we have learned in the case of our first parent that we perpetrate the iniquity of every sin in three ways; that is to say, in suggestion, delight, and consent." "In primo autem parente didicimus quia tribus modis omnis culpa nequitiam perpetramus, suggestione scilicet, delectatione, consensu." Gregory the Great, *Règle Pastorale*, Vol. 2, ed. F. Rommel, SC 382 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1992) p. 474. The significant substitution of *operatione* in *Epistola* 137 may not be Alcuin.

¹²⁹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 202. "Tunc albis induitur vestimentis propter gaudium regenerationis et castitatem vitae et angelici splendoris decorem."

¹³⁰ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, pp. 202–3. "Tunc sacro chrismate caput perungitur et mystico tegitur velamine, ut intellegat se diadema regni et sacerdotii dignitatem portare . . ."

connection to the Church, and fortification in one's new life followed from the new Christian's reception of the eucharist. "Then he is strengthened by the Lord's Body and Blood, so that he is a member of that head who suffered for him and rose."¹³¹ Finally, the celebrant laid hands on the new Christian so that he received the seven fold grace of the Holy Spirit in order to live as a good example for others. Even as Alcuin reminded his reader of the eternal reward offered at baptism, he presented every Christian's obligation to preach as the moral capstone of Christian formation. "Lastly, through the imposition of hands, he receives the Spirit of sevenfold grace from the bishop, so that he, who has been given eternal life by the grace of baptism, is strengthened by the Holy Spirit for preaching to others."¹³² In *Primo paganus* Alcuin constructed a clear order of baptism, which gave liturgical shape to the three-step scheme laid out in his letters concerning the Avars. He wanted Christian formation to begin with instruction about Christian doctrine, to continue with the administration of baptism, and to culminate with the communication of Christian moral principles.

3.3. FAITH AND MORALS IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: ALCUIN AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE SACRAMENTUM OF BAPTISM

Baptism provided Alcuin with a useful organizational concept for Christian formation, especially for coordinating his reflections on faith and morality. At the end of the eighth and beginning of the ninth century, Alcuin wrote a number of works in which he expanded his ideas, using the *sacramentum* of baptism to explore the moral implications of Christian doctrine. He used his celebrity to advocate his position and disseminate his thoughts across Europe to people in different states, clerical and lay, through different genres, from saints' *vitae* to moral *specula*, and for different purposes—polemical, didactic, hortatory—across the Carolingian World.

During the winter of 797/798, Alcuin composed his *Contra haeresim Felicis*, the first of his several treatises against the Adoptionist heresy.¹³³ Felix was the bishop of Urgel, part of the Carolingian Spanish March from 789. He was a popular preacher and vocal advocate of Elipandus of Toledo's (Adoptionist) Christological teachings. Felix was summoned to court at Regensburg in 792 to defend

¹³¹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 203. "Sic corpore et sanguine dominico confirmatur, ut illius sit *capitis* membrum, qui pro eo passus est et resurrexit." Alcuin, *Epistola* 137, p. 215. "Sic corpore et sanguine dominico confirmatur, ut illius sit membrum, qui pro eo passus est et resurrexit."

¹³² Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 203. "Novissime per inpositionem manus a summo sacerdote septiformis gratiae spiritum accipit, ut roboretur per Spiritum sanctum ad praedicandum aliis, qui fuit in baptismo per gratiam vitae donatus aeternae."

¹³³ See the discussion of Frankfurt in Chapter Two. The most recent edition of Alcuin's work is Gary Blumenshine, *Liber Alcuini Contra Haeresim Felicis, Edition with an Introduction* (Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1980) pp. 55–99. The work survives in a unique manuscript, Vatican, BAV Pal. Lat. 290, a mid-ninth century work from Lorsch, see Bernhard Bischoff, *Lorsch im Spiegel seiner Handschriften* (Munich: Arbeo-Gesellschaft, 1974) p. 110.

his theology, then again at Frankfurt (794) and at Aachen (799). A long and—notably—cordial debate between Felix and Alcuin lasted through the 790s. He wrote the work with the benefit of the library of St. Martin of Tours, where he “retired” as abbot in 796. In the *Contra haeresim Felicis*, Alcuin developed a theologically sophisticated assault on Adoptionism driven by his reading of a Latin translation of the synodal *acta* of the Council of Ephesus (431).¹³⁴ His polemic associated Adoptionism with Nestorian Christology. The work consisted largely of a dossier of patristic texts which treated the language of Adoptionism, organized, edited, and explained by Alcuin so as to undermine the premises of Spanish Adoptionist Christology. Alcuin circulated at least three copies of the work. In March 798, he sent a copy to Charlemagne.¹³⁵ After the work met with Charlemagne’s approval, he sent copies to Theodulf of Orléans and Benedict of Aniane in order to aid them in the struggle against the Adoptionists across southern Gaul.¹³⁶ The Lorsch manuscript in which the work survives may testify to even wider circulation. Though the manuscript is likely a mid-ninth-century copy, it may indicate an early history at the abbey. Ricbod, abbot of Lorsch (784–804) and bishop of Trier (791–804) was Alcuin’s student and a court intimate, earning a nickname drawn from early Christianity monasticism, Macarius.¹³⁷ And in a surviving letter, Alcuin identifies Ricbod, along with Paulinus of Aquileia and Theodulf of Orléans, as a principal participant in the discussion of Adoptionism.¹³⁸ The letter concerning this copy was sent to Benedict and “all the abbots, brothers and sons who are in the regions of Gothia,” which indicates a circular letter-type distribution similar to one of his letters containing *Primo paganus*.¹³⁹

Baptism served as the point of departure for Alcuin’s Christology and his anti-Adoptionist polemics.¹⁴⁰ Sifting through earlier Christian writings for his

¹³⁴ Blumenshine, *Contra Haeresim Felicis*, p. 17. The manuscript copy of the *acta* (Paris, BN Lat. 1572) has been described in Bernhard Bischoff, “Aus Alkuins Erdentagen” *Mittelalterliche Studien*, Vol. 2 (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1967) pp. 12–19.

¹³⁵ Alcuin mentions this copy in Alcuin, *Epistola* 145, pp. 233–4.

¹³⁶ See Alcuin, *Epistola* 160, p. 259 and Alcuin, *Epistola* 205, p. 340, respectively.

¹³⁷ Garrison, “The Social World of Alcuin,” p. 61.

¹³⁸ See Alcuin, *Epistola* 149, p. 243. For discussion on this point, see Blumenshine, *Contra Haeresim Felicis*, pp. 42–6.

¹³⁹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 205, p. 340. “... omnibus abbatibus fratribus et filiis, qui sunt Gothiae partibus...”

¹⁴⁰ For a brief overview of the Adoptionist dispute, see David Ganz, “Theology and the Organization of Thought” pp. 762–6. The foundational study of the Adoptionist debate is found in Wilhelm Heil, *Alkuinstudien I. Zur Chronologie und Bedeutung des Adoptionismusstreites* (Düsseldorf: L. Schwann, 1970). See also, Wilhelm Heil, “Der Adoptionismus, Alcuin, und Spanien” *Karl der Grosse. Bd. II Das geistige Leben*, ed. B. Bischoff (Düsseldorf: L. Schwann, 1965) pp. 95–155. For a full treatment of the contested theological issues, see John C. Cavadini, *The Last Christology of the West: Adoptionism in Spain and Gaul 785–820* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993) pp. 88–102; James B. Williams, *The Adoptive Son of God, the Pregnant Virgin, and the Fortification of the True Faith: Heterodoxy, the Cult of the Virgin Mary, and Benedict of Aniane in the Carolingian Age* (Ph.D. Diss., Purdue University, 2009); Florence Close, *Uniformiser la foi pour unifier l’empire: contribution à l’histoire de la pensée politico-théologique de Charlemagne* (Bruxelles: Classe des Lettres, Académie royale de Belgique, 2011).

Contra haeresim Felicis, Alcuin looked for treatments of Jesus' baptism in the Jordan. At that baptism Alcuin saw an unambiguous statement about the distinction of persons in the Trinity. In a paragraph of very basic framing for the longer patristic excerpts he compiled, Alcuin wrote

Let us believe the testimony of the Lord God the Father when he testified over his baptized Son in a splendid voice, saying: This is my beloved Son (Mt. 3:17). And lest anyone doubt something was said about the other person, the presence of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove confirms that this is the Son of God who was baptized by John in the Jordan.¹⁴¹

To this introductory note, Alcuin appended selections on Jesus' baptism from Hilary of Poitiers' *De Trinitate* which offered language critical of Felix's position. He identified Jesus Christ as the Son of God "not by name, but by nature, and not by adoption, but by birth."¹⁴² Alcuin developed his interpretation of the Gospel accounts of Jesus' baptism in the Jordan and offered an analysis of Jesus' relationship to God the Father.

Soon after Alcuin circulated his *Contra haeresim Felicis*, Felix composed his own treatise defending Adoptionist Christology. Although the text does not survive, selections are preserved in Alcuin's spirited rebuttal, *Contra Felicem Urgellitanum*, written during the winter of 798–99.¹⁴³ Longer and more synthetic, this work again concentrated on Jesus' baptism in the Jordan. Alcuin explored God's declaration from heaven—"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased (Mt 3:17)"—twice in the first book and again in the second of his seven book effort.¹⁴⁴ As earlier, Alcuin emphasized that the Father's voice should be taken at face value. He adopted the same interpretive perspective as in his earlier work, but with greater specificity and nuance. He indicated not only the true sonship of Jesus, but laid out an orthodox vocabulary of humanity and divinity, two natures in one person, with which to discuss Christ and explore his sonship. In Book Two Alcuin wrote

¹⁴¹ Blumenshine, *Contra Haeresim Felicis*, p. 56. "Credamus domini dei patris testimonio ubi super baptizatum filium magnifica uoce testatur dicens, Hic est filius meus dilectus. Et ne quis de altero dici dubitaret, etiam sancti spiritus in specie columbae praesentia conprobatur hunc esse filium dei qui a Iohanne in Iordane baptizatur."

¹⁴² Blumenshine, *Contra Haeresim Felicis*, p. 59. For Hilary's text and the original context consult Hilaire de Poitiers, *La Trinité*, Vol. 2 (livres iv–viii), ed. P. Smulders, SC 448 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2000) p. 234. Alcuin's creation of a tradition of Hilary interpretation at just this point is considered in John C. Cavadini, "A Carolingian Hilary" *The Study of the Bible in the Carolingian Era*, eds. Celia Chazelle and Burton Van Name Edwards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003) pp. 133–40. Especially important is Alcuin's selective citation of Hilary, including the editing out of passages seeming to support Adoptionist vocabulary.

¹⁴³ The most recent edition is that printed in Migne's *Patrologia Latina* 101, which is a reprint from Alcuinus, *Opera Omnia*, ed. Frobenius Forster (Regensburg, 1777). For more on the transmission history of Alcuin's works, consult Michael Gorman, "Alcuin Before Migne" *Revue Bénédictine* 112 (2002) pp. 101–30. On the theology of the work see, especially, Cavadini, *Last Christology*, pp. 81–2, 88–102.

¹⁴⁴ Alcuin, *Contra Felicem Urgellitanum libri septem* I.12, PL 101.0138; I.20, PL 101.0145; and II.15, PL 101.0157.

In the hearing of John the Baptist, that voice testified on behalf of Christ after he was baptized, proclaiming 'this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased' (Mt. 3:17). We have already commented on this passage a great deal above. At present we wish only to ask if the paternal voice referred to the one person of Christ. If so, then that one person to whom this voice was addressed is the whole beloved Son of God, although in two natures. If the voice referred only to the divinity, then it was the divinity that was baptized there, and not the humanity, because this voice was produced over the one who was baptized. But then it was the newly baptized man, upon whom the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove, who was proclaimed by God to be the Son of God. The paternal voice and the descent of the Holy Spirit both indicated that the very same one who was baptized was the Son of God.¹⁴⁵

As Alcuin himself noted, he commented on this passage a great deal. Alcuin's interest in how this Gospel passage worked against the Adoptionists was widespread and consistent beyond *Contra Felicem Urgellitanum*. It is found, for example, in the letter to the monks of Septimania which contained *Primo paganus*.¹⁴⁶

In addition to his doctrinal interests, Alcuin saw these accounts as an opportunity to lay out the moral stakes of rightly understanding Jesus' baptism in the Jordan. Alcuin's mature analysis used scripture to explain the theology of Christ's nature, but then turned to the liturgy to tease out the moral and eschatological stakes. As his argument moved forward, Alcuin carefully distinguished the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan from the baptism subsequently celebrated by Christians. Alcuin signalled where he was headed when he introduced his discussion with the distinction between what occurred in the Gospel and what happened in his own day. "Why until now, O remarkable Doctor [Felix], do you place the name of adoption on Christ? You do it so that in addition he requires the washing of baptism, and a second birth, just as we sinners who are now born through carnal generation as sons of wrath?"¹⁴⁷ So, after completing his analysis of the Trinitarian teaching implied by the baptism at the Jordan, he looked to the Christian *sacramentum* to complete his thought. Alcuin observed that because Jesus was God's Son and was sinless, he could not have needed Christian

¹⁴⁵ Alcuin, *Contra Felicem Urgellitanum libri septem* II.15, PL 101.157. "... audiente beato Baptista Joanne, perhibuit hujusmodi, clamans: Hic est Filius meus dilectus, in quo mihi bene complacui. De quo testimonio supra plenius diximus. Nunc tantum in hoc loco interrogare libet, si haec vox paterna ad unam Christi personam pertineret? Si ad unam: ergo illa una persona, ad quam haec vox facta est, tota est Filius Dei dilectus, licet in duabus naturis. Si ad divinitatem tantum, ergo divinitas baptizata est ibi, et non humanitas: quia super baptizatum haec vox facta est. Homo siquidem, qui baptizatus est, Dei Filius a Deo Patre praedicatur, super quem et Spiritus sanctus in specie columbae descendit. Quatenus paterna vox et sancti Spiritus descensio eundem esse Dei Filium demonstraret, qui baptizatus est."

¹⁴⁶ Alcuin, *Epistola* 137, p. 211.

¹⁴⁷ Alcuin, *Contra Felicem Urgellitanum libri septem* II.15, PL 101.0157. "Quid adhuc, o doctor mirabilis, adoptionis nomen Christo imponis? quem insuper lavacro indiguisset baptismatis, et secunda generatione, sicut nos peccatores jam nati per generationem carnalem in filios irae."

baptism because Christian baptism removed sins and made people sons of God: “we with the whole Church of Christ cry out that Christ had no sin to be expiated and needed no second birth, since he is true God and true Son of God, conceived and born of the Holy Spirit. For if Christ needed a second birth, he was—certainly—a sinner!”¹⁴⁸ Alcuin hammered on the difference between the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan and the Christian *sacramentum*. It is the *sacramentum*, not the Incarnation, which made sons of God by adoption. Alcuin reiterated his point by contrasting biblical with liturgical exegesis. This decision formed the lynchpin of his contention that Jesus was not an adopted son of God. “If the prince of this world, that is the devil, does not have anything in him, why did he need to be reborn? We indeed are not born sons of God, but we are reborn. That one was conceived and born the Son of God: and therefore he who was born the Son of God did not need adoption to be the Son of God.”¹⁴⁹

Alcuin’s explanation of the baptism in the Jordan addressed his doctrinal concerns, but at the same time raised a liturgical one. How did the baptism of Jesus relate to Christian baptism? Alcuin’s willingness to attack this issue revealed his larger agenda. He developed his answer through a moral interpretation of baptism’s significance. Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan was theologically illuminating and morally instructive. Jesus allowed himself to be baptised not in order to purge his own sins, but in order to provide an example to others. Specifically, through his own baptism, Jesus taught the virtue of humility. “But that Jesus Christ conceived and born without sin rather came to baptism to show an example of humility, and to sanctify the water by his baptism; not to be sanctified in the water, who in himself had nothing of sin, from which he needed to be cleansed through baptism.”¹⁵⁰ Alcuin’s perspective on Jesus’ baptism extended to other works. In his study of the Trinity, *De fide sanctae trinitatis*, written early in the ninth century, Alcuin followed the same logic in his analysis of Jesus’ baptism.¹⁵¹ “Therefore Christ was baptized, not to wash away any

¹⁴⁸ Alcuin, *Contra Felicem Urgellitanum libri septem* II.20, PL 101.0162. “*Sed nos libera voce clamamus cum tota Ecclesia Christi, Christum nec peccatum habuisse, quod expiaretur; nec secunda indiguisset generatione, qui Deus verus et verus Dei Filius de Spiritu sancto conceptus est et natus. Nam si Christus secunda indiguit generatione, utique peccator fuit.*”

¹⁴⁹ Alcuin, *Contra Felicem Urgellitanum libri septem* II.20, PL 101.0162. “*Si quidquam in eo non habuit princeps mundi hujus, id est, diabolus, cur eguit renasci? Nos vero non Filii Dei nascimur, sed renascimur. Ille mox Dei Filius conceptus est et natus: et ideo adoptione non eguit ut Filius Dei esset, qui Filius Dei natus est.*”

¹⁵⁰ Alcuin, *Contra Felicem Urgellitanum libri septem* II.17, PL 101.0158–0158. “*Quin potius Christus Jesus absque omni peccato conceptus et natus venit ad baptismum, exemplum humilitatis ostendere, et aquas suo sanctificare baptismum; non ut sanctificaretur in aquis, qui nihil habuit in se peccati, a quo mundari debuisset per baptismum.*”

¹⁵¹ See also the earlier John Cavadini, “The Sources and Theology of Alcuin’s ‘De Fide Sanctae et Individuae Trinitatis’” *Traditio* 46 (1991) pp. 123–46; John Cavadini, “Alcuin and Augustine: ‘De Trinitate’” *Augustinian Studies* 12 (1981) pp. 11–18. Cavadini emphasized the creativity and vision Alcuin displayed in reworking, rewriting, and reimagining Augustine’s work for application to the contemporary scene.

iniquity of his, who had none at all, but to hold up his great humility.”¹⁵² Although Alcuin addressed many of the same doctrinal themes in the *De Fide* as he did in his anti-Adoptionist works, there is no reason to think that he imagined or disseminated it as a polemical effort. It was rather part of his larger and more general effort to establish an *imperium christianum*, to catechize Carolingian Europe. In a letter from 802, Alcuin commended the text to Charlemagne as a sermon to aid in the emperor’s preaching. “Lest the zeal of my devotion in the Lord grow lethargic in leisure and become lacking in support for your preaching of the Catholic Faith, I have directed to your most holy authority a discussion, under the guise of a little manual, *De fide sanctae et individuae Trinitatis*, so that the praise and faith of wisdom may be approved by the judgment of the most wise of men.”¹⁵³ Also from 802, a letter to Arn, now archbishop of Salzburg, clarified the more generally catechetical, as opposed to strictly anti-Adoptionist, purpose of the work. He invited Arn to read a book “which I recently wrote concerning the Catholic Faith and directed to our Lord Emperor through this boy (who ferried correspondence). In no way let this little book slip from your hands, but by all means make a copy so that you have one, because it is very necessary to know willingly the Catholic faith in which the highest things of our salvation consist.”¹⁵⁴ The emphasis on preaching and willing acceptance of Christian teachings connected the work to Alcuin’s broader efforts at renewal. The early manuscript tradition of the work bears out this interpretation. *De fide* circulated in ninth-century manuscripts not with works against Felix and Elipandus, but with instructional materials, especially a Creed, a treatise on the soul, and a question-and-answer text.¹⁵⁵ Both conceptually and specifically, *De fide* was closely related to Alcuin’s teaching on baptism. It fleshed out the basic instructions and interpretations Alcuin gave to the baptismal rite. The work was designed as text for preachers, one which summarized and explained the Creed in such a way that drew very basic and fundamental distinctions that clarified the “inner logic” of the

¹⁵² Alcuin, *De fide sanctae trinitatis et de incarnatione Christi*, III.17, ed. Eric Knibbs and E. Ann Matter, CCCM 249 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012) p. 120. “Baptizatus est ergo Christus non ut eius ulla dilueretur iniquitas, qui omnino nullam habuit, sed ut eius magna commendaretur humilitas.”

¹⁵³ Alcuin, *Epistola* 257, pp. 414–15. “Ne vero meae in Domino devotionis studium otio torpens, vestro in praedicatione catholicae fidei defuisset adiutorio, direxi sanctissimae auctoritati vestrae de fide sanctae et individuae Trinitatis, sub specie manualis libelli, sermonem, ut divinae laus et fides sapientissimi hominum probaretur iudicio.”

¹⁵⁴ Alcuin, *Epistola* 258, p. 416. “. . . quem noviter scripsi de catholica fide, et domno imperatori per hunc puerum direxi. Qui libellus nullatenus vestras effugiat manus, sed omnimodis scribatur, ut habeatis, quia necessarius est valde fidem volentibus scire catholicam, in qua summa salutis nostrae consistit.”

¹⁵⁵ E. Ann Matter, “A Carolingian Schoolbook? The Manuscript Tradition of Alcuin’s *De fide* and Related Treatises” *The Whole Book: Cultural Perspectives on the Medieval Miscellany*, eds. Stephen G. Nichols and Siegfried Wenzel (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996) pp. 145–52.

faith.¹⁵⁶ It proposed a social and ecclesiastical structure that precluded one from drawing faulty conclusions about the faith. On a specific and textual level, Alcuin's principal point of departure built on his baptismal teaching. Chapter one opened with a discussion of how no one may enjoy true happiness or eternal life without faith.¹⁵⁷ The chapter hung on a citation from Hebrews, "without faith it is impossible to please God."¹⁵⁸ This was the same passage that Bede used in his interpretation of Matthew to secure the eternal stakes found in Jerome's order to Jesus instruction. Further, Alcuin pressed his point on baptism to Arn using the very same quotation from Hebrews following his analysis of the Great Commission. Alcuin baldly asked and answered "Without faith what does baptism accomplish? Since the apostle says: 'Without faith it is impossible to please God.'"¹⁵⁹

Throughout Alcuin's writings at the turn of the ninth century, and following the model he developed for the rite of baptism, the *sacramentum* of baptism both anchored a right understanding of doctrine and implied a relationship of right faith to sound morality. In *De fide*, the regeneration of baptism created moral claims on a Christian, which was important to understand because—ultimately—eternal reward hinged on morality. In a typical move, Alcuin developed his idea by thinking in *vestigia patrum*, in this case through his reading of Augustine's *Enchiridion*. Augustine wrote the *Enchiridion*, or *Liber de fide, spe, et caritate*, in 421–22 as a response to Laurentius, a layman who had asked for a handbook with a basic explanation of the Christian faith. Toward the end of his discussion of faith in Christ as the redeemer, Augustine considered Jesus' baptism. The bishop of Hippo distinguished Christian baptism from John's by identifying the presence of the Holy Spirit. "For this baptism is not only in water, just as John's was, but also in the Holy Spirit, so that from that Spirit everyone who believes in Christ is regenerated."¹⁶⁰ Augustine's accent on regeneration inspired Alcuin to extend his consideration of baptism to the remission of sins granted to each individual at baptism. Alcuin emphasized the moral dimension of baptism as he augmented citations from Augustine. The abbot of Tours subtly altered and clarified Augustine's statement in order to make more explicit that baptism's significance for forgiveness of sins, which, along with the heavenly reward brought by the remission of sins, made

¹⁵⁶ Cavadini, "The Sources and Theology of Alcuin's 'De Fide,'" pp. 128–30.

¹⁵⁷ Alcuin, *De fide sanctae trinitatis* I.1, pp. 18–20.

¹⁵⁸ Heb. 11:6.

¹⁵⁹ Alcuin, *Epistola* 113, p. 164. "*Absque fide quid proficit baptisma? dicente apostolo: 'Sine fide impossibile est placere Deo.'*" That *De fide* meets the criteria for catechesis set out by Alcuin in his various letters is first identified in Cavadini, "The Sources and Theology of Alcuin's 'De Fide,'" p. 129.

¹⁶⁰ Augustine, *Enchiridion* XIV.49, ed. E. Evans, CCL 46 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969) pp. 75–6. "*Huius enim baptismus est non in aqua tantum, sicut fuit Ioannis, uerum etiam et in spiritu sancto, ut de illo spiritu regeneretur quisquis in Christum credit.*"

Christian baptism superior to the baptism of John. "Wherefore the baptism of Christ was not only in water just as John's, but in the Holy Spirit, in the remission of sins, with him saying elsewhere: 'unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God' (Jn 3:5): so that regenerated from the Holy Spirit, those who believe in Christ, have the remission of all their sins."¹⁶¹ Alcuin's additions to Augustine provided greater clarity as to what the regeneration of baptism meant: moral cleanness. He also made explicit the goal of baptismal regeneration: eternal life.

Another example of an idea central to Alcuin's rebuttal of Adoptionism, which he derived from consideration of baptism and with which he worked out the wider implications of baptism through his formation program was the concept of the "new man." Sustained analysis of this concept enabled Alcuin's Christology to include consideration of both moral ramifications and ultimate goals. In his anti-Adoptionist polemic, Alcuin built part of his case against Felix on the distinction between the "old man" and the "new man" within the context of baptism. He drew on the exegetical strategy developed from the letters of Paul that the old man was Adam and the new was Christ.¹⁶² Against Adoptionism, Alcuin argued that the baptismal transition from the old man to the new man addressed the question of who was a son of God by adoption and who was properly the Son of God. "For Christ was never an old man, he never had a body of sin, but from the beginning of his conception was true God, and the true Son of God, he was conceived and born without any sin. We however were all old men in the sins of Adam: but by the grace of Christ Jesus converted into new men, both adopted and predestined into sons of adoption."¹⁶³

In other writings, Alcuin exploited this notion of the new man resulting from the *sacramentum* of baptism, but along a different route. The idea of the new man not only clarified Christ's two natures, but also undergirded the new moral claims resulting from the *sacramentum*. In *De fide*, amid a discussion of the diversity of things that exist and how they exist, Alcuin first considered God, then the uncreated Trinity, and finally Creation. He distinguished between

¹⁶¹ Alcuin, *De fide sanctae trinitatis* III.17, p. 121. "Quapropter baptisma Christi non fuit in aqua tantum sicut Iohannis, sed in Spiritu Sancto in remissionem peccatorum ipso alibi dicente: Nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et Spiritu Sancto, non potest introire in regnum Dei—ut de Spiritu Sancto regenerat, qui in Christum credunt habeant omnium remissionem peccatorum." Cf. Jn 3:5.

¹⁶² Cf. Vulgate 1 Cor. 15:21–2 "quoniam enim per hominem mors et per hominem resurrectio mortuorum et sicut in Adam omnes moriuntur ita et in Christo omnes vivificabuntur" and Vulgate Eph. 4:22–4 "deponere vos secundum pristinam conversationem veterem hominem qui corrumpitur secundum desideria erroris renovamini autem spiritu mentis vestrae et induite novum hominem qui secundum Deum creatus est in iustitia et sanctitate veritatis."

¹⁶³ Alcuin, *Contra Felicem Urgellitanum libri septem*, II.13, PL 101.0156. "Christus namque nunquam vetus homo fuit, nunquam corpus peccati habuit, sed ab initio conceptionis Deus verus, et verus Filius Dei, absque omni peccato conceptus est et natus. Nos vero omnes veteres homines fuimus in peccatis Adam: sed in novos gratia baptismi per Christum Jesum conversi et adoptati et praedestinati in filios adoptionis."

men and animals, who were both made and born with sensation, insofar as men were able to be remade through baptism. "Some things are made and born with sensation, as men and animals are. Others are made and born and reborn, as man is made by God, born from his parents, and remade by God's grace through the mystery of baptism, which regeneration is found in man alone, but not in all."¹⁶⁴ He then immediately turned the discussion to men and angels, who were both made rational. The principal distinction Alcuin drew was moral decision-making and its consequences. "But out of these, that is the angels, some are eternally wretched, and some eternally blessed, just as out of men, some are subject to punishment on account of the merit of their wickedness, while some, with the angels who preserved their original state, will be eternally blessed through the grace of God."¹⁶⁵

Alcuin advanced his perspective across several genres to a wide variety of audiences. The moral significance of the post-baptismal "new man" was clearly portrayed in his *Life of Willibrord*.¹⁶⁶ Alcuin composed the *vita* in 796 or 797, around the time he was distributing his letters concerning the Avars. Most of the story considered Willibrord's missionary activities on the Continent, and thus in a narrative form dramatized many of Alcuin's ideas on mission. The preface identified the addressee as Beornrad, archbishop of the metropolitan see of Sens. The archbishop was another intimate of the Carolingian court, meriting a nickname drawn from the Old Testament, Samuel.¹⁶⁷ Moreover, Alcuin expressed high hopes for the influence of his piece which expected to be "read publicly by the brothers in the church."¹⁶⁸ In a dramatic speech before Radbod, king of the Frisians, Alcuin had Willibrord challenge the king to accept baptism and its moral responsibilities. He identified the significance of the new man with concrete and well-known moral categories. "Be baptized in the fountain of life and wash away all your sins, so that, forsaking all wicked-

¹⁶⁴ Alcuin, *De fide sanctae trinitatis* II.9, p. 61. "quiddam est factum, natumque sensibiliter, ut homines et animalia. Aliquid etiam factum est et natum et renatum, ut homo factus a Deo, natus a parentibus, renatus gratia Dei in mysterio baptismatis: quae regeneratio in solo homine inuenitur, sed non in omni."

¹⁶⁵ Alcuin, *De fide sanctae trinitatis* II.9, pp. 61–2. "Sed ex his, id est angelis, quidam sunt aeternaliter miseri, quidam aeternaliter beati, sicut etiam de hominibus: quidam sunt poenales propter merita malitiae, quidam uero cum angelis, qui suum seruauerunt principatum, beati aeternaliter erunt per gratiam Dei."

¹⁶⁶ Alcuin, *Vita sancti Willibrordi Traiectensis auctore Alcuino*, ed. Wilhelm Levison, MGH SRM 7 (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1920) pp. 81–141. For more on Willibrord see, Walter Berschin, *Biographie und Epochenstil im lateinische Mittelalter*, Vol. 3. Quellen und Untersuchungen zur lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters 10 (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1986) pp. 113–39. Arnold Angenendt, "Willibrord im Dienst der Karolinger" *Annalen des historischen Vereins für den Niederrhein* 175 (1973) pp. 63–113. See also Phelan, "Catechising the Wild," pp. 455–74.

¹⁶⁷ Garrison, "The Social World of Alcuin," p. 61.

¹⁶⁸ Alcuin, *Vita sancti Willibrordi*, p. 113. "puplice fratribus in ecclesia."

ness and unrighteousness, you may henceforth live as a new man in temperance, justice, and holiness.”¹⁶⁹

Alcuin further promoted the *sacramentum* of baptism as the theological foundation for virtuous behaviour through moral *specula*, his ethical advice to lay leaders. To important political figures he described moral life after baptism as not just a matter of interior disposition, but as a driver of social and political action. Sometime toward the end of the eighth century, perhaps as early as 794 but as late as 800, Alcuin composed a pedagogical treatise for Charlemagne.¹⁷⁰ The *Disputatio de rhetorica et de virtutibus sapientissimi regis Karli et Albinii magistri*, as the title suggests, falls into two large sections, one concerning rhetorical or literary education, and another on virtue or moral training.¹⁷¹ Alcuin saw these sections as closely related, however. He drew parallels throughout the discussion, for example:

Charlemagne: I perceive that the philosophical axiom should be applied not only to our habits, but also to our speech.

Alcuin: What axiom?

Charlemagne: Nothing to excess.¹⁷²

Alcuin sought to integrate political and religious activities in Charlemagne's mind. He saw the “occupations of the kingdom and tasks of the palace” closely connected to preaching.¹⁷³ In a long paragraph, Alcuin responded to Charlemagne's curiosity about the origin and purpose of rhetoric. The persuasive aspect of rhetoric dovetailed with Alcuin's missionary concerns. He juxtaposed preaching and converting to revering God and respecting humanity. The complementary theological and civil messages parallel Alcuin's ideals for the mission to the Avars, especially in his letters to Meginfred and Charlemagne. He bound together in his explanation conversion, especially through preaching on the soul, the moral implications of education (or catechesis), and a stable fruitful polity. He also appealed to the notion of tradition by framing his perspective as at once ancient and also useful in the present age.

¹⁶⁹ Alcuin, *Vita sancti Willibrordi*, p. 125. “et vitae fonte baptizatus, abluit omnia peccata tua et, proiecta omni iniquitate et iniustitia, deinceps novus homo vivas in omni sobrietate, iustitia et sanctitate.”

¹⁷⁰ Alcuin, *The Rhetoric of Alcuin and Charlemagne: A Translation, with an Introduction, the Latin Text, and Notes*, ed. Wilbur Samuel Howell (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941). Howell's Latin text is a very slightly re-edited version of that published in Karl Halm, *Rhetores Latini Minores* (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1863) pp. 523–50. Howell offers an introductory discussion of the principal manuscripts and earlier editions on pp. 8–22.

¹⁷¹ For consideration of the pedagogical significance from the perspective of a “classical” education, see Howell's introduction at Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, pp. 33–64. For a discussion of the place of the treatise in Alcuin's pedagogical oeuvre see E. Ann Matter, “Alcuin's Question and Answer Texts” *Rivista di storia della filosofia* 4 (1990) pp. 645–56.

¹⁷² Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, pp. 142–4. “Karlus. Intellego philosophicum illud proverbium non solum moribus, sed etiam verbis esse necessarium. Albinus. Quodnam? Karlus. Ne quid nimis.”

¹⁷³ Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, p. 66. “occupationes regni et curas palatii.”

I shall explain the view of the ancients. For there was once a time, as it is said, when mankind wandered here and there over the plains very much as do wild beasts, and men did nothing through the reasoning power of the mind, but everything by sheer brute strength. The duty of revering God and of respecting humanity was not yet heeded; and Passion, that blind and rash tyrant, wasted the strength of men's bodies in the mad pursuit of his own satisfactions. At that time a man undeniably great and wise indeed discovered what latent genius—how great a capacity for the highest things—was in the souls of men if only someone could draw it forth, and by nurturing, perfect it. And by force of reason he collected men into one place from being scattered as they were over the plains and hidden in dwellings in the forests, and he assembled them together and led them into each useful and honourable pursuit. They, at first protesting the strangeness of it, yet finally with eagerness listening because of his reason and eloquence, were made gentle and mild from being savage and brutal. And it seems certain to me Lord King that a mute wisdom, or a wisdom endowed but weakly with the gift of speech, would not have been able suddenly to turn men against their previous habits, and bring them to the diverse pursuits of civilized life.¹⁷⁴

As in his letter to Meginfrid, Alcuin stressed the civilizing power of education, that nurturing souls with knowledge moderates savage passions and that the most useful force is not that of arms, but of reason.

For Alcuin, faith and moral life were intimately connected, joined by the *sacramentum* of baptism. Toward the end of the treatise, when he treated virtues specifically, Alcuin dropped his discussion of virtue into a Christian framework that began with baptism and ended with eternal life in heaven. In between, virtues ordered public behavior and civic relationships. A fruitful baptism primed by right faith yielded a virtuous life. The abbot of Tours drew much of his discussion—especially that of the cardinal virtues—from Cicero's *De inventione*, but he made telling additions which poured the virtues into their Christian molds. When he approached the subject of virtue, Alcuin distinguished the motivations of Christians from those of pagan philosophers by their faith and baptism.

¹⁷⁴ Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, p. 68. "Pandam penes auctoritatem veterum. Nam fuit, ut fertur, quoddam tempus, cum in agris homines passim bestiarum more vagabantur, nec ratione animi quicquam, sed pleraque viribus corporis administrabant. Nondum divinae religionis, non humani officii ratio colebatur, sed caeca et temeraria dominatrix cupiditas ad se explendam corporis viribus abutebatur. Quo tempore quidam, magnus videlicet vir et sapiens, cognovit quae materia et quanta ad maximas res opportunitas animis inesset hominum, si quis eam posset elicere et praecipiendo eam meliorem reddere: qui dispersos homines in agris et in tectis silvestribus abditos ratione quadam compulit in unum locum et congregavit et eos in unam quamque rem inducens utilem atque honestam primo propter insolentiam reclamantes, deinde propter rationem atque orationem studiosius audientes ex feris et inmanibus mites reddidit ac mansuetos. Ac mihi quidem videtur, domine mi rex, hoc nec tacita nec inops dicendi sapientia perficere potuisse, ut homines a consuetudine subito converteret et ad diversas rationes vitae traduceret."

Charlemagne: Then what is the difference between these philosophers and the Christians?

Alcuin: Faith and Baptism.¹⁷⁵

In Alcuin's Christian society, faith was installed first and baptism came after. In this text, as in his missionary theory, the virtues were explored last. He continued with the explanation of the four cardinal virtues, a systematic analysis of the ideas advanced by Willibrord to Radbod. For the Ciceronian virtues of Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance as set forth in *De inventione*, Alcuin provided a Christian context. He sharply contrasted the virtues admired by philosophers with the same virtues as practiced by Christians. Alcuin had Charlemagne explain that the philosophers, like Cicero, practiced virtue for earthly rewards of prestige and honor. Christians, on the other hand, practiced virtue for a heavenly reward of eternal glory, the final end for the soul established by the *sacramentum* of baptism. "If those philosophers cultivated the virtues merely because such an activity lent great prestige and honor to their lives, then I am astonished that we Christians should turn away from the virtuous life and fall into many grievous errors when we are promised by Jesus Christ, who is truth itself, that our faithful and loving devotion to good conduct will bring a reward of eternal glory."¹⁷⁶

In making the move from Cicero's Roman ideals to Alcuin's own Christian ideals, the cardinal virtues became extensions of one's baptismal vows.¹⁷⁷ They were no longer the purely secular and civic-oriented virtues of Cicero. Virtues became eschatological, guiding one to eternal life—though certainly with temporal implications. Alcuin first reproduced Cicero's discussion of the virtues from *De inventione*. Impressive as the discussion was to Charlemagne, the Carolingian leader was left unsatisfied. He asked for Christian definitions of the virtues, ones informed by faith and baptism. "I entreat you, however, to explain, as briefly as may be, how these excellent virtues should be understood and observed

¹⁷⁵ Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, p. 146. "Karlus. Quid tunc distat inter philosophum talem et christianos? Albinus. Fides et baptismus."

¹⁷⁶ Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, p. 150. "Sed miror nos christianos, si illi philosophi has virtutes ob illarum tantum dignitatem vel laudem vitae servaverunt, cur nos ab his in multis devio errore declinamus, cun haec nunc in fide et caritate observantibus aeternae gloriae ab ipsa veritate, Christo Iesu, praemia pollicentur?"

¹⁷⁷ For a rich discussion of how Christian authors appropriated the cardinal virtues, see Sibylle Mähl, *Quadrige Virtutum. Die Kardinaltugenden in der Geistesgeschichte der Karolingerzeit* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1969). Alcuin is treated on pp. 83–125. Bullough reads Alcuin's adjustments of Cicero as reflecting a preference for Augustine, though direct quotations are not obvious. See Donald Bullough, "Alcuin and Lay Virtue" *Predicazione e società nel Medioevo: riflessione etica, valori e modelli di comportamento: atti = Preaching and society in the Middle Ages: ethics, values and social behaviour: proceedings of the XII Medieval Sermon Studies Symposium, Padova, 14–18 luglio 2000*, eds. L. Gaffuri and R. Quinto (Padova: Centro studi antoniani, 2002) pp. 71–91, at pp. 83–4.

in our Christian religion.”¹⁷⁸ Alcuin obliged and gave a Christian definition of each virtue, deleting Cicero’s ethical analysis and crafting an eschatological trajectory that used virtues as a path toward Christian salvation. Alcuin first defined the Prudence of the philosophers as “knowledge of things and of natures.”¹⁷⁹ This definition differed in an important respect from the one offered in *De inventione*, where Cicero defined Prudence as “the knowledge of what is good, what is bad and what is neutral.”¹⁸⁰ Alcuin’s paraphrase of Cicero drained any obvious moral value from the meaning of the virtue. But Alcuin reattached a moral imperative to Prudence against the backdrop of final judgment. Eternal stakes then made the virtue as much about Wisdom as about Prudence. Alcuin wrote that a prudent person was one “who comes to know God, so far as the limitations of the human mind permit; and who comes to fear Him and to believe in His future judgment.”¹⁸¹

Alcuin similarly altered the definition of Justice. Cicero defined Justice as “a disposition of the mind to render to every man his due while preserving the common advantage.”¹⁸² Alcuin quoted Cicero as writing that Justice was “a disposition of the mind to render to each what is his due.”¹⁸³ Here Alcuin detached the social aspect of Justice from the pagan definition. The meaning of Justice took on a wholly different focus for Alcuin, who recharacterized the virtue in much more theocentric terms. Alcuin stated that a just man was one who “loves God and keeps his commandments.”¹⁸⁴ In Alcuin’s estimation proper behavior and just social organization could only be determined with reference to God’s commands, just as in his analysis of the Great Commission at the end of Matthew’s Gospel.

Alcuin recharacterized Fortitude as a virtue focused on spiritual and not temporal prowess. He identified what aspect of each person possessed fortitude, a detail which Cicero left ambiguous. Cicero wrote that “Fortitude is the quality by which one undertakes dangerous tasks and endures hardships.”¹⁸⁵ For the philosophers, Alcuin suggested, Fortitude meant “the capacity to endure danger and hardship with an undaunted spirit.”¹⁸⁶ For the Christian, it

¹⁷⁸ Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, p. 150. “attamen rogo, ut quam breviter possis edisseras, quomodo hae excellentes virtutes in nostra religione christiana intellegendae atque observandae sint.”

¹⁷⁹ Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, p. 146. “Karlus. Quae est prudentia? Albinus. Rerum naturarum scientia.”

¹⁸⁰ Cicero, *De Inventione* II.53, ed. E. Stroebe (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1915) p. 160. “Prudentia est rerum bonarum et malorum neutrarumque scientia.”

¹⁸¹ Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, pp. 150–1. “Albinus. Nonne tibi videtur sapientia esse, qua Deus secundum modulum humanae mentis intellegitur et timetur et futurum eius creditur iudicium?”

¹⁸² Cicero, *De Inventione* II.53, p. 160. “Iustitia est habitus animi communi utilitate conservata suam cuique tribuens dignitatem.”

¹⁸³ Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, p. 146. “Albinus. Iustitia est habitus animi unicuique rei propriam tribuens dignitatem.”

¹⁸⁴ Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, p. 150. “Albinus. . . . sed quid tibi iustitia videtur esse nisi caritas Dei eiusque mandatorum observatio?”

¹⁸⁵ Cicero, *De Inventione* II.54, p. 163. “Fortitudo est considerata periculorum susceptio et laborum perpessio.”

¹⁸⁶ Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, p. 148. “Albinus. Fortitudo est magno animo periculorum et laborum perpessio.”

was the soul that endured hardship and the devil who inflicted hardship on Christian souls. A Christian possessing Fortitude “conquers his ‘ancient enemy’ and bears the trials of this world.”¹⁸⁷ The virtue of Fortitude was placed squarely in the midst of a Christian salvation narrative.

Finally, Cicero had defined Temperance as “a firm and moderate control exercised by the reason over lust and other improper impulses of the soul.”¹⁸⁸ Alcuin largely agreed with Cicero that Temperance controlled human passions and that those passions should be muted. Alcuin disagreed with Cicero that the reason alone did the controlling. Alcuin defined the Temperance of the philosophers as “the reasonable rule, firm and moderate, over lust and other improper impulses of the soul.”¹⁸⁹ He completed the Christianization of Temperance with the removal of an impersonal reason from his definition. Alcuin also added “greed” to his Christian definition. He reminded his reader that the occupations of the kingdom and tasks of the palace require restraint. This remark may allude to Alcuin’s concerns about the fiscal aspects of early missionary policies under Charlemagne. The temperate Christian “governs his lust and controls his greed and calms and moderates all the passions of his soul.”¹⁹⁰

Alcuin’s advice to Carolingian leaders consistently depended on the *sacramentum* of baptism for contextualizing treatment of virtues. In the year 799 or 800, Alcuin composed a brief *speculum* of thirty-five chapters, *De virtutibus et vitiis*, for Wido, margrave of the Carolingian march in Brittany, who in 799 had just overcome ferocious local resistance to Charlemagne’s rule. While certainly not the Saxons, the Bretons were depicted in Carolingian annals as a treacherous race, requiring numerous Frankish military interventions before and after Charlemagne’s reign.¹⁹¹ The work explained how one committed to a military life ought to envision a spiritual dimension to his efforts.¹⁹² It began with considerations of twenty-six topics of interest to a pious lay leader, including faith, reading the Bible, confession, fasting, judging, lying,

¹⁸⁷ Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, p. 150. “Albinus. Numquid non fortitudinem esse cernis, qua hostis antiquus vincitur et adversa mundi tolerantur?”

¹⁸⁸ Cicero, *De Inventione*, II.54, p. 164. “Temperantia est rationis in libidinem atque in alios non rectos impetus animi firma et moderata dominatio.”

¹⁸⁹ Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, p. 148. “Albinus. Temperantia est rationabilis in libidinem atque in alios non rectos impetus animi firma et moderata dominatio.”

¹⁹⁰ Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, pp. 152–3. “Albinus. An temperantia non est, quae libidinem refrenat, avartitiam reprimat, omnes animi impetus sedat et temperat?”

¹⁹¹ On the general condition of Carolingian rule in Brittany see the survey in Smith, “Fines imperii,” pp. 169–89 and her much fuller study, Julia Smith, *Province and Empire: Brittany under the Carolingians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

¹⁹² Alain Dubreucq, “Auteur du *De virtutibus et vitiis* d’Alcuin” Alcuin, *de York à Tours. Écriture, pouvoir et réseaux dans l’Europe du haut Moyen Âge*, eds. Philippe Depreux and Bruno Judic (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2004) pp. 269–88 and the earlier Luipold Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne: Studies in Carolingian History and Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968) pp. 231–54.

and so forth.¹⁹³ It continued with a treatment of eight principal vices, and concluded with a discussion of the four cardinal virtues. Alcuin, as is typical, fashioned the work out of earlier materials, especially Isidore of Seville, a set of pseudo-Augustinian sermons, John Cassian, and Gregory the Great.¹⁹⁴ In an explanation of the virtue of charity, Alcuin drew on pseudo-Augustine as he considered a passage from a letter of John: “this command we have from God, that who loves God should love also his neighbor” (cf. 1 Jn 4:21).¹⁹⁵ Alcuin explained who ought to be considered a neighbor. He endorsed a considerably narrower definition than that offered in the Gospel of Luke.¹⁹⁶ He decided that the command for charity applied specifically to Christians by reason of their common baptism. “If perhaps anyone wonders who is his neighbor, he should know rightly that every Christian is his neighbor, because we are all sanctified sons of God in baptism, so that spiritually we are brothers in perfect charity.”¹⁹⁷ For Alcuin, baptism not only framed how virtues should be understood, but also to whom they were rightly applied.

Before criticizing Alcuin for sharply turning from his more agreeable approach to Christian mission among the Avars, it should be noted that the Bretons were largely Christian before the arrival of the Carolingians, likely having been converted from the British Isles via the Cornish or Welsh.¹⁹⁸ With that in mind, Alcuin’s evaluation of neighbor, rather than seeking to marginalize the local populace, encouraged Wido to take a more sympathetic approach to the Christian Bretons because of their shared baptism, even though they posed a political and military threat to Frankish rule. Attention to the particular context of Alcuin’s advice also explains his seemingly inconsistent position on the idea of neighbor. In the early 790s, he composed a letter to his friends at the monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow, counselling against monastic instincts to isolation and superiority.¹⁹⁹ In the letter he cited the parable of the Good Samaritan and concluded that everyone should be numbered among a Christian’s neighbors. “One’s neighbor,

¹⁹³ For a survey of Carolingian approaches to the moral life of men see Rachel Stone, *Morality and Masculinity in the Carolingian Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) which leads with Alcuin’s treatise to Wido.

¹⁹⁴ Alcuin’s sources are laid out in Luitpold Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, pp. 231–47.

¹⁹⁵ Alcuin, *De virtutibus et vitiis liber ad Widonem comitem*, PL 101.0615–16. “Item Johannes evangelista: Hoc mandatum habemus a Domino[Al. Deo], ut qui diligit Dominum[Al. Deum], diligit et proximum.” Cf. Vulgate 1 Jn 4:21

¹⁹⁶ See the Parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 6.

¹⁹⁷ Alcuin, *De virtutibus et vitiis liber ad Widonem comitem*, PL 101.0616. “Si forte quislibet quaerat quis sit proximus, sciat omnem Christianum recte proximum dici, quia omnes in baptismo filii Dei sanctificamur, ut fratres simus spiritualiter in charitate perfecta.” See pseudo-Augustine, *Sermo CVIII*, PL 39.1960.

¹⁹⁸ Smith, *Province and Empire*, pp. 13–16.

¹⁹⁹ On Carolingian ideas of proper monastic conduct and engagement with others see Chapter Five.

that is every man, [is to be loved] for the sake of God; and above all things God is to be loved.”²⁰⁰

Alcuin’s concluding consideration of the cardinal virtues, echoed his advice to Charlemagne. The cardinal virtues were only rightly interpreted against the backdrop of one’s final judgment.²⁰¹ And as in his advice for Charlemagne, Alcuin emphasized to Wido that a wise man should see the point. “No wisdom is sweeter than that by which God, according to the little measure of the human mind, is understood and feared and loved, and his future judgment is believed.”²⁰² Alcuin then continued framing his thoughts on virtue with the central issues from baptismal formation: love for God, rejection of the devil and embrace of a new moral life. “For what is more just than to love God and to observe his commandments? Through him when we were not, we were created, and when we were destroyed, we were re-created and freed from slavery to the devil, who destroyed in us all the good things we had.”²⁰³

The consistent tack taken by Alcuin as he looked to shape the opinions of Charlemagne and Wido dominated his advice to lay audiences. Sometime between 789 and 799, Alcuin wrote a brief letter of advice to an anonymous noble and his wife, perhaps to Gerold of Bavaria sometime before his death in 799.²⁰⁴ The letter was essentially a single-page summary of his treatise for Wido. Alcuin lifted some of the same scriptural quotations he used in the opening sections of *De virtutibus et vitiis*, though with substantially less explanation. He considered briefly what God commanded: “Turn away from evil and do good” (Ps. 33:15).²⁰⁵ He also noted the importance of charity, “the excellence of which precept Christ, God himself, says in the Gospel, ‘By this shall all know that you are my disciples: if you have love for one another’ (Jn 13:35).²⁰⁶ Most critically,

²⁰⁰ Alcuin, *Epistola* 19, p. 53. “*Proximus, id est omnis homo, propter Deum et super omnia Deus diligendus est.*”

²⁰¹ The discussion of the cardinal virtues for Wido is not precisely the same as that in the *Rhetorica*. Some are abbreviated or otherwise adjusted, likely to emphasize the importance of acting in the world always in light of one’s heavenly aspirations. For a discussion see Bullough, “Alcuin and Lay Virtue,” pp. 88–90.

²⁰² Alcuin, *De virtutibus et vitiis liber ad Widonem comitem*, PL 101.0637. “*Nulla melior est sapientia, quam ea qua Deus secundum modulum humanae mentis intelligitur et timetur [et amatur], et futurum ejus creditor judicium.*”

²⁰³ Alcuin, *De virtutibus et vitiis liber ad Widonem comitem*, PL 101.0637. “*Nam quid est justius quam Deum diligere ejusque mandata custodire, per quem, dum non fuimus, creati sumus [dum perditii fuimus, recreati sumus], et a servitute diabolica liberati, qui nobis omnia bona quae habemus, perdonavit?*”

²⁰⁴ In the critical edition of Alcuin’s letters, Dümmler does not speculate on the addressee or assign a particularly helpful date, Alcuin, *Epistola* 69, p. 112. Without providing a thorough explanation, Bullough suggests Gerold as a recipient, whom Alcuin would have known through the duke’s sister, Queen Hildegard. The connection is mentioned twice in Bullough, *Alcuin*, pp. 371 and 407.

²⁰⁵ Alcuin, *Epistola* 69, p. 113. “*Deverte a malo et fac bonum.*” Compare with chapter one of Alcuin, *De virtutibus et vitiis*, PL 101.614.

²⁰⁶ Alcuin, *Epistola* 69, p. 112. “*Cuius praecepti excellentiam ipse deus Christus in evangelio ostendens ait: ‘In hoc enim cognoscent omnes, quia [mei] discipuli estis, si dilectionem habueritis ad invicem.’*” Compare with chapter three of Alcuin, *De virtutibus et vitiis*, PL 101.615.

Alcuin framed a list of virtues or moral ideals with, on the one hand, his baptismal moral imperative and, on the other hand, the salvation at stake in moral decision making. In a conflation that echoed both Jesus' commission in Matthew and baptismal preparations, Alcuin expounded "for the love of God is to preserve his commands with complete purpose and to place him before all the enjoyments of this age."²⁰⁷ Alcuin concluded his note with a reminder to his reader of the eternal reward awaiting one redeemed through baptism who makes good decisions. "The fruit of these flowers [the virtues] is the eternal life which he permitted us to reach, who redeemed us by his blood and adopted us as sons of his love, Jesus Christ our Lord."²⁰⁸

Another example used a different and more focused framework to introduce the same topics to a lay audience. Sometime in early 798 Alcuin wrote a letter to Charlemagne in response to a discussion among laymen at court.²⁰⁹ At issue was the proper interpretation of passages where Jesus mentioned swords. "How is it consistent for him [Jesus], who ordered them [the Apostles] to sell their tunic and buy a sword, immediately to say those who take the sword will die by the sword? If the sword is the word of God and the Lord, when he ordered them to buy a sword, he signified the word of God. How is it appropriate that all who received the word of God perish by the word of God?"²¹⁰ The crux of Alcuin's answer, drawn from the works of Augustine and Eucherius was that allegorical interpretation assigned different meanings to the same words based on context.²¹¹ After a laundry list discussion of instances from the scriptures which included references to the sword, Alcuin turned his discussion to consideration of preaching and the moral interpretation of the sword. He recalled his evaluation of missionary work (with the Avars in mind?) when he cited the Gospel of Matthew as condoning use of the sword, not as a military instrument, but as preaching—the sword of a *miles Christi*. "It is necessary for us to buy this sword and fight

²⁰⁷ Alcuin, *Epistola* 69, p. 113. "*Dilectio enim Dei est eius mandata tota intentione conservare et eum omnibus seculi huius delectationibus anteponeere.*"

²⁰⁸ Alcuin, *Epistola* 69, p. 113. "*Horum autem florum fructus est vita eterna, ad quam nos pervenire ille concedat, qui nos suo sanguine redemit et in filios suae dilectionis adoptavit, Iesus Christus dominus noster.*"

²⁰⁹ Alcuin is crystal clear that the question arose from a layman. Alcuin, *Epistola* 136, p. 205. "... *propositam nobis a quodam, non clerico, sed laico, de evangelio quaestionem.*"

²¹⁰ Alcuin, *Epistola* 136, p. 206. "*Quomodo sibi convenit, ut, qui nunc vendere tunicam, emere gladium iusserat, is statim accipientes gladium gladio diceret esse perituros? Si gladius est verbum Dei et Dominus, quando gladium emere praecepit, verbum Dei significavit; quomodo congruit, ut omnis, qui accipiat verbum Dei, verbo Dei pereat?*" This letter is excellently read with an accent on the importance of the "two swords" to Carolingian lay ethics in Mary Alberi, "The Sword Which You Hold in Your Hand": Alcuin's Exegesis of the Two Swords and the Lay Miles Christi" *The Study of the Bible in the Carolingian Era*, eds. Celia Chazelle and Burton Van Name Edwards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003) pp. 117–31. The letter is commonly read as an element of the larger medieval discussion of the two swords; see the note in Alberi, "The Sword Which you Hold" p. 118.

²¹¹ For example, as Alberi notes, he draws a discussion of the multiple meanings of the word "lion" from Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*. Compare Alcuin, *Epistola* 136, p. 206 with Augustine, *De doctrina christiana*, ed. J. Martin, CCL 32 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1962) p. 98.

manfully with it against all the traps of the ancient serpent. Our Savior, in his triumph of glory returning to his paternal seat, gave this sword to his disciples saying ‘Go (*Ite*) teach all nations.’²¹² Alcuin’s explanation to the lay courtiers uses martial imagery to support his catechetical objectives. He exhorts his lay audience with the liturgical reading of Matthew to take up the task of preaching. He argued that the sword of preaching was an act of renunciation of the world and the traps of the devil. “The purchase of this sword accordingly is the renunciation of this age.”²¹³ He clarified his meaning by drawing a connection between avarice and preaching. The dangers of greed that Alcuin emphasized with Meginfrid and Charlemagne destroyed the possibility of preaching in the general sense, which he indicated at the end of *Primo paganus* was an obligation of all the baptized upon reception of the Holy Spirit. He continued “concerning which [renunciation] the Lord himself said: ‘Who does not renounce everything which he has is not able to be my disciple’; this means, a follower of avarice is not able to be a preacher of truth, because what he preaches with his mouth, he destroys by his works.”²¹⁴ The responsibilities of an *imperium christianum* do not fall on priests and clergy alone; all are called to be good and faithful servants.

The point of the letter becomes clear not through attention to the fact of the swords Alcuin identified, but through attention to the purpose of the swords for the audience. The letter culminates with an analysis of Malchus, the slave Peter attacked with his sword in the Garden of Gethsemani.²¹⁵ Alcuin used the story to fashion a moral imperative for all Christians to preach and placed his instruction against the backdrop of heavenly reward. Alcuin told the king’s retinue that the “old man” needed to be put away and replaced with a “new man” worthy to dwell as a king forever in heaven. The transformation from an old man to a new brought with it the obligation to preach, especially to one’s enemies—just as in *Primo paganus*. “‘Malchus’ is translated into the Latin tongue as ‘king’ or ‘one who is to reign.’ How is a king also a slave, unless, because we were slaves of sin in the old man, and so in the new, cleansed by the grace of God, we will be kings and ones to reign with Christ?”²¹⁶ Alcuin continued his discussion with a passage that illumined his understanding of the importance and ubiquity of preaching by the baptized “new men” of Carolingian Europe. “Why did the Lord

²¹² Alcuin, *Epistola* 136, p. 207. “nobis emere necesse est et viriliter in eo pugnare contra omnes antiqui serpentis insidias. Quem gladium Salvator noster, cum triumpho gloriae ad paternam rediens sedem, discipulis suis dedit dicens: ‘Ite docete omnes gentes.’”

²¹³ Alcuin, *Epistola* 136, p. 207. “*Emptio siquidem huius gladii est saeculi renuntiatio.*”

²¹⁴ Alcuin, *Epistola* 136, p. 207. “*De qua ipse Dominus dixit: ‘Qui non renuntiaverit omnibus, quae possidet, non potest meus esse discipulus’; hoc est: avaritiae sectator non potest veritatis esse praedicator, quia quod ore praedicat, opera destruit.*” Cf. Lk. 14:33.

²¹⁵ The account is described in all four Gospels (Mt. 26, Mk. 14, Lk. 22, and Jn. 18), but only John furnishes the name of the servant, and only Luke mentions the healing of the ear.

²¹⁶ Alcuin, *Epistola* 136, p. 208. “*Malchus in Latinam linguam vertitur rex vel regnaturus Quomodo rex et servus, nisi, quia in vetere homine servi fuimus peccati, in novo itaque, domini Dei sanati gratia, reges et regnaturi erimus cum Christo?*”

himself heal his persecutor? So that every preacher in the church of Christ should not cease to heal his enemies by the word of duty.”²¹⁷ With an explicit connection to the Holy Spirit, again drawing from his analysis of the baptismal rites, he viewed as a moral imperative the duty of each Christian to preach. “Where charity burns interiorly in the soul through the gift Holy Spirit, it soon becomes evident through the word of preaching.”²¹⁸ Attention to the centrality of preaching in the letter lifts out its significance to the lay courtiers and also makes sense of the final portion of the letter. Rather than an ending with an awkward condemnation of episcopal efforts to prevent priests and deacons from preaching, Alcuin drew a splendid contrast between the lay courtiers who ought to be preaching and the misguided bishops who forbid such a crucial task to their clergy.²¹⁹ Such a reading of the letter agrees with Alcuin’s perspective in his letter to Meginfrid, where he emphasized that everyone—cleric and lay—had a responsibility from God for advancing Christianity, even when these responsibilities differed in kind. It also takes up the concluding thought of his commentary on baptism, *Primo paganus*, with its emphasis on the universal responsibility for preaching. Everyone shared in the basic project of establishing an *imperium christianum* in Europe.

Alcuin of York’s work offers a unique vantage point from which to see not only the broad hold of the *sacramentum* of baptism on one important Carolingian thinker, but also the many ways in which he shared his belief with other influential ecclesiastical and secular leaders as he worked to fashion an *imperium christianum*, a sacramental society in which baptism was theologically constitutive and pedagogically instrumental in the formation of Christians in Carolingian Europe. Theologically, socially, politically, and culturally, *sacramenta* ordered one’s relationships with God and with others. In his theological works, the context of baptism provided Alcuin a means of connecting his doctrinal expositions to his ethical interests. Moreover, the baptismal liturgy provided an opportunity to explain the sacramental logic of community and the concrete moral implications of that logic to others. In his ethical works, Alcuin used baptism to provide a clear theological frame for his moral teachings. This study of Alcuin’s interest in baptism explored in some detail one approach to the deeper rationale behind the Carolingian explanations of public life explored in Chapter Two and prepares the ground for a study of the breadth and endurance of that same consensus in the next chapter as Carolingian leaders apply and assess Alcuin’s vision throughout Europe.

²¹⁷ Alcuin, *Epistola* 136, p. 208. “*Quid est, quod ipse Dominus persecutorem suum sanavit, nisi quod omnis praedicator in ecclesia Christi nec suos verbo pietatis sanare inimicos desistat?*”

²¹⁸ Alcuin, *Epistola* 136, p. 208. “*Ubi caritas per donum sancti Spiritus intus ardescit in animo, mox foras in verbo clarescit praedicationis.*”

²¹⁹ The final topic addressed by Alcuin is criticism of episcopal policies on preaching. Alcuin, *Epistola* 136, p. 209. “*Nam dicunt ab episcopis interdictum esse presbyteris et diaconibus praedicare in ecclesiis.*” The contrast between the preaching he demands of the courtiers and the preaching he complains about at the end of the letter is clarified by “in churches.”

The Carolingian Machinery of Christian Formation: Charlemagne's Encyclical Letter on Baptism from 811/812 and Its Implications

In the early ninth century, Carolingian thinkers and administrators frequently returned to Christian formation and its implementation. Their concern cut across many Carolingian initiatives, especially ones where ecclesiastical leaders and secular rulers cooperated. Baptism consistently provided leaders with a crucial tool for organizing their *imperium christianum*. Carolingian treatments of *sacramentum* underscored the continuity and unanimity in Carolingian efforts at forming society as well as the procedures and mechanisms they used. The specific attention to the *sacramentum* offered by Alcuin was not unusual. Study of early medieval discussions about the idea and practice of baptism unveil not only a consensus about the importance of the *sacramentum* as an abstract organizing principle, but also an impressive administrative organization supporting that consensus in the understanding and implementation of the baptismal liturgy. Themes central to Carolingian interest in baptism governed approaches to other topics. Carolingian perspectives on the theology of the Holy Spirit, particularly during the Filioque controversy, exhibited an overriding concern for sound Christian formation. Moreover, specific examples survive from the early ninth century of bishops working to implement at the diocesan level formation programs consistent with the Alcuin's vision. On at least one occasion, Charlemagne intervened to ensure such a program was established in Liège. In 811/812 Charlemagne initiated an empire-wide accounting of baptism as the indispensable context for basic Christian formation. He issued a circular questionnaire to assess the continuity in the understanding and practice of baptism across the Carolingian world. Numerous surviving responses testify, on the one hand, to the broad implementation of court-sponsored initiatives, and, on the other hand, to the impressive coordination and communication typical of the Carolingian world.

4.1. FORMATION AND CONTROVERSY: THE CAROLINGIAN DEFENSE OF THE FILIOQUE

The Filioque became a burning concern for Carolingian theologians in the 790s. In general, Western Christianity's debt to Augustine's trinitarian theology is well known, particularly his discussion of the double procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son.¹ This explanation of the inner relationship of the persons of the Trinity crept into the Latin text of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed under the Visigoths. After King Reccared's (r. 586–601) conversion from Arian Christianity to Catholic Christianity, the "Filioque" doctrine was held by the Visigoths as an indispensable article of orthodoxy.² The belief was held by many in the West, but rarely voiced in the Creed, especially by those sensitive to the concerns of eastern Christians. Pope Gregory the Great certainly taught the doctrine, but did not incorporate it into any profession of faith.³ Revised texts of Creeds appeared across Western Europe throughout the early Middle Ages. The Filioque was specifically required for the Creed by the English synod of Hatfield in 680.⁴ Carolingian interest in the Filioque may have arisen in the mid-760s, but it more likely came to their attention during the last decade of the eighth century. The Carolingians' first engagement with the Greeks over the issue of the Trinity could have been under King Pippin at Gentilly in 767. While the fact of the meeting is recorded in both the *Annales regni francorum* and the Revised Annals, who participated in the synod and what was decided are lost.⁵ The earliest description of the proceedings—including details of a Trinitarian conflict—survive from Ado of Vienne's *Chronicle*

¹ Edward Siecienski, *The Filioque: History of a Doctrinal Controversy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Peter Gemeinhardt, *Die Filioque-Kontroverse zwischen Ost- und Westkirche im Frühmittelalter* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002); *Das Konzil von Aachen 809*, ed. Harald Willjung MGH *Concilia II* Supplementum II (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1998) pp. 1–41; Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, Vol. III, trans. David Smith (New York: Crossroad, 1997); Richard Haugh, *Photius and the Carolingians: The Trinitarian Controversy* (Belmont: Nordland Publishing Co., 1975) pp. 63–90; J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 2nd ed. (New York: David McKay Co., 1960) pp. 358–67.

² Generally, see Roger Collins, *Visigothic Spain, 409–711* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004) pp. 64–91; more specifically, see Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, Vol. III, pp. 49–53 and E.A. Thompson, "The Conversion of the Visigoths to Catholicism" *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 4 (1960) pp. 4–35.

³ F.H. Dudden, *Gregory the Great: His Place in History and Thought*, Vol. 2 (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1905) pp. 347–9.

⁴ Miranda Wilcox, "Creeds and Confessions of Faith" *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture*: Vol. C, ed. Thomas Hall (forthcoming).

⁵ See the entries for the year 767 in *Annales regni francorum*, MGH SRG in *usum scholarum* 6, ed. F. Kurze (Hannover, 1895) p. 24, and in *Annales Einhardi*, MGH SRG in *usum scholarum* 6, ed. F. Kurze (Hannover, 1895) p. 25. See Thomas F.X. Noble, *Images, Iconoclasm, and the Carolingians* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) pp. 144–5 and *Das Konzil von Aachen*, pp. 1–41. For the earlier view that the Filioque was discussed see Richard Haugh, *Photius and the Carolingians*, pp. 41–4.

from the mid-ninth century.⁶ The *Opus caroli regis*, a book prepared for Charlemagne by the Visigothic scholar Theodulf of Orléans, dealt primarily with the Eastern doctrine on images promulgated at the Second Council of Nicaea in 787 and transmitted to the Carolingian court via a Latin translation. Book Three of the *Opus caroli regis* aggressively defended the Filioque as original to the Creed and assaulted the eastern position that the Spirit proceeds from the Father “per Filium” or “through the Son” as erroneous and unauthorized.⁷

Concern for sound baptismal formation came to govern Carolingian approaches to the theology of the Holy Spirit when, at the close of the eighth century, Paulinus of Aquileia adopted a new, more measured, and more subtle tack in defense of the Filioque. After the Council of Frankfurt, and shortly after his gathering on the banks of the Danube, Paulinus summoned a council at Friuli in 796 or 797. The council’s decisions survive from his own hand. The very first topic addressed in the statement was the Filioque. An important prelate in Italy with cosmopolitan interests, Paulinus likely knew the textual challenges posed by the Filioque in the Creed. Accordingly, he neither denied nor downplayed that the Filioque was an addition beyond what was taught at Nicaea. He straightforwardly argued that creeds were not fundamental to Christianity, but rather instrumental. The primary utility of creeds was their usefulness in forming good Christians. He argued, first, that creeds were fundamentally about formation and, second, that creeds were not fixed. They could and did sometimes require clarification. “For if the revered sequence of the Nicene Creed is examined, nothing else made known in it concerning the Holy Spirit will be discovered except in this way: they say, ‘and in the Holy Spirit.’ What is it, therefore, to say: ‘and in the Holy Spirit?’”⁸ Paulinus continued by addressing the difference between the Creed devised by the 150 participants at the Council of Constantinople I (381) and the earlier Creed issued by the 318 bishops present at the Council of Nicaea I (325). His point was that the Nicene faith was truly transmitted through both creeds, but that the second council felt it necessary to add language to the Creed issued by the first council. It was the faith represented by the Creed which must remain inviolable, not the specific language of the Creed itself.

⁶ On the implausibility of the Filioque being a point of contention at Gentilly, as well as Ado’s reasons for thinking it may have been discussed, see Michael McCormick, “Textes, images et iconoclisme dans le cadre des relations entre Byzance et l’occident carolingien” *Settimane di Studio dell’Centro Italiano per il Medioevo* 41 (1994) pp. 95–158.

⁷ Noble, *Images, Iconoclasm, and the Carolingians*, pp. 195–6. Haugh, *Photius and the Carolingians*, pp. 45–53.

⁸ *Concilium Foroiulense*, ed. A. Werminghoff, *MGH Concilia aevi karolini I* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1906) p. 182. “*Nam si recensetur Nicaeni symboli series veneranda, nichil aliud de Spiritu sancto in ea nisi hoc modo repperiri poterit promulgatum: ‘Et in sanctum,’ inquit, ‘Spiritus.’ Quid est ergo dicere, ‘Et in Spiritum sanctum?’*”

How should their most brief profession be received, except as their mind's religious consideration of faith openly uttered to be understood? And that they had credibly believed 'in the Holy Spirit' in the same way as in the Father and the Son, just as afterwards by the one hundred fifty holy fathers, who testified that the faith of the creed of the Nicene council should remain inviolable forever?⁹

Paulinus then outlined the additions to the Creed made at Constantinople and presented them as elucidations of the teaching contained in the original Nicene Creed, necessary to remain faithful to the unchanging Nicene faith.¹⁰ "Still they [the fathers at Constantinople] supplied their sense, as if by explanation, also in the Holy Spirit. They confessed they believe 'the Lord and Giver of Life, proceeding from the Father, with the Father and Son to be worshipped and glorified.'" ¹¹ The patriarch of Aquileia also discussed possible reasons for additions to the Creed which moved beyond whether or not a teaching was true. Creedal statements must be true, but there was more to consider. Because Creeds were principally concerned with formation and teaching, they were to be composed in such a way as to promote right faith in the face of heresies. "For this and the other things that follow are not contained in the sacred teaching of the Nicene Creed. But afterwards, evidently on account of those heretics who muttered that that Holy Spirit is of the Father alone and proceeds from the Father alone, it was added: 'Who proceeds from the Father and the Son.'" ¹² Paulinus concluded his principal argument by reminding his readers that the faith was neither augmented nor diminished by additions to the Creed, but the true faith rather was preserved by clarification. "And yet these holy fathers are not to be condemned, as if they added something or took something away from the faith of the 318 Fathers, because they [the holy fathers] did not think things divergent from their sense [of the 318], but desired to supply their spotless understanding by sensible actions."¹³ This explanation justified the insertion of the Filioque into the Creed and was a line of reasoning in addition to that by which Paulinus, frankly, believed that the Filioque was a true statement about the triune God and hence fitting—and even necessary in present circumstances—for

⁹ *Concilium Foroiuliense*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 182. "Quomodo accipienda est tam brevissima eorum professio, nisi ut patenter detur intellegi mentium eorum integre fidei religiosa devotio et in sanctum Spiritum sicut et in patrem et filium probabiliter credidisse, quemadmodum postea a sanctis patribus centum quinquaginta, qui contestati sunt symboli fidem Nicaeni concilii inviolatam perenniter permanere?"

¹⁰ That Paulinus' understanding of the relationship between the Creeds is mistaken is beside the point. On the nature of the relationship between the Creeds see Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*.

¹¹ *Concilium Foroiuliense*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 182. "Suppleverunt tamen quasi exponendo eorum sensum et in Spiritum sanctum confitentur se credere, 'dominum et vivificatorem, ex patre procedentem, cum patre et filio adorandum et glorificandum.'" ¹²

¹² *Concilium Foroiuliense*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 182. "Haec enim et cetera, quae secuntur, in Nicaeni symboli sacro dogmate non habentur. Sed et postmodum, propter eos videlicet hereticos, qui susurrant sanctum Spiritum solius esse patris et a solo procedere patre, additum est: 'Qui ex patre filioque procedit.'" ¹³

¹³ *Concilium Foroiuliense*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 182. "Et tamen non sunt hi sancti patres culpandi, quasi addidissent aliquid vel minuissent de fide trecentorum decem et octo patrum, quia non contra eorum sensum diversa senserunt, sed immaculatum eorum intellectum sanis moribus supplere studuerunt."

the Creed. Later in the council proceedings, the patriarch of Aquileia wrote that in his understanding the double procession was how properly to identify and profess the third person of the Trinity. "For in fact the Holy Spirit is true God. The Holy Spirit is truly and properly not begotten nor created, but eternally and inseparably proceeding from the Father and Son."¹⁴

Concern for Christian formation provided the backdrop for Paulinus' spirited defense of the Filioque. His framing of the discussion at Friuli exhibited continuity with the approach to baptism advocated by Carolingian court—especially by Alcuin—and discussed the year prior on the banks of the Danube. The influence is most evident in the biblical passages the patriarch used to anchor his discussion of the importance of creeds. He began with an affirmation of the great creeds. "But may it be far from us and distant from every faithful heart to compose or to teach a creed or faith of others or other than they [the fathers of Nicaea and Constantinople] composed."¹⁵ Paulinus then connected his efforts at Friuli to baptism through his citation of Hebrews 6, used by Bede and taken up by Alcuin. He pointed out that creeds were concise not for the sake of space, but in the interests of teaching, even catechesis, insofar as he identified the people to be taught as "simple" and "unlearned." He concluded with the reference to Hebrews, making the point that the creeds were brief not because there is nothing else to say, but so that their content, the faith which allowed one to be a good Christian, could be easily mastered.

According to their understanding, those things, which on account of concise abridgement fitting for the simple and unlearned are less well understood, we declared, however, that they ought to be explained in this memorial to hand on to others. We ordered also to preserve the text itself so as not to stand against the faith, since according to the apostle the suitable man of God is prepared for every good work. For he says: 'without faith it is impossible to please God' (Heb. 11:6).¹⁶

Now familiar quotations and references emphasize that baptismal formation provided a broader context for Paulinus' discussion. At one point in his examination he launched into an investigation of the Trinity by assembling biblical texts that dealt with baptismal teaching. He began by comparing the significance of baptism in the name of the Trinity against baptism in Jesus' name, citing Jesus and Peter. Paulinus quoted Jesus' words from the Gospel of Matthew "Go (*Ite*) teach all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the

¹⁴ *Concilium Foroiuliense*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 187. "*Spiritus namque sanctus verus Deus, vere et proprie Spiritus sanctus est, non genitus, nec creatus, sed ex patre filioque intemporaliter et inseparabiliter procedens.*"

¹⁵ *Concilium Foroiuliense*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 181. "*Sed absit a nobis proculque sit ab omni corde fidei alterum vel aliter quam illi instituerunt symbolum vel fidem componere vel docere.*"

¹⁶ *Concilium Foroiuliense*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 181. "*Sed iuxta eorum sensum ea fortasse, que propter brevitatis compendium minus ut decet a simplicibus vel indoctis intelleguntur, exponendum decrevimus tradere hac memoria mandavimus eum ipsumque textum symboli retinere, quatenus iuxta apostolum idoneus sit homo Dei ad omne opus bonum paratus, ad resistendum non sane fidei. Ait enim ipse: Sine fide impossibile est Deo placere.*"

Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28:19).¹⁷ The patriarch then explored how Peter instructed the apostles "Do penance and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins" (Acts 2:37).¹⁸ Perhaps reflective of the context of liturgical formation he cited the Great Commission in its liturgical form and not the Vulgate reading. Indirectly, he located the Matthean text as the point of departure for understanding the Trinity. For Paulinus, the double procession rendered intelligible the Holy Spirit's full participation in the Godhead and eliminated any possibility of subordinationism.

Therefore the *sacramentum* of the Holy Trinity, which the Teacher and Lord wished to show by enumerating the three persons, yet in one name, the disciples merited to understand this of the very same Truth in one person of the Trinity, that is of the Son, with the Holy Spirit revealing essentially the entire Holy Trinity, since, as is frequently said, the works of the Trinity are always inseparable.¹⁹

Paulinus ensured that Friuli advanced a theology of the Holy Spirit in continuity with his missionary efforts on the banks of the Danube and with the Carolingian court's decisions at the Council of Frankfurt. After his discussion of the importance of the Creed for understanding the Trinity, including his defense of the Filioque, Paulinus appended a Creed, the version of the Constantinopolitan Creed that became incorporated in the Western liturgy and was professed regularly at Catholic Mass up into the twentieth century. Following the Creed is a brief exposition. Paulinus required that the Creed and the Lord's Prayer become the foundation for Christian formation in the West. "Every Christian of every age, every sex and every condition, male, female, young, old, slave, free, boys, married and unmarried women ought to know by heart the Creed, certainly, and the Lord's Prayer, because without this blessing no one will be able to gain a portion of the kingdom of heaven."²⁰ This instruction reiterated the will of the Council of Frankfurt, "that the catholic faith of the Holy Trinity, the Lord's Prayer and the Creed are to be preached and expounded to all."²¹ Alcuin acknowledged

¹⁷ *Concilium Foroiuliense*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 183. "Ite, inquit, docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine patris et filii et Spiritus sancti."

¹⁸ *Concilium Foroiuliense*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 183. "Paenitentiam, inquit, agite, et baptizetur unusquisque vestrum in nomine Iesu Christi in remissione peccatorum."

¹⁹ *Concilium Foroiuliense*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 183. "Sacramentum igitur sanctae trinitatis, quam magister et Dominus tribus enumeratis personis, in uno tamen nomine voluit demonstrare, hoc eiusdem veritatis discipuli in una de trinitate persona, id est filii, totam sanctamque trinitatem essentialiter sancto sibi revelante Spiritu intellegere meruerunt, quoniam, sicut crebrius dictum est, inseparabilia sunt semper opera trinitatis."

²⁰ *Concilium Foroiuliense*, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 189. "Symbolum vero et orationem dominicam omnis Christianus memoriter sciat, omnis aetas, omnis sexus omnisque conditio, masculini, feminae, iuvenes, senes, servi, liberi, pueri, coniugati innuptaeque puellae, quia sine hac benedictione nullus poterit in caelorum regno percipere portionem."

²¹ *Capitulare Francofurtense* c. 33, ed. A. Werminghoff, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1906) p. 169. "Ut fides catholica sanctae trinitatis et oratio dominica atque symbolum fidei omnibus praedicetur et tradatur."

Paulinus' efforts in the very same year, when he wrote to the patriarch concerning his anti-Adoptionist work. At one point, he congratulated Paulinus specifically on crafting a statement of faith suitable for formation. Alcuin also indicated that he would like to see the formula distributed across the Carolingian world. The abbot of Tours described the text as arriving to local priests via their bishop, this hints at channels of distribution envisioned already in the *Admonitio generalis*. Alcuin wrote

How you [Paulinus] did work profitable and necessary to many in an assessment of the catholic faith, which I desired for a long time and often urged to the lord king, that a creed of the catholic faith in the most plain sense and most splendid language be compiled on a single page. And through every parish under episcopal control it should be given to all the priests to be read and committed to memory, since although many languages are spoken, one faith nevertheless may resound everywhere.²²

Concern for formation framed the Carolingian defense of the Filioque when the topic rose again. Controversy erupted around the year 809 when a Byzantine monk from St. Saba in Palestine accused a group of Frankish monks on the Mount of Olives near Jerusalem of being heretics because they chanted an unorthodox Creed during the celebration of the Mass.²³ Two features of the dispute highlight the Carolingians' underlying concern for Christian formation. First, the Carolingian response revolved around their anxiety over the theologies of the Spanish Adoptionists and Byzantine Iconodules. Second, Carolingians advocated liturgical celebration as the proper context for advancing sound formation. In this instance, rather than baptism, an accent was placed on the Mass and the chanting of the Creed by the congregation. The Creed was first introduced to the liturgy by the Patriarch of Constantinople at the beginning of the sixth century. In the West, the earliest testament to the use of the Creed in the liturgy is by the Visigothic church, where the Creed was introduced into the Mass at the council of Toledo in 589.²⁴ Use of the Creed at Mass was popularized across the Frankish world after its addition to the liturgy of the imperial chapel at Aachen, likely by the archchaplain Hildebald, and approved by the pope, probably at Christmas 804/805.²⁵ The Carolingian court

²² Alcuin, *Epistola* 139, ed. Ernst Dümmler, *MGH Epistolae IV* (Berlin: Weidmannos 1895) p. 220. "Quam plurimis vero profuturum et pernecessarium fecistis opus in catholicae fidei taxatione, quod diu optavi, et saepius domno regi suasi, ut symbolum catholicae fidei planissimis sensibus et sermonibus luculentissimis in unam congereretur cartulam, et per singulas episcopaliū regiminū parrochias omnibus daretur praesbiteris legenda memoriaeque commendanda, quatenus, licet lingua diversa loqueretur, una tamen fides ubique resonaret."

²³ For a fuller account of the Controversy see Gemeinhardt, *Die Filioque-Kontroverse zwischen Ost- und Westkirche*, pp. 160–4; *Das Konzil von Aachen*, pp. 1–41; Haugh, *Photius and the Carolingians*, pp. 63–90; Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, pp. 358–67.

²⁴ Bernard Capelle, "L'introduction du Symbol à la messe" *Mélanges Joseph de Ghellinck, S.J., Vol. II* (Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1951) pp. 1003–27.

²⁵ Bullough, "Alcuin, Arn and the Creed in the Mass," pp. 131–4.

adopted for its chapel liturgy the version of the Creed (with the Filioque) penned by Paulinus of Aquileia at the Council of Friuli in 797 in response to the Adoptionist controversy.²⁶ Its insertion into the Mass was remembered as a formation initiative well into the ninth century. In the early 840s, Walahfrid Strabo understood the use of the Creed this way in his *Libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum*. He had studied at Fulda under the famous Hrabanus Maurus, himself an influential pupil of Alcuin. He left his mark on the Carolingian world as a scholar, as an abbot of Reichenau, and as the personal tutor for Louis the Pious' youngest son, Charles, who succeeded his father in the Western Frankish world. In the *Libellus*, Walahfrid recorded that the tradition of chanting the Creed at Mass originated in Constantinople, but erroneously indicated that the practice moved from the east to Rome. He emphasized the formative aspect of the practice, noting that it was instituted to counter heretical teachings and that the custom spread in the West as a counter-Adoptionist measure.

They [the Greeks] also chose it [the Constantinopolitan Creed] so that the piety of the faithful should, even in their celebration of the *sacramenta*, counter the poisons of the heretics with medicine concocted at the Imperial capital. That practice, therefore, is believed to have come from them to the Romans, but among the Gauls and Germans the Creed began to be repeated in the liturgy of the Mass more widely and frequently after the deposition of Felix the heretic, condemned under the most glorious Charles, ruler of the Franks.²⁷

Thus, according to Walahfrid, the Symbol was brought into the Mass in order to preserve proper Christian formation and stem the spread of Adoptionism.

The aftermath of a council held at Aachen in 809 testified to the continuity of the Carolingian justification for the Filioque. Immediately following the council, a legation, led by bishops Bernhar of Worms and Jesse of Amiens, and abbot Adalhard of Corbie, was dispatched to Rome in order to present the Carolingian position to the pope.²⁸ A rough transcript of the meeting of the *missi* with Pope Leo III survives. The *missi* framed their case as a question of the continuing formation of the laity. "Because indeed, as you say, it [the Creed] ought most certainly thus be believed, by believing ought immutably to be held, indeed ought

²⁶ Bullough, "Alcuin, Arn and the Creed in the Mass," p. 132; Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, pp. 353–7; Ellard, *Master Alcuin*, pp. 174–88.

²⁷ Walahfrid Strabo's *Libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum*, ed. and trans. Alice L. Harting-Correa (Leiden: Brill, 1996) pp. 136–9. "... et ut contra hereticorum venena in ipsis etiam sacramentorum celebrationibus medicamenta apud regiae suae urbis sedem confecta fidelium devotio replicaret. Ab ipsis ergo ad Romanos ille usus creditur pervenisse; sed apud Gallos et Germanos post deiectionem Felicis heretici sub gloriosissimo Karolo Francorum rectore damnati idem symbolum latius et crebrius in missarum coepit officiis iterari."

²⁸ Because the annals are not specific and unanimous on the point, some question remains as to Jesse's participation in the legation. *Einleitung*, ed. Harald Willjung MGH *Concilia II Supplementum II* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1998) p. 88.

to be defended faithfully whenever necessary, should it not also be taught to those who are ignorant and be confirmed for those who know so that they may hold it more carefully?"²⁹ As with Paulinus, the thrust of Carolingian concern was not whether the double procession was correct teaching, upon which both the pope and the Carolingians agreed, but rather what wording the Creed ought to contain in order to convey the content of the faith. The liturgy, in this case the Mass, was viewed as a desirable context for Christian formation.

4.2. SUSTAINED CAROLINGIAN ATTENTION TO BAPTISM

While the *sacramentum* of baptism informed other Carolingian projects, such as their defense of the Filioque, Carolingian officials continued to show interest in baptism itself, particularly the baptismal liturgy, and especially its value in the formation of the laity. Both ecclesiastical and imperial leaders showed a consistent concern for Christian formation through baptism during the first decade of the ninth century. Three surviving examples from the early ninth century testify to sustained interest in baptism among Carolingian leaders. In 802, bishop Jesse of Amiens composed a letter to the priests of his diocese on the *sacramentum* of baptism. In 806, Charlemagne corresponded with bishop Ghaerbald of Liège concerning baptism. Finally, in 811/812 Charlemagne issued a circular questionnaire to the metropolitan bishops of the Carolingian world inquiring about baptism and Christian formation.

In the early years of the ninth century, at least one Carolingian religious leader took steps to coordinate the execution of baptism in his diocese. Jesse of Amiens (r. 798/99–836) wrote an instruction on the *sacramentum* of baptism for his diocesan clergy. Little is known about Jesse's early years, but his ecclesiastical career was closely intertwined with Carolingian royal, then imperial, activity. He appears as a *missus* periodically from 799. He attended Charlemagne's imperial coronation at Rome in 800; in 802/803 he served on an embassy to Constantinople; and as we have seen, he participated in the Filioque mission to the papacy in 810. According to Einhard, he was among the many ecclesiastics who witnessed Charlemagne's will.³⁰ After Charlemagne's death, he advised the new Emperor, Louis the Pious, though his career would derail after he sided with Lothar against Louis in the troubles

²⁹ *Ratio Romana de symbolo fidei*, ed. Harald Willjung, MGH Concilia II Supplementum II (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1998) p. 288. "Quia vero, ut dicitis, ita certissime credendum est, credendo inmutabiliter tenendum, tenendo vero, sicubi necesse fuerit, constantissime defendendum est, numquid non id nescientes docendum, scientibus autem, ut id attentius teneant, confirmandum est?"

³⁰ Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1911) p. 41.

around 830. Among the sources revealing Jesse's activity as bishop of Amiens is a circular letter to the priests of his diocese, likely issued around 802 while he was away in Constantinople.³¹ In question and answer form, the letter contained a brief description of the order of baptism, followed by longer explanations of specific elements of the baptismal liturgy. Jesse treated key terms from the liturgy of baptism, such as catechumen, *competentes*, and exorcism. He also considered fundamental components of the rite, such as the anointings, the renunciation, and the Creed. Jesse's overriding concern, however, was education, specifically Christian formation. He commended the importance of conducting scrutinies and of communicating the Creed and the Lord's Prayer to those seeking baptism. When Jesse wrote about those involved in baptism he divided them into catechumens and *competentes* on the basis of their knowledge and training in the faith. "It is read that a catechumen is so called on account of 'hearing' or by 'instructing.' For he hears the teaching of the faith he is to receive and is instructed how he ought to approach the washing of sacred baptism."³² The catechumen was conceived of as one in need of education and *sacramenta*. The competens was one who already formed, but still needed the *sacramenta*. The Creed and the Lord's Prayer supplied the content of formation, just as recommended by other important figures such as Alcuin and Paulinus. The final goal of this formation was two fold. First, new Christians were admitted to a community, the church. Second, new Christians received responsibilities to their new lord, Jesus Christ.

A competens is one who having been well instructed in the faith and carefully imbued with belief—after handing over to him the teaching of Christianity both the mystery of the Creed and an account of the Lord's Prayer—entreats and asks to gain the mysteries of sacred baptism, and thankful, also to be a partaker in the holy church of God and to be with the faithful in the service of Christ, whence they are called competens from 'entreating.'³³

Throughout the letter, Jesse stressed Christian teaching and reception of that teaching by the catechumens. On several occasions, he offered descriptions of what he wanted to take place during the ceremonies of baptism. He emphasized that the catechumen must understand what happened during the ceremony. "If we say to the catechumen, 'do you believe in Christ?' And he responds, 'I believe,' and signs himself, now carrying the cross of Christ on his forehead,

³¹ Susan A. Keefe, *Water and the Word: Baptism and the Education of the Clergy in the Carolingian Empire*, Vol. II (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002) I, pp. 52–9.

³² Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 406. "*caticuminum ab audiendo vel ab instruendo dictum fore legitur. audit namque doctrinam percipiendae fidei instruiturque qualiter ad sacri baptismatis lavacrum pervenire debeat.*"

³³ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 414. "*competens est qui diligenter instructus fide, et attente de credulitate inbutus, post traditam sibi doctrinam christianitatis, et mysterium symboli, et traditionem orationis dominicae, petit et rogat ut possit consequi mysteria sacri baptismatis, et gratiam, et particeps fieri sanctae dei ecclesiae, et in servitio cum fidelibus esse christi; unde et a petendo competentes vocant.*"

he does not blush from the cross of his Lord. Behold! He believes in his name.”³⁴ Jesse expected all to show understanding with the words of the mouth and reactions of the body.

Aside from thematic continuity, Jesse’s instruction corroborated specific points of contact with the court’s concerns for baptism and especially with Alcuin’s. Continuity lay in a unified message, not in uniform liturgical observance. Jesse still described a rite which varied from Alcuin’s even as he drew his explanation from Alcuin. In other words, the significance of the individual elements of the rite were the same, though the order differed. Whereas Alcuin placed the eucharist and then episcopal anointing at the end of his rite, Jesse reversed the order of these last two elements. Still, Jesse’s understanding of the significance of the catechumen’s first eucharist amplified that of Alcuin’s *Primo paganus*.

The infant is confirmed with the body and blood of Christ so that he is able to be his member, who suffered and rose for him. The Lord himself witnesses this for he says: ‘who eats my flesh and drinks my blood, remains in me and I in him because my flesh is true food and my blood true drink.’³⁵

Jesse’s mention of infant reception includes Alcuin’s accent on confirmation, while adding an emphasis on incorporation into the community.

Like Alcuin, Jesse was also explicit about triple immersion baptism. Here he clarified Alcuin with Alcuin himself. The bishop of Amiens drew together key texts from different works of the Anglo-Saxon master, most notably, Matthew’s Great Commission in its liturgical form and the explanation of baptism put forth in *Primo paganus*. He explained that a Christian

is made under the designation of the Trinity, that is of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, since the Lord said to the Apostles: ‘Go (*Ite*) teach all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.’ Man is recalled with a suitable reason, therefore, to the image of the Holy Trinity under a triple immersion. He was created for the same in the beginning with God’s cooperation, when he who fell into death by the third grade of sin, that is by consent, is recovered by the third washing and moved back to life.³⁶

³⁴ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 413. “*si dixerimus catechumeno: credis in christum? respondit, credo, et signat se, iam crucem christi portans in fronte, et non erubescit de cruce domini sui: ecce credit in nomine eius.*”

³⁵ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 427–8. “*corpore et sanguine christi confirmatur infans ut eius possit esse membrum qui pro eo passus est et resurrexit, ipso domino adtestante, qui ait: ‘qui manducat corpus meum et bibit sanguinem meum, in me manet, et ego in eo; quia caro mea vera est cibus, et sanguis meus vere est potus.’*” Compare with Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 203, also in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 245.

³⁶ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 424. “*sub trinitatis enim designatione fit, id est, patris et filii et spiritus sancti, dicente domino ad apostolos: ‘ite, docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti.’*” (cf. Mt. 28:19) *convenienti ergo ratione sub trina mersione homo ad imaginem revocatur sanctae trinitatis, qui ad eandem deo cooperante in principio est creatus; et bene qui lapsus est in mortem tertio gradu delicti, id est consensu, tertio a lavacro receptus recuperetur ad vitam.*” Compare with Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 202, also in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 243–4.

Just as important as Jesse's concern for formation were the assumptions that underlie his discussion. The letter confirms that some sort of organized catechumenate program was active in the diocese of Amiens at the turn of the ninth century. Jesse wrote to ensure that all the priests in his diocese knew of the program and order of baptism, in his words "how the wave of sacred baptism ought to be reached through steps."³⁷ In sum, Jesse testifies to the existence of a program of Christian formation consonant with Alcuin's process, active on a local level, and implemented in the Frankish heartlands, not on the missionary periphery.

Local bishops were not the only Carolingian officials who showed concern for baptismal formation in the first decade of the ninth century. Around 806, Charlemagne sent a remarkable letter to bishop Ghaerbald of Liège.³⁸ The details of the correspondence and the chain of events it set off again underscored the importance of baptism as the paradigmatic *sacramentum* with broad theological, social, and political implications.³⁹ In the letter, Charlemagne described his intense disappointment while attending Mass at a diocesan church on the Feast of the Epiphany. To his dismay, his fellow Christians were ignorant of the most fundamental prayers of the church. The emperor watched as a number of people prepared to serve as godparents and receive new Christians from the font of baptism. In a moment which lends credence to Notker's tale of Charlemagne's surprise test for the pupils committed to Clement's care, he quizzed the potential godparents concerning the Lord's Prayer and the Creed . . . and found them lacking.⁴⁰ The details of the emperor's concern as well as the way in which he framed it point to a broad continuity of Carolingian interest in the *sacramentum*. Charlemagne himself had a continuing interest in the practice of

³⁷ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 405. "qualiter a sacri baptismatis unda per gradus perveniri debeat.".

³⁸ Wilhelm A. Eckhardt, *Die Kapitulariensammlung Bischof Ghaerbalds von Lüttich*, Germanenrechte, Neue Folge, Deutschrechtliches Archiv, Vol. 5 (Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1955); Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship*, pp. 323–6; Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity AD 200–1000*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003) pp. 452–5.

³⁹ How to interpret Charlemagne's interest in religion has proved a difficult task. On the minimalist side see, for example, Arnold Angenendt, "Libelli bene correcti: Der richtige Kult als ein Motiv der karolingischen Reform" *Das Buch als magisches und als Repräsentationsobjekt*, ed. Peter Ganz (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1992) pp. 117–35. Examples of more optimistic portrayals are Henry Mayr-Harting, "Charlemagne's Religion" *Am Vorabend der Kaiserkrönung*, eds. Peter Godman, Jörg Jarnut, and Peter Johaneck (Berlin: Akademie, 2002) pp. 113–24; and Janet Nelson, "The Voice of Charlemagne" *Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages: Studies Presented to Henry Mayr-Harting*, eds. Richard Gameson and Henrietta Leyser (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) pp. 77–88. Both of the latter works cite Charlemagne's interest in baptism as a testament to the sincerity of his beliefs.

⁴⁰ Notker the Stammerer, *Gesta Karoli Magni* 3, ed. Hans F. Haefele, *MGH SRG 12* (Berlin: Weidmanns 1959) pp. 4–5. On possible textual and oral sources available to Notker see Matthew Innes, "Memory, Orality, and Literacy in an Early Medieval Society" *Past and Present* 158 (1998) pp. 3–36. For an introduction to Notker see the Conclusion.

baptism across his empire even after Alcuin's death in 804. He mentioned the *sacramentum* often and in a variety of venues. Mastery of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer was a basic duty of priestly preaching and teaching. Moreover, such knowledge was testable, requiring that the bishop or his clergy assess people's command of the prayers. Charlemagne wrote

We suppose then Your Sanctity [Ghaerbald] well recalls how often in assembly and in our council we advised concerning preaching in the holy church of God, that each one of your men according to the authority of the holy canons ought both to preach and to teach first of all concerning the catholic faith, so that also he who is not able to grasp merely the Lord's Prayer and the Creed of the catholic faith, just as the apostles taught, is able to hold and recite it from memory in your presence or in the presence of your ministers of holy order.⁴¹

While the Lord's Prayer and the Creed were basic, the context of baptismal formation for the baptismal sponsors heightened his ire. He wanted especially to be sure potential godparents knew these prayers. He reiterated that the bishop or their priests ought to be able to test for this knowledge, perhaps during a scrutiny. Charlemagne ordered "that no one presume to receive another from the sacred font of baptism before he can recite the Lord's Prayer and the Creed."⁴² Charlemagne was so enraged by what he witnessed that he felt compelled to intervene and halt the proceedings. "We ordered these [potential godparents] to refrain until they knew or were able to recite the prayer and the Creed and not presume to receive anyone from the sacred font of baptism."⁴³ The emperor maintained a personal and intense interest in baptism.

Charlemagne's concerns also reveal assumptions about the proper execution of baptism consistent with the vision espoused by advisors like Alcuin. As mentioned, Charlemagne assumed that godparents would be tested for their mastery of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. Further, the emperor mentioned Easter and Pentecost in association with the *sacramentum*. He recognized the typical times for public baptism and referenced the well-worn exception for emergencies, confirming in his own voice laws seen widespread in capitularies. "Indeed either he [the potential godparent] should immediately find another who knows, or, if infirmity does not impede, he should wait from Easter up to

⁴¹ Charlemagne, *Epistola*, ed. A. Boretius, *MGH Capitularia regum Francorum I* (Hannover: Hahnische, 1883) p. 241. "*Bene igitur recordari credimus sanctitati tuae, qualiter saepius in conventu et concilio nostro monuimus de praedicatione in sancta Dei ecclesia, ut unusquisque vestrum secundum sanctorum canonum auctoritatem et praedicare et docere deberet: primo omnium de fide catholica, ut et qui amplius capere non valisset tantummodo orationem dominicam et symbolum fidei catholicae, sicut apostoli docuerunt, tenere et memoriter recitare potuisset.*"

⁴² Charlemagne, *Epistola*, p. 241. "*... ut nullus de sacro fonte baptismatis aliquem suscipere praesumeret, antequam in vestra aut ministrorum vestrorum sacri ordinis praesentia orationem dominicam et symbolum recitaret.*"

⁴³ Charlemagne, *Epistola*, p. 241. "*Quibus praecepimus abstinere, ut antequam orationem et symbolum scirent et recitare potuissent, neque aliquem de sacro fonte baptismatis suscipere praesumerent.*"

Pentecost, until he learns the things which were said above.”⁴⁴ The emperor told Ghaerbald to instruct his priests to ensure that no one stood as a godparent unless he could recite the Creed and the Lord’s Prayer. The letter shows Charlemagne’s synthetic concerns for baptismal formation, that is his attention to its individual and its social effects. His principal objection revolved around the fitness of the godparents to serve in their capacity as *fideiussores* for a child. “Everyone ought to keep himself from this work up to the point when he is able to be a good *fideiussor* in this business.”⁴⁵ Charlemagne likely referred to one of several capitularies related to meetings held at Aachen in the year 802.⁴⁶ A capitulary for priests issued at that time required “that each priest carefully teach the people committed to him the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed and expose their minds to the practice of the whole religion and worship of Christianity.”⁴⁷ He reiterated this concern more purposefully in other similarly dated capitulary instructions on priestly training in which priests were required to know “how they should instruct catechumens about the Christian faith.”⁴⁸ Another canon required “that no one receive from the holy font an infant or another out of paganism before he renders to his priest the Creed and the Lord’s Prayer.”⁴⁹ The canon explicitly included the godparents both of adult and of infant catechumens in the process of formation. Comparable to *sacramentum*, the concept of *fideiussor* and the obligations of fidelity pervade Charlemagne’s capitulary legislation.⁵⁰ Formation for such responsibility, whether exercised in a religious or civil context, was required for all. At the end of the eighth century, when trying to shape the behavior of the Saxons in the notorious *Capitulatio de partibus Saxoniae*, Charlemagne mandated:

If anyone is unable to find a *fideiussor* for his liabilities, he is to suffer distraint of his property until he provides one. And if he presumes to enter his house in

⁴⁴ Charlemagne, *Epistola*, p. 241. “*Scilicet aut certe statim alium inveniret scientem, aut, si infirmitas non impediret, expectaret de pascha usque in pentecosten, donec ipse disceret ea quae supra dicta sunt.*”

⁴⁵ Charlemagne, *Epistola*, p. 241. “*se unusquisque abstinere debuisset ab hoc opere, usque dum bonus fideiussor esse valeret in hoc negotio.*”

⁴⁶ For a brief discussion see Wilfried Hartmann, *Die Synoden der Karolingerzeit im Frankenreich und in Italien* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1989) pp. 124–6. See also the broad context set out in Matthew Innes, “Charlemagne, justice and written law” *Law, custom, and justice in late antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Alice Rio (London: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2011) pp. 155–203.

⁴⁷ *Capitula a sacerdotibus proposita* c. 5, MGH *Capitularia regum Francorum* I, p. 106. “*Ut unusquisque sacerdos orationem dominicam et symbolum populo sibi commissio curiose insinuet ac totius religionis studium et christianitatis cultum eorum mentibus ostendat.*”

⁴⁸ *Capitula de examinandis ecclesiasticis* c. 3, MGH *Capitularia regum Francorum* I, p. 110. “*Quomodo catechumens de fide christiana instruere soleant.*”

⁴⁹ *Capitula de examinandis ecclesiasticis* c. 14, MGH *Capitularia regum Francorum* I, p. 110. “*Ut nullus infantem vel alium ex paganis de fonte sacro suscipiat, antequam symbolum et orationem dominicam presbitero suo reddat.*”

⁵⁰ See Chapter One.

contravention of the bannus, he is to pay either ten solidi or one ox in composition as a fine for breach of that bannus and additionally to pay the sum for which he stands in debt. But if the *fideiussor* does not keep to the appointed day, then he is to incur the loss of the amount for which he promised to stand surety; but he who stands as a debtor to the *fideiussor* is to make twofold restitution for as much as he has allowed the *fideiussor* to suffer loss.⁵¹

The emperor was primarily concerned with the formation of the laity, not the execution of the rite of baptism. "Now we remind you again, so that you are mindful, just as is fitting, to hold a meeting with your priests concerning the priestly office and carefully seek out and examine the whole truth of the issue" [the state of Christian formation in the diocese].⁵² Furthermore, Charlemagne was not shy about focusing his bishop's attention on the laity as well. "First of all," he wrote, "concerning the catholic faith, that he who is not able to grasp more, is at least able to hold and recite from memory the Lord's Prayer and the Creed of the catholic faith, as the apostles taught."⁵³ The Emperor was committed to basic religious formation for all the people of his realm.

The specificity of Charlemagne's instruction to Ghaerbald raised the possibility that Jesse may have had some encouragement to compose his circular letter. Perhaps even in the midst of his journey to Constantinople he was informed of the synod at Aachen in 802 and its concerns for Christendom. The emperor's ire had teeth. Soon after receiving the letter from Charlemagne, Ghaerbald issued a sharp circular letter to his diocesan clergy, excoriating his clerics for their evident sloth. The letter touched on the prayers and the context identified by Charlemagne: proper times for baptism, the importance of well-formed godparents, and the principal prayers which constituted formation. The bishop emphasized what doctrinal content everyone should know and explained why it mattered. Fidelity required understanding of what one was to be faithful to and for. "For who in the future on Easter or on Pentecost are to receive sons and daughters from the sacred font, they should know the Lord's Prayer and the faith of the Apostle's Creed and give back an explanation, so that

⁵¹ *Capitulatio de partibus saxoniae* c. 27, *MGH Capitularia regum Francorum* I, p. 70. "Si quis homo fideiussorem invenire non potuerit, res illius in forbanno mittantur useque dum fideiussorem praesentet. Si vero super bannum in domum suam intrare praesumpserit, aut solidos decem aut unum bovem pro emendatione ipsius banni componat, et insuper unde debitor exstitit persolvat. Si vero fideiussor diem statutum non observaverit, tunc ipse tantum damni incurrat quantum manus sua fideiussoris exstitit; ille autem qui debitor fideiussori exstitit duplum restituat, pro eo quod fideiussorem in damnum cadere permisit."

⁵² Charlemagne, *Epistola*, pp. 241–2. "Nunc autem denuo monemus, ut memores sitis, sicut condecet, de ministerio sacerdotali et conventum habeatis cum vestris sacerdotibus et diligenter omnem rei veritatem requirite et examine."

⁵³ Charlemagne, *Epistola*, p. 241. "primo omnium de fide catholica, ut et qui amplius capere non valisset tantummodo orationem dominicam et symbolum fidei catholicae, sicut apostoli docuerunt, tenere et memoriter recitare potuisset."

we know each one of them is a true *fideiussor*.⁵⁴ He is also clear that he wrote after being browbeaten by the Emperor himself and for that reason wanted his instruction to his priests to sting a bit.

The charity of Christ and the concern of our lord and emperor, who with respect to all ecclesiastical religion shows vigilance with the most anxious care and stirs up our sloth so that we do not sleep, urges us to advise and to preach this, so that we do not sleep but remain vigilant in the maintenance of the Lord's commands. And let everyone consider the duty of preaching who is such as the prophet says 'Woe who rises in the morning to follow drunkenness and drinking up to evening to be enflamed with wine' (cf. Is. 5:11).⁵⁵

Ghaerbald selected examples emphasizing the wider social implications for sound Christian formation at baptism. He challenged his priests to ensure that godparents knew, understood, and verbally professed their beliefs before standing for another, so that everyone would know the truth of his conviction.

Therefore every Christian who professes that he believes in God ought with his mouth to profess what he believes in his heart, so that others hear how he believes and is faithful to God. If he says that he believes in God in his heart and does not profess him in his mouth, who knows whether he is faithful or unfaithful?⁵⁶

The bishop clarified his point with an analogy that secured the connection between religious formation and social formation. He plainly likened religious fidelity to social fidelity.

If anyone has a servant and asks him whether he is faithful to him, if he is silent and does not respond whether he is faithful to him, the lord does not well believe him. If before he professed that he was faithful to his lord and after this profession of fidelity, if he does not show it in his work, it is not believed that fidelity to a lord was professed by words alone. If work does not follow from it and it is not shown in his work, how is the servant of his lord proved to be faithful?⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Eckhardt, *Die Kapitulariensammlung*, p. 111. "Nam et qui in posterum in pascha et pentecosten filios et filias de sacro fonte suscepturi sunt, sciant se orationem dominicam et fidem simbulo apostolorum reddere rationem, ut sciamus, qualiter uerus fideiussor sit unusquisque illius."

⁵⁵ Eckhardt, *Die Kapitulariensammlung*, pp. 108–9. "Istud enim admonere et predicare caritas Christi urget nos et sollicitudo domni et imperatoris nostri, qui circa omnem religionem ecclesiasticam sollicitissimam curam preuigilat et excitat pigritiam nostram, ut non dormiamus, sed uigilemus in custodia mandatorum Domini et predicationis officium unusquisque consideret, quis sit talis, unde propheta loquitur: 'Uae qui consurgitis mane ad ebrietatem sectandam et potandum usque ad uesperam, ut uino estuetis.'"

⁵⁶ Eckhardt, *Die Kapitulariensammlung*, p. 108. "Ideo et unusquisque christianus, qui profitetur se Deum credere, debet ore profiteri, quod corde credit, ut alii audiant, quomodo credat et quomodo Deo fidelis sit, quasi dicit se corde Deum credere, et ore non profitetur, quis scit utrum fidelis ait infidelis sit?"

⁵⁷ Eckhardt, *Die Kapitulariensammlung*, p. 108. "Si seruus quis habeat et interroget eum, utrum ei fidelis sit, si tacet et non respondit, utrum ei fidelis sit, dominus non bene credit, si ei antequam profiteatur se fidelem esse domini sui; et post professionem fidelitatis, si non demonstratur in opere, non placet domini solis uerbis profiteri fidelitatem, si opus non sequatur et in opere demonstratur, qualiter fidelis sui domini existat seruus."

Interestingly, the bishop concluded his example by remarking on works following from faith, an echo of the proper order of Christian formation. Perhaps also, Ghaerbald promulgated a diocesan capitulary which legislated on the topics of Christian formation raised in Charlemagne's letter and featured in his own harangue.⁵⁸ The letter and capitulary serve as concrete reminders of how attentive some bishops could be to concerns voiced by the emperor and how these concerns reflected a broader consensus of what ought to constitute the *imperium christianum*.

In 811 or 812, Charlemagne again directly engaged his clergy on the issue of Christian formation at baptism. The emperor issued a circular letter inquiring about the ceremonies of the order of baptism. The letter was likely sent to all of the metropolitan bishops of Carolingian Europe. Many of these bishops responded to Charlemagne's letter, and several of these responses survive. Charlemagne's letter and the responses underscore the broad consensus and cooperation in baptismal formation across the Frankish world. The emperor's letter foregrounded concern for Christian formation. He identified first the clergy and then the laity. Charlemagne wrote "therefore, through your writing or through yourself we wish to know how you and your suffragans teach and instruct the priests of God and the people entrusted to you about the *sacramentum* of baptism."⁵⁹ The letter and its responses are also crucial for an assessment of the impact and influence of Carolingian aspirations across Europe. That not only did Charlemagne direct ecclesiastical attention to Christian formation, but that metropolitan bishops responded to the emperor's concerns indicates the function, sophistication, and use of written communication in the Frankish world. The complexity of the discussion also creates a new context within which to interpret earlier episodes such as Jesse's and Ghaerbald's, marking them as more typical than exceptional.

⁵⁸ For the capitulary consult Ghaerbald of Liège, *First Episcopal Statute*, ed. Peter Brommer, *MGH Capitula Episcoporum I* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1984) pp. 3–21. Doubts have been cast on the specific attribution of the capitulary to Ghaerbald, but not on the dating. If the capitulary is not Ghaerbald's, it is more evidence of widespread concern for Christian formation among the Carolingian leadership at the turn of the ninth century. See the summary and contribution in Carine van Rhijn, *Shepherds of the Lord: Priests and Episcopal Statutes in the Carolingian Period* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007) pp. 219–28. See, for example, Ghaerbald of Liège, *First Episcopal Statute* c. 1, p. 26. "*Primitus ergo, quae christianae legi adversa sunt, ea proponimus, scilicet qui orationem dominicam et symbolum fidei christianitatis memoriter non tenent neque didicere volunt, eos notate et ad praesentiam nostram veniant seu maiores seu minores sive nobiles sive ignobiles, omnes generaliter ante nos veniant et dicant orationem dominicam et symbolum apostolorum, ut catholicae fidei plenitudo continetur, quia impossibile est, sine fide placere deo (Heb. 11:6).*"

⁵⁹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol II, p. 262. "*nosse itaque per tua scripta aut per te ipsum volumus qualiter tu et suffraganei tui doceatis et instruatis sacerdotes dei et plebem vobis commissam de baptismi sacramento.*"

4.3. CHARLEMAGNE'S ENCYCLICAL LETTER: CONTINUITY OF CONCERN FOR FORMATION IN THE *IMPERIUM CHRISTIANUM*

Charlemagne circulated a brief questionnaire on the rites of the baptismal liturgy in 811 or 812.⁶⁰ The exchange of ideas initiated by the questionnaire witnesses to the court's continued interest in the *sacramentum* and the consensus engendered surrounding it. Moreover, the episode illuminates the breadth and complexity of communication in the Carolingian Empire of the early ninth century. Surviving manuscript evidence suggests the letter was circulated among the metropolitan bishops of his empire.⁶¹ Manuscripts preserve three copies of the circular letter, one to Amalarius of Trier, one to Odilbert of Milan, and one to an unknown recipient, "N." Moreover, several surviving responses signal copies of the letter now lost. Five replies survive from archbishops Magnus of Sens, Maxentius of Aquileia, Leidrad of Lyon, Amalarius of Trier, and Odilbert of Milan.⁶² In addition to clearly identifiable responses, a number of anonymous replies survive, some likely from Gaul and others likely from

⁶⁰ Because of the careers of the archbishops who responded to the letter, Charlemagne must have disseminated the letter in 811 or 812. A response to the letter survives from Maxentius of Aquileia in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. I, pp. 462–6. The letter cannot have been written before 811, when Maxentius became the archbishop of Aquileia. A reply also survives from Amalarius, the archbishop of Trier in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. I, pp. 337–51. The letter also must have been written before 813, when Amalarius departed Trier on his diplomatic mission to Constantinople. For further discussion, see Keefe, *Water and the Word*. Vol. I, p. 88; Glenn C.J. Beyer, *Charlemagne and Baptism: A Study of Responses to the Circular Letter of 811/812* (San Francisco: International Scholars Press, 1999) p. 3; J.P. Bouhot, "Explications du rituel baptismal à l'époque carolingienne" *Revue des études augustiniennes* 24 (1978) p. 285.

⁶¹ The surviving copies of the letter address metropolitan archbishops from around the Carolingian world, not abbots or other officials. It is clear that Charlemagne dispatched the letter to influential episcopal leaders of the Carolingian Empire. Previous scholars have assumed that the letter was sent to the heads of all the ecclesiastical provinces enumerated in the "Testament of Charlemagne" appended to Einhard's *Life of Charlemagne*, see Bouhot, "Explications," p. 293; Elisabeth Dahlhaus-Berg, *Nova Antiquitas et Antiqua Novitas: Typologische Exegese und isidorianisches Geschichtsbild bei Theodulf von Orléans* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1975) p. 101. The "Testament" lists 21 sees to which Charlemagne bequeathed two-thirds of his wealth: Rome, Ravenna, Milan, Friuli [Aquileia], Grado, Cologne, Mainz, Salzburg, Trier, Sens, Besançon, Lyon, Rouen, Rheims, Arles, Vienne, Moutiers-en-Tarantaise, Embrun, Bordeaux, Tours, and Bourges, see Einhard, *Vita Karoli magni*, *MGH Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi* 25, ed. O. Holder-Egger (Hannover: Hahn, 1911) pp. 37–41. Whether or not this assumption is accurate, the fact remains that Charlemagne dispatched this letter to leading bishops of his Empire. Beyer has challenged the use of the Testament to identify the metropolitan sees. He argues that Aquileia is missing, that two important metropolitan sees go unnamed (Narbonne and Eauze), and that Rome and Ravenna certainly do not answer to Charlemagne, see Beyer, *Charlemagne and Baptism*, pp. 14–21.

⁶² Magnus of Sens's letter is edited in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol.II, pp. 265–71, Maxentius of Aquileia in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol.II, pp. 462–6, Leidrad of Lyon in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol.II, pp. 353–84, Amalarius of Trier is edited in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol.II, pp. 337–51, and Odilbert of Milan in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 154–70.

Bavaria, one likely connected to Arn of Salzburg, and another perhaps from the hand of Hildebald of Cologne, Charlemagne's former archchaplain.⁶³ This remarkably rich surviving evidence need not be seen as a singular circumstance or even as an unusual communication. The rhetoric and language used in the correspondence suggest rather an unusually well-preserved record of a more common mechanism used to address topics important to Charlemagne. Thus, the evidence becomes a suggestive lens through which to view similar circular letters which triggered the multiple position papers surviving on controversial topics from Spanish Adoptionism to the Filioque. Moreover, it contextualizes the scant surviving evidence of other circular letters such as the celebrated *De litteris colendis*, a brief letter on educational reform addressed to abbot Baugulf of Fulda. Thomas Martin's careful study has convincingly shown it to be but one copy of a more widely disseminated letter.⁶⁴

Charlemagne drew his topics for the questionnaire mostly from Alcuin's *Primo paganus*. The order of the questions and added topics stress that the emperor's principal interest was in Christian formation, not ritual uniformity. What Charlemagne asked underscored the continuity of the discussion of baptism from Alcuin's flurry of activity at the end of the eighth century through the reform councils of 813. As Charlemagne instructed his religious leaders to canvass their dioceses and to comment on the various elements of Christian formation that surrounded the *sacramentum* of baptism, he identified fifteen items for consideration in seventeen questions. Items include catechumen (2×), scrutiny (2×), symbol, renunciation, breathing into (or out of), exorcism, salt, touching of the nostrils, anointing of the chest, signing of the shoulders, the sealing of the chest and shoulders, white vesture, anointing of the head, the mystical veil, and the body and blood of the Lord (see Table 4.1).⁶⁵

⁶³ An anonymous reply, probably from a see in Gaul is in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 599–602. Two texts survive in early ninth-century manuscripts from scriptoria in Bavaria, which led Keefe and Bouhot to suggest that either could be connected with the work of Arn of Salzburg. The texts are printed in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 467–79 and 489–529. See Bouhot, "Explications" 291. Norbert Kruse argued that another text was written by Hildebald of Cologne. He made a case based on his analysis of an Old High German phrase in this commentary on baptism, see Norbert Kruse, *Die kölnen volksprachige Überlieferung des 9. Jahrhunderts* (Bonn: Ludwig Röhrscheid, 1976) pp. 127–32. The text is printed in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 542–5.

⁶⁴ Thomas Martin, "Bemerkungen zur 'Epistola de litteris colendis' " *Archiv für Diplomatik* 31 (1985) pp. 227–72.

⁶⁵ Scholars have disagreed over the number of questions Charlemagne asked. The varying numbers offered depend largely on liturgical assumptions about which elements were distinct and which elements were just different aspects of the same liturgical moment. Beyer enumerated eighteen different questions. Beyer, *Charlemagne and Baptism*, pp. 48–51. Hanssens listed only sixteen. J.M. Hanssens, "Deux documents carolingiens sur le baptême" *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 41 (1927) pp. 74–5. Morin identifies only thirteen questions, Germain Morin, "Note sur une lettre attribuée faussement à Amalaire de Trèves dans le manuscrit lat. 21568 de Munich" *Revue Bénédictine* 13 (1896) p. 292.

Table 4.1. Contents of *Primo paganus*

Latin Text	English Translation
Cur primo infans catecuminus efficiatur?	Why is an infant first made a catechumen?
Quid sit catecumenus?	What is a catechumen?
De scrutinio, quid sit scrutinium?	Concerning the scrutiny, what is a scrutiny?
De symbolo, quae sit eius interpretatio secundum latinos?	Concerning the symbol, what is the meaning of the symbol according to the Latins?
De credulitate, quomodo credendum sit in Deum Patrem omnipotentem, et in Iesum Christum Filium eius natum et passum, et in Spiritum Sanctum, sanctam ecclesiam catholicam, et cetera que secuntur in eodem symbolo?	Concerning religious belief, how is one to believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ his Son who was born and suffered, and in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, and the other things which follow in the same symbol?
De abrenuntiatione satanae et omnibus operibus eius atque pompis, quid sit abrenuntiatio vel quae opera diaboli et pompae?	Concerning the renunciation of satan and all his works and pomps, what is the renunciation or what are the works and pomps of the devil?
Cur insuffletur?	Why is he breathed upon?
Cur exorcizetur?	Why is he exorcized?
Cur catecumenus accipiat salem?	Why does the catechumen receive salt?
Quare tangantur nares?	Why are his nostrils touched?
Quare pectus unguatur oleo?	Why is his chest anointed with oil?
Quare scapulae signetur?	Why are his shoulders signed?
Quare pectus et scapulae liniantur?	Why are his chest and shoulders sealed?
Cur albis induitur vestimentis?	Why is he clothed in white garments?
Cur sacro chrismate caput perungitur?	Why is his head anointed with sacred chrism?
Cur mystico tegitur velamine?	Why is he covered by a mystical veil?
Cur corpore et sanguine domini confirmatur?	Why is he strengthened with the Lord's body and blood?

In his preliminary study of the letter, Bouhot suggested the questionnaire was likely inspired by *Primo paganus*.⁶⁶ Keefe similarly saw a relationship, but argued that the texts were related through an intermediary florilegium, because the questionnaire does not follow the order of *Primo paganus* and because Charlemagne asked for more information than Alcuin provided in *Primo paganus*.⁶⁷ Conversely, in his study of Carolingian baptismal rites, Glenn Beyer proposed that the circular letter was not dependent on *Primo paganus* at all, but

⁶⁶ Bouhot, "Explications," p. 286.

⁶⁷ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. I, p. 89.

rather that the text developed out of the baptismal practice of the royal court.⁶⁸ He offered two arguments. First, he reasoned that because the order of events in *Primo paganus* differed from the order in the encyclical letter, the two texts were not closely related. Second, he argued that the textual similarities seemed insufficient to establish a relationship.⁶⁹ However, the differences between the lists need not show a difference of source base, but rather a difference of interest. Alcuin's *Primo paganus* described a rite of baptism and commented on each ritual element. Charlemagne's letter, on the other hand, inquired about the baptismal instruction that was to occur within the context of the rite.⁷⁰ In other words, the circular letter was fundamentally about Christian formation delivered through baptism, and not about the rite itself. Charlemagne's debt to the abbot of Tours accounts for the similarity to *Primo paganus*. The emperor's specific intention accounts for the differences. Charlemagne's encyclical letter was meant to ensure that a catechumenate program of instruction was active in every diocese of the Carolingian world, and that each program conveyed principles that would allow Christians to be properly formed Carolingian subjects.

The way Charlemagne posed his questions shows the profound continuity with the themes of baptism advanced earlier by Alcuin and others. It also explains the difference in the order of topics (see Table 4.2). Charlemagne asked a double question about catechumens in order to give his respondents an opportunity to reflect on pedagogy, content, and assessment. Charlemagne accented the next four questions by announcing the topic before asking his question. "Concerning scrutinies, what is a scrutiny?"⁷¹ This method highlighted the topics and invited the readers to reflect more deeply on a theme and not just a ritual structure. Charlemagne's attention to the scrutinies, the Creed, and the renunciations stood in stark relief to the rest of the questionnaire, which bluntly demanded "why is he (the catechumen) exorcised?" or "why does the catechumen receive salt?"⁷² Charlemagne's interest in Christian formation, and not the specifics of liturgical practice, explains both why he moved scrutinies and the Creed to the top of his list and why he asked about credulity, but not baptism itself. Perhaps triple immersion baptism had been so emphasized over the preceding fifteen years that it would have been unnecessary to inquire about it (see Table 4.2). The concentration on formation also

⁶⁸ Beyer, *Charlemagne*, p. 45.

⁶⁹ Beyer, *Charlemagne*, p. 46.

⁷⁰ Keefe identifies education as the dominant concern of Charlemagne's questionnaire. Further, she helpfully suggested that differences between *Primo paganus* and Charlemagne's letter were bridged by Isidore's well-known *Etymologies*, to which Charlemagne mostly likely would have had access. She then described the letter as loosely related to Alcuin's *Primo paganus* and geared toward the promotion of clerical education. I see the letter as more directly related to Alcuin's earlier efforts and focused as much on the education of the laity as on the training of clerics. Keefe, *Water and the Word*. Vol. I, pp. 89–90.

⁷¹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 262. "de scrutinio, quid sit scrutinium?"

⁷² Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 263. "Cur exorzizatur? Cur catecuminus accipit salem?"

Table 4.2. *Primo paganus* and the encyclical letter

Alcuin's <i>Primo paganus</i>	Charlemagne's encyclical letter
catechumen	catechumen
	<i>scrutiny</i>
	<i>symbol</i>
	credulity
renunciation	renunciation
exsufflation	insufflation
exorcism	exorcism
salt	salt
<i>symbol</i>	
<i>scrutinies</i>	
nostrils	nostrils
chest	chest
shoulders	shoulders
baptism	
	chest and shoulders
white vestments	white vestments
mystical veil	mystical veil
Lord's Body and Blood	Lord's Body and Blood
imposition of the hand of the bishop	

explains the absence of interest in imposition of hands, which was already being sundered from the baptismal rite and evolving into a distinct rite of Confirmation.⁷³

Charlemagne's encyclical letter followed the blueprint laid out in the *Admonitio generalis*. It reiterated that the emperor's primary interest in the rite of baptism lay in its formative aspect. The questionnaire began with its primary objective.

We address and impress our letter on your devotion with the Holy Spirit inciting, so that more and more in the holy church of God eagerly and with watchful care you desire to work in holy preaching and saving doctrine; as far as

⁷³ See Bryan Spinks, *Early and Medieval Rituals and Theologies of Baptism From the New Testament to the Council of Trent* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006); the earlier Leonel Mitchell, *Baptismal Anointing* (London: S.P.C.K., 1966); and J.D.C. Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West* (London: S.P.C.K., 1965) pp. 141–8.

through your most devout skill the Word of eternal life grows and runs, and the number of the Christian people is multiplied in the praise and glory of God our savior.⁷⁴

The goal of the exercise, as Charlemagne saw it, was to promote the growth of Christianity. In the letter, *how* Charlemagne asked about the items reveals the educational nature of his concern about the administration of the *sacramentum* of baptism, as well as his interest in *sacramenta* more generally. The encyclical letter enumerated a series of items from the baptismal liturgy and asked for a comment on each. He specifically asked the metropolitan bishops to explain how they taught the significance of baptism to their clergy and laity. “Therefore, through your writing or through yourself, we wish to know how you and your suffragans teach and instruct the priests of God and the people entrusted to you about the *sacramentum* of baptism.”⁷⁵ This sentence implied that the responsibility for teaching rested with the bishops, under the management of the archbishops, in the same way imagined in the *Admonitio generalis* more than twenty years before. Furthermore, Charlemagne’s concern was not the execution of the *sacramentum*, but rather instruction, which the execution of the *sacramentum* entailed and required. Charlemagne emphasized his interests at the end of the letter when he asked the readers to be clear about the difference between what was taught and what was observed. “Busy yourself through a careful investigating to relate to us in writing all these things, just as we said, and if you hold and preach thus, and if you yourself observe that which you preach.”⁷⁶ The encyclical letter on baptism was a diagnostic tool employed by Charlemagne to measure the progress of his *renovatio* of Europe.

The broad reform impulse behind the questionnaire governed more than just interest in baptism as a *sacramentum*; it also explains the document’s particular emphasis on the Creed. Because of the imperial oaths that his subjects would swear, few things were more important to Charlemagne than that adult catechumens and godparents—when the catechumens were infants—understood the gravity of *sacramenta* made before God. Charlemagne asked specifically about the meaning of the word Creed (*symbolum*), about religious faith, and

⁷⁴ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 261–2. “*tuam devotionem sancto incitante spiritu nostris apicibus conpellamus atque commoneamus, ut magis ac magis in sancta dei aecclesia studiose ac vigilantia cura laborare studeas in praedicatione sancta et doctrina salutari; quatenus per tuam devotissimam sollertiam verbum vitae aeternae crescat et currat, et multiplicetur numerus populi christiani in laudem et gloriam salvatoris nostri dei.*”

⁷⁵ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol II, p. 262. “*nosse itaque per tua scripta aut per te ipsum volumus qualiter tu et suffraganei tui doceatis et instruatis sacerdotes dei et plebem vobis commissam de baptismi sacramento.*”

⁷⁶ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol II, p. 263. “*Haec omnia subtili indagine per scripta nobis, sicut diximus, nuntiare satage, vel si ita teneas et praedices, aut si in hoc quod praedicas, te ipsum custodias.*”

about renunciations.⁷⁷ Without exception the Creed was identified as a *symbolum*, which was neither accidental nor insignificant. Like the word *sacramentum*, *symbolum* had a semantic range exploited by Carolingian reformers. As with *sacramentum*, Isidore of Seville is instructive. He conveyed the different contexts within which *symbola* appeared. In the *Etymologies*, Isidore described how the army used *symbola* in war. They were used to identify and direct armies in military engagements. "Military signs are so called because by them does an army receive the *symbolum* of fighting, of victory, or of retreat. For an army is prompted either by the sound of the trumpet or by the *symbolum*."⁷⁸ The connection in Isidore's mind was clear enough when he spoke about the Creed as a *symbolum*. The Creed functioned as a signpost for preaching especially designed by the apostles for their preaching to the nations. He also explained in the *Etymologies* that

the word *symbolum* from the Greek means sign or token of recognition, for the apostles about to disperse for preaching the gospel among the nations proposed the *symbolum* for themselves as a sign or guidepost for preaching. Moreover it contains the profession of the Trinity and the unity of the Church and every *sacramentum* of Christian teaching. This creed of our faith and hope is not written on papyrus sheets and with ink, but on the fleshly tablets of our hearts.⁷⁹

In *On Ecclesiastical Offices*, Isidore reiterated his thoughts. In a chapter devoted to *symbolum*, he described the importance of *symbolum* in both ecclesiastical and in military usage, citing its importance for identifying sides during "civil wars."⁸⁰ In the ninth century, Hrabanus Maurus appealed to Isidore's definitions into his massive *De rerum naturis*.⁸¹

Symbolum's polysemy explains why the history of the scrutiny within the baptismal rite has perplexed historians of the liturgy, who have long recognized

⁷⁷ Much like the word *sacramentum*, *symbolum* had a wide range of meanings, which included secular elements that would not be lost on Carolingian authors. Scholars have long appreciated the range of the word symbol in the early church. "Now we have already seen that a chain of later Christian writers connect *symbolum* with a pact made between God and man in baptism, and this is a meaning which accords with the earlier usage of *symbolum* in secular contexts. More exactly *symbolum* is the act or token or pledge which seals the pact and makes it binding." H.J. Carpenter, "Symbolum as a Title of the Creed" *The Journal of Theological Studies* 43 (1942) pp. 1–11, at p. 9. Also see J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 2nd ed. (New York: David McKay, 1960) pp. 52–61.

⁷⁸ Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, XVIII.iii.1 "Signa bellorum dicuntur quod ex his exercitus, et pugnandi, et victoriae, et receptui accipit symbolon. Nam aut per vocem tubae, aut per symbolon admoventur exercitus."

⁷⁹ Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, VI.xix.57. "Symbolum per linguam Graecam signum vel cognitio interpretatur. Discessuri enim Apostoli ad evangelizandum in gentibus, hoc sibi praedicationis signum, vel indicium posuerunt. Continet autem confessionem Trinitatis, et unitatem Ecclesiae, et omne Christiani dogmatis sacramentum. Quod symbolum fidei et spei nostrae non scribitur in carta et atramento, sed in tabulis cordis carnalibus."

⁸⁰ Isidore, *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, ed. Christopher Lawson, CCSL 113 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1989) p. 98. "... in bellis civilibus."

⁸¹ Hrabanus Maurus, *De Universo* [*De rerum naturis*], PL 111.0535 and 0136.

that something changed during the reign of Charlemagne.⁸² In the patristic church the scrutinies primarily indicated exorcistic rites with occasions for instruction, but by the early eighth century the use of the scrutinies in the baptismal rite had fallen into such disuse that in the *Gallicanum vetus* only two prayers betrayed any trace of the practice.⁸³ The prayers did not suggest that any questioning occurred during the celebration of baptism. However, rather than continuing to atrophy, the discipline of the scrutinies enjoyed a rapid renewal under Charlemagne, albeit with a new purpose. The practice of scrutinizing catechumens became an integral part of Christian formation under Charlemagne. That the scrutiny came to be understood as a literal examination, and thus connected with instruction, further explains why it was moved to the beginning of the questionnaire. The question about the scrutinies, as well as the replies, testifies to the reversal of a trend that had diminished the place of the scrutinies in the liturgy of baptism. They became pedagogically significant as a test not just of faith, but of understanding of the faith. Charlemagne's encyclical letter on baptism showed specific imperial concerns about the *sacramentum* of baptism and how the baptismal liturgy played a central role in Christian education and formation in the Carolingian Empire.

4.4. THE ENCYCLICAL LETTER, THE RESPONSES, AND CHRISTIAN FORMATION IN THE CAROLINGIAN EMPIRE

With his encyclical letter, Charlemagne intensified consideration of the baptismal liturgy and Christian formation in Carolingian Europe. The episcopal responses to Charlemagne, as well as subsequent treatments of baptism, recognized, accepted, and elaborated on baptism and Christian formation. An example of the stunning breadth and depth of Carolingian coordination, the replies surviving from 811/812 echoed themes developed by Alcuin and others at the end of the eighth century. They focused on Christian formation at baptism—consisting primarily of instruction in doctrine and morals—and how to assess the success of that formation. The explanations reveal little interest in liturgical uniformity. The diversity of approaches taken by the archbishops in their replies, in how they decided to craft their responses and in how they unpacked their baptismal practices, reminds us not only of the vast distances across which Carolingian thinkers worked and taught, but also of the diversity and

⁸² A. Chavasse, "La Discipline romaine des sept scrutins prè-baptismaux" *Recherches de science religieuse* 48 (1960) pp. 227–40. A. Dondeyne, "La Discipline des scrutins dans l'église latine avant Charlemagne" *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 28 (1932) pp. 1–33, 751–87.

⁸³ J.D.C. Fisher, *Christian Initiation*, pp. 47–9; Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. I, p. 64. *Missale Gallicanum vetus, Rerum Ecclesiasticarum Documenta, Series Maior, Fontes III*, ed. Leo Cunibert Mohlberg (Rome: Casa Editrice Herder, 1958) p. 23.

vitality of their efforts.⁸⁴ Unity of purpose in fashioning an *imperium christianum* compelled their reflection. Effective formation did not require liturgical uniformity; variation in form was fine so long as consistent formation was provided. Thus, the story of the correspondence is not liturgy itself, but rather the implications of liturgy.⁸⁵ The five certain replies that survive—those of Amalarius of Trier, Leidrad of Lyon, Magnus of Sens, Maxentius of Aquileia, and Odilbert of Milan—exhibit three approaches toward Charlemagne's questions. First, Odilbert of Milan identified an already extant florilegium of writings which addressed most of Charlemagne's concerns, so he composed a prefatory letter and forwarded the florilegium to the Emperor.⁸⁶ Leidrad of Lyon and Maxentius of Aquileia organized their thoughts around local *ordines* of baptism, explaining how what they did addressed Charlemagne's principal concerns. Amalarius of Trier and Magnus of Sens replied to Charlemagne's questionnaire point by point, taking up the questions in the order posed by the emperor.

Not much is known about Odilbert, other than that he was the archbishop of Milan at the beginning of the ninth century, from c.805–c.813. His reply exemplified one instinct in addressing Charlemagne. Odilbert's response to the circular questionnaire consisted of an introductory letter attached to an older florilegium on baptism.⁸⁷ Keefe has convincingly shown that Odilbert did not compose the text he submitted to Charlemagne in 811/812.⁸⁸ She identified Odilbert's florilegium as a text that had appeared already in a St. Gall manuscript

⁸⁴ On broad theme of the diversity in Carolingian thought now taken for granted by many scholars of the Carolingian World, especially with respect to education see John Contreni, "Inharmonious Harmony: Education in the Carolingian World" *The Annals of Scholarship: Metastudies of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 1 (1980) pp. 81–96. On similar flexibility in pursuit of justice see Jennifer R. Davis, "A Patter for Power: Charlemagne's Delegation of Judicial Responsibilities" *The Long Morning of Medieval Europe: New Directions in Early Medieval Studies*, eds. Jennifer R. Davis and Michael McCormick (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008) pp. 235–46.

⁸⁵ Other studies examine the letters for their information on Carolingian liturgical practice. Keefe organized and classified the liturgical orders suggested by each response before widening her analysis in Keefe, *Water and the Word, Vol. I*. Differentiating and classifying the different liturgical elements in each response and evaluating the letters to form a picture of Carolingian liturgical preferences was the primary task of Beyer, *Charlemagne and Baptism*. For overviews adopting a traditional narrative see Maxwell Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation: Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1989); J.D.C Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West* (London: SPCK, 1965).

⁸⁶ Susan A. Keefe, "The Claim of Authorship in Carolingian Baptismal Expositions: The Case of Odilbert of Milan" *Fälschungen im Mittelalter V, MGH Schriften* 33, ed. H. Furrhmann (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1988) pp. 385–401.

⁸⁷ The text, with Odilbert's prologue, was first printed in Friedrich Wiegand, *Erzbischof Odilbert von Mailand über die Taufe. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Taufliturgie im Zeitalter Karls des Grossen* (Leipzig, 1899—repr. Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1972) pp. 23–37. The florilegium without the prefatory letter is edited in Keefe, *Water and the Word, Vol. II*, p. 154–70. The letter without the florilegium is edited in *MGH Capitularia regum Francorum I*, ed. A. Boretius (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1883) pp. 247–8.

⁸⁸ Keefe, "The Claim of Authorship" pp. 385–401.

dated by Bischoff to around 800, a full decade before the questionnaire. Divided into two parts for analysis then—the florilegium and the prologue—Odilbert's response sheds light on the context and significance of responses to the emperor's inquiry. On the one hand, the response itself, because it was pre-existent, only ambiguously cracks open the archbishop's thoughts on baptism, even as it further informs our sense of what materials existed for Carolingians interested in baptism. The content of Odilbert's response, because it consisted of an older florilegium, must be interpreted within a broader context than just replies to Charlemagne. The archbishop of Milan was straightforward in his prologue about the content of his reply. He announced that in response to the imperial questionnaire he intended to submit a florilegium of writings drawn from earlier authorities. "To that which your Lordship demands we are unable more fully to lay out by ourselves. Nevertheless it is fitting however much poorer we know that we are in our response, so much greater is it appropriate to become more devout in the holy writings, so that we who are lesser in our own words, are able to increase by speaking with the testimony of the saints."⁸⁹ His florilegium explained both the scrutinies and the Creed with brief and well-known quotes from Isidore and John the Deacon, who were both identified in the text as the sources of their respective quotations. The information in Odilbert's florilegium was remarkable only for resonance with a common sacramental teaching. Charlemagne's questionnaire did not appear from out of nowhere to Carolingian audiences, but invited very focused attention on a topic of long and broad interest throughout Carolingian Europe. That Odilbert could quickly and easily locate relevant material when he himself was not interested in engaging the questionnaire reinforces our sense of the hold the *sacramentum* had on Carolingian thought.

The archbishop of Milan saw the chief aims of Charlemagne's interest in religious and civil authority, but not necessarily the precise reasoning of his view of their unity—much like his earlier northern Italian colleague, Paulinus of Aquileia.⁹⁰ The prologue revolved around the acknowledgement of two principal ideas: Charlemagne's authority and Christian formation in the Carolingian world. Odilbert certainly recognized the emperor's temporal authority. He also identified a theological basis for Charlemagne's power. Importantly, he saw the two as intertwined in Charlemagne's rule, but not unified. Odilbert reflected the claims of Charlemagne's encyclical letter which mixed more recent Christian with older Roman titles. Charlemagne identified himself as "most serene Augustus crowned by God, great and peaceful emperor ruling the Roman

⁸⁹ Wiegand, *Erzbischof Odilbert*, pp. 26–7. "Ad id quod dominatio vestra flagitat, plenius a nobis ipsis nequimus responsa proponi, oportet tamen ut quanto pauperiores nos cognoscimus esse in nostris responsis, tanto magis in scripturis sanctis convenit fieri devotiores, ut qui propriis sermonibus minores sumus, in dicendo sanctorum quoque testimoniis ad crescere valeamus . . ."

⁹⁰ See Chapter Two.

Empire, who also through the mercy of God is king of the Franks and the Langobards.”⁹¹ Odilbert graphically displayed his perspective as he separated and reorganized the titles, placing the theological before and the secular after Charlemagne’s name. He addressed the emperor as the “most Christian lord and preserved by God, Charles, the most invincible and most dutiful emperor.”⁹² The archbishop of Milan further emphasized Charlemagne’s territorial authority by subordinating the see of Milan to Charlemagne, when he characterized himself as “the archbishop of your holy church of Milan.”⁹³ At the same time, he identified a separate source for his own sacerdotal power, affirming that he derived his authority directly from God and not from Charlemagne. In sharp contrast to his transalpine episcopal brothers, Odilbert used the Gregorian formula “servant of the servants of God” to identify himself.⁹⁴ Further, Odilbert, perhaps betraying knowledge of court culture and its nicknames, compared the emperor to both Roman and biblical leaders in praising Charlemagne’s efforts to Christianize his empire. He first placed Charlemagne in the company of the great Christian Roman Emperors who presided over councils and promulgated conciliar decrees. Carolingians commonly referred to four principal early church councils as paradigm setting for Christian beliefs.⁹⁵ Odilbert saw imperial authority as confirming and supporting the decisions of the clergy who derived their authority from God. “Each one moved by divine zeal—that is Constantine, Theodosius the elder, Marcian, and Justinian—all these to free the Christian people from stains of every error, divinely inspired they confirmed by their sovereign authority those things which the priests of the Lord defined.”⁹⁶ Odilbert identified the Roman emperors who oversaw the councils of Nicaea, I Constantinople, Chalcedon, and II Constantinople respectively. In the next sentence, Odilbert likened Charlemagne to the great biblical king David, whose efforts foreshadowed Christ’s. He lauded the emperor as “you, distinguished by merits and by learning, imitating holy David who presented himself for the salvation of his people as a type of our Redeemer, you who—a vigorous worshiper—burned with divine love for the belief of right faith about our Lord Jesus

⁹¹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 261. “*serenissimus augustus a deo coronatus magnus pacificus imperator romanum gubernans imperium, qui et per misericordiam dei rex francorum et langobardorum.*”

⁹² Wiegand, *Erzbischof Odilbert*, p. 25. “*Domino christianissimo et a deo conservato Karolo invictissimo atque piissimo imperatori.*”

⁹³ Wiegand, *Erzbischof Odilbert*, p. 25. “*sanctae vestrae Mediolanensis ecclesiae archiepiscopus.*”

⁹⁴ Wiegand, *Erzbischof Odilbert*, p. 25. “*Odilbertus servus servorum dei.*” On the use of his title to construct authority see Ildar Garipzanov, *The Symbolic Language of Royal Authority in the Carolingian World c.751–877* (Leiden: Brill, 2008) pp. 113–14.

⁹⁵ See, for example, Hrabanus Maurus, *De Universo*, PL 111.0124–5.

⁹⁶ Wiegand, *Erzbischof Odilbert*, 25. “*Quique divino zelo commoti, id est Constantinus Theodosius maior Martianus et Iustinianus, hi omnes, ut christianum populum ab omni erroris macula liberarent, divinitus inspirati quae domini sacerdotes diffiniebant, illa tamen principali auctoritate confirmabant.*”

Christ, son of the Almighty God through all things and over all.”⁹⁷ Through this comparison of Charlemagne to David, Odilbert may have deliberately acknowledged Charlemagne’s court nickname.⁹⁸ Still, the archbishop used David as a way to talk about Charlemagne’s religious zeal, not his rulership. Throughout his prologue, Odilbert addressed Charlemagne’s view of a Christian world where the emperor occupied a religio-political center. But while he rightly identified the Old Testament as a significant source of Charlemagne’s construction of his own authority, he did not recognize that the biblical narrative had pushed out a Roman imperial narrative for a genealogy of rulers. Odilbert did not see the Carolingian court’s preference for the “new Israel” and placed Charlemagne in the line of Christian Roman emperors.⁹⁹

The archiepiscopal replies of Leidrad and Maxentius, who followed local orders of baptism, described baptismal practices in terminology and with explanations emphasizing the *sacramentum*’s formative role for Charlemagne’s vision of an *imperium christianum*. Leidrad arrived at Charlemagne’s court from Freising shortly after 782 seeking the king’s patronage. He found it. Charlemagne appointed him to the important see of Lyon in 797, soon to be raised to an archbishopric in 804. Leidrad remained close to Charlemagne throughout his life, serving on diplomatic missions, taking custody of Felix following the Adoptionist controversy, and witnessing the emperor’s will.¹⁰⁰ Leidrad was also a confidant of Alcuin. A principal ally in the struggle against Adoptionism, Leidrad, along with Nibridius of Narbonne and Benedict of Aniane, led a campaign against the teachings of Felix across southern Gaul.¹⁰¹ Leidrad crafted his response to Charlemagne as a kind of biblical and liturgical exegesis through which he explored the mystical significance of baptism. The first section of Leidrad’s reply considered the outward signs of sacred baptism. At the end of a litany of important moments in biblical history which featured water, Leidrad offered a brief overview of the baptismal rite. Throughout the letter, he employed language and ideas that translated easily from the theological world to the social-political world of ninth-century Carolingian Europe. In

⁹⁷ Wiegand, *Erzbischof Odilbert*, p. 25. “*Quorum vos meritis et scientia praecllentes, David sanctum imitantes qui se pro populi salute in typo nostri exhibuit redemptoris, qui vos—strenuus cultor—pro credulitate rectae fidei divino amore accensi de domino nostro Iesu Christo dei omnipotentis filio per omnia et super omnia.*”

⁹⁸ For more on Carolingian court nicknames and their significance see Mary Garrison, “The Social World of Alcuin. Nicknames at York and at the Carolingian Court” *Alcuin of York. Scholar at the Carolingian Court*, eds. L.A.J.R. Houwen and A.A. MacDonald (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1998) pp. 59–79.

⁹⁹ Mary Garrison, “The Franks as the New Israel? Education and identity from Pippin to Charlemagne” *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, eds. Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) pp. 114–61.

¹⁰⁰ For Charlemagne’s will see Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, p. 41.

¹⁰¹ Cavadini, *Last Christology*, pp. 82, 185.

a passage that must have delighted Charlemagne, Leidrad described how baptism transferred one's allegiance, moving one from Satan's reign to God's. In a play on the word not dissimilar from Alcuin's in his *Life of St. Martin of Tours*, the archbishop summed up "through the *sacramentum* of baptism, he [the baptizand] is transferred to the kingdom of the Lord."¹⁰² He provided a complementary explanation for the delivery of salt during the baptismal rite. With a textual anchor in the Book of Esdras, he explained that among the gentiles the reception of salt secured one's fidelity to the king.

For certain people reckon that among certain gentiles it was an ancient custom that those who promised fidelity to the king ate salt solemnly sworn or consecrated in the presence of the king to whom they promised faith. Whence in the Book of Esdras is it written that the princes of the Samaritans said to the king of Persia when they wrote concerning the accusation of the Jews 'we are mindful of the salt we ate in the palace' (cf. 1 Esdr. 4:14).¹⁰³

Leidrad characterized baptism itself as concluding two pacts, one to reject Satan and another to believe in God. In an ancient reference placed in a new context, he noted "for there are two pacts of the believers. The first pact is in which he renounced the devil, his pomps, and that whole way of life. The second pact is in which he professes that he believes in God the Father almighty and in Jesus Christ his Son and in the Holy Spirit."¹⁰⁴ This move drew the Creed (or the Symbol) into the realm of a promise or vow of fidelity not dissimilar from the imperial oaths demanded by Charlemagne. This impression is immediately bolstered by the martial imagery adopted by Leidrad to explain the significance of the two pacts sworn at baptism. Again in a spirit reminiscent of Alcuin's *Life of Martin*, the archbishop explained that the new Christians were conscripted through baptism into the army of God and were expected to wage a moral war against Satan and vice. "Now the novices of God and soldiers of Christ receive the arms of the *sacramenta*, so that they carry the fight to the devil."¹⁰⁵ Moreover, his explanation of the Creed went beyond that offered by Isidore and drew on the wider meaning of the word *symbolum* as a standard for identification. He first reported that "'symbol' in Greek, is translated 'evidence'

¹⁰² Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 358. "*in regnum domini sui per sacramentum baptismatis transferantur.*"

¹⁰³ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 358–9. "*aestimant namque quidam quod etiam apud quosdam gentilium antiqua erat consuetudo, ut qui fidelitatem regibus promittebant, salem adiutum vel consecratum in praesentia eorundem regum quibus fidem promittebant comederent. Unde in libro esdrae scriptum est quod principes samaritanorum regi persarum, cum de accusatione iudaeorum scriberent, dixerint: 'memores sumus salis quem in palatio comedimus.'*"

¹⁰⁴ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 367. "*Duae sunt namque pactiones credentium. Prima pactio est in qua renuntiavit diabolo et pompis eius et universae conversationi illius; secunda pactio est in qua se profitetur credere in deum patrem omnipotentem et in iesum christum filium eius et in spiritum sanctum.*" For more discussion on this idea see Chapter One.

¹⁰⁵ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 367. "*Iam deinde tirones dei et milites christi arma sacramentorum suscipiunt, ut pugnam gerant adversus diabolium.*"

or 'collation' in Latin."¹⁰⁶ Then after explaining that the collation stems from the belief that each Apostle provided an element of the Creed, he continued that the Creed functioned as a verification of faith which allowed believers to distinguish orthodox from unorthodox preachers.¹⁰⁷ "Therefore they [the apostles] provided the Creed (*symbolum*), evidence by which they might know who truly preaches the apostolic rules according to Christ."¹⁰⁸

Leidrad recognized that Charlemagne's interest lay in Christian formation. As he unpacked the rite of baptism, he emphasized instruction, what ought to be taught and how content ought to be assessed through each element of the rite. He spilled the most ink on the catechumens, competentes, and the Creed. Building on Isidore, he depicted catechumens fundamentally as students. Catechumens "are catechized, that is they are instructed in the teaching of the *sacramenta*."¹⁰⁹ He developed his discussion along a trajectory reminiscent of that advocated by Alcuin. Following a quotation of Matthew's Great Commission in its liturgical (*ite*) form, he explained that formation took place in a specific order and that the first element of formation was instruction in the faith. "Therefore, he who is to be baptized first should be taught to believe, that is he should be instructed in the faith."¹¹⁰ Nowhere is this disposition clearer than in Leidrad's treatment of the scrutiny, which he presented as a test. The last element of the rite before baptism itself was a final examination of the catechumens which assessed their knowledge and readiness for graduation to baptism.

This whole action, which is celebrated over the catechumens and competentes by certain people, is called the scrutiny, for no other reason, I think, except close examination according to the word of the Psalmist: 'God scrutinizing hearts and kidneys,' because there the hearts of the believers and the doubters are scrutinized by the priests so that they know who they should now rightly admit to baptism and who must be postponed.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 363. "*Symbolum grece, latine vero interpretatur indicium vel conlatio*."

¹⁰⁷ On the tradition that the twelve apostles provided the twelve elements of the Apostles' Creed see Henri de Lubac, *The Christian Faith: An Essay on the Structure of the Apostles' Creed* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986) pp. 19–54.

¹⁰⁸ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 364. "*Idcirco posuerunt symbolum, indicium per quod agnosceretur is qui christum vere secundum apostolicas regulas praedicaret*."

¹⁰⁹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 359. "*catezizantur, id est instruuntur instructione sacramentorum*"

¹¹⁰ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 357. "*Ergo qui baptizandus est, prius doceatur ut credat, id est instruat fide*."

¹¹¹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 359. "*haec tota actio quae super caticuminis et competentibus celebratur a quibusdam scrutinium nominatur, non ob aliud, ut putamus, nisi a scrutando, iuxta illud psalmistae: 'scrutans corda et renus deus,' (cf. Ier. 17:10) eo quod ibi scrutarentur corda credentium et dubitantium a sacerdotibus ut intellegent quis ad baptismum iam rite admitteretur, quis adhuc differetur*." Leidrad seems to have misremembered the source of his quote, which comes from Jeremiah, not the Psalms.

For Leidrad, the clergy did not supply moral instruction to catechumens. Rather, moral life was an implication of proper formation in faith. This assumption governed his discussions of the Christian faith. When treating the Creed, the archbishop supplied a brief treatment of the theological ideas contained in the statement of faith and closed his discussion with the idea that such teaching had moral ramifications. "The saving Creed is handed on to them, as a reminder of the faith and evidence of a holy confession, by which those instructed know what they now ought to show on account of the grace of Christ."¹¹² For Leidrad, moral life was second, but not a secondary area of Christian formation.

Leidrad's intense concern to address Christian formation led him to answer questions not explicitly posed by Charlemagne. Leidrad ended his text with an explanation of infant catechumens whose faith was professed by godparents. After answering Charlemagne's question about the Body and Blood of the Lord, Leidrad appended a section "concerning infants or those who are not able to respond for themselves."¹¹³ This additional passage highlighted two concerns Leidrad wished to address: instruction in the context of infant baptism and whether infants could be called "faithful." First, he addressed Christian formation by considering the role of the godparent in the baptism of the infants. Second, he reflected on the integrity of the community. One who could not answer for himself nevertheless should be counted among the faithful. This betrayed Leidrad's sensitivity to the concerns of Charlemagne who had earlier voiced his personal concern about godparents.¹¹⁴ Perhaps Leidrad had heard about Charlemagne's trip to Liège.

Leidrad's commitment to the Carolingian court's theological vision—and especially his debt to Alcuin—was on full display in the archbishop's defense of triple immersion baptism, a position all the more burning insofar as the archbishop served as warden—albeit an extremely generous one—to the deposed Adoptionist heresiarch Felix.¹¹⁵ To justify his position, Leidrad cited Gregory the Great's letter from April 591 to his good friend Leander, archbishop of Seville, in which he advised his friend concerning the administration of baptism across Iberia. The stakes were high because of the recent conversion of the Visigoths under King Recarred from Arian to Catholic Christianity in 586 or 587. Leander, evidently, was concerned about which liturgical practices were to be conserved and which might be safely accommodated. Gregory showed the same instinct for flexibility he later showed in his advice to Augustine of Canterbury

¹¹² Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 359. "*istis salutare symbolum traditur, quasi communitorium fidei et sanctae confessionis indicium, quo instructi agnoscant quales iam ad gratiam christi exhibere se debeant.*"

¹¹³ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 379. "*de infantibus vel his qui pro se respondere non possunt.*"

¹¹⁴ See the discussion earlier in this chapter; also Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. I, p. 66, n. 59.

¹¹⁵ Cavadini, *Last Christology*, p. 82.

on his mission to the English, famously preserved by Bede in his *Ecclesiastical History*.¹¹⁶ However, the pope ultimately urged rigor when comfort or credibility might be given to heretics, in this case the very recently removed Arian clergy. Gregory wrote

However, concerning triple immersion baptism, no truer reply can be made than what you yourselves feel, that in one faith, a different custom is in no way harmful to the Holy Church. But as we are immersed for the third time, we signify the *sacramenta* of the burial that lasted three days, so that while the infant is lifted out of the water for the third time, the resurrection of a three-day period is expressed. But if perhaps someone should also think that it happens for the sake of the veneration of the supreme Trinity, no objection is made to this, immersing in the water just once for baptism, because while there is one substance in three beings it can in no way be reprehensible for an infant to be immersed either three times or once, when there is both a trinity of persons in three immersions, and the singularity of divine essence can be signified in one. But if until now, an infant was immersed three times in baptism by heretics, I do not think that this should be done among you, in case they divide the divine while counting the immersions, and boast that they have defeated your custom while doing what they used to do.¹¹⁷

Gregory advised Leander to observe single baptism against the triple immersion practiced by the Arian heretics. This single immersion then was adopted by the Spanish Catholics and Gregory's recommendation was inserted into the decrees of the fourth council of Toledo (633).¹¹⁸ If Leidrad were not familiar with this text on his own, he would likely have known it from his infamous Spanish detainee. In his reply to Charlemagne, he quoted a substantial portion of Gregory's opinion, but drew a different conclusion than did Gregory himself. Whereas Gregory recommended single immersion on propagandistic grounds, Leidrad used the same line of reasoning to advocate triple immersion on theological grounds. On the one hand his specific advice on the matter directly

¹¹⁶ Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, Vol. 1, ed. Michael Lapidge, SC 489 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2005) pp. 206–58. For analysis see Rob Meens, "A background to Augustine's mission to Anglo-Saxon England" *Anglo-Saxon England* 23 (1994) pp. 5–17 and Robert Markus, *Gregory the Great and His World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) pp. 178–85.

¹¹⁷ Gregory the Great, *Epistola I.41, Registrum Epistularum libri I–VII*, CCSL 140, ed. Dag Norberg (Turnholt: Brepols, 1982) p. 48. "*De trina uero mersione baptismatis, nil respondi uerius potest quam ipsi sensistis, quia in una fide nil officit sanctae ecclesiae consuetudo diuersa. Nos autem quod tertio mergimus, triduanæ sepulturae sacramenta signamus, ut, dum tertio ab aquis infans educitur, resurrectio tridui temporis exprimatur. Quod si quis forte etiam pro summae trinitatis ueneratione aestimet fieri, neque ad hoc aliquid obsistit, baptizandum semel in aquis mergere, quia, dum in tribus subsistentiis una substantia est, reprehensibile esse nullatenus potest, infantem in baptis-mate uel ter uel semel mergere, quando et in tribus mersionibus personarum trinitas, et in una potest diuinitatis singularitas designari. Sed si nunc usque ab haereticis infans in baptis-mate tertio mergebatur, fiendum apud uos esse non censeo, ne, dum mersiones numerant, diuinitatem diuidant, dumque quod faciebant faciunt, morem uestrum se uicisse glorientur.*"

¹¹⁸ *Quartum Concilium Toletanum* c. 6, PL 84.0367–8.

contradicted Gregory. On the other hand, he quite elegantly applied Gregory's reasoning to his own context. Instead of focusing on a struggle against vanquished heretics, he concentrated on theological formation and from that drew his conclusion.¹¹⁹ He wrote

Some indeed think that triple immersion is on account of veneration of the Trinity, others however on account of the *sacramentum* of the three-day burial. But blessed Pope Gregory responded thus to a certain one asking him about triple and single immersion: 'However, concerning triple immersion baptism, no truer reply can be made than what you yourselves feel, that in one faith, a different custom is in no way harmful to the Holy Church. But as we are immersed for the third time, we signify the *sacramenta* of the burial that lasted three days, so that when the infant is lifted out of the water for the third time, the resurrection of a three-day period is expressed. But if perhaps someone should also think that it happens for the sake of the veneration of the supreme Trinity, no objection is made to this, immersing in the water just once for baptism, because while there is one substance in three beings it can in no way be reprehensible for an infant to be immersed either three times or once, when there is both a trinity of persons in three immersions, and the singularity of divine essence can be signified in one.' But although we are baptized in the death of Christ according to the Apostle, if any person of the Trinity is in any way omitted when baptism is given on the solemnity of regeneration, nothing is done unless the whole Trinity is invoked, because the office of baptism is not sanctified unless in the one name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.¹²⁰

Triple immersion was preferred, and single immersion only tolerated when a triple invocation was still observed, lest the Adoptionists claim the symbolism for their Christological beliefs.

Maxentius of Aquileia led his northern Italian see from his election in 811 until his death in 833. The archbishop's reply is the briefest of the surviving archiepiscopal replies. The *ordo* indicated in the letter departed from baptismal

¹¹⁹ For further discussion of this phenomena with respect to Alcuin, which I have termed "innovative deference" see Owen M. Phelan, "Catechising the Wild: The Continuity and Innovation of Missionary Catechesis under the Carolingians" *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 61:3 (2010) pp. 455–74.

¹²⁰ Keefe, *Water and the World*, Vol. II, p. 370. "*Quidam enim senserunt trinam fieri mersionem propter trinitatis venerationem; quidam autem propter triduanæ sepulturae sacramentum. Sed beatus gregorius papa cuidam se interroganti de trina et simpla mersione sic respondit: 'De trina vero mersione baptismatis, nihil responderi verius potest quam ipsi sensistis, quia in una fide nihil officit sanctae ecclesiae consuetudo diversa. Nos autem quod tertio mergimus, triduanæ sepulturae sacramenta signamus ut dum tertio ab aquis infans educitur, resurrectio triduanæ temporis exprimitur. Quod si quis forte etiam pro summae trinitatis veneratione aestimet, neque ad hoc aliquid obsistit, baptizando semel in aquis mergere, quia dum in tribus subsistentiis una substantia est, reprehensibile esse nullatenus potest infantem in baptismo vel ter vel semel mergere, quando et in tribus mersionibus personarum trinitas, et in una potest divinitatis singularitas designari. Sed quamvis in morte christi secundum apostolum baptizemur, si praetermissa qualibet trinitatis persona baptismus detur in regenerationis sollemnitate, nihil agitur nisi tota trinitas invocetur, quia nonnisi in uno nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti baptismi sanctificatur officium.'*"

practices common to northern Italy and, by so doing, accents Christian formation and reveals his interest in addressing Charlemagne's concerns. Maxentius began his discussion by emphasizing that everyone was made a catechumen before baptism, no matter how young. He conceived of the catechumenate both as instilling doctrine and promoting freedom. "When they come to the *sacramentum* of regeneration, whether infants or children, they do not approach the font of life before they are made catechumens, since 'catechumens' means 'instructed' or 'subject to restraint' and 'having a will free for Christ.'"¹²¹ Earlier studies of the letter have concluded that both the brevity of the reply and the near constant affirmations of the "Roman-ness" of his rite made it likely that Maxentius was attempting to describe as concisely as possible his non-Roman rite in terms he imagined agreeable to the Carolingian court, seeming—perhaps understandably—to mistake the Charlemagne's interest in uniform instruction for an interest in uniform liturgy.¹²² For example, he did not bother to distinguish between catechumens and competentes. Slightly later northern Italian baptismal rites addressed catechumens as competentes during the first week of Lent.¹²³ Maxentius touched on the Creed and education, but without elaboration or significant commentary. His brief description of the Creed invited meditation, but without providing much direction. "Therefore connected by all brevity is the plan of this Creed, whose words indeed are few, but whose mysteries are great."¹²⁴ Maxentius continued with a brief recapitulation of the Creed taken largely from the Gelasian Sacramentary's text for the elect. He excerpted the Creed, but not the Gelasian's accompanying exegesis. Perhaps betraying his relative distance from the court, the patriarch of Aquileia understood the scrutinies as relating to exorcism, not as a test in the sense of an examination. He offered a widely cited definition for scrutiny, but then described the scrutiny as an element separating the catechumen from the clutches of Satan, implying any examination was more ritual than literal.

A scrutiny is a 'questioning' or an 'investigation,' because the works of the devil and his pomps overcame the first man in Paradise through a suggestion deformed from the command of God. That vessel formed and animated from the mud of the earth was infected with the poison of his fault. Through the mouth of the priests and the imposition of hands, examined (*scrutiniatum*) and cleansed, and the unclean spirit then having been cast out, he is signed with holy oil on every part. Called back to

¹²¹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 462. "*Cum sive parvoli sive iuvenes ad regenerationis veniunt sacramentum, non prius fonte vitae adeunt quam catecumini efficiantur. Catecumini etenim instructi dicuntur sive subiacentes castigationi et liberum ad christum habentes arbitrium.*"

¹²² H. Boone Porter, "Maxentius of Aquileia and the North Italian Baptismal Rites" *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 69 (1955) pp. 3–9, and Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. I, pp. 107–11.

¹²³ C. Lambot, *North Italian Services of the Eleventh Century: Recueil D'Ordines Du XIe Siècle Provenant de la Haut-Italie* (Milan, Bibl. Ambros. T.27.sup.) (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1920) p. 8.

¹²⁴ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 464–5. "*Ratio igitur symboli huius omni brevitate conexa est, cuius quidem pauca sunt verba, sed magna mysteria.*"

the grace of blessing, he is made a vessel of the Lord and he becomes a temple of the Holy Spirit just as the Apostle says: 'He will be a vessel in honor sanctified and useful to the Lord, prepared for every good work (2Tim. 2:21).'¹²⁵

Somewhat clumsy changes made to the rites of baptism highlight Maxentius' focus on Christian formation and his desire to avoid controversy. Maxentius addressed why the nostrils were touched and why the breast and shoulders were anointed, both rites not common to baptism in northern Italy, but specifically mentioned by Charlemagne. Tellingly, he omitted any mention of the celebrated *pedilavium*, or foot washing ceremony, connected to Ambrose of Milan and common to most baptismal rites from northern Italy. In its stead sat his somewhat awkward discussion of the Creed (with the Filioque). For Keefe, this provided added evidence of Maxentius' trying to put a Roman spin on his non-Roman baptismal rite.¹²⁶ The use of a creedal commentary at this point in Maxentius' text directly addressed Charlemagne's chief concern, while simultaneously smoothing over a prominent non-Roman feature of northern Italian baptismal rites. The general sense of Maxentius' letter is of one engaged with the Carolingian court, but not too closely. He recognized and tackled topics of concern to the emperor, but avoided offering more detail than absolutely necessary. Perhaps his brevity reflected disinterest, or anxiety, or uncertainty. At least equally possibly, like Paulinus, his predecessor, he grasped the general outlines of the court interests in formation, but lacked command of the subtleties.

The replies that followed the order of Charlemagne's questions also highlighted Christian formation through instruction in faith and morals as well as a means to test that instruction. Amalarius of Trier composed his response to Charlemagne's letter during his time at the head of the archiepiscopal see from 809–814/816, when he was likely a casualty of administrative transition from Charlemagne's court to that of his son, Louis the Pious.¹²⁷ Amalarius, while not a court intimate, was certainly familiar with the court. He was trusted by Charlemagne and appointed as an ambassador to Constantinople in late 813. He would return only after Charlemagne's death and the accession of Louis in 814. After a brief period of uncertainty, Amalarius would win Louis' trust,

¹²⁵ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 463–4. "*Scrutinium namque est inquisitio vel investigatio quia opera diaboli et eius pompae quae primum hominem in paradiso per pravam suggestionem a mandato dei superaverat, et vas illud ex limo terrae formatum et animatum veneno suae militiae infecerat, per ora sacerdotum et manus inpositionum (sic), scrutinium atque purgatum, et eiectum exinde spiritum immundum, ex omni parte signatum oleo sanctificato, ad benedictionis gratiam revocatum et vas fiat domini et templum efficiatur spiritus sancti, sicut dicit apostolus: 'Erit vas in honore sanctificatum, et utile domino ad omne opus bonum paratum' (2 Tim. 2:21)."*

¹²⁶ Keefe, *Water and the Word*. Vol. I, p. 109.

¹²⁷ A brief attempt to clarify difficulties in establishing Amalarius' biography is Christopher A. Jones, *A Lost Work by Amalarius of Metz. Interpolations in Salisbury, Cathedral Library, MS. 154* (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 2001) pp. 164–74. See also the earlier biographical sketches in Eleanor Shipley Duckett, *Carolingian Portraits: A Study in the Ninth Century* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962) pp. 92–120 and Allen Cabaniss, *Amalarius of Metz* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing, 1954).

working at the court in the 820s, when he served as a participant in the Colloquy of Paris in 825. In the 830s, he would be installed in the prestigious see of Lyon, though Florus of Lyon's strident objections to Amalarius' liturgical views would make it a short tenure.¹²⁸ He was also an admirer of Alcuin and, perhaps, his student.¹²⁹ The Adoptionist debate helped shape Amalarius' treatment of the liturgy.¹³⁰ Amalarius' reply to Charlemagne was the earliest in a substantial corpus of commentary on the liturgy, and was distinctive within his corpus for being markedly less allegorical than later works such as his *Liber officialis*.¹³¹ The letter's ruminations run to some length, shorter only than Leidrad's among the surviving archiepiscopal replies. The archbishop's reply fixed quickly on education as he acknowledged that the emperor had inquired about "why each thing is done in baptism or in the scrutiny."¹³² Like Leidrad, Amalarius understood the scrutinies essentially as tests, not exorcisms. Thorough examination, he explained, was why he employed the Roman model of seven scrutinies. "They [the catechumens] are examined (*perscrutantur*), that is they are thoroughly examined, to determine if they hold fixed in their mind those things which they heard from their teacher in a certain way just as shadows are put to flight in the preparation by the catechumen, and in the progress of the scrutiny the catechumens themselves are illuminated."¹³³ For Amalarius, the renunciation of Satan in the baptismal rite was predicated upon education confirmed by the scrutinies. To renounce the devil one needed command of the faith. And the scrutiny assessed whether one knew enough doctrine knowledgeably to renounce evil.

We ask those whom we previously instructed in the faith, and whom afterwards we examined, if they until now persevered in those things which they originally learned, and if they knew that they were blind and recently run to the light, to the

¹²⁸ Adolf Kolping, "Amalar von Metz und Florus von Lyon: Zeugnis eines Wandels im liturgischen Mysterienverständnis in der Karolingerzeit" *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 73 (1951) pp. 424–64.

¹²⁹ Jones, *A Lost Work*, pp. 52–3, 145–53.

¹³⁰ On Amalarius liturgical works see Celia Chazelle, "Amalarius's *Liber officialis*: Spirit and Vision in Carolingian Liturgical Thought" *Seeing the Invisible in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, eds. Giselle de Nie, Karl Morrison, and Marco Mostert (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005) pp. 327–57; P.G. Ferriby, *The Development of Liturgical Symbolism in the Early Works of Amalarius of Metz* (Ph. D. Diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2000); P.A. Jacobson, *Ad memoriam ducens: The Development of Liturgical Exegesis in Amalar of Metz' Expositiones missae* (Ph. D. Diss., Graduate Theological Union, 1996).

¹³¹ Amalarius' liturgical writings, including his letter on baptism, are edited in *Amalarii episcopi Opera liturgica omnia*, 3 Vols, *Studi e Testi* 138–140, ed. J. M. Hanssens (Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1948–50).

¹³² Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 337. "*cur unaquaque res agatur in baptisterio aut in scrutinio.*"

¹³³ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 340. "*Septies perscrutantur, id est perfecte perscrutantur, si ea fixa mente teneant quae audierunt a magistro et quodammodo quasi tenebrae fugantur in inchoatione a catecumino, et in profectu scrutinii inluminentur ipsi catecumini.*"

extent that we examined them thoroughly, that is seven times, if they renounced, that is opposed, Satan, the hostile power, and all his works and pomps.¹³⁴

He also connected the religious nature of the emperor's interest to his temporal rule. In his introduction, he accorded Charlemagne the popular form "crowned by God" and addressed him as the "most Christian Emperor."¹³⁵ He further reminded the emperor of his constant prayers for both religious and secular success. Humbly deferential to the emperor as an educator, the archbishop of Trier concluded "indeed, although we are ignorant, we do not cease to give thanks to God for you and your mercy, which you cultivate in all worshippers of God, and to pray for stability and wisdom in your reign."¹³⁶

Although he did not cite *Primo paganus* as some of the other replies did, Amalarius displays a clear sense of Alcuin's preferences as he built his explanation.¹³⁷ Some references were mere echoes, such as his discussion of the need for baptism. He described the ontological rejuvenation that took place. "And we are not able to be re-formed to the image of him who created us except through saving baptism."¹³⁸ Other references betrayed affinities for patristic authors like Augustine of Hippo. When Amalarius offered advice on the content of catechesis, he referred Charlemagne to the very same book Alcuin suggested in his letter on the conversion of the Avars. "Concerning instruction, if anyone wishes he is able to find enough in Augustine's *De catechizandis rudibus*."¹³⁹ And, although he did not cite the liturgical form of Matthew's Great Commission, he did mirror Alcuin's approach in the order in baptismal instruction. Amalarius emphasized teaching the faith before baptism and exhorting proper moral behavior during the post-baptismal ceremonies. He quoted

¹³⁴ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 345–6. "Interrogamus illos quos antea instruximus in fide, et quos postea scrutati fuimus, si adhuc permansissent in his quae primitus didicerunt, et si se caecos fuisse cognovissent, et modo properasse ad lumen, eo quod perfecte, id est septies, illos scrutati sumus; si abrenuntient, id est contradicant satanae contrariae potestati, et omnibus operibus eius, et omnibus pompis eius."

¹³⁵ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 337. "a deo coronato . . . christianissime imperator . . ."

¹³⁶ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 337. "Nos vero, quamquam ignari simus, non cessamus pro vobis et vestra miseracordia, quam exercetis in omnes dei cultores, gratias deo agere, et stabilitatem atque sapientiam inprecari vestro sancto regimini."

¹³⁷ Peter Ferriby recognized a tension between Amalarius and *Primo paganus* in which Amalarius provided extensive original detail, yet echoed elements of Alcuin's instruction, especially in his recapitulations. Peter G. Ferriby, *The Development of Liturgical Symbolism in the Early Works of Amalarius of Metz*, ca. 775–850 (Ph. D. Diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2000) pp. 67–71.

¹³⁸ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 338. "Et non posse nos reformari ad imaginem eius qui nos creavit, nisi per salutare baptisma." Compare to Alcuin's sentiment "et recte homo qui ad imaginem sanctae trinitatis conditus est, per invocationem sanctae trinitatis ad eandem renovatur imaginem." Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 202, also in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 243–4. Also the explanation repeated earlier by Jesse of Amiens, see Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 424.

¹³⁹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 339. "de qua instructione, si quis vult, satis reperire potest in agustino de catechizandis rudibus."

Augustine, this time from *De fide*, to describe the proper content of formation, which was faith and works. Though Augustine was ambiguous about the exact order of instruction, Amalarius set faith before baptism and works after. The archbishop of Trier wrote

As Augustine says in his book concerning faith and works: 'Thus are those to be catechized who seek baptism so that they not only hear and receive what to believe, but also how they ought to live: thus is eternal life to be promised to the faithful, not as through a dead faith, which without works is unable to save, but through the faith of grace, which works through love.'¹⁴⁰

Accordingly, Amalarius interpreted the rites preceding baptism as focused on the faith. The longest discussions were of the scrutinies, the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed. Revealingly, although Charlemagne's questionnaire did not specifically ask about the Lord's Prayer, the archbishop included it along with a rudimentary explanation of his prebaptismal catechesis. While this likely reflected common liturgical practice, its mention in the letter also underscored Amalarius' sense of the emperor's interests, in line with what Ghaerbald learned the hard way. For example, salt administered before baptism indicated attention to the teachings of the faith. "In that scrutiny we place blessed salt into his [the catechumen's] mouth after the first prayer which says: 'Almighty eternal God, consider to be worthy this servant, whom you deemed worthy to call to the rudiments of faith.'¹⁴¹ After baptism, attention fell on moral interpretation. Amalarius explained that the head covering was an exhortation to constant prayer and the white garment was to remind one of duty to justice. "Now with the grace of sacred baptism received, he should not have confidence in his own strength, but ought always to pray that he is protected by the heavenly aid of the Lord. We wish to understand the aforementioned protection of the Lord through the linen cloth by which the head is covered."¹⁴² And then he continued "for through your clothing works of justice are understood."¹⁴³

Amalarius' lengthy treatment offered details clarifying terse passages and vague references found in other replies. In his treatment of catechumens, Amalarius confirmed that both adults and children were accepted for baptism.

¹⁴⁰ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 338. "Et sicut agustinus ait in libro de fide et operibus: 'sic catecizandos eos qui baptismum petunt ut non solum audiant atque suscipiant quid credere, verum etiam qualiter vivere debeant; sic promitti fidelibus vitam aeternam, ut non etiam fidem mortuam, quae sine operibus saluare non potest, ad eam se quisque posse pervenire abiretur, sed per illam fidem gratiae, quae per dilectionem operatur.' See Augustine, *De fide et operibus* xxvii.49, ed. Joseph Zycha, CSEL 41 (Vienna: F. Tempsky, 1900) p. 97."

¹⁴¹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 344. "In ipso scrutinio benedictum salem ori inponimus post primam orationem quae dicitur: 'omnipotens sempiterna deus, respicere dignare super hunc famulum tuum, quem ad rudimenta fidei vocare dignatus est.'"

¹⁴² Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 348. "Iam percepta gratia sacri baptismatis, non se confidat viribus suis, sed semper depraecetur ut protectus sit domini et caelesti auxilio. Protectionem domini praeclaram volumus intellegere per linteum quo capit tegitur."

¹⁴³ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 348. "Per vestimenta enim opera iustitiae intelleguntur."

Further, he distinguished between respective formations. Adults, Amalarius wrote, should be instructed in the faith before baptism. "It is necessary that he who desires to be renewed according to the new man is instructed by the teachers of the church what he is before baptism and what he is to be after baptism through the grace of God, so that he is turned from the shadows of sins to the light of truth, and with the name of the false gods left behind, he worships the one true and living God."¹⁴⁴ Children, on the other hand, he presented as the subjects of prayers which would aid them eventually to be formed in the faith. "We perform prayers over the children so that blindness of the heart is expelled from them, and Satan's snares by which they were bound are broken off, and through growth and the ministry of the members, they are made suitable to know those things which are to be abandoned and which are to be held."¹⁴⁵ Amalarius revealed the formative element associated with infant baptism when he included the godparents in his treatment of the scrutinies. He specifically mentioned teaching both the Lord's Prayer and the Creed to the godparents, so they would be able to instruct their godchildren. "We teach the Lord's Prayer to the godfathers and godmothers, so that they might do the same for those whom they are to receive from holy baptism. Likewise we teach the Creed"¹⁴⁶ In fact, not only were the godparents instructed under Amalarius, they were scrutinized. "Then we scrutinize (*perscrutamur*) the godfathers and godmothers to see if they are able to sing the Lord's Prayer and the Creed just as we had warned them in advance."¹⁴⁷ This explanation accords with references to infant catechumens in the other replies. It also further contextualizes Charlemagne's frustration with the godparents at Liège.

Less is known about Magnus of Sens, who governed his see from his election until his death (c.818). Magnus seems to have been trusted by Charlemagne, serving as a *missus* on at least one occasion.¹⁴⁸ The archbishop's concise response to the questionnaire emphasized Christian formation and showed clear links to Alcuin's teachings on baptism, especially *Primo paganus*. He began his response by weaving the questions about the catechumen, the scrutiny, and the Creed into a short narrative on Christian formation before baptism. Magnus described

¹⁴⁴ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 338. "*qui desiderat renovari secundum novum hominem, necesse est ut instruatur a doctoribus ecclesiae qualis ante baptismum sit, qualis post baptismum futurus sit per dei gratiam, ut de tenebris peccatorum in lucem veritatis convertatur, relicto nomine falsorum deorum, colat unum deum vivum et verum.*"

¹⁴⁵ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 339. "*super parvulos orationem facimus ut cecitas cordis ab eis expellatur, dirumpantur laquei satanae quibus fuerant conligati et idonei efficiantur per incrementa et ministrationem membrorum ea cognoscere quae dimittenda sunt et quae tenenda.*"

¹⁴⁶ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 339. "*docemus orationem dominicam paternos et maternas, ut et ipsi similiter faciant quos suscepturi sunt a sacro baptismo. Similiter docemus symbolum.*"

¹⁴⁷ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 346. "*deinde perscrutamur paternos vel maternas, si possint cantare orationem dominicam et symbolum, sicut praemonuimus.*"

¹⁴⁸ Rosamond McKitterick, *Charlemagne: The Formation of a European Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) p. 260.

the catechumenate as a time before baptism during which a person learned about Christian practices, doctrines, and laws. "Catechumen moreover is translated 'one hearing or instructed' so that, before he arrives at the sacred font, he hears and learns the mystical *sacramenta* of the Christian religion and then he learns the faith of the Holy Trinity and the Creed and the other things, which Christian law advises."¹⁴⁹ The scrutiny, then, for Magnus as for Leidrad and for Amalarius, was fundamentally an examination of an individual's understanding of the Christian faith. "A scrutiny, however, is called an 'investigation' because through it is explored how the catholic faith is retained in their hearts. And, in another way, a scrutiny is so called 'by scrutinizing' because then catechumens are to be scrutinized to see if they now firmly hold the right faith of the Creed newly handed to them."¹⁵⁰

Magnus' response resonated with the language of community and polity important to Charlemagne. When providing a simple explanation of the Creed, he elaborated on the communion of saints to gloss that this group was characterized primarily by fidelity. The archbishop remarked that the church is "the communion of all the saints, that is the congregation of all of the faithful in Christ."¹⁵¹ He also framed the renunciations in political or social language when he described Satan as a ruler and sin as slavery. "The renunciation is called an 'aversion' or a 'curse' because before baptism each one on account of original sin is a slave of sin, and therefore he renounces the devil, who is the prince of sin, and all his work and all his pomps, that is vices, so that he rejects his domination."¹⁵² Magnus tied his interest in education and community together in his analysis of Creed. He cited the well-known definition of a *symbolum* provided by Isidore, but then elaborated to highlight the unity given to Christians by their faith, the separation of Christians from others who did not share the faith, and the antiquity of the faith shared by Christians. For Magnus, knowledge of the Creed was the key prerequisite for baptism. "Symbol is Greek, in Latin it is translated 'evidence,' 'sign,' or 'collation.' It is translated 'evidence' because through it is indicated the integrity of the faith; 'sign' because in it is well preserved and understood that the faithful are distinguished from unfaithful; 'collation'

¹⁴⁹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 266. "*catechumenus autem audiens sive instructus interpretatur ut audiat et discat, antequam ad sacrum accedat fontem, mystica christianae religionis sacramenta, et tunc discat fidem sanctae trinitatis et symbolum et cetera quae christiana ammonet lex.*"

¹⁵⁰ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 266–7. "*Scrutinium vero dicuntur inquisitio, eo quod per illud exploratur qualiter fides catholica in illorum cordibus retinetur. Et aliter scrutinium a scrutando dicitur, quia tunc scrutandi sunt catechumeni, si rectam iam noviter fidem symboli eis traditam firmiter teneant.*"

¹⁵¹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 267. "*. . . communionem omnium sanctorum, id est congregationem omnium fidelium in Christo.*"

¹⁵² Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 268. "*Abrenunciatio dicitur abominatio sive detestatio, quia ante baptismum unusquisque propter originalia peccata servus est peccati, et ideo abrenuntiat diabolo, qui est princeps peccati, et omnibus operibus eius et omnibus pompis eius, id est vitiis, ut dominationem illius aspernetur.*"

because in it the apostles brought together the whole integrity of the faith.”¹⁵³ Striking is Magnus’ use of language familiar both in imperial and in catechetical contexts.

In several key explanations Magnus’ reply closely mirrored Alcuin’s *Primo paganus*, offering further evidence of the archbishop’s sensitivity to the court’s agenda. Magnus adopted Alcuin’s concern for triple immersion baptism and for his language and explanation of interior renewal when he explained that “in no way is the mystery of baptism able to be accomplished except by the invocation of the Holy Trinity, because it is right that man who was created in the image of the Holy Trinity be renewed to that same image.”¹⁵⁴ Alcuin had written “rightly is man, who was made in the image of the Holy Trinity, renewed to the same image through the invocation of the Holy Trinity.”¹⁵⁵ Other explanations also reflected *Primo paganus*. For example, when addressing the topic of the eucharist, Magnus noted “finally, they share in the body and blood of the Lord so that they are made his members who suffered and rose for them.”¹⁵⁶ In *Primo paganus*, Alcuin had taught “thus is he strengthened by the Lord’s body and blood so that he is a member of his head, who suffered and rose for him.”¹⁵⁷ Magnus’ debt to Alcuin went beyond textual echoes of *Primo paganus*. He also demonstrated command of the missionary strategy Alcuin developed for the Avars. Magnus emphasized points identified by Alcuin as most suitable for those coming to the faith, especially knowledge of the immortal soul and final judgment.¹⁵⁸ As the archbishop explained the catechumenate, he remarked “and indeed it is agreed that they [the catechumens] listen while he [the catechumen] is instructed so that he worships, knowing the one God, and also hearing about the immortality of his soul and about eternal glory for the saints as well as eternal torments for the evil, he believes that he is going to be rewarded

¹⁵³ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 267. “symbolum graece, latine indicium et signum vel conlatio interpretatur. Indicium quia per id indicatur fidei integritas; signum quod eo bene retento et intellecto fideles ab infidelibus discernuntur; conlatio quia in eo apostoli omnem fidei integritatem contulerunt.”

¹⁵⁴ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 266. “Nullatenus itaque baptismi mysterium perfici potest nisi sub invocatione sanctae trinitatis, quia rectum est ut homo qui ad imaginem sanctae trinitatis creatus est, ad eandem renovetur imaginem.” Susan Keefe argued that the minor alterations in language require that Magnus be working from an intermediate text, and not Alcuin’s letters themselves. Susan Keefe, “An Unknown Response from the Archiepiscopal Province of Sens to Charlemagne’s Circulatory Inquiry on Baptism” *Revue Bénédictine* 96 (1986) pp. 48–93, at pp. 60–2.

¹⁵⁵ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 202 and Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 243–4. “Et recte homo qui ad imaginem sanctae trinitatis conditus est, per invocationem sanctae trinitatis ad eandem renovatur imaginem.”

¹⁵⁶ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 270. “Postremo corpore et sanguine domini communicantur, ut illius membra efficiantur qui pro eis passus est et resurrexit.”

¹⁵⁷ Alcuin, *Epistola* 134, p. 203 and also Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 245. “Sic corpore et sanguine dominico confirmatur, ut illius capitis membrum, qui pro eo passus est et resurrexit.”

¹⁵⁸ Phelan, “Catechising the Wild,” pp. 455–74.

for the nature of his merits.”¹⁵⁹ Certain knowledge of basic Christian doctrines ultimately affected people’s behavior.

All five surviving archiepiscopal replies agree on the organizing importance of the *sacramentum* of baptism and on the centrality of the baptismal liturgy to Christian formation. All the replies acknowledge Charlemagne’s deep interest in baptismal formation and—with the exception of Odilbert—reflect a consensus on the outlines of formation in line with earlier programs such as the one developed by Alcuin of York. Formation ought to revolve around doctrinal and moral instruction, it ought to be provided in a specific order, and it ought to be assessed, or scrutinized. The explanations reveal little interest in promoting liturgical uniformity. Liturgical diversity evident in the replies emphasized the unity of concern for sound instruction ordered by the *sacramentum* of baptism.

4.5. THE CAROLINGIAN MACHINERY IN ACTION: REPLIES TO THE ENCYCLICAL LETTER, THEIR USES, AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING THE CAROLINGIAN RENEWAL

The episode of Charlemagne’s circular letter on baptism and the discussion it provoked delivers two insights into the formation of an *imperium christianum* and Carolingian Renewal. First, the *sacramentum* of baptism was, in imperial and ecclesiastical consensus, the effective means for creating a *populus Dei*. Second, an imperial directive was the occasion for a sophisticated discussion and complex communications where imperial and ecclesiastical aims converge. Moreover, the process itself deepens our sense of the commonness of such deliberations beyond just notable theological and political disputes.¹⁶⁰ The conversation implies the existence of an institutional framework that facilitated the exchange of views. Such structure, in turn, uncovers how leaders vetted ideas and implemented reforms. Attention to the bureaucratic aspects of the discussion on baptism refines our understanding of Carolingian administration and deepens our grasp of the impact of literacy in the *imperium*

¹⁵⁹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 599. “Audire etenim illi convenit dum instruitur ut unum deum agnoscens colat. Anime quoque suae immortalitatem et aeternam sanctis gloriam, malis vero aeterna tormenta pro meritorum qualitate audiens credat retribuenda forte (lege: fore).”

¹⁶⁰ On the Carolingian mechanisms for dealing with theological inquiry see Thomas F.X. Noble, “Kings, clergy and dogma: the settlement of doctrinal disputes in the Carolingian world” *Early Medieval Studies in Memory of Patrick Wormald*, eds. Stephen Baxter et al. (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009) pp. 237–52; on dispensing justice see Davis, “A Pattern for Power,” pp. 235–46.

christianum.¹⁶¹ From the court, Charlemagne issued his circular letter. Returning to the court were the replies of the various metropolitan archbishops. These we have examined, but they are not the only evidence of discussion triggered by the emperor's letter. Also surviving from the early ninth century are replies to Charlemagne's letter drafted by suffragan bishops to their archbishops, Charlemagne's follow-up letters to several archbishops asking for clarifications, redacted fragments of episcopal letters designed as standalone commentaries for clerical education, letters from other ecclesiastical leaders inquiring about the episcopal replies to Charlemagne, and a series of reform councils called by Charlemagne in 813 to codify and legislate proposals drawn at least in part from the discussion prompted by the circular letter.

The replies to Charlemagne that survive from several metropolitan bishops—the securely identified ones just treated—testify to the expectation of Carolingian leaders during the early ninth century that communication could be carried out at a high level. The replies' existence affirms that the machinery to disseminate and collect information was in place. The content of the replies shows that the machinery could successfully elicit reflections on a theme. Through the questionnaire Charlemagne provided some insight into how the Carolingians coordinated their efforts across Europe. Charlemagne began by announcing his intention to initiate a discussion both with the recipients and with his colleagues, “with you and indeed with your other clergy we often wished to have an intimate conversation concerning the advantage of the holy church of God.”¹⁶² Carolingian leaders often sought advice when dealing with important theological issues. They would either gather experts together in one place in order to study a topic and craft an opinion, or they would send out letters to a variety of experts and ask them to return reports, which were then processed by the intellectuals at the court.¹⁶³ Examples of important theologians and bishops being canvassed for positions on critical theological issues ranged from Spanish Adoptionism at the end of the eighth century, to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the first decade of the ninth, to the image controversy managed by Louis the Pious in the 820s. This instinct continued among Carolingian leaders and is evident in Louis' sons. For example, Charles the Bald consulted multiple people when wrestling with the theology of the eucharist or the idea of Predestination.

¹⁶¹ Generally see Matthew Innes, “Charlemagne's Government” *Charlemagne: Empire and Society*, ed. Joanna Story (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005) pp. 71–89. Of course, the capitularies take center stage in most studies see Christina Pössel, “Authors and recipients of Carolingian capitularies, 779–829” *Texts & Identities in the Early Middle Ages*, eds. Richard Corradini et al. (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2006) pp. 253–74; Janet Nelson, “Literacy in Carolingian Government” *The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) pp. 258–96. On literacy in the Carolingian World more broadly see Rosamond McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

¹⁶² Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol II, p. 261. “*sepius tecum, immo et cum ceteris collegis tuis familiare conloquium de utilitate sanctae dei aecclesiae habere voluissimus.*”

¹⁶³ Noble, “Kings, clergy, and dogma,” p. 250.

Impressive depth of discussion occasioned by the encyclical letter on baptism is evidenced by surviving replies to archbishops by the suffragans whom Charlemagne asked to be consulted before results were drawn up. The suffragans' replies to their archbishops show that at least some metropolitan bishops took seriously Charlemagne's command thoroughly to scour the ecclesiastical provinces of his empire. From the province of Sens, three separate letters survive addressing Charlemagne's questionnaire. One is that of Archbishop Magnus considered above. The other two letters are responses from suffragans directed to Magnus. The first is from the well-known court intimate, and literary nemesis of Alcuin's, Theodulf of Orléans (750–821).¹⁶⁴ The second reply is from an anonymous hand. An impressively learned Visigoth, Theodulf attracted Charlemagne's attention and was made abbot of the important monastery of Fleury and then bishop of Orléans. Theodulf was a court confidant, serving as a *missus* for Charlemagne on a number of occasions: in 798 when he toured southern Gaul with Leidrad of Lyon, and in 800 when he participated at the inquest of Pope Leo III.¹⁶⁵ After Charlemagne's death, he was accused of collaborating with Bernard of Italy against Louis the Pious and deposed in 818.¹⁶⁶ A number of his works survive, including poetry, treatises, and an edition of the Bible. Among the most important treatises are the *Opus caroli regis*, a long critique of Byzantine theology of icons, and a work on the Holy Spirit, which included a vigorous defense of the Filioque.¹⁶⁷ Clearly, Magnus had forwarded Charlemagne's letter to his suffragan bishops and gathered their input. Keefe has studied the responses from the archdiocese of Sens and has outlined the well-organized and efficient response to Charlemagne's circular letter.¹⁶⁸ She highlighted the movement of ideas up and down a hierarchy stretching from Charlemagne at the top,

¹⁶⁴ Ann Freeman, "Theodulf of Orléans: A Visigoth at Charlemagne's Court" *L'Europe héritière de l'Espagne wisigothique*, ed. Jacques Fontaine and Christine Pellistrandi (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 1992) pp. 185–94. On literary animosity in particular, see Peter Godman, *Poets and Emperors: Frankish Politics and Carolingian Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987) pp. 68–9. On a more substantial matter see, for example, Rob Meens, "Sanctuary, Penance, and Dispute Settlement under Charlemagne: The Conflict between Alcuin and Theodulf of Orléans over a Sinful Cleric" *Speculum* 82 (2007) pp. 277–300.

¹⁶⁵ See Thomas F.X. Noble, "The Papacy in the eighth and ninth centuries" *New Cambridge Medieval History II c. 700–c. 900*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 563–86, esp. pp. 568–70; idem, *The Republic of St. Peter: The Birth of the Papal State, 680–825* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984) pp. 199–210, 292–94.

¹⁶⁶ Thomas F.X. Noble, "The Revolt of King Bernard of Italy in 817: Its Causes and Consequences" *Studi Medievali* 15:1 (1974) pp. 315–26.

¹⁶⁷ On the *Opus caroli* (formerly the *Libri Carolini*) see the introduction and edition *Opus caroli regis contra synodum*, ed. Ann Freeman, *MGH Concilia II Supplementum I* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1998). For the *Libellus de processione spiritus sancti* see the introduction and edition *Das Konzil von Aachen 809*, ed. Harald Willjung, *MGH Concilia II Supplementum II* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1998) pp. 170–213, 315–82. On Theodulf's theology more generally, see Elisabeth Dahlhaus-Berg, *Nova Antiquitas et Antiqua Novitas: Typologische Exegese und isidorianisches Geschichtsbild bei Theodulf von Orléans* (Cologne: Böhlau 1975).

¹⁶⁸ Keefe, "An Unknown Response," pp. 48–93.

through the local archbishop, his suffragans, local priests, and—perhaps—to the lay population of the parishes of Sens. Open lines of communication, which existed between Charlemagne and his metropolitans, were mirrored at the archdiocesan level in Sens. The letters from Theodulf and the anonymous bishop confirmed what Magnus wrote at the beginning of his reply—that he consulted his associates in his archdiocese before crafting his letter.

Most glorious emperor, we your servants—Magnus namely and my other colleagues—although unworthy bishops from the diocese of Sens, because we received your command humbly and with a most willing spirit, presume to make known to Your Greatness according to what our smallness allows, just as instructed by your letter, we decided to examine and investigate how we ought to understand and to hold the mystery of baptism.¹⁶⁹

Theodulf's own response confirms that he wrote in response to Charlemagne's questionnaire at the request of his own bishop.

To the most reverend and beloved brother Bishop John, Theodulf sends greeting. Your order, venerable man John, I completed and if not with skilled efficiency, nevertheless with full obedience. For you ordered me—more correctly charity ordered through you—to respond briefly and quickly to certain questions concerning the order of baptism sent to you by our lord and glorious emperor Charles. And thus first having been constrained by the brevity in which I was ordered to explain great things in a few words, and then by the want of time, in which quickly I wished to fulfil what you ordered, I completed what you ordered.¹⁷⁰

A self-study of catechetical practice was well underway in the archdiocese of Sens.

Theodulf largely agreed with other influential thinkers across the Frankish world concerning the emperor's intention in circulating his questionnaire. In his introduction, he explicitly acknowledged that Charlemagne's most basic interest was formation: "Meanwhile, these questions, as I am sure you know, were provided by His Royal Highness not out of his need for learning, but out of his zeal for teaching."¹⁷¹ Theodulf understood baptismal formation to undergird

¹⁶⁹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 265. "*Gloriosissime imperator, innotescere magnitudini vestrae praesumpsimus nos servi vestri, magnus scilicet et ceteri compares mei, licet indigni episcopi ad senonicam dioecesim pertinentes, quia praeceptum vestrum humiliter et libentissimo animo susceptum, iuxta quod nostra praevaluit exiguitas de mysterio baptismatis, sicut in vestra continetur epistola, ammonitionem vestram inquirere vel investigare studuimus, qualiter intelligere vel tenere debuissemus.*"

¹⁷⁰ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 280. "*Reverentissimo atque karissimo fratri iohanni episcopo teodulfus, salutem. Praeceptum tuum, vir venerabilis iohannes, peregi et si non sollerti efficaciam, plena tamen oboedientia. Praecepisti enim michi, immo per te caritas paracepit, ut quibusdam quaestionibus de ordine baptismi a domino et glorioso imperatore karolo tibi transmissis breviter et cito respondere. Coartantibus itaque me hinc brevitate qua cogebar brevi sermone res magnas expedit, illinc temporis angustia, qua cito quod iusseras adimplere volebam, explevi quod iussisti.*"

¹⁷¹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 281. "*Quaestiones interea istae ut ego te nosse certus sum, a regali celsitudine non sunt factae necessitate discendi sed studio docendi.*"

not just ecclesiastical conduct, but all behavior. The bishop of Orléans suggested a wide scope for the emperor's educational interests. The virtues Theodulf derived from baptismal formation touched on all areas of Carolingian life, secular and ecclesiastical, high and low. He concluded his list with the four cardinal virtues well known to the emperor from Alcuin's instruction to which he added the Carolingian interest in concord. He wrote that Charlemagne hoped

to train bishops for the investigation of Holy Scriptures and of sound and saving teaching, each cleric for discipline, philosophers for the examination of things divine and human, monks for religion, everyone generally for holiness; nobles for counsel, judges for justice, soldiers for experience in arms, leaders for humility, subordinates for obedience, everyone generally for prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance and harmony.¹⁷²

The specifics of Theodulf's list may have alluded to programs of study he wished to follow such as his description of the work of philosophers and its similarity to Cassiodorus' *Institutes of Divine and Human Letters*, a volume influential for the bishop.¹⁷³ Certainly the list indicated the bishop's moral interests when he appended the typically Carolingian interest in "harmony" to the classical cardinal virtues.¹⁷⁴ Baptism ought to provide moral formation for everyone, clerical and lay, and in their areas of competence.

Theodulf also took advantage of the familiar semantic range of *sacramentum* when he underscored the magnitude of the change in one's allegiance after baptism. "O splendid and wonderful *sacramentum*, which makes sons of God from sons of wrath, new men from old, and the beautiful from the goats, in which we are regenerated and purged and imitate the example of the death of Christ."¹⁷⁵ He anchored the intimate personal nature of the change in the presence of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—at the *sacramentum* when Jesus modelled baptism for Christians under John in the Jordan River. Theodulf remarked "that the Lord confirmed this same *sacramentum*, when in his baptism the Father is indicated in the voice, the Son in the body, and the Holy Spirit in the display of a dove."¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 281. "... ut exerceat praesules ad sanctorum scripturarum indagationem et sanam sobriamque doctrinam, omne clerum ad disciplinam, philosophos ad rerum divinarum humanarumque cognitionem, monachos ad religionem, omnes generaliter ad sanctitatem; primates ad consilium, iudices ad iustitiam, milites ad armorum experientiam, praelatos ad humilitatem, subditos ad oboedientiam, omnes generaliter ad prudenciam, iustitiam, fortitudinem, temperantiam atque concordiam."

¹⁷³ Dahlhaus-Berg, *Nova Antiquitas*, pp. 54–5.

¹⁷⁴ On the tight relationship Theodulf saw between ethics and knowledge generally see Sybille Mähl, *Quadrige Virtutum. Die Kardinaltugenden in der Geistesgeschichte der Karolingerzeit* (Cologne: Böhlau 1969) pp. 64–72.

¹⁷⁵ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 302. "O praeclarum et admirabile sacramentum, quod de filii irae facit filios dei, de veteribus novos, de fedis pulchros, in quo et regeneramur, et purgamur, et exemplum mortis christi imitatur."

¹⁷⁶ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 302. "et idem dominus hoc sacramentum firmavit, cum in suo baptisate pater declaratus est in voce, filius in corpore, spiritus sanctus in columbae ostensione."

The language adopted by Theodulf reflected Carolingian vocabulary of oath-taking more generally.¹⁷⁷ The entry for the year 787 in the revised *Annales regni francorum*, likely written in the early ninth century, described the establishment of Charlemagne's authority throughout Bavaria after the submission of Tassilo. The king remained in Bavaria, confirming the *sacramenta* of the Bavarians.¹⁷⁸ "Besides his [Tassilo's] son, Theodo, he [Charlemagne] received twelve other hostages from him, those whom he commanded to be provided, and then, after securing the people of the land by *sacramenta*, he returned to Francia."¹⁷⁹

Theodulf's reply affirmed his connection to the court and the interests of Charlemagne. It emphasized education and, without citing his Anglo-Saxon contemporary, matched Alcuin's model for Christian formation—even though Theodulf and Alcuin viewed each other as splenetic rivals. Theodulf twice cited the Great Commission in its liturgical form, once to establish the order of instruction accompanying baptism and once to demonstrate the importance of triple immersion. In his very first chapter on the infant as catechumen, Theodulf used a quotation from Matthew to reinforce that catechetical instruction was fundamental to God's plan for baptism and that it had a specific order. "But the Lord, since he did not say 'Go baptize' but 'Go (*Ite*) teach all the nations, baptizing them' (Mt. 28:19) so that we are able to know that he ought first to instruct and teach him who is to be baptized and afterwards to baptize him."¹⁸⁰ This order, however, was not the order recommended by Alcuin, faith first and then morals. Theodulf suggested a negative process first, abjuring Satan and shedding vices, followed by a positive development of faith in God and growth in virtue.¹⁸¹ Theodulf wrote "for first the thorns of unbelief or vices ought to be pulled out and afterwards the first lessons of faith and good works ought to be planted."¹⁸² Later, when considering baptism itself, he employed the same text to secure triple immersion baptism. "And thus by no means is the mystery of baptism able to be completed except by the invocation of the Holy Trinity,

¹⁷⁷ See treatments in Chapters One and Two; also see Charles E. Odegaard, *Vassi and Fideles in the Carolingian Empire* (New York: Octagon Books, 1972) pp. 51–68.

¹⁷⁸ Rosamond McKitterick, *Perceptions of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006) p. 70. Roger Collins, "The 'Reviser' Revisited: Another Look at the Alternative Version of the *Annales Regni Francorum*" *After Rome's Fall: Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History, Essays presented to Walter Goffart*, ed. Alexander Callander Murray (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998) pp. 191–213.

¹⁷⁹ *Annales Einhardi*, ed. F. Kurze, *MGH SRG in usum scholarum* 6 (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1895) p. 79. "acceptisque ab eo praeter filium eius Theodonem aliis, quos ipse imperavit, duodecim obsidibus et populo terrae per sacramenta firmato in Franciam reversus est."

¹⁸⁰ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 283–4. "Sed et dominus, non ut cumque ait, 'ite, baptizate'; sed, 'ite, docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos,' ut nosse possimus, primum instruere et docere debere eum qui baptizandus est, et postea baptizare."

¹⁸¹ On a more aggressive stance toward conversion possibly distinguishing Theodulf from Alcuin see Yitzhak Hen, "Charlemagne's Jihad" *Viator* 37 (2006) pp. 33–51.

¹⁸² Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 288. "Prius enim evellendae sunt incredulitas sive vitiorum spiniae, et postea plantanda sunt fidei et bonorum operum rudimenta."

because the Lord said to the Apostles: 'Go (*Ite*), teach all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Mt. 28:19).¹⁸³ That his point not be misunderstood, Theodulf quickly clarified that the triple invocation of the persons of the Trinity must be accompanied by a triple immersion in the baptismal font. "We are buried with Christ when with the invocation of the Holy Trinity by a triple immersion we descend into the font of washing just as into a certain sepulchre."¹⁸⁴ The emphasis on a triple invocation, which he believed required triple immersion, demonstrated Theodulf's sensitivity to court concerns, including vigorous opposition to Spanish Adoptionism.

Theodulf's lengthy reply to the circular questionnaire was in concert with Carolingian priorities regarding the execution of baptism, from the importance of instruction to the timing of the rite. The bishop of Orléans emphasized that both the Creed and the Lord's Prayer formed the foundation of catechesis.

And meanwhile many prefer that the word epitomized in the prophet Isaiah be understood in the Creed and the Lord's Prayer For in the one is contained the faith, in the other the totality of prayers, so that in the teaching of the twelve apostles in twelve sayings and in the seven petitions everything is contained, whatever pertains to the dispensation of the present and future life.¹⁸⁵

When discussing the scrutiny, Theodulf presented it as a straightforward examination intended to assess each catechumen's mastery of formation content. "They [the catechumens] ought to be scrutinized with a careful exam whether they believe truly, or whether a stain of some deceit is concealed in them."¹⁸⁶ Also while discussing scrutinies, the bishop identified Easter as a routine and appropriate time for baptism, the culmination of several days of preparations, especially scrutinies: "the church is accustomed to preserve this custom, so that through a period of a few days those who are to be baptized on the solemnity of Easter are scrutinized, so that having been instructed and learned and coming to the true faith with a simple heart, the *sacramenta* of life are bestowed."¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 302. "Nullatenus itaque baptismi mysterium perfici potest, nisi sub invocatione sanctae trinitatis, quia et dominus ad apostolos dixit: "ite, docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti."

¹⁸⁴ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 303. "Consepelimur christo cum sub invocatione sanctae trinitatis sub trina mersione, in fontem lavacri quasi in quoddam sepulchrum descendimus."

¹⁸⁵ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 289. "Plerique interea verbum adabbreviatum per esaiam prophetatum in symbolo et orationem dominica intellegi volunt. In altero enim fides, in altero praecum continetur integritas, ut et in duodecim verbis duodecim apostolorum doctrina, et in septem petitionibus omne contineatur quicquid ad praesentis et futurae vitae pertinet dispensationem."

¹⁸⁶ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 293. "Diligenti examine scrutandi sunt utrum veraciter credant an alicuius falsitatis in eis macula celetur."

¹⁸⁷ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 293. "Hunc enim morem ecclesia servare consuevit, ut per aliquot dierum spatium hi qui in sollemnitate paschali baptizandi sunt scrutentur, ut instructis et doctis et simplici corde ad fidem veram venientibus, vitae sacramenta inpertiantur."

In succinct point-by-point answers to the circular questionnaire, the anonymous suffragan reply emphasized education and addressed concerns popularized by court thinkers like Alcuin. The reply defined scrutiny as a test. "A scrutiny is called an investigation."¹⁸⁸ The reply to the question about religious faith consisted entirely of a presentation of a creed to which the catechumen ought to assent—or the godparent in the case of infant catechumens.

For he who comes to baptism is asked: Do you believe in God the Father Almighty?

Holding him whom he is about to receive from the sacred font, he responds: I believe.¹⁸⁹

The reply's version of the Creed and its specific attention to baptism mostly clearly betrayed its sensitivity to larger court concerns. The Creed in the anonymous reply employed anti-Adoptionist language championed by Alcuin, Theodulf, Leidrad, and others. Alcuin consistently preferred the term "proper" to describe the Son against the term "adoptive."¹⁹⁰ The reply's Creed ran "similarly he [the catechumen] ought to believe that our Lord Jesus Christ is the *proper* son of God through each nature."¹⁹¹ The anonymous reply also specifically required triple immersion. "For also he is immersed three times so that he more clearly receives the Trinity, one time in the name of the Father, a second time in the name of the Son, a third time in the name of the Holy Spirit."¹⁹²

Magnus took seriously Charlemagne's command to consult his suffragans. Furthermore, he incorporated his suffragans' thoughts, often verbatim, into his own response.¹⁹³ In addition to highlighting the responsiveness of Carolingian archbishops to instructions issued from the court, Magnus' synthetic reply, with significant passages culled from both Theodulf and the anonymous episcopal reply, illumines the robust regional communication that took place between ecclesiastical officials in the early ninth century. Magnus' reply to Charlemagne on the use of salt in the baptismal ceremonies combined the beginning of Theodulf's answer with the end of the anonymous reply (see Table 4.3). The letters of Theodulf and the anonymous bishop contributed to

¹⁸⁸ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 322. "Scrutinium dicitur inquisitio."

¹⁸⁹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 323. "Interrogatur et enim ille qui ad baptismum venit: Credis in deum patrem omnipotentem, tenens eum in manibus quem de sacro fonte suscepturus est. Respondet: Credo."

¹⁹⁰ John C. Cavadini, *The Last Christology of the West. Adoptionism in Spain and Gaul, 785–820* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993) pp. 83–102.

¹⁹¹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 323. "Similiter debet dominum nostrum iesum christum dei filium credere proprium per utramque naturam."

¹⁹² Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 326. "Mergitur et enim tribus vicibus ut plenius suscipiat trinitatem, una in nomine patris, secunda in nomine filii, tertia in nomine spiritus sancti."

¹⁹³ Scholars have long recognized that Magnus' reply to Charlemagne was derivative. Keefe is the first scholar explain how Magnus' reply was derivative and the larger significance for understanding Carolingian ecclesiastical politics in Sens. See Keefe, "An Unknown Response," pp. 55–62; Dahlhaus-Berg, *Nova Antiquitas*, pp. 161–8; Carlo de Clercq, *La Législation Religieuse*, p. 217.

Table 4.3. Responses to Charlemagne's encyclical letter

Magnus of Sens	Theodulf of Orléans	Anonymous bishop
<i>Salem in sacramento baptismatis accipiunt, ut eius gustu condimentum sapientiae percipiant, neque a sapore Christi desipiant, et sint insulsi et fatui; sed quod habuerunt in se naturaliter insulsum habeant per Christi gratiam per omnia sale conditum.</i> ¹⁹⁴	et idcirco hi qui baptizandi sunt <i>salem in sacramento accipiunt, ut eius gustu condimentum sapientiae percipiant, neque a sapore christi desipiant et sint insulsi et fatui</i> . . . ¹⁹⁵	ideo datur caticumeno sal ut per eundum salem et invocationem domini nostri iesu christi detur et sermo sapientiae et intellectus, et efficiatur spiritale sale conditus, et <i>quod in se habuit naturaliter insulsum, habeat per christi gratiam per omnia sale conditum.</i> ¹⁹⁶

the discussion of Christian formation in the diocese of Sens. The texts from Sens are coincident with an efficient Carolingian bureaucracy at the turn of the ninth century, as Keefe has suggested. The exchange from Sens confirms the existence of Carolingian intradiocesan structures implied by Jesse of Amiens' encyclical letter.

Evidence of substantive communication survives from dioceses across Carolingian Europe. A similar phenomenon appeared in letters from the ecclesiastical province of Trier. Although there is no evidence of collaboration on Amalarius' part, surviving correspondence reveals that the bishop was aware of, if unsure about, his responsibility for the bishops of his area. In his letter, Amalarius indicated some confusion about how Charlemagne wanted him to tackle composing a response to the circular letter. Specifically, he was unclear about whom the emperor wished him to consult. Near the conclusion of his letter, the archbishop of Trier protested that he did not know to whom the term suffragan applied. "Suffragan is a word of ambiguous meaning. Therefore we do not know how we ought to apply the fixed term to a person, either priests, or abbots, or deacons, or other lesser grades."¹⁹⁷ Amalarius acknowledged Charlemagne's expectation of consultation throughout his region. His hesitation likely reflected sincere apprehension over the ecclesiastical politics of the region around 811, and not genuine confusion over terminology.¹⁹⁸ The nearby church at Metz was technically under the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Trier. However, the see had long enjoyed extraordinary rights on account of historical ties to the Carolingians.¹⁹⁹ Metz's

¹⁹⁴ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 268.

¹⁹⁵ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 286.

¹⁹⁶ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 324–5.

¹⁹⁷ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 350. "suffraganeus est nomen mediae significationis. Ideo nescimus quale fixum ei apponere debeamus, aut presbiterorum, aut abbatum, aut diaconorum, aut ceterorum graduum inferiorum."

¹⁹⁸ Jones, *A Lost Work*, pp. 164–6; Otto Gerhart Oexle, "Die Karolinger und die Stadt des heiligen Arnulfs" *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 1 (1967) pp. 250–364.

¹⁹⁹ Damien Kempf, "A textual *détournement*: From Pauls the Deacon's *Liber de episcopis Mettensibus* to the *Vita Clementis*" *Early Medieval Europe* 20:1 (2005) pp. 159–78.

prestige had only grown under Charlemagne, when bishop Angilram (768–91) was named royal chaplain in 784, a position the king felt ought to carry metropolitan dignity. This sensitivity to his patron's feelings could only have been exacerbated by a recent ecclesiastical realignment of Trier's jurisdiction. In 811 Cologne was given metropolitan status, which not only removed the see from Trier's jurisdiction but also brought with it control over several sees, such as Maastricht, which until recently had fallen under Trier.²⁰⁰ Given this uncertainty, it is easy to understand why Amalarius was hesitant to initiate the type of survey conducted by Magnus.

Two instances survive of a vigorous back and forth discussion between Charlemagne and his archbishops. The emperor dispatched follow up letters to at least two of his ecclesiastical leaders: Amalarius of Trier and Leidrad of Lyon. Together these letters speak both to the depth of Charlemagne's interest in the *sacramentum* of baptism and its execution across the Carolingian world and to vibrancy of Carolingian communication. Charlemagne gently reprimanded the archbishop of Trier for his failure to survey his province, and urged him to fulfil the questionnaire's requirements. Charlemagne first acknowledged receipt of Amalarius' letter. "We have received from Your Sanctity the pleasing writings directed to us by your right hand, for which we give you praise and thanks, especially because when we had it read aloud in our presence we found it catholic and worthy for all praise."²⁰¹ He then chided the archbishop, brushing aside the grounds of Amalarius' reluctance. "Although we are not unaware that Your Sanctity is concerned for spiritual and Christian teachings, still we remind and exhort you more and more not to hesitate to instruct in Christian teaching and holy preaching everyone who is set under your direction and belongs to your province."²⁰² The Emperor was not impressed with equivocation.

Charlemagne also requested that the archbishop of Lyon elaborate on his response to the encyclical letter. Although Charlemagne's request has been lost, Leidrad's second letter survives. Leidrad acknowledged Charlemagne's circular letter on baptism to which he had already replied. "Your most Christian and admirable religion and your most burning faith in God, touched by divine inspiration and moved by the most pious concern, recently ordered that we

²⁰⁰ Rosamond McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians 751–987* (London: Longman, 1983) p. 373.

²⁰¹ Charlemagne, *Epistola* 3, ed. E. Dümmler, *MGH Epistolae V* (Hannover: Weidmannos, 1899) p. 244. "*Scripta nobis tua sanctitate directa grata suscepimus dextera. Pro quo tibi laudes et gracias referimus; maxime quia, cum ipsam perlegere in presencia nostra fecissemus, catholicam et omni laude dignam invenimus.*"

²⁰² Charlemagne, *Epistola* 3, p. 244. "*Quamvis enim tuam sanctitatem in spiritalibus et christianis doctrinis sollicitam esse non ignoramus, adhuc te admonemus et exortamur, ut magis ac magis in christiana doctrina et praedicatione sancta omnes, qui sub tuo regimine consistunt et ad tuam diocesim pertinent, inbuere non graveris.*"

respond to your most perceptive questionnaire concerning the *sacramenta* of our renewal and regeneration.”²⁰³ Then he identified this letter as a response to a follow-up question issued by Charlemagne. “Only then did you deign to make known to us, not as much by imperial as by paternal admonition, that we said less concerning the renunciation of the devil and of those things, which are his, than Your Mercy desired.”²⁰⁴

Leidrad explained what he saw to be at stake in the emperor’s request: the very unity of the Empire. In what is tempting to see as a window into his catechetical explanations, the archbishop isolated two threats in particular, a division between the ecclesiastical and secular rulers and, most fundamental and most insidious, a rift between teachers and students. He nuanced his explanation through the use of vocabulary which underscored the connections he saw between catechetical formation and Carolingian society. When describing the fracture between teachers and students he deployed the word for student seen in several of the replies to Charlemagne’s circular letter as a synonym drawn from Isidore for catechumen.²⁰⁵ Similarly, he drew on specific language meaningful to Carolingians as he characterized societal breakdowns, such as hostility, originating with Satan’s pomps and works.²⁰⁶

And so after your most kind advice we realized that we needed fuller answers concerning the works and pomps of the devil than concerning other things, since through them spread sinful desires and through sinful desires spread the temptations of the world and they grow daily! And what is worse, disagreements crop up between the leaders of the church and leaders of the government, and which—to this point—is the worst of these, between teachers and students (*auditores*) hatreds sow themselves, hostilities (*inimicitiae*) are enflamed, and slanders are stirred up.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Leidrad, *Epistola* 29, ed. Ernst Dümmler, *MGH Epistolae IV* (Berlin: Weidmannos 1895) p. 540. “*Christianissima et admirabilis religio vestra atque in Deum ardentissima fides, divina inspiratione adtacta et piissima sollicitudine permota, iussit nuper aliquid nos de sacramentis nostrae renovationis et regenerationis ad vestras sagacissimas inquisitiones respondere.*”

²⁰⁴ Leidrad, *Epistola* 29, p. 541. “*Tunc demum non tam imperiali quam paterna ammonitione innotescere nobis dignati estis minus nos dixisse de abrenunciatione diaboli et earum, quae eius sunt rerum, quam vestra pietas optabat.*”

²⁰⁵ See, for example, Leidrad himself in his initial letter Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 357. Other examples are Amalarius of Trier at Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 338 or Magnus at Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 266 among others.

²⁰⁶ Gerd Althoff, *Family, Friends, and Followers: Political and Social Bonds in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) pp. 67–101.

²⁰⁷ Leidrad, *Epistola* 29, p. 541. “*Intelleximus itaque post vestram benignissimam ammonitionem, quia de operibus et pompis diaboli multiplicius respondendum erat, quam de ceteris rebus; quoniam per ea cupiditates et per cupiditates scandala mundi crebrescunt et crescunt cotidie et, quod peius est, inter ecclesiae rectores et rei publicae administratores discordiae oriuntur et, quod adhuc horum est pessimum, inter doctores et auditores odia se interserunt, inimicitiae concitantur, detractioes agitantur.*”

The works and pomps of the devil threatened the stability the *imperium christianum*, eating away at the order and harmony Carolingian leaders envisioned for society. Sound baptismal formation was crucial to the success of the Empire.

Additional epistolary evidence exists of leaders outside the episcopal hierarchy interested both in Charlemagne's questionnaire and in the replies, underscoring the impressive breadth of the discussion throughout the Carolingian World. A letter survives from Abbot Peter of Nonantola to Amalarius asking about his reply. The monastery of St. Sylvester at Nonantola was an important monastic foundation in northern Italy founded initially under the Lombards, but supported by Charlemagne after his conquest of the kingdom in 774. Peter was an abbot of some note to the Emperor: he was selected, along with Amalarius, for the embassy to Constantinople in 813.²⁰⁸ Peter dispatched his letter probably in early 814, after the pair had returned to the west. The letter itself shows a monk and abbot interested in baptism, likely indicative of the liturgical responsibilities of an abbot at a major monastery.²⁰⁹ Peter was not a bishop, much less a metropolitan. Still, he was interested in baptismal formation. Moreover, Peter characterized Charlemagne's letter in such a way as to highlight the pedagogical focus of the questionnaire. Peter identified the work as on the faith and the scrutinies, as well as on the *sacramentum* of baptism itself. "I inquire about that explanation, which you yourself composed concerning the faith and the scrutiny or baptism, at the command of Lord Charles of happy memory, that you might direct it equally to us."²¹⁰ Amalarius' letter to Peter characterized the reply to Charlemagne in similar terms, highlighting the importance of the scrutiny. Both Amalarius and Peter stressed the scrutiny, the tests administered prior to baptism. "Your Sanctity added in the letter, as I remember, that I fasten the papers to the aforementioned work, which you read were sent to the Lord Emperor Charles from our smallness concerning the scrutiny and the baptistery."²¹¹

After receiving replies from his archbishops and after further exchanges with several of them Charlemagne convened a series of councils to enact reforms stemming from his study of baptism across Europe. During the year 813, Charlemagne convoked five councils which continued the work of his encyclical letter by giving legal force to ideas on Christian formation generated by the

²⁰⁸ Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy. Communication and Commerce AD300–900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) pp. 138–42.

²⁰⁹ On the pastoral care of monks, including conducting public baptisms, see Chapter Five.

²¹⁰ *Amalarii Episcopi Opera Liturgica Omnia*, Vol. I, *Studi e Testi* 138, ed. J.M. Hanssens (Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1948) p. 229. "Iterum obsecro de illa expositione quam ipse de fide et scrutinio seu baptismo, imperante piae memoriae domno Karolo, exposuisti, ut pariter dirigas."

²¹¹ *Amalarii Episcopi*, p. 231. "Addidit etiam sanctitas vestra in epistola commemorata scedas quas legisti missas ad domnum Karolum imperatorem a nostra parvitate de scrutinio et baptisterio, praedicto operi innectere."

many archiepiscopal replies.²¹² The prominence of baptism in the deliberations of the reform councils shows the impact of the circular letter and its responses on the council's agenda.²¹³ Four of the councils were held in metropolitan cities: Arles, Mainz, Rheims, and Tours. The other council was held at Chàlon in the ecclesiastical province of Lyon. Important metropolitan bishops, who had just completed writing their responses to Charlemagne's questionnaire, deliberated at the councils. The introduction to the canons issued at the council of Mainz named Arn of Salzburg and Hildebald of Cologne (c.791–819) among the participants.²¹⁴ Arn's involvement in Carolingian discussions of baptism stretches back at least to the conversion of the Avars in the 790s. Though his own reply to Charlemagne does not survive, two related texts on baptism from early ninth-century Bavarian scriptoria may reflect the archbishop's thinking.²¹⁵ As the archbishop of Cologne and court chaplain, Hildebald is unlikely to have been excluded from the discussion on baptism. Based on the presence of some Old High German vocabulary, Norbert Kruse has argued that an unattributed reply to Charlemagne's questionnaire is likely Hildebald's response.²¹⁶ In addition to the council leaders, thematic and linguistic continuities between the encyclical letter and the conciliar records establish a close connection between the questionnaire and the councils. The conciliar decrees consistently required that baptism be the primary tool in Christian formation. The very first canon of the council of Mainz concerns "the catholic faith that ought to be firmly retained."²¹⁷ The fourth canon addressed the *sacramenta* of the church, before immediately narrowing its consideration to the *sacramentum* of baptism. The canon then extolled the importance of the Roman order of baptism and identified the key feature of Roman-ness as the scrutiny. Moreover, the canon referred to a reminder issued by Charlemagne, likely a direct reference to the encyclical letter that inspired this canon. "And so we wish the *sacramenta* of baptism, in accord with your holy admonition, to be celebrated harmoniously, uniformly and continually, preserved among us in each parish according to the Roman *ordo*, that is the scrutiny for the *ordo* of baptism."²¹⁸ This evidence led Susan

²¹² Hartmann, *Die Synoden der Karolingerzeit*, pp. 128–51.

²¹³ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. I, pp. 88–9.

²¹⁴ *Concilium Moguntinense*, ed. A. Werminghoff, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini I* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1906) p. 259. "Almifice reverentiae vestrae patefacimus nos humillimi famuli ac missi vestri, Hildibaldus scilicet sacri palatii archiepiscopus, Rihholfus et Arno archiepiscopi seu Bernharius, una cum reliquis coepiscopis atque abbatibus et caetero clero, quia venimus secundum iussionem vestram in civitatem Mogontiam."

²¹⁵ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 467–79, 489–529.

²¹⁶ Kruse, *Die kölnen volkspachige Überlieferung*, pp. 89–132. The text is edited in Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 452–545.

²¹⁷ *Concilium Moguntinense* c. 1, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini I*, p. 260. "De fide catholica firmiter retinenda"

²¹⁸ *Concilium Moguntinense* c. 4, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini I*, p. 261. "Sacramenta itaque baptismatis volumus, ut, sicut sancta vestra fuit ammonitio, ita concorditer atque uniformiter in singulis parrochiis secundum Romanum ordinem inter nos celebretur iugiter atque conservetur, id est scrutinium ad ordinem baptismatis."

Keefe to conclude that Carolingian authors who promoted the Roman *ordo* of baptism likely meant a Lenten program of scrutinies, and not a specific rite of baptism.²¹⁹ It may also explain the awkward nature of Maxentius' reply to Charlemagne. He knew that "Romanness" was important, but was not quite sure how or why. Other reform councils, such as the one convoked at Arles, similarly emphasized instruction and the importance of Christian formation. The canons of Arles opened with a consideration "of the obvious truth of the catholic faith," which contained a summary of the Creed similar to those found in several of the replies to Charlemagne's letter.²²⁰ Canon three introduced the *sacramentum* of baptism, and, as in Charlemagne's encyclical letter, stressed the educational responsibility resting on the archbishop and his suffragan bishops.

Concerning baptism and the mystery of the holy faith: that every archbishop undertake carefully and assiduously to remind his suffragans how, having been instructed through the study of sacred reading, both concerning the mystery of the holy faith and concerning the *sacramentum* of baptism, each one of them should not neglect fully and assiduously to teach and instruct his priests and the whole people.²²¹

The language used in the conciliar canons also echoed the terminology of formation established at baptism. In the canons promulgated at Châlon, topics were framed with baptismal concepts. Bishops were to scrutinize teachings. "We decreed according to the decision of the holy canons and the teaching of other holy writings that bishops be constant in their reading and scrutinize (*scrutentur*) the mysteries of the word of God, in which the teachings may shine in glory in the church."²²² Another canon explained how bishops were to lead by word and by deed. Again the idea of scrutinizing teaching appeared. "So that those things, which they scrutinize (*perscrutantur*) by reading, they complete by work."²²³ In canon six, rejection of worldly wealth was captured by the notion of renunciation. "Certain brothers are charged with persuading men on account of avarice. This ought to be thoroughly rooted out from the minds of all, so renouncing (*abrenuntiantes*) the things of this age, they should convey their

²¹⁹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. I, pp. 59, 67–8.

²²⁰ *Concilium Arelatense* c. 1, ed. A. Werminghoff, *MGH Concilia aevi karolini I*, (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1906) p. 249. "*De evidenti catholicae fidei veritate.*"

²²¹ *Concilium Arelatense* c. 3, *MGH Concilia aevi karolini I*, p. 250. "*De baptismo et mysterio sanctae fidei: ut unusquisque archiepiscopus suos suffraganeos diligenter studioseque admonere curet, quatenus, per studium sacrae lectionis imbuti, et de mysterio sanctae fidei et de sacramento baptismatis unusquisque illorum in propria parrochia perfecte studioseque presbyteros et universum populum docere et instruere non neglegat.*"

²²² *Concilium Cabillonense* c. 1, *MGH Concilia aevi karolini I*, p. 274. "*Decrevimus iuxta sanctorum canonum constitutionem et ceterarum sanctarum scripturarum doctrinam, ut episcopi assidui sint in lectione et scrutentur misteria verborum Dei, quibus in ecclesia doctrinae fulgore splendeant.*"

²²³ *Concilium Cabillonense* c. 2, *MGH Concilia aevi karolini I*, p. 274. "*Ut ea, quae legendo perscrutantur, opere compleant.*"

possessions to their churches.”²²⁴ After the conclusion of the fifth council, Charlemagne issued an epitome, which synthesized the work of the archbishops in their letters and at the reform councils. The first item is the *sacramentum* of baptism, focusing on the practice and teaching of baptism as it was conducted locally. In an administrative culmination to an empire wide and local church deep study of baptism, Charlemagne required “concerning baptism, that each archbishop eagerly and diligently strive to remind his suffragans, that they not neglect to investigate clearly their priests, how they do the *sacramentum* of baptism, and carefully teach them this, so that it is done in an orderly manner.”²²⁵

Discussion of the *sacramentum* did not end with the five reform councils, however. Early ninth century manuscripts preserve numerous smaller commentaries on baptism, redactions of either Charlemagne’s questionnaire or of the archiepiscopal replies to Charlemagne. Beyond continuing the discussion, these texts show that the conversation over Christian formation initiated by Charlemagne was not understood by Carolingian religious leaders as a purely intellectual exercise. These shorter texts were edited in order to make local contributions to the teaching and practice of baptism in the early ninth century. The encyclical letter and its responses proved suitable for training and maintenance in at least some Carolingian dioceses. Primarily derivative material was reworked and reshaped into a variety of genres, including pedagogical and legal texts. Several commentaries pared down the prolix florilegium used by Odilbert simplifying it for practical use. They discarded much of the theological reflection and preserved only what directly concerned the execution of the rites of formation surrounding baptism. Because Odilbert’s reply consisted of an older florilegium, these condensed commentaries may reflect digestion of the archiepiscopal reply or of independent interest, still likely spurred by the wider discussion. They certainly testify to a vigorous engagement with commentary and instruction on the *sacramentum* of baptism. They witness to the richness and diversity of ways in which Carolingian authors at the local level responded to an empire-wide initiative and adapted pre-existing texts for their own local purposes. One text dependant on Odilbert’s florilegium survives as an anonymous commentary from northern Italy. It is much shorter than Odilbert’s reply, and more focused on Christian formation than the original.²²⁶ The compiler of this commentary discarded sections “concerning the command of baptism in the Gospel” and “concerning the interpretation of baptism.” The text

²²⁴ *Concilium Cabillonense* c. 6, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 275. “Imputatur quibusdam fratribus, eo quod avaritiae causa hominibus persuadeant, ut abrenuntiantes saeculo res suas ecclesiis conferant, quod penitus ab omnium mentibus eradicandum est.”

²²⁵ *Karoli Magni capitula e canonibus excerpta* c. 1, MGH *Concilia aevi karolini* I, p. 294. “De baptismo, ut unusquisque archiepiscopus suos suffraganeos diligenter ac studiosae admonere studeat, ut unusquisque suos presbiteros puriter investigare non neglegat, baptismatis sacramentum qualiter agant, et hoc eos studiose doceant, ut ordniabiliter fiat.”

²²⁶ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 171–83.

begins with “concerning catechumens” and continues with “concerning the renunciation.” A second compilation displayed a similar impulse.²²⁷ It included comments on the rites of baptism itself, but with a few additions, including a treatment of infant baptism, a section on the three types of baptism (water, blood, and tears), and a consideration of why only priests ought to baptize. The remaining sections, which dealt with baptismal rites themselves, treated many of the same topics as the first text, but with slightly varied vocabulary. A third redaction of Odilbert’s florilegium, perhaps made at Tours, involved a more drastic reorganization through which the author stretched Christian formation over a long period of time through several discrete stages.²²⁸ This commentary consists of five sections, which detailed the steps of forming and maintaining a Christian. The sections were divided into catechumens, competentes, baptism, the body and blood of the Lord, and penitents. It organized its teachings into the stages suggested by Alcuin, emphasizing doctrine before baptism and moral obligations after. The text clearly separated the activities of the catechumens from those of the competentes, and assigned specific tasks to each category of person. It identified the catechumenate as a time to learn about evil. During the catechumenate one renounced Satan, was exorcised, and received salt. Competentes’ instruction contained doctrine. The petitioner was taught the Creed, subjected to scrutinies, and anointed several times. The ceremonies of baptism formed a new Christian. During the rite of baptism itself, a new Christian was instructed about his transformation, how he was leaving his old life and entering a new. After baptism, the neophyte was introduced to the eucharist and penance, the primary means for maintaining one’s Christian life. He was taught how the body and blood symbolized the unity of and life in the church and how penance forgave sins incurred after baptism.

Authors in Lyons and Sens followed similar patterns in redacting material from the encyclical letter and its replies. Because of its long and complicated typological discussion, Leidrad’s remarks made an excellent target for redaction. One such streamlined commentary on baptism survives. An anonymous author distilled from Leidrad’s effort only the remarks directly relevant to the baptismal rite itself.²²⁹ From Sens survives a text which redrafted Magnus’ response as a question and answer text suitable for clerical examinations.²³⁰ In addition to providing an example of how Charlemagne’s discussion with his archbishops influenced local policies, this commentary also testifies to Alcuin’s influence on the discussion of baptism across the Carolingian World. The anonymous Sens’ text cited *Primo paganus*. The selection quoted in the examination likely came directly from the Anglo-Saxon abbot’s correspondence because it

²²⁷ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 198–208.

²²⁸ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 184–97.

²²⁹ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 385–8.

²³⁰ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 329–31.

included other remarks Alcuin made in his letter to the monks of Septimania.²³¹ While one cannot rule out the possibility that these many and varied texts witness to still more examples of suffragans' replies, their present form, as chopped up instructions and not as independent letters, suggests that they were derived from archiepiscopal replies and not vice versa. In either case, the works were practical, evidence of attempts to implement the baptismal reforms advanced by the Carolingian court.

While some texts distilled pastoral guidance, others repackaged deliberations as legal guidelines, which provide additional evidence of the Carolingian machinery that coordinated discussion such as those of the reform councils held in 813, and the legal teeth of Charlemagne's interest. A brief text from the archdiocese of Sens gave instructions on baptism in a question-and-answer form and was based on Magnus' response to Charlemagne's inquiry.²³² Keefe suggested the text was a capitulary issued by a diocesan synod. The text consists of four canons, which treat the duties of the priest, baptism, the catechumen, and the scrutiny.²³³ Another example of the legal use of baptismal responses survives from the ecclesiastical province of Liège. There legislators packed the questions from Charlemagne's encyclical letter into a capitulary detailing what each priest must know and understand about baptism. "Concerning the order of the baptistery, how every priest knows and understands, or how first an infant is made a catechumen, or what is a catechumen. Then in order all the things which are done . . ." ²³⁴ The questions then simply list the topics asked about by Charlemagne in his encyclical letter.

The *sacramentum* of baptism was fundamental to Carolingian reform efforts at the beginning of the ninth century. Ecclesiastical leaders, and Charlemagne himself, displayed consistent concern for Christian formation through the baptismal liturgy, which in turn framed Carolingian approaches to theological challenges such as the defense of the Filioque. Bishops, such as Jesse of Amiens and Ghaerbald of Liège, monitored baptismal practices within their dioceses

²³¹ *Primo paganus* ends "ut roboretur per Spiritum sanctum ad praedicandum aliis, qui fuit in baptismo per gratiam vitae donatus aeternae." The text of this commentary runs "ut roboretur per Spiritum sanctum ad praedicandum aliis, qui fuit in baptismo per gratiam vitae donatus aeternae" and then continues "videtis quam fideliter, rationabiliter, et prudenter haec omnia tradita sunt nobis observanda . . . quos a suis deviasse intellegis doctrinis." The text follows that of Alcuin's letter to the monks of Septimania, Alcuin *Epistola* 137, p. 215. On the attribution and circulation of *Primo paganus* see Owen M. Phelan, "Textual Transmission and Authorship in Carolingian Europe: *Primo paganus*, Baptism, and Alcuin of York" *Revue Bénédictine* 118 (2008) pp. 262–88.

²³² Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 327–8.

²³³ Keefe points out that the texts are probably reworked suffraganed' responses to Magnus. Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. I, p. 147. She also considers the relationship of the texts to Magnus' response, specifically passages preserved in both texts in, Keefe, "An Unknown Response" pp. 54–64. A similar recommendation is logged in Rudolf Pokorný, "Zur Taufumfrage Karls des Grossen: Ein fehlgedeutetes Gutachten als Grundtext einer Synodalansprache (Sens 811–814)" *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 26 (1984) pp. 166–73, at p. 172.

²³⁴ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 264. "De ordine baptisterii qualiter unusquisque presbiter scit vel intellegit, vel qualiter primo infans caticuminus efficitur, vel quid sit caticuminus. Deinde per ordinem omnia quae aguntur."

and pressed for reforms along lines suggested by the Carolingian court—and sometimes the emperor himself. Concern for proper baptismal formation also prompted Charlemagne to initiate an empire wide discussion of baptism. His inquiry and the resulting flurry of activity testify to a broad consensus across the Carolingian world on Christian formation through the *sacramentum* in continuity with earlier court ideas, especially those of Alcuin of York. The replies and ancillary discussions identify that baptism's importance did not rest in uniformity of liturgical practice, but rather in harmony of world view. Social, political and theological concerns were pursued in concert. The Emperor was more concerned with consistency in explanations and assessments, than in particular liturgical customs. Liturgy had a twofold importance: provide formation and obtain evidence. On the one hand, the liturgy was the medium for conveying a sacramental worldview to the subjects of an *imperium christianum*. On the other hand, it was the context for assessing successful communication of crucial social, political, and theological concepts. Moreover, rich evidence surviving from the discussion illumines the machinery of Christian formation already in place to ensure wide consistency in the formation offered across the Carolingian World. Vigorous communications were coordinated from the court to all regions of the empire and within each region from provincial ecclesiastical leaders to suffragan bishops and prominent local figures. The appearance of this machinery leads also to another point. Carolingian leaders like Charlemagne viewed baptism and baptismal formation as incorporative, and not only in the missionary context first envisioned by Alcuin, but broadly for all members of the *imperium christianum*. It remains to assess the impact.

The Sacramental Assumption: Baptism and Carolingian Society in the Ninth Century

By the middle of the ninth-century elements of Christian formation through the *sacramentum* of baptism as promoted by Charlemagne, Alcuin, and other Carolingian leaders had been absorbed by ecclesiastical and political leaders and by elite laity across the Frankish world. As a *sacramentum*, baptism continued to organize people's approaches to society and moral life. Its foundational significance persisted, but now having been internalized, it became working concepts people used in varied contexts to articulate their thoughts and plans, hopes, and disappointments. A common set of sacramental assumptions led to more elaborate implementation and maintenance of Carolingian Christian identity beyond just the rites of baptism. The voices of the Carolingian laity reflected formation in the *imperium christianum* even as the topic continued to dominate the clergy's pastoral efforts. In the mid-ninth century the *sacramentum* of baptism provided the frame for advice literature, shaping a leading bishop's advice to an elite layman and a laywoman's counsel to her son. The same basic sacramental assumptions undergird a lay courtier's record of the intense political and social dissention erupting in mid-century, providing categories of analysis for the problems facing the Empire. His colorful narrative vividly showcases the organizing significance of the *sacramentum* by providing examples of social and political evaluation according to the same religious and theological categories found in the advice manuals. Moreover, engagement with the new challenges emerging in the mid-century led to reflection upon well-worn themes and the development of new strategies for extending and baptismal formation and maintaining sacramental commitments. Substantial manuscript evidence—especially of homiletic, liturgical, and vernacular texts—signals well-established and widespread sacramental practices deeply ingrained in people across the *imperium christianum*.

5.1. THE ROLE OF THE SACRAMENTUM OF BAPTISM IN CAROLINGIAN FORMATION DURING THE NINTH CENTURY

The *sacramentum* of baptism continued to provide Carolingians with a rubric for evaluating their world in the ninth century. It offered a compelling approach to interpreting personal moral life and broader social relationships. Two manuals for lay instruction from the middle of the ninth century, one by bishop Jonas of Orléans and another by Dhuoda of Septimania, show how fundamentally the *sacramentum* informed Carolingian perceptions of their world, laying bare not just continuity with but also the evolution of earlier ideas; the program propounded by Charlemagne and his court had been internalized.¹ These works presented programs of formation rooted in sacramental ideas of baptism. However, the authors of these manuals went beyond their predecessors, responding to new social, political, and religious pressures of the mid-ninth century. The expansion of the Carolingian world had slowed, or stopped.² Threats to the unity of Christendom intensified. Complications along the periphery of the Frankish world tugged at loose threads.³ From Scandinavia, Viking incursions strained Carolingian political leadership in the North.⁴ Muslim assaults from the Mediterranean eroded stability in the South.⁵ Internal discord racked political unity.⁶ Consequent anxiety about Christian society no

¹ Dhuoda's and Jonas' manuals differ in important ways from those released around the turn of the ninth century, such as the *Liber exhortationis* written by Paulinus of Aquileia for Duke Eric of Friuli and Alcuin's *De virtutibus et vitiis*. For example, these early treatises do not provide specific information on the mechanisms by which Christian formation should be made available to wide audiences. For a comparison of these texts with those of Jonas and Dhuoda, see Franz Sedlmeier, *Die laienparänetischen Schriften der Karolingerzeit. Untersuchungen zu ausgewählten Texten des Paulinus von Aquileia, Alkuins, Jonas' von Orleans, Dhuodas und Hinkmars von Reims* (Nuried: Ars Una, 2000); and Hans Hubert Anton, *Fürstenspiegel und Herrscherethos in der Karolingerzeit* (Bonn: Ludwig Röhrscheid, 1968). Contextualizing Jonas and Dhuoda with a more specific interest is Rachel Stone, *Morality and Masculinity in the Carolingian Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

² Timothy Reuter, "The End of Carolingian Military Expansion" *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious*, eds. Peter Godman and Roger Collins (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990) pp. 391–405.

³ Julia M.H. Smith, "Fines Imperii: the Marches" *New Cambridge Medieval History II c.700–c.900*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 169–89.

⁴ Simon Coupland, "The Vikings in Francia and Anglo-Saxon England to 911" *New Cambridge Medieval History II c.700–c.900*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 190–210.

⁵ Hugh Kennedy, "The Muslims in Europe" *New Cambridge Medieval History II c.700–c.900*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 249–71.

⁶ Surveys of these problems, underscored even by the divergent narratives chronicling the turbulence are Janet Nelson "The Frankish Kingdoms, 814–898: The West" *New Cambridge Medieval History II c.700–c.900*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 110–41 and Johannes Fried, "The Frankish Kingdoms, 817–911: The East and Middle Kingdoms" *New Cambridge Medieval History II c.700–c.900*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 142–68.

longer revolved around issues of mission or growth. Authors probed the *sacramentum* for clues on how to maintain the *imperium christianum* as well as the individual moral life on which the larger social, political, and spiritual unity depended. Contemporary analysis of some of the most acute problems of mid-century in the very categories proposed by Jonas and Dhuoda confirms that their viewpoints were typical and widely held. Nithard, an influential courtier close to Charles the Bald, wrote four books of histories exploring the tensions and conflict between the sons of Louis the Pious. While not a work specifically addressing formation, allusions to baptism in concert with his explicit treatment of *sacramenta* confirm, from a slightly different angle, that baptismal formation had been deeply embedded in the Carolingian psyche.

Jonas of Orléans (c.780–843/4) composed his *De institutione laicali* for Matfred of Orléans during the 820s.⁷ Matfred was an important player in Carolingian politics in the 820s and 830s. Having been given lands and title by Charlemagne, Louis deprived him of his possessions in 828 after his disappointing effort on a military campaign, and perhaps a touch of political rivalry.⁸ This prompted Matfred, against Jonas' advice, to encourage Pippin of Aquitaine to revolt against his father in 830.⁹ Because the work was cited in the acts of the Colloquy of Paris (829), at which Jonas was a principal figure, it must have been composed by 828 at the latest.¹⁰ Around the same time, Jonas also composed *De institutione regia* for Pippin, which reflected his pastoral interest for elite lay life and the related intricacies of his political, social, and religious concerns.¹¹ It too reflected the bishop of Orléans' deep concern for the integrity of the *imperium christianum* insofar as the work was aimed to prevent Pippin from revolting against Louis the Pious.¹² The work shares many passages with *De institutione laicali*, though was clearly much more focused in its goals. In 827, at the request of Louis the Pious, Jonas began work on *De cultu imaginum*, where he laid out his thoughts on icons and images, though he would set the work aside before

⁷ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, PL 106.121–278. Preliminary work toward a modern critical edition of the *De Institutione laicali* has begun, see Isolde Schröder, "Zur Überlieferung von *De Institutione laicali* des Jonas von Orléans" *Deutsches Archiv* 44:1 (1988) pp. 83–97.

⁸ On Jonas and Matfred see Stone, *Morality and Masculinity*, pp. 38–40.

⁹ Janet Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London: Longman, 1992) pp. 80–1, 88–9; Mayke de Jong, *The Penitential State: Authority and Atonement in the Age of Louis the Pious, 814–840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) pp. 42–3, 85–6.

¹⁰ Joachim Scharf, "Studien zu Smaragdus und Jonas" *Deutsches Archiv* 17 (1961) pp. 371–84.

¹¹ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione regia*, ed. Alain Debreucq, SC 407 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1995). See also the translation and commentary—though based on the PL edition—in R.W. Dyson, *A Ninth-Century Political Tract: The De Institutione Regia of Jonas of Orleans* (Smithtown: Exposition Press, 1983) and Jean Reviron, *Les Idées politico-religieuses d'un évêque du IX^e siècle: Jonas d'Orléans et son "De institutione regia"* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1930).

¹² Roger Collins, "Pippin I and the kingdom of Aquitaine" *Charlemagne's Heir. New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious*, ed. Peter Godman and Roger Collins (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990) pp. 363–89.

returning to it in 840 at Charles the Bald's invitation.¹³ *De institutione laicali* dealt with the Christian faith and moral life through three books divided into sixty-nine chapters. Jonas explicitly announced that the book was for lay consumption. In his dedicatory letter to Matfred, Jonas said "and lest on account of its (*De institutione laicali*'s) length it be wearisome to those reading, I divided it into three books: clearly the first and last were specifically arranged for all the faithful generally, however the second for the most part is for those leading the married life."¹⁴ In the first book, Jonas focused on exploring the theological foundations of Christian life, including treatments of baptism, penance, and prayer. In Book Two he described what he saw as the challenges common to lay Christian life: topics such as fornication and adultery, the tithe, and lying. In the last book, Jonas worked through virtues and vices in general, such as charity and pride, before considering the last things: death, judgment, and the afterlife. Jonas' thought sat in clear thematic and textual continuity with that of his predecessors, especially Alcuin of York. For the former, recall Alcuin's comments on the tithe both for the Saxons and for the Franks.¹⁵ For the latter, the bishop of Orléans cited *De virtutibus et vitiis* in Book Three, when writing on the eight principal vices and identifying his source as "the venerable teacher Alcuin."¹⁶

Dhuoda's *Liber manualis*, offers a unique perspective on the significance of baptism in the training of the Carolingian aristocracy.¹⁷ She was the wife of the powerful and controversial duke, Bernard of Septimania.¹⁸ Neither a member of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, nor a professed religious, Dhuoda provides the perspective of the layperson and of a woman on Christian formation, albeit from the upper class of Carolingian society.¹⁹ From 841–43 the Carolingian noblewoman labored over a lengthy book of advice for her son, William,

¹³ Jonas of Orléans, *De cultu imaginum*, PL 106.305–388. *Council of Paris*, ed. A. Werminghoff, *MGH Concilia* 2.2, (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1908) pp. 605–80. Thomas F.X. Noble, *Images, Iconoclasm, and the Carolingians* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) pp. 295–306.

¹⁴ Jonas, *Epistola* 29, ed. E. Dümmler, *MGH Epistolae* V (Berlin: Weidman nos, 1899) p. 347. "Et ne ob sui prolixitatem tedio esset legentibus, id tribus libellis distinxit, videlicet ut primus et ultimus omnibus generaliter fidelibus, medius autem magna sui ex parte coniugalem vitam ducentibus specialiter conveniret"

¹⁵ See Chapter Three.

¹⁶ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, III.vi, PL 106.247. "venerabilis magister Alcuinus scribit . . ."

¹⁷ Dhuoda, *Manuel pour mon fils*, ed. Pierre Riché, SC 225bis (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1991). The text has been lightly adjusted and translated into English as Dhuoda, *Handbook for Her Warrior Son. Liber Manualis. Cambridge Medieval Classics* 8, ed. and trans. Marcelle Thiébaux (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Also noteworthy is the English translation and commentary Dhuoda, *Handbook for William: A Carolingian Woman's Counsel for Her Son*, trans. Carol Neel (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1999), a reprint of her 1991 translation but with a new afterword.

¹⁸ Dhuoda, *Handbook for her Warrior Son*, pp. 13–18; Stone, *Masculinity and Morality*, pp. 40–2.

¹⁹ Unlike Jonas' corpus, which remains somewhat understudied, Dhuoda's *Manuel*, a unique work from the early Middle Ages, has proven a popular subject of study in the recent past because she was a woman, she was lay, and she dealt with a wide range of issues both secular and religious. A thoughtful orientation to the literature is offered by Steven Stofferahn, "The Many Faces in Dhuoda's Mirror: The Liber Manualis and a Century of Scholarship" *Magistra* 4:2 (1998) pp. 91–134.

a political hostage at the court of Charles the Bald. She organized her thoughts into twelve brief chapters. The first two chapters dealt with the doctrine of God. The central portion of her work covered living a virtuous life in the world, and she concluded her manual with two chapters on prayer. Throughout her work she emphasized a theological foundation for moral life and described how the future reward promised by God to man required virtuous behavior in this life. She described her work as a model, a rule, and a handbook of right behavior.²⁰ As with Jonas, Dhuoda was deeply influenced by earlier Carolingian authors. Alcuin appears both directly and indirectly in citations and organizational decisions throughout the work.²¹

Both in overall design and in the particulars of the content, Jonas' presentation of Christian formation follows the recommendations of the Carolingian court from Alcuin's work on the Avars through Charlemagne's encyclical on baptism. For Jonas, baptism as a *sacramentum* was fundamental to moral life. The structure of Book One emphasized sacramental primacy in two ways. It was chronologically first. It also established the conditions within which moral action was possible. On the organizational level, Jonas explained the importance of the *sacramentum* of baptism to Matfred at the outset. He began with the problem of the human condition. Chapter one was entitled "What Generally it is Appropriate that All the Faithful Know about How They Came to the Damnation of the Fallen on Account of the Crime of the First Man."²² Jonas recounted the Genesis narrative, where God made man, established him in Paradise, and then exiled him as a punishment for eating the fruit of the forbidden tree. He framed the fall of man as an issue of fidelity to pacts made with God, drawing on language common to Carolingian baptismal expositions.²³ "For it is clear that with that man [Adam] transgressing, we also have transgressed with him against our pact with the Lord."²⁴ Jonas followed an Augustinian doctrine of original sin as he described his current generation as "born out of the transmission of that sin."²⁵ He moved to establish that Christ came to

²⁰ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 66. "Volo enim ut simili modo in tribus lineis secundum auctoritatis seriem utilissimum habeat nomen: id est Norma, Forma, et Manualis."

²¹ While Riché cites only three direct citations, he does identify 14 close parallels. In addition to these, he notes several passages drawn from *libelli precum* connected to Tours. Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, pp. 383–5, see *Precum libelli quattuor aevi karolini*, ed. D.A. Wilmart (Rome: Ephemeris liturgicae, 1940).

²² Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.i, PL 106.0123. "Quod generaliter omnes fideles nosse oporteat in quantam prolapsionis damnationem, propter reatum primi hominis, devenerint."

²³ See Chapter Four.

²⁴ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.i, PL 106.124. "Liquet enim quia, illo praevaricante, nos etiam cum illo pactum Domini praevaricati sumus."

²⁵ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.i, PL 106.0123. "ex illius peccati traduce nascimur." On Augustine's ideas and influence see Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, Vol. 1: *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971) pp. 299–303; Henri Rondet, *Original Sin: The Patristic and Theological Background*, trans. Cajetan Finegan (Shannon: Ecclesia Press, 1972) pp. 109–91.

restore and improve everything that man lost through Adam, before segueing to an introduction of moral life and explaining how the benefits offered by Christ required a response on the part of man. One must follow the example of Christ in order to receive the benefit of Christ's sacrifice. The bishop of Orléans summarized his point with a quotation he attributed to Prosper of Aquitaine but was actually from Julianus Pomerius' *De vita contemplativa*, "in Adam all good things which we were able to have, we lost. In Christ we will have been guaranteed greater things and these without end, if persevering we keep to his footsteps."²⁶

The sacramental solution to the anthropological problem outlined in Chapter One was immediately explored in the second and third chapters. The *sacramentum* of baptism saved a person's soul for eternal reward. It also enabled a person to live a moral life and participate in Carolingian society. Jonas titled Chapter Two "That in Baptism the Old Man is Cast Off and Dies and is Buried with Christ, and the New is Put On."²⁷ Jonas quickly identified his purpose in composing *De institutione laicali* as he explained that the old man cast off was vice and the new man put on was virtue. He established this first point with a lengthy quotation from Augustine's *Enchiridion*, summarizing in his own words: "For what is the old man but our earlier life which we led in sins? What is the new man but Christ, who certainly is justice and truth and sanctification?"²⁸ Baptism allowed a person to live in a new manner informed by Christian moral principles. He confirmed this second point with a quotation from Jerome's *Commentary on Matthew*.²⁹ Jonas distilled his position, after baptism "therefore, nothing from the filth of the old man remains in us."³⁰

Jonas underscored in chapter three the seriousness of a Christian's new disposition and the centrality of baptism: "That the Faithful Ought Always to

²⁶ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.i, PL 106.0125. "in Adam omnia bona quae potuimus habere, perdidimus; in Christo etiam majora, et sine fine habenda recepturi sumus, si perseverantes ejus vestigia teneamus." See Julianus Pomerius, *De vita contemplativa*, PL 59.465. On the underappreciated importance of Julianus Pomerius to the early Middle Ages, especially Chrodegang, see M.A. Claussen, *The Reform of the Frankish Church: Chrodegang of Metz and the Regula canonicorum in the Eighth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) pp. 184–203 and, more generally, see Jean Devisse, "L'influence de Julien Pomère sur les clercs carolingiens" *Revue d'histoire de l'église de France* 56 (1970) pp. 285–95 and M.L.W. Laistner, "The Influence during the Middle Ages of the Treatise 'De vita contemplativa' and its Surviving Manuscripts" in *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati*, Vol. 2, Studi e Testi 121–26 (Rome: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana 1946) pp. 344–58.

²⁷ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.ii, PL 106.126. "Quod in baptismo vetus homo exuatur, et novus induatur, et Christo commoriatur, et consepeliatur."

²⁸ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.ii, PL 106.126. "Vetus quippe homo quid est, nisi vita prior quam duximus in peccatis? Novus homo quid est, nisi Christus, qui est utique justitia, et veritas, et sanctificatio." See Augustine, *Enchiridion*, ed. E. Evans, CCSL 46 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969) pp. 77–8.

²⁹ See Jerome, *Commentariorum in Mattheum libri IV*, eds. D. Hurst and M. Adriaen, CCSL 77 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969) pp. 201–2.

³⁰ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.ii, PL 106.127. "Elaborandum est itaque ut de sordibus veteris hominis nihil remaneat in nobis."

Remember the Pacts that They Made with God in Baptism.”³¹ Seizing upon the legal resonances of *sacramentum*, he tied pre-baptismal doctrinal instruction to post-baptismal moral requirements. Individual transformation was subordinated to moral obligations stemming from baptism. Jonas reminded his readers of the agreements each swore by their *sacramentum*. “In baptism every one of the faithful has bound himself to God by the legal obligations of two pacts: one whereby he professed to renounce the devil and all his works and all his pomps, and another whereby he professed that he believes in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”³² Theological training, ontological change, and proper order for the rite, while de-emphasized, were not absent, as Jonas continued “whence also by the invocation of the same Holy Trinity, he deserved to receive the grace of baptism.”³³ That Jonas featured and advanced this section without the support of any patristic citations, the only such section in Book One, highlights its importance to Jonas’ overall message.

The *sacramentum* of baptism established a foundation for moral life at the beginning of *De institutione laicali*, and it provided for the maintenance of baptismal commitment at the end of life. The concluding reflection of the last chapter of the third book, “On the Eternal Reward of the Elect,” tied back to Jonas’ opening discussion of baptism. He reminded his reader of the ultimate purpose behind moral life: salvation. And he recalled the one who granted it: God. After a series of rhetorical questions on good works and greater reward, Jonas closed with reference to the baptismal ideas with which he began his work, echoing the baptismal formation program advanced by his predecessors. Eternal reward followed from heeding Jesus’ commands. “We should heed his teachings, so that we are able to obtain such glory from him.”³⁴ Because of rebirth at baptism people were able to live moral lives and merit eternal life. For Jonas, baptism was deeply integrated into the meaning and purpose of human life. “For this certainly we are born, so that we are reborn in Christ. For this also we are reborn, so that with the same Christ the Lord we live forever without end.”³⁵ For Jonas, the baptism’s effects are assumed, not argued.

Dhuoda shared Jonas’ basic assumptions about human life and similarly reflected continuity with the ideas developed by Alcuin and others at the end of the eighth century. Both the overarching design of her manual and particular

³¹ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.iii, PL 106.128. “*Ut fideles semper meminisse debeant pacti quod cum Deo in baptismo fecerunt.*”

³² Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.iii, PL 106.128. “*Duarum pactionum nexibus unusquisque fidelis Deo in baptismo se obligavit: altera qua abrenuntiare diabolo, et omnibus ejus, et omnibus pompis ejus; altera qua se in Patrem, et Filium, et Spiritum sanctum credere professus est.*”

³³ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.iii, PL 106.128. “*Unde et sub ejusdem sanctae Trinitatis invocationem baptismatis gratiam accipere promeruit.*”

³⁴ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, III.xx, PL 106.278. “*ejusque monitis obtemperemus, ut ab eo tantam gloriam adipisci valeamus.*”

³⁵ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, III.xx, PL 106.278. “*Ad hoc nempe nascimur, ut Christo renascamur. Ad hoc etiam renascimur, ut cum eodem Christo Domino sine fine in aeternum vivamus.*”

items of concern underlined the importance of the *sacramentum* of baptism and of catechetical formation to her understanding of the Carolingian world. Dhuoda hoped her work would inform William's interactions with others in the world and with God. "You will also find in it [the *Liber manualis*] a mirror in which beyond all doubt you will be able to see the salvation of your soul, so that you will be able to please not only the world, but in everything Him who formed you from clay."³⁶ Even as Dhuoda distinguished between the ends her work addressed, the seeming ambiguity of her vocabulary reflected an intentionally broad semantic range. When she wrote about the "salvation" (*salutem*) of William's soul it has seemed unclear to some scholars if she meant primarily his eternal salvation or his success in the world.³⁷ She meant both simultaneously. Throughout her work, she explicitly and often emphasized that her advice provided for William's "soul and body."³⁸ Dhuoda's integrated perspective is nowhere clearer than in book three, where echoing a creedal affirmation, she identified God as the originator and ruler of both the body and the soul. "We believe in one Creator, Shepherd, and Governor of our bodies and our souls."³⁹

The overall structure of her book links her vision to earlier Carolingian views on formation. Dhuoda began with Christian doctrine. Then she considered moral commands. She preserved the general trajectory suggested by Alcuin, even as she made her own contribution by not just having the topics follow sequentially, but by having one flow from the other. Through the first two books of her Handbook, she laid out what she understood to be principle Christian teachings on God and on the Holy Trinity. A theological and philosophical vocabulary organized her views on religion and society. This vocabulary enabled her to connect her theological views to earthly things and her temporal views to heavenly matters. She derived her principal political concepts from her understanding of divinity. "He himself is the God of everything, his is power and kingdom and authority."⁴⁰ The relationship was reciprocal. "My son, earthly things teach us about those which are heavenly."⁴¹ The deity anchored all her central concepts. "This word 'God' contains a great and wondrous *sacramentum*."⁴² Her catechesis informed the rest of her work insofar as moral life

³⁶ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, pp. 80–2. "*Inuenies etiam et speculum in quo salutem animae tuae indubitanter possis conspiciere, ut non solum saeculo, sed ei per omnia possis placere qui te formauit ex limo*" (cf. Gen. 1:7).

³⁷ Both Neel and Thiébaux choose to translate *salutem* in this instance with "health," underscoring the ambiguity but, perhaps, slightly obscuring the spiritual basis of Dhuoda's holistic concern for her son.

³⁸ See for example, Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, pp. 68, 86, 150, 152, 162, 166, 200, 206, and 278.

³⁹ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 172. "*Unum esse credimus Creatorem, Pastorem, et Gubernatorem corporum siue animarum nostrarum.*"

⁴⁰ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 110. "*Deus uniuersorum ipse est; ipsius est potestas est regnumque et imperium.*"

⁴¹ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 122. "*Docent, fili, terrena quae sunt coelestia.*"

⁴² Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 104. "*Deus hoc magnum admirabilem continet sacramentum.*"

proceeded by analogy from catechetical propositions. She developed her moral analysis out of her theology, just as Alcuin proposed to teach the faith first and instruct in moral commands next. She began her exploration of William's obligations to his earthly father in the second chapter of book three with reference to her earlier treatment on the love of God. She wrote "therefore I advise you again, most beloved son William, that first you love God as you have seen written above and then love, fear, and cherish your father."⁴³

Book Seven, perhaps the key section of her work, offers a compelling view of her continuity with earlier Carolingian views on formation.⁴⁴ Here Dhuoda explained her first principles of analysis. The first chapter, entitled "A Single Most Useful Admonition," introduced the implications of baptism for Dhuoda's relationship with William.⁴⁵ The indirect references framing her discussion only emphasized the organizing role the *sacramentum* of baptism had on her thought. She informed William that everything she had written to this point in the book was for his earthly life, addressing his temporal bodily needs as a successful Carolingian leader, strong in battle and prayerful. "Just as I, as your Arranger, succeeded in assisting you in all things to order the character of the times, so that, without blame while you live in active military service or the contemplative life, you should be able to walk safely and peacefully."⁴⁶ For the remainder of the book, Dhuoda advised her son as a godmother, who focused on William's perfection before the Creator. Baptism was the trigger or the rationale for formation. "But from this point forward, I will not cease to instruct how, with God's help, you should lead the military service of your soul to perfection, just as a mother according to your soul and your body, so that you may be reborn daily in Christ."⁴⁷ This distinction was so important to Dhuoda that she elaborated on her meaning. With a forced reference to Ovid's *Amores* on inner conflict, she wrote

for in fact according to the sayings of the learned, in each man there are known to be two births, one carnal and the other spiritual, but the spiritual is nobler than the carnal. For in the human race one is not able usefully to exist without the other, and so that both accord more worthily, somebody says: 'with which

⁴³ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 140. "Ego autem admoneo te, desideratissime fili Wilhelme, ut in primis diligas Deum sicut supra habes conscriptum; deinde ama, time, et dilige patrem tuum."

⁴⁴ Janet Nelson has previously suggested that Book VII is a key point in the book's structure; eadem, "Dhuoda" in *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World*, eds. Patrick Wormald and Janet Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) pp. 106–20, at 112.

⁴⁵ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 298. "Admonitio singularis utilissima."

⁴⁶ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 298. "Qualitas temporalium, ut, absque reprehensione, tempore dum uiuis in militia actuali, siue dignitatis contemplationum, secure et quiete ualeas incedere, prout ualui ordinatrix tibi astiti in cunctis."

⁴⁷ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 298. "Nunc uero deinceps militiam animae tuae qualiter, auxiliante Deo, ad summum usque perducas, uelut genetrix secunda mente et corpore ut in Christo cotidie renascaris ammonere non cesso."

and without which we cannot live.' And although the sense of the passage turns in another direction for clear reasons of its differences, I want you to understand it just as I say.⁴⁸

She made the connection to the *sacramentum* of baptism more explicit, and ornamented her point with a classical rhetorical flourish—one she realized did not exactly fit, but which she was willing to force for the sake of her overarching point about the fundamental significance of baptism for interpreting human life.

Dhuoda elaborated on first principles for the rest of Book Seven. She offered meditations on first and second birth, as well as first and second death. The details of her ruminations match Jonas' instincts, even as she added her own twists. She began with her assumptions about the human condition. The crucial element of one's first birth for Dhuoda was that everyone was born in sin. Everything else depended upon this realization. "Concerning first birth: no one does not know that each one of us is born with sin."⁴⁹ With respect to second birth, Dhuoda penned a longer reflection in which she made three points. She began with the high stakes of second birth, eternal reward in heaven. She offered the Gospel of John as evidence for her assertion. "For concerning the second birth, which is spiritual, the Gospel says: 'Unless one is born again' (Jn 3:3), etc."⁵⁰ The cited passage from John continues "he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn 3:3).⁵¹ Next, Dhuoda acknowledged the important role of godparents in contemporary society and in history more generally. She reminded William that through the *sacramentum* of baptism, people could have many more offspring than through first birth. "For through this increase of regeneration many become fathers to many, many times."⁵² She followed with a list of holy

⁴⁸ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 298. "*Secundum dicta namque doctorum, duo natiuitates in uno homine esse noscuntur, una carnalis, altera spiritualis, sed nobilior spiritualis quam carnalis. Vna enim sine alia utiliter non potest in genere consistere humano, et ut ambae dignius conueniant, Apostolus dicit: 'Cum quibus <uiuimus> et sine quibus uiuere non possumus.' Et licet aliter hoc in loco uoluitur sensus, pro certis differentium causis, ego uolo ut ita teneas sicut fateor.*" Because he recognized Dhuoda's allusion to Ovid, Peter Dronke revised Riché's reading of this passage, reading "aliquis" as opposed to "Apostolus," the reading in Paris, BN Lat. 12293, a seventeenth century copy of an earlier manuscript belonging to Pierre de Marca, archbishop of Tolouse and later Paris. Peter Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages: A Critical Study of Texts from Perpetua to Marguerite Porete* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) pp. 46 and 292. Riché followed the reading in Barcelona, Biblioteca Central, MS 569 from the first half of the fourteenth Century. Because of its Catalan origin and because William died in Barcelona, Riché proposed that the MS descended from William's own book. For a brief discussion of the three surviving manuscripts of Dhuoda's work see Thiébaux's introduction in Dhuoda, *Handbook for Her Warrior Son*, pp. 38–9; also see Cullen Chandler, "Barcelona BC 569 and a Carolingian programme on the virtues" *Early Medieval Europe* 18:3 (2010) pp. 265–91.

⁴⁹ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 298. "*De prima natiuitate nullus ignorat quia cum peccato unusquisque nascitur nostrum.*"

⁵⁰ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 300. "*De secunda namque natiuitate, quod est spiritualis, ait Euangelium: Nisi quis renatus fuerit denuo, etc.*"

⁵¹ Jn 3:3 "*Nisi quis natus fuerit denuo non potest videre regnum Dei.*"

⁵² Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 300. "*Per hanc enim regenerationis augmentum multi pluraliter plurimis extiterunt genitores.*"

women drawn from saints' lives, mothers in particular, who could be shown to have provided physically and spiritually for their children. And last, spiritual birth involved obligations of education or formation. Dhuoda reiterated the importance of godparents offering doctrinal instruction and moral example to their godchildren. "And many—then, now, and always—do not cease to beget sons daily in the church, through the Gospel, it is said, and the teaching of holy preaching, or the example of a life of good works."⁵³ All three points emphasized the centrality of baptism to Carolingian life and to her efforts in the manual.

Book Seven concludes with a discussion of death, distinguishing between first and second death. First death was the death of the body, which happened to everyone. "The first death is a crossing over of the body . . . No one is able to escape this first death."⁵⁴ Second death was the death of the soul, by which she meant eternal damnation. This second death could be avoided though virtuous life, aided by study and prayer. "From second death, however, one is able to escape if he wishes and if he struggles worthily . . . according to my instruction, and your wish to grow in Christ, you ought frequently to read, frequently to pray."⁵⁵ Baptism was at the root of the most important questions of life and death, the only ones Williams would have any control over.

Other contemporary authors confirm that the *sacramentum* of baptism structured Carolingian moral analysis. The harmony of shared assumptions are in evidence in the writings of the lay noble Nithard, who composed four books of histories concerning the rise of Charles the Bald and the mid-century civil wars. A member of Charles' retinue, Nithard composed the first two books at Charles' request to establish the justice of Charles' action against his older half-brother, Lothar. The third book continued the story and detailed the alliance of Charles with his other half-brother, Louis the German, against Lothar. The fourth book covered the aftermath of the civil war and the settlement between Lothar and his brothers. This final book—strikingly different in tone—conveyed Nithard's personal anxiety and disappointment over the negotiated settlement. Nithard has been compared to Dhuoda, who faced similar turmoil through the lives of Bernard, her husband, and William, her son, who was given to Charles the Bald as a hostage.⁵⁶ The connections between the two are not just

⁵³ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 302. "Et multi tunc et nunc et semper, per Euangelium, inquit, et doctrinam sanctae praedicationis, uel exemplum conuersationis operum bonorum, cotidie in sancta Ecclesia non desinunt generare filios."

⁵⁴ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 302. "Mors prima, transmigratio est corporis . . . Primam nullus euadere potest hominum."

⁵⁵ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, pp. 302–4. "De morte autem secunda potest euadere homo, si uult et si certauerit digne . . . secundum admonitionem meam, et tua[m] in Christo adcrecente uoluntate, frequenter debes legere, frequenter orare." With Thiébaux I prefer "tua" to "tuam," see Dhuoda, *Handbook for Her Warrior Son*, p. 192.

⁵⁶ Janet Nelson, "Public Histories and Private History in the Work of Nithard" *Speculum* 60:2 (1985) pp. 251–93.

thematic. Nithard featured Bernard of Septimania in a number of episodes throughout his *Histories*, and never positively. In one example of many, early in book one—in a paragraph that also negatively portrayed Matfred of Orléans—Nithard condemned Bernard's actions as politically deleterious.⁵⁷ “He (Bernard) rashly abused the commonwealth, which he ought to strengthen. He completely destroyed it.”⁵⁸ Moreover, Nithard, in comparison with Dhuoda and with Jonas, confirmed that lay and ecclesiastical values did not widely vary across the middle decades of the ninth century, even if their particular application of values did.⁵⁹

An episode toward the end of the second book captured the deep importance of baptism to Carolingian interpretations of moral, social, and political life. The second book depicted Charles' attempt to ameliorate the injustices identified in Book One. At the outset of the narrative, Nithard outlined the sacramental stakes when he described Lothar as sending emissaries across Francia to exact *sacramenta* of fidelity from the people.⁶⁰ Later in the book, after a consideration of the vigorous negotiations between Charles and Lothar, Nithard recounted the following story.⁶¹ On Holy Saturday Charles happened to be taking a bath. Things had been looking dour for Charles and his retinue and he was prepared to put on his old clothes at the conclusion of his washing. However, wonderfully, just as he was emerging from the tub, emissaries arrived bearing a crown and new clothes, royal and liturgical. This inspired Charles and his men. Interpreted as God's grace and divine approval for their side in the conflict, all were filled with confident hope in Charles' position vis-à-vis Lothar. Key markers of Charles' legitimacy were encoded in widely accessible allusions to the *sacramentum* of baptism. Charles' right belief, his washing on Easter, and his new clothes indicated the moral correctness of his position. These echoes from the baptismal liturgy emphasized to readers the sacramental purity of Charles the leader and anticipated the moral superiority of Charles' position against Lothar. The last straw before open conflict with Lothar was the elder

⁵⁷ Nithard, *Histoire des fils de Louis le Pieux*, I.3, ed. and trans. Philippe Lauer, rev. Sophie Glansdorff (Paris: Les belles lettres, 2012) p. 10. “*Instigante autem Hugone, cujus filiam in matrimonium Lodharius duxerat, ac Mathfrido ceterisque, sero se hoc fecisse penituit et quemadmodum illud quod fecerat annullare posset querebat.*” On the contrast in portrayals of Matfred in Ermoldus and Nithard see Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, p. 79.

⁵⁸ Nithard, *Histoire*, I.3, p. 10. “*Qui dum inconsulte re publica abuteretur, quam debuit, penitus evertit.*”

⁵⁹ See Nelson, “Dhuoda” pp. 106–20, at 108; and Thomas F.X. Noble, “Secular Sanctity: Forging an Ethos for the Carolingian Nobility” *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World*, ed. Patrick Wormald and Janet Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) pp. 8–36. For a sustained analysis of groups with shared social and political assumptions and dramatically different ideas on appropriate social and political outcomes for disagreements, see the readings of Louis' penance explored in Courtney M. Booker, *Past Convictions: The Penance of Louis the Pious and the Decline of the Carolingians* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

⁶⁰ Nithard, *Histoire*, II.1, p. 44. “. . . *fidei sacramento . . .*”

⁶¹ Nithard, *Histoire*, II.8, pp 70–4.

brother's deceitful *sacramentum*. Toward the end of Book Two, Charles and Louis made a final peace offer to Lothar who swore he would consider it. Nithard noted that "Louis and Charles believed this *sacramentum*."⁶² When it turned out that Lothar was merely stalling for time until Pippin and his armies could arrive from Aquitaine "any hope for justice and peace from him [Lothar] seemed gone."⁶³ Charles's decision to fight Lothar was sacramentally justified, and subsequently confirmed by victory. Nithard shared basic convictions and vocabulary with Jonas and Dhuoda, even as he expressed his individual opinions.

Lacking Nithard's gripping narrative, Jonas and Dhuoda developed their basic assumptions about the *sacramentum* of baptism into thematic analyses of moral life. Continuity of thought with earlier Carolingians is masked to an extent by the difference of immediate concern. The adaptability of sacramental thinking to various contexts, surveyed in Chapter One, helps explain its continued utility. The impetus to find missionary success felt so acutely by Alcuin and Carolingians at the turn on the ninth century had disappeared. In its place arose dismay over moral fatigue and ethical compromise amid the social and political unknowns of the mid-century, as evidenced by Nithard's tale of betrayal and Jonas' and Dhuoda's pre-emptive advice. In widely divergent contexts, *sacramentum* aligned earthly with heavenly success in accordance with Christian faith.

Throughout *De institutione laicali*, Jonas connected his vocabulary of spiritual and moral order to the daily practical concerns for Matfred. Jonas opened his work with an analogy between spiritual efforts and earthly works when he described Adam's fall and its significance for all subsequent people. After Jonas explained the sin, that Adam violated his pact with God, the bishop of Orléans explained the punishment. He focused his attention on God's words to Adam and Eve, specifically, "you are earth, and into earth you will go" (Gen. 3:19).⁶⁴ He alternated external and internal penalties, before unifying both in the double death merited by the first sin. Making clear that the punishment issued to Adam and Eve applied to contemporary people, Jonas wrote "he [God] sent us out: for the fatherland, certainly, exile; for happiness, misery; for glory, obscurity, and for immortality, he imposed death of the body and of the soul."⁶⁵

Throughout the book Jonas identified one's interior quality with one's external actions. He introduced marriage in Book Two by establishing the divine nature and purpose of marriage: the continuation of the human race.⁶⁶ Jonas

⁶² Nithard, *Histoire*, II.10, p. 86. "Quo quidem sacramento Lodhuvicus et Karolus creduli effecti . . ."

⁶³ Nithard, *Histoire*, II.10, p. 86. "omnis spes justitiae ac pacis sua ex parte ablata videretur."

⁶⁴ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.i, PL 106.124. "Terra es, et in terram ibis."

⁶⁵ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.i, PL 106.124–5. "... nobis dimisit; pro patria, scilicet, exilium; pro felicitate miseriam, pro gloria ignobilitatem, et pro immortalitate infligit nobis corporis et animae mortem."

⁶⁶ On the theology and law of marriage in the early Latin West see Philip Reynolds, *Marriage in the Western Church. The Christianization of Marriage during the Patristic and Early Medieval Periods* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

explained “that marriage was established by God, and is not to be sought for reason of luxury, but for the procreation of children.”⁶⁷ Marriage ought to encourage interior virtue by the preservation of physical purity. The second chapter of Book Two explored the way in which marriage required a correspondence between the physical states of the husband and wife, “as those who wish to have wives, just as they want to find them chaste and unspoiled, thus they should desire to approach them chaste and unspoiled.”⁶⁸ To support further his position, he referred to Jesus’ moral instruction from Matthew’s Gospel. “For those Ten Commandments are renewed as two, just as we heard, so that we love God and neighbor. And those two are reduced to one and the one is: ‘What you do not wish to be done to you, do not do to another’” (cf. Mt 7:12).⁶⁹ On another occasion, Jonas similarly addressed fidelity within marriage when he wrote “concerning preserving the faith between a husband and wife, and that it is not permitted to have a concubine.”⁷⁰ He argued for the moral requirement of fidelity given the reciprocal relationship between external action and internal moral condition. “Therefore I advise you, O most great man, you who strive for the grace of the Lord, not to join to an adulterous body, for he who joins himself to a harlot is one body [with her].”⁷¹

Jonas crafted his approach to the human condition, the Fall, and baptism in terms drawn from the high-stakes social and political arena in which Matfred lived. Instead of emphasizing catechetical formation more generally, he assumed basic catechesis and framed baptism as a matter of solemn “pacts” which ensured moral rigor. Jonas described the problematic human condition as a result of the Fall and as a matter of infidelity to Adam’s agreement with God. When Adam ate the fruit of the tree, he deserved to be expelled from Eden along with his descendants. “We, too, violated with him the pact of the Lord.”⁷² At baptism, a right relationship between God and man was re-established by means of two pacts, one against the devil and one for God. “In baptism every one of the faithful has bound himself to God by the legal obligations of two pacts: one whereby he professed to renounce the devil and all his works and all his pomps, another whereby he professed that he believes in the

⁶⁷ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, II.i, PL 106.0167–70. “*Quod conjugium a Deo sit institutum; et non sit appetendum causa luxuriae, sed liberorum procreatione.*”

⁶⁸ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, II.ii, PL 106.170–2. “*Ut qui uxores ducere voluerint, sicut eas castas et incorruptas cupiunt invenire, sic ad eas casti et incorrupti studeant accedere.*”

⁶⁹ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, II.ii, PL 106.172. “*Decem enim praecepta ad duo illa referuntur, sicut audivimus, ut diligamus Deum et proximum. Et duo illa, ad unum illud. Unum est autem: Quod tibi fieri non vis, alii ne feceris.*”

⁷⁰ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, II.iv, PL 106.174. “*De conservanda fide inter virum et uxorem: et quod non liceat [neque pellicem, neque] concubinam habere.*”

⁷¹ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, II.iv, PL 106.0177. “*Vos ergo moneo, viri maxime, qui ad gratiam Domini tenditis, non conjungi adulterino corpori; qui enim se meretrici conjungit, unum corpus est.*”

⁷² Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.i, PL 106.0124. “*Nos etiam cum illo pactum Domini praevaricati sumus.*”

Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”⁷³ The reorientation of allegiances implied formation for Matfred and demands actions.

On the one hand, using the language of pact to describe baptism was well attested in earlier Carolingian approaches to baptism.⁷⁴ The notion appeared in responses to Charlemagne’s questionnaire on baptism from 811/812 in authors such as Maxentius of Aquileia and Leidrad of Lyon.⁷⁵ Jonas’ predecessor, Theodulf of Orléans used “pact” in his own treatment of baptism, addressed to Magnus of Sens. In a passage dense with liturgical and biblical allusions he wrote

Because therefore it is agreed that there are two pacts of believers, one in which the devil is renounced with his pomps and all his works, the other in which it is acknowledged that he [the catechumen] believes in the Father and the Son and in the Holy Spirit, it is appropriate that he hold these with an unshakable purpose of mind. Thus they [the catechumens] are able to be preserved unstained, always to seek the aid of that one who conferred the *sacramentum* of baptism for the salvation of the human race. This mystery was prefigured through Moses in the Old Testament when the people were baptized in the cloud and in the sea, and is shown in the New most clearly through the mediator of God and man.⁷⁶

On the other hand, “pacts” were crucial to maintaining peace and order in the rough and tumble world of the Carolingian political environment of the mid-ninth century. Violating pacts created unrest and stoked conflict. For an example, we can turn again to Nithard. Toward the end of Book One of his *Histories*, Nithard recounted the reconciliation of Lothar with his father, Louis. He explained their relationship in the language of baptism and penance. “Likewise however, as a dutiful and merciful father, he [Louis] forgave the sins of the one petitioning him [Lothar] and granted his grace to the one asking for it; namely by that pact, so that henceforth he would do nothing whatsoever against his will with respect to Charles or anything in the kingdom.”⁷⁷ Nithard’s perspective depended on the same analytical framework used by Jonas for Matfred.

⁷³ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.iii, PL 106.128. “*Duarum pactionum nexibus unusquisque fidelis Deo in baptismo se obligavit: altera qua abrenuntiare diabolo, et omnibus ejus, et omnibus pompis ejus; altera qua se in Patrem, et Filium, et Spiritum sanctum credere professus est.*”

⁷⁴ See Chapter One. ⁷⁵ See Chapter Four.

⁷⁶ Susan Keefe, *Water and the Word: Baptism and the Education of the Clergy in the Carolingian Empire*, Vol. II (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002) pp. 300–1. “*quia igitur constat pactiones credentium esse duas, unam in qua renuntiatur diabolo et pompis ejus et omnibus operibus ejus, altera quae se credere confitetur in patrem et filium et in spiritum sanctum, oportet has inconvulse mentis intentione tenere, et ut intemerate custodiri possint, illius semper adiutorium quaerere qui baptismi sacramentum ad salutem generis humani contulit, cuius mysterium et in veteri testamento per moysen praefiguratum est, cum populus in nube et in mari baptizatus est, et in novo nobis per mediatorem dei et hominem apertissime demonstratum.*”

⁷⁷ Nithard, *Histoire*, I.7, p. 36. “*Idem autem, ut pius ac clemens pater, et delicta postulanti indulset et gratiam roganti concessit, eo scilicet pacto, ut deinceps nihil quolibet modo contra suam voluntatem nec in Karolum nec in regnum alicubi egisset.*”

Jonas reiterated his main purpose in the final chapters of Book One when he discussed the elevated stakes of moral life for Christians. The penultimate chapter featured the importance of maintaining the *nomen Christianum*: "That Those who Gained the Faith of Christ and Ended Life in Wickedness are More Severely Punished than those who Died without Faith and Nevertheless Did Good Works."⁷⁸ The bishop of Orléans centered baptism in the combat against moral laxity, not on the conversion of pagans. Christians, according to Jonas, did not understand the seriousness of the moral commitments stemming from the *sacramentum* of baptism: "it is commonly said by some Christians that those who were reborn in Christ, although they live wretchedly and conclude their final day with evil works, are punished with long-lasting purgatory, but not with everlasting fire."⁷⁹ Not only did Jonas remind Matfred of the obligations of baptism, he insisted upon the moral rectitude incumbent upon the baptized. "Those," he wrote, "living in shame and atoning for their sins neither though the weeping of penance nor the distributions of alms, but rather continuing in them to death, suffer *more dreadful* torments than those who, although they were never baptized with the washing of Christ in the church nevertheless do good works."⁸⁰ He supplied supporting texts from the New Testament, Latin translations of Origen's homilies, and Augustine, before concluding with a final chapter "That Many Hold a Christian Profession in Words, but Ignore Deeds."⁸¹ He closed the first book by reiterating his concern about maintaining Christian discipline. "How many appear in the Church today (which cannot be described without great grief of spirit) who received the faith of Christ and avoid doing good works and are devoted to vices and think the Christian name suffices?"⁸² In a world where theological and civil life are still integrated, faith can make spiritual and civil demands.

Dhuoda too developed her own moral analysis along similar lines. In a section on intercession and praying for others, she addressed the tragic situation of those who had been baptized but subsequently sinned and died without penance. Dhuoda drew her distinction from the sayings of the Desert Fathers and

⁷⁸ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.xix, PL 106.158. "*Quod gravius puniantur qui fidem Christi perceperunt, et in malis vitam finierunt, quam illi qui sine fide mortui sunt, et tamen bona opera egerunt.*"

⁷⁹ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.xix, PL 106.158. "*Dici solet a nonnullis Christianis, quod hi qui in Christo renati sunt, quanquam scelerate vivant, et in malis operibus diem claudant extremum, diuturno atque purgatorio, non tamen perpetuo igni sunt puniendi.*"

⁸⁰ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.xix, PL 106.158. "*Quod autem qui in flagitiis viventes, et haec nec poenitentiae lamentis nec eleemosynarum largitionibus redimentes, sed in eis potius perseverantes diem obeunt, atrociora sint tormenta passuri, quam illi qui, licet lavacro Christi in Ecclesia nequaquam sunt baptizati, bona tamen opera fecerunt: subtus testimonia collecta declarant.*"

⁸¹ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.xx, PL 106.161. "*Quod multi Christianam professionem verbis teneant, sed operibus negligent.*"

⁸² Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.xx, PL 106.162. "*Quam multi hodie in Ecclesia existunt (quod non sine magno animi moerore prosequi potest), qui fidem Christi perceperunt, et opera habere contemnunt, vitiis inserviunt, et Christianitatis nomen sibi sufficere putant?*"

preserved the dialogue format with a departed soul responding to the questions of a generic old man “for we who have not known the law, nor ever received the grace of baptism, punishments will be a somewhat more bearable for us, as if he said: No man has hired us.”⁸³ In Matthew’s version of the parable of the vineyard, Dhuoda saw an analogy between laborers waiting to be hired and non-Christians waiting to be called to the faith. To avoid any ambiguity in this case, she continued “indeed those who, having recognized God’s power and the faith of the Holy Trinity, received the grace of baptism and after this acknowledgement finished their days without the fruit of penance, will experience harsher torments than we.”⁸⁴ Dhuoda preserved the order of baptismal formation seen in Alcuin. She assumed that one would first know God’s sovereignty and profess faith in the Trinity, then be baptized, and finally be held accountable for moral actions. With a reference to John’s challenge in the Gospel of Luke, she added penance as a maintenance feature, a tool to restore one’s moral integrity in light of the inevitability of sin after baptism.⁸⁵

Dhuoda’s exhortations to William stressed continual maintenance and calibration of Christian moral life. And her frame of reference consistently was baptism. She was even more explicit than Jonas in her analogy between the interior and exterior life. On the one hand, she wrote that her advice was intended to guide William toward both. In her poetic summary in Book Ten, she again returned to the point using the semantic range of *salus*:

From the first line of this little book
To its last syllable, know that
All this is written for your salvation (*salutis*).⁸⁶

The following stanza clarified her polysemous intent as she recorded that her concern for his well-being extended both to his body and to his soul.

All the verses here—above and below, with all the rest—
I have dictated for the good of your spirit and your body.⁸⁷

⁸³ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 316. “‘Nos qui necdum legem nouimus nec gratiam baptismatis unquam accipimus, quantulumcumque tolerabilior a nobis poena mane[n]t,’ ac si dixisset: ‘Nemo nos conduxit (Mt. 20:7).’” Riché’s note refers to *Les Sentences des Pères du désert, les apophtegmes des Pères (recension de Pélagie et Jean)*, intro. Dom L. Regnault, trans. J. Dion and G. Oury (Solemes: Abbaye Saint-Pierre, 1966) pp. 297–8.

⁸⁴ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 316. “*Illi uero qui, agnita Dei uirtute, Sanctae Trinitatis fide, cum baptismatis gratiam acceperunt, et post agnitionem absque fructum poenitentiae dies finierunt suos, duriora nobis sentient tormenta.*”

⁸⁵ Cf. Lk. 3:8. This reference passes unmentioned by Riché and both English translations.

⁸⁶ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 340. “*Ex primo namque huius uersu libelli, Vuque ad ultimam eiusdem sillabam, Cuncta tibi ad pensum salutis scripta cognosce.*”

⁸⁷ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 340. “*Hos uersiculos supra, infra, et subtus. Ad mentem corpusque tuum ipsa dictaui, cum cunctis.*”

Already at the beginning of Book One, Dhuoda had introduced the idea that a faithful moral life would ensure both earthly happiness and heavenly reward. After her initial outline of moral life, she paused to explain to William why moral life mattered. "Because if you do this [lead a moral life], he [God] will guard you, a Leader, a Companion, a Country, 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life' (Jn. 14:6), most lavishly granting you prosperity in this world, and He will convert all your enemies to peace."⁸⁸ A rightly ordered interior life could have civil consequences. But earthly peace was not the only, or even, main reason for moral action. Dhuoda continued and identified her own wish for William and her main purpose in advising him on moral living. "And after the course of this life is finished, may he [God] bring you rejoicing with his saints into heaven."⁸⁹ The ultimate goal, of course, was atemporal.

The polysemy resulting from the intrinsic connection for Dhuoda between heaven and earth has sometimes vexed modern scholars as ambiguous. For example, Dhuoda used the word "Lord" (*domnus*) to indicate God, Charles the Bald, and Bernard of Septimania. At some crucial points scholars have disagreed to whom Dhuoda referred. For example, at one point Dhuoda reminded William of his godfather's great love for him. She described how Theuderic had left his earthly possessions for William's benefit. How these possessions would benefit William turns on the reading of the word "Lord." She wrote "leaving you behind in this age, just as a first born little son, everything was left to his Lord (*domno*) and our master in order to be useful to you in everything."⁹⁰ In an illuminating study of a lay woman's authorial voice and claims to authority, Martin Claussen—while explicitly acknowledging "ambiguity in Dhuoda's language"—argued that she here referred to God. The benefits and honors she desired for William were not secular and earthly, but rather spiritual and included the intercession of Theuderic from the next life.⁹¹ In one of the first modern editions and studies of the text, Édouard Bondurand took Lord to refer to Charles the Bald. Because he was the king and because he held William as a hostage, Bondurand reasoned that it would make sense for Charles to hold possession of any material inheritance until William's adulthood.⁹² Finally, in Pierre Riché's more recent critical edition, the "Lord" is identified as William's

⁸⁸ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 114. "Quod si feceris, erit tibi custos, dux, comes, et patria, uia, ueritas, et uita, tribuens tibi prospera in mundo largissime, et omnes inimicos tuos conuertet ad pacem."

⁸⁹ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 116. "et post expletum huius uitae cursum, polum faciat cum sanctis introiri laetantes."

⁹⁰ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, pp. 320–2. "Te quasi primogenitum paruulum relinquens in saeculo, suo cuncta domno et seniori nostro, ut tibi prodesse ualerent in omnibus, remanserunt."

⁹¹ M. A. Claussen, "Fathers of Power and Mothers of Authority: Dhuoda and the Liber Manualis" *French Historical Studies* 19:3 (1996) pp. 785–809, at 808.

⁹² Édouard Bondurand, *Le manuel de Dhuoda (843) publié sous les auspices de m. le ministre de l'instruction publique et de l'Académie de Nîmes* (Paris: A. Picard, 1887) p. 54.

father Bernard, whom Riché believed was the more obvious choice to guard William's inheritance.⁹³

Both Jonas and Dhuoda believed that moral life, in order to be fruitful, must be informed by faith. In other words, they agreed in assuming that the *sacramentum* of baptism sustained and made possible worthwhile moral behavior. Both Jonas and Dhuoda argued that the purpose of moral life, in line with Alcuin's recommendation, was eternal reward. Jonas framed Book One with references to the end of Christian life, eternal reward for the soul, and the difficulty of attaining that end. In his first book, Jonas inserted a paraphrase of the "first commandment" that Jesus gave in the Gospel of Mark. "And you shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, and with your whole soul, and with your whole mind, and with your whole strength. This is the first commandment."⁹⁴ Jonas made the service of God in the present life obligatory for future reward. "Hence it is appropriate that each and every faithful one know where he deservedly fell, and whence through the generous mercy of Christ he was plucked up, and he should busy himself loving such a rescuer and liberator with his whole heart, whole soul, and whole strength, and should in no way grow tepid in his love, but consume the whole time of his life in his service."⁹⁵ At the conclusion of the first book he returned to this theme, underscoring the special difficulty of success for Christians because of the high moral demands of their Christianity.

Dhuoda developed a similar moral teaching through theological analogy. She used the idea of fatherhood to organize her thoughts on social relationships. Book Three began with two sections on William's father. Dhuoda described an appropriate attitude toward one's father as similar to the attitude one should maintain toward God. In Dhuoda's estimation, fear, love, and faithfulness ought to characterize a son's relationship with his father. "I am not reluctant to advise you, as I am able, how you ought to fear, to love, and to be faithful in all things to your lord and father, Bernard, when he is present and when he is absent."⁹⁶ The virtues Dhuoda recommended to William in developing his relationship with his father echoed the virtues Dhuoda recommended in maintaining his relationship with God. God ought to be loved and feared because of his great power. Earlier she had instructed William that "therefore, he himself (God) is to be feared and to be loved and most certainly his immortality is to be believed, he who is always a powerful king without diminution

⁹³ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, pp. 19–20.

⁹⁴ Mk. 12:30 "*et diliges Dominum Deum tuum ex toto corde tuo et ex tota anima tua et ex tota mente tua et ex tota virtute tua hoc est primum mandatum.*"

⁹⁵ Jonas, *De institutione laicali* l.i., PL 106.0126. "*Proinde oportet ut unusquisque fidelis agnoscat ubi merito corruerit, et unde per gratuitam Christi pietatem erutus fuerit, et tantum ereptorem et liberatorem toto corde, tota anima, tota virtute diligere satagat, et ab amore illius in nullo tepescat, sed omne tempus vitae suae in ejus servitio insumat.*"

⁹⁶ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 134. "*Qualiter domno et genitori tuo Bernardo, tam praesens quam absens, timere, amare, atque fidelis in omnibus esse debeas, insinuare, ut ualeo, non pigeo.*"

ruling and doing whatever he wishes.”⁹⁷ One ought to be faithful to God because of the care and the reward that God could bestow. “And he who prepares a table in the desert for his faithful, and giving them in a time of necessity a filling measure of wheat, is able to fulfil in me his will for his handmaid from his desire.”⁹⁸ Throughout the *Manual*, Dhuoda united one’s relationship to God to one’s relationship with one’s natural father. She interpreted the biblical account of the sons of Noah and of Jacob’s son, Joseph as showing that obedience to God and to one’s father could bring earthly success and heavenly reward. She concluded “many others obeying God and complying with the orders of a faithful father were worthy and acceptable in the world, and struggling without injury they safely arrived at their end.”⁹⁹ Civil and theological goods remained integrated for Dhuoda.

Dhuoda continued this theme as she considered more generally his lord, Charles the Bald. She especially stressed the virtue of faithfulness that William ought to show Charles. After brief mentions of servants who faithfully served Abraham and David, Dhuoda reminded William that the faithfulness shown to earthly fathers ultimately reflected faith in the Heavenly Father who gave power to worldly leaders. “Therefore, we ought to serve them (*seniores*) faithfully without trouble, tepidness, or sloth. For, as we read: ‘There is no power except from God and who resists authority, resists the ordinance of God’” (cf. Rom. 13:1–2).¹⁰⁰ Dhuoda left William to draw the conclusion, implied by the scripture passage, that unfaithful service would lead to eternal damnation. In the following section, when Dhuoda advised William on how to be a good counselor, she identified the love and fear of God as the most desired qualities. “You, my son, believe, fear, and love God and do not hesitate to cling to him in the flower of your youth. Seek his wisdom and he will give it to you.”¹⁰¹ Dhuoda echoed the same themes again as she described how William ought to treat the families of his lords and other leaders.

The celebrated and famous parents and others related to your lord of royal power, both ascending from the illustrious origin of his father and from the dignity of mat-

⁹⁷ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 110. “Propterea, ipse est timendus amandusque et certissime immortalis credendus, qui sine diminutione semper est Rex potens, imperans et faciens quaecumque uult.”

⁹⁸ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, pp. 98–100. “et qui parat fidelibus suis in deserto mensam, dansque illis in tempore necessitatis satietatem tritici mensuram, potest et me ancillae suae ex suo desiderio compleri uoluntatem.” Cf. Ps 77:19 (LXX) and Lk. 12:42.

⁹⁹ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 146. “multi alii obedientes Deo patrisque fidei obtemperantes iussa, digni et acceptabiles fuerunt in saeculo, ad summum certantes sine laesione peruenerunt securi.”

¹⁰⁰ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, pp. 148–50. “Propterea illis, sine molestia et tepiditate atque pigritia, fideliter est seruendum. Nam, ut legimus: Non est potestas nisi a Deo, et qui potestati resistit, Dei ordinationi resistit.” Cf. Rom 13:1–2.

¹⁰¹ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 154. “Tu, fili, crede, time, ama Deum et in tuae iuuentutis flore ei adhaerere ne pigeas. Pete illi sapientiam et dabit eam tibi.”

rimony, with your comrades in the royal and imperial court, or anywhere else you are a useful servant, fear, love, honor, and cherish them, if you arrive at this, and in every business provide for their advantage, clean and suitable, with fidelity in enforcement, both in mind and in body, and reliable obedience to them in all things.¹⁰²

Dhuoda's advice to her son depend upon the same basic sacramental assumptions as Jonas' instructions to Matfred and Nithard's analysis of Charles the Bald's relationship with Lothar. Shared concepts derived from baptismal formation were used for personal objectives in particular contexts.

5.2. BAPTISM AND EXTENDED CHRISTIAN FORMATION IN THE NINTH CENTURY

By the middle of the ninth century Christian formation had become a process extending far beyond pre-baptismal instruction of catechumens or their godparents. Concern had shifted from the establishment of Christianity and its implications for building an *imperium christianum* toward the maintenance of Christianity and its importance for preserving the *imperium christianum*. Instead of interrogating the rite of baptism for how best to present Christianity to newcomers, Jonas and Dhuoda teased out of their baptismal assumptions plans for life long support of baptismal commitments. They shifted the pedagogical burden from priests' Lenten catechesis to godparents' formative relationship with their godchildren. Moreover, they began to explore how practices related to the *sacramentum* of baptism, such as penance and what would come to be known as confirmation, supported the new needs they saw for extended Christian formation after baptism.

Christian formation shaped Jonas' understanding of godparenthood. The social and political significance of godparents in early medieval Europe is well known, sometimes including an acknowledgement of its importance in formation, or the transmission of Christian learning.¹⁰³ That Jonas' fundamental

¹⁰² Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 166. "*Inclitos atque praeclaros seniori tuo regiae potestatis eximios parentes atque propinquos, tam ex paternitatis illustrem quam ex matrimonii dignitatem ascendente originem, si ad hoc perueneris, ut cum commilitonibus infra aulam regalem atque imperialem, uel ubique utilis merearis esse seruator, time, ama, uenera, et dilige eos, atque in omni negotio utilitatem illorum, purum et abtum, cum executionis fidelitate, tam mente quam corpore, certum illis in omnibus para obsequium.*"

¹⁰³ For a view of the long evolution of godparenthood see, Joseph H. Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship in Early Medieval Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) pp. 83–162. See also Bernhard Jussen, *Spiritual Kinship as Social Practice: Godparenthood and Adoption in the Early Middle Ages* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2000) and Arnold Angenendt, *Kaiserherrschaft und Königstaufe: Kaiser, Könige und Päpste als geistliche Patrone in der abendländischen Missionsgeschichte* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1984). A survey of godparenthood and religious instruction is in Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship*, pp. 305–32.

concern for godparents was formation is evident in his assessment of the changing habits of baptism and the role he indicated for godparents. The bishop's analysis of historical change highlights his core interests in reform. Toward the middle of the first book of *De institutione laicali*, he argued that the Carolingian era marked a break with the past. Patristic models of adult conversion and lengthy Lenten catechumenal instruction were obsolete.

For in the beginning of the holy church of God, people were not baptized unless they were first instructed in both the faith of the Holy Trinity and the mystery of sacred baptism. Now, however, because the name of Christ is strong everywhere and infants are born from Christian parents, those children while still unable to speak are brought without hesitation to receive the grace of baptism.¹⁰⁴

The successful establishment of an *imperium christianum* had led to the prevalence of infant baptism. Thus change in the practice of baptism was needed to preserve its most critical feature, ensuring individual salvation. Continuity in result required change in execution. Jonas deployed a familiar defense of infant baptism to justify changing practices. "Indeed (children are baptized) so that those who were guilty of sin by others are released from the transgression of original sin by the carrying and response of others, as they are plucked from the power of shadows and carried over into the kingdom of their God."¹⁰⁵ The practices of Christian formation were built upon the theology of salvation.

Godparenthood became Jonas' means to solve the dilemma of Christian formation posed by infant baptism. Specifically, catechesis needed reworking. When most people coming for baptism were adults, they were catechized before baptism, but now since most people coming for baptism were children born in Christian homes, formation must follow rather than precede the *sacramentum*. Because clerics could not offer baptismal instruction to infants, Jonas placed the responsibility for Christian formation on the shoulders of the children's parents, natural and spiritual. Jonas exhorted parents and godparents properly to train their children. "It is to be especially attended to, either by the parents or by those who receive the children from the holy washing of the font, to instruct the children in the mystery of the faith and of baptism when they arrive at the age of understanding."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.viii, PL 106.0135. "In primordio namque sanctae Dei Ecclesiae non baptizabantur nisi primum instructi fuissent, et fide sanctae Trinitatis, et mysterio sacrosancti baptismatis. Nunc autem quia nomen Christi ubique pollet, et parvuli de Christianis parentibus nati, ad percipiendam baptismatis gratiam necdum loquentes incunctanter deportantur."

¹⁰⁵ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.viii, PL 106.0135. "quippe ut qui alienis peccatis obnoxii sunt, aliorum deportatione et responsione a praevaricatione originalis noxae absolvantur, quatenus eruti de potestate tenebrarum, in regnum Domini sui transferantur." Compare with the explanation offered by Alcuin and accompanying discussion in Chapter Three.

¹⁰⁶ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.viii, PL 106.0135. "summopere procurandum est, sive parentibus sive his qui eos de sacro fontis lavacro susceperint, ut cum ad intelligibilem aetatem pervenerint, et fidei et baptismatis mysterio instruantur."

This perspective on the essential role of godparents as formators was new in the ninth century.¹⁰⁷

While not reflecting as self-consciously on the rationale for change, Dhuoda adopted the same basic outlook in her *Liber manualis*. Insofar as she envisioned herself as a godparent offering instruction to her son, she addressed him as a young man and instructed him in basic matters of faith and morals. Dhuoda addressed William as if she were his godmother. "Now from this point on, I will act as your mother in spirit as well as in body, continually instructing you how to direct your soul's service to perfection with God's help, so that every day you may be reborn in Christ."¹⁰⁸ Two references within the work further underscore the consonance of her work with Jonas' vision. When Dhuoda addressed William concerning his younger brother, she exhorted him to make sure his little brother, after baptism of course, was well-taught and encouraged to live a moral life. "Your infant brother, whose name I still do not know, has received the grace of baptism in Christ, do not be slow to teach, mentor (*nutrire*), and love him, to challenge him to go from good to better."¹⁰⁹ Then later in the work, she offered an oblique reason for the necessity of her advice when she advised William to pray for his godfather, whose death left him unable to support or protect his young godson.

And this [prayer] is not to be neglected, my son, for him who receiving you from my arms, adopted you as his son in Christ through the bath of regeneration. He was called by the name lord Theuderic, when he was alive, now however 'the late.' He would have been in all respects your mentor (*nutritor*) and indeed your friend, if this had been possible for him.¹¹⁰

Dhuoda's vocabulary shows the continuity in her thinking. The same root word for "mentor" supplied the sense for Dhuoda's characterization of William's relationship to his brother, of William's godfather's relationship to him, and of God's own spiritual concern for William. In poetic verse Dhuoda wrote "may he [God] deign to nourish (*nutriri*) your spirit in all things."¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship*, pp. 188–9. Lynch discusses how godparents were admonished to be moral examples to their godchildren by figures such as Caesarius of Arles and Ildefonsus of Toledo, except for an exceptional and clear instance in a sermon attributed to the seventh-century Gallic bishop Eligius of Noyon. However, now it is clear that these sermons are in fact late ninth century efforts; see James McCune, "Rethinking the Pseudo-Eligius sermon collection" *Early Medieval Europe* 16 (2008) pp. 445–76.

¹⁰⁸ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 298. "Nunc uero deinceps militiam animae tuae qualiter, auxiliante Deo, ad summum usque perducas, uelut genitrix secunda mente et corpore ut in Christo cotidie renascaris ammonere non cesso."

¹⁰⁹ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 116. "fratremque tuum paruulum, cuius modo inscia sum nominis, cum baptismatis in Christo acceperit gratiam, insinuare, nutrire, amare, ac de bono in melius prouocare ne pigeas."

¹¹⁰ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 320. "Nec hoc praetereundum est, fili, de illo qui te, ex meis suscipiens brachiis, per lauacrum regenerationis filium adoptauit in Christo. Nomen autem eius appellatus est, dum uixit, dominus Teodericus, nunc uero condam. Nutritor etenim atque amator tuus fuerat in cunctis, si ei licuisset."

¹¹¹ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 342. "Dignetur per cuncta tuam nutriri mentem."

The responsibilities of godfatherhood made an appearance in Nithard's narrative too, establishing the comprehensive scope of Lothar's failures to observe *sacramenta* and simultaneously justifying Charles the Bald's moves against his half-brother, the Emperor. Book Two began with Nithard's reviewing the sacramental catastrophe of Lothar's life, how he failed to observe his promises in multiple senses: legal, social, theological, and familial. The crowning condemnation arrives as Nithard made explicit for his audiences criticism leveled implicitly at the beginning of Book One, where he accused Lothar of reneging on a *sacramentum* made at Charles' birth. "In addition, he [Lothar] also should remember their fraternity and the situation of his godson."¹¹² The earlier *sacramentum* is revealed as Charles' own baptism, where Lothar stood as his godfather. Lothar's failure to teach, mentor, and love his younger brother justified Charles' dramatic actions against him.

Attention to changing circumstances was neither original nor without foundation. Hints at pastoral detection of the problematic posed by widespread infant baptism appeared as early as the responses to Charlemagne's encyclical letter from 811/12. Several metropolitan bishops—and a couple of suffragans—addressed the issue of infant baptism even though Charlemagne did not raise the topic. Leidrad of Lyon introduced godparents to his reply when he considered how children could participate in the scrutinies by proxy. Godparents, he elucidated, did not speak on their own behalf, but on behalf of the infant. "He, indeed, who receives him [the baptized infant] does not respond and speak as one for another: 'he renounces' or 'he believes,' but 'I renounce' or 'I believe.'"¹¹³ Amalarius of Metz also included explicit discussion of children and godparents.¹¹⁴ Although Magnus of Sens did not address the issue in his reply to Charlemagne, Theodulf of Orléans—Magnus' suffragan and Jonas' predecessor—did. Theodulf argued that baptismal formation was an issue of preserving apostolic custom. He recognized that people who approached the apostles with an interest in Christianity were first educated and then baptized. "For whoever approached the apostles believing and desirous of being baptized were instructed and taught by them. After having been taught and instructed about the *sacramentum* of baptism and about the other rules of the faith, they received the most holy mystery of baptism."¹¹⁵ Infants were to be called catechumens to preserve the custom of apostolic activity, not its content. "Infants therefore become hearers and catechumens, not because they are able to be instructed and taught

¹¹² Nithard, *Histoire*, II:2, 48. "*insuper etiam fraternae filioliq[ue] conditionis meminerit.*"

¹¹³ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 379. "*is vero qui eum suscipit non quasi unus pro altero respondet ac dicit: 'abrenuntiat' vel 'credit,' sed 'abrenuntio' aut 'credo.'*"

¹¹⁴ Amalarius, *Epistola de baptismo*, in *Amalarii episcopi opera liturgica omnia*, Vol. 1, Studi e Testi 138, ed. J.M. Hanssens (Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana 1948) pp. 248–50.

¹¹⁵ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 283. "*quicumque enim ad apostolos credentes baptizandi adveniebant, instruebantur et docebantur ab eis, et instructi et docti de sacramento baptismatis et de ceteris regulis fidei, accipiebant sacrosanctum mysterium baptismatis*"

at that same age, but so that the ancient custom be preserved in which the apostles first instructed and taught those whom they were about to baptize.”¹¹⁶ He elaborated on the implications of his position during his discussion of the scrutiny. Theodulf explained that godparents responded for infants at the scrutinies and that children should be educated in the faith once they reached the age of reason. “Because children, not yet having the use of reason, are hardly able to grasp these things, it is appropriate that when they reach the age of reason, they are taught both the *sacramenta* of faith and the mysteries of their confession, so that they believe them truly and guard them with diligent care.”¹¹⁷ He reiterated his stance in his episcopal capitulary, where he specified the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed as the substance of instruction to be required of adults and provided for children once they reached an appropriate age.¹¹⁸ An even more telling instance of the necessity of extended formation appeared already in Ghaerbald’s letters to his clergy inspired by criticism from the emperor over the suitability of godparents.¹¹⁹ Instruction for infants, though not for godparents, came after baptism for reasons of practicality.

To meet the challenge posed by infant baptism, Jonas argued that extended Christian formation preserved and strengthened the teaching mandate of baptism. Although *De institutione laicali* contained neither an introduction to Christian doctrine nor any explication of the Christian faith, his treatment of baptism presumed basic catechesis. Christian formation was no longer to rest primarily on a program of catechumenal instruction, but on the shoulders of godparents. Jonas devoted an entire chapter in Book One of *De institutione laicali* to the idea that responsibility for the proper formation of young Christians lay with spiritual kin. He described how spiritual parents bore responsibility for the religious convictions and moral behavior of the children entrusted to them. He considered the order and effects of formation and the significance of godparents in the education of children: “that by words and by deeds spiritual fathers ought to call forth to better things those whom they received from the sacred font.”¹²⁰ The formation that godparents ought to supply had the traditional double content: faith and morals. And it had the expected goal: godparents instilled faith and morals in the young in order to lead them to salvation. Faith in God turned children toward salvation and

¹¹⁶ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 284. “*infantes ergo et audientes et catecumeni fiunt, non quo in eadem aetate et instrui et doceri possint, sed ut antiquus mos servetur, quo apostoli eos quos baptizaturi erant primum docebant et instruebant.*”

¹¹⁷ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 292. “*quia ergo parvuli necdum ratione utentes haec minime capere possunt, oportet ut cum ad intellegibilem aetatem pervenerint, doceantur et fidei sacramentis et confessionis suae mysteriis, ut ea et veraciter credant et diligenti cura custodiant.*”

¹¹⁸ Theodulf of Orléans, ed. Peter Brommer, *First Diocesan Capitulary* c.22, *MGH Capitula episcoporum I* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1984) p. 119.

¹¹⁹ See Chapter Four.

¹²⁰ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.vi, PL 106.0132. “*Quod patres spirituales eos quos de sacro fonte suscipiunt, verbis et exemplis ad meliora provocare debeant.*”

moral instruction encouraged them to work for a heavenly reward rather than eternal punishment. Jonas grounded his view in the example of the prophet Daniel. "We are challenged by the teaching of the prophet Daniel, so that not only do we [godparents] awake those ones [spiritual children] to grasp saving teaching, but we also instruct them in justice."¹²¹ The rhetorical frame, the content, and the organization of Dhuoda's *Liber manualis* demonstrate that Jonas was not alone in his vision of the formational responsibilities of godparents. In addition to presenting herself to William as a godmother, she defined the responsibilities of a godparent as she described the obligations of those who have begotten children in the church. "Many men as well—in those times, now, and always—have begotten their sons again and again 'by the Gospel' in the holy church, in their teaching of its holy doctrines and the example of their life of good works."¹²²

When Jonas considered the responsibilities of godparents in the formation of their godchildren, he described the simplicity of Christian formation which could be delivered to young people and did not necessarily require any advanced theological training. Jonas provided an explanation, complete with concrete examples, of how this new reality moved Christian formation beyond the strictly liturgical context to crystallize the essential features of Christian formation. He quoted a passage from Augustine's *Sermon on Christian Instruction*, where Augustine meditated on the Golden Rule. He concluded, still quoting Augustine, "Behold what is learned in the house of teaching: to love God, to love your neighbor; God as God, and your neighbor as yourself."¹²³ Likewise again, Dhuoda's thoughts closely paralleled those of the bishop of Orléans. The *Liber manualis* itself was an example of the formation expected of godparents. Basic theological knowledge about the Trinity offered in this life the grounding for a moral life and, in the next, eternal salvation of the soul.

Even though Jonas did not address basic catechetical treatments of faith and doctrine, he based Christian moral living on the *sacramentum* of baptism. Throughout the *De institutione laicali*, he drew from earlier authors to illustrate his teaching on vices and virtues. In a treatment of what godparents ought to teach their godchildren through their words and deeds, he cited a lengthy passage from what he mistakenly identified as Saint Augustine's sermon to the people.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.vi, PL 106.0132. "Provocamur Danielis prophetae magisterio, ut non modo nos ipsos ad doctrinam salutarem capessendam excitemus, verum etiam alios ad iustitiam erudiamus."

¹²² Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 302. "Et multi tunc et nunc et semper, per Euangelium, inquit, et doctrinam sanctae praedicationis, uel exemplum conuersationis operum bonorum, cotidie in sancta Ecclesia non desinunt generare filios."

¹²³ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.viii, PL 106.0135. "Ecce quod discitur in domo disciplinae: diligere Deum, diligere proximum: Deum tanquam Deum, proximum tanquam te." See Augustine, *Sermo de disciplina christiana*, ed. R. Vander Plaetse, CCSL 46 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969) p. 209.

¹²⁴ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, PL 106.0132. "Beatus Augustinus in Sermone ad populum ait."

The passage was derived from two sermons actually written by Caesarius of Arles.¹²⁵ Jonas—or an intermediary—altered and expanded the passage in order to make explicit an idea of just behavior. After a comment on frequently attending church and firmly holding to the faith, Caesarius wrote, “they should receive strangers and, in accord with what was done for them in baptism, wash the feet of their guests.”¹²⁶ Jonas changed this passage to read, “they should feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, receive the poor and strangers. They should visit the sick and those in prison. They should attend them and their needs.”¹²⁷ Jonas broadened and clarified the passage from a narrow reflection on the meaning of baptism. The passage now made each of the corporal works of mercy derived from Jesus’ discussion of the Last Judgment in Matthew an extension of each Christian’s baptismal obligation.¹²⁸ Dhuoda’s manual unfolds in a similar manner. The first principles of Dhuoda’s work flowed from her assumptions about how the *sacramentum* of baptism ordered life in a fundamental way, which is especially clear from her pivotal Book Seven.

The implications of infant baptism triggered an interest in an extended period of Christian formation that led, in part, to more detailed examinations of the rites of penance and of post-baptismal anointing, which would come during the high Middle Ages to be known as confirmation.¹²⁹ Penance, especially, as its popularity rose during the early Middle Ages was viewed like baptism as a context for delivering catechesis.¹³⁰ Carolingian thinkers derived theologies of penance and post-baptismal anointing from their understandings of baptism.¹³¹ Jonas and Dhuoda held that baptism removed someone from a life of sin and introduced him into a life of grace. They saw earthly life—and indeed

¹²⁵ Caesarius of Arles, ed. G. Morin, *Opera*, CCSL 104 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1953) pp. 537, 821–2. The first is sermon 130 on Elisha and the Axe, which is presented as a lesson on the importance of teaching the Creed to children. The second sermon is 204 on Easter.

¹²⁶ Caesarius of Arles, *Opera*, p. 821. “*peregrinos excipiant, et secundum quod ipsi in baptismo factum est hospitibus pedes abluant.*”

¹²⁷ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.vi, PL 106.0132. “*Esurientes pascant, sitientes potent, nudos vestiant, pauperes et peregrinos excipiant, infirmos et in carcere positos visitent, eisque in necessitatibus suis administrare procurent.*”

¹²⁸ Cf. Mt. 25:34–46.

¹²⁹ A survey of Western baptism with special focus on anointing is Bryan Spinks, *Early and Medieval Rituals and Theologies of Baptism From the New Testament to the Council of Trent* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006) and the earlier Leonel Mitchell, *Baptismal Anointing* (London: S.P.C.K., 1966). On the term “confirmation” and its use in the early Middle Ages see J.D.C. Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West* (London: S.P.C.K., 1965) pp. 141–8.

¹³⁰ Rob Meens, “Religious instruction in the Frankish kingdoms” *Medieval Transformations. Texts, Power, and Gifts in Context*, eds. Esther Cohen and Mayke De Jong (Leiden: Brill, 2001) pp. 51–67 and R. Emmet McLaughlin, “The Word Eclipsed? Preaching in the Early Middle Ages” *Traditio* 46 (1991) pp. 77–122.

¹³¹ Seeing baptism as a *sacramentum* paradigmatic for other *sacramenta* was not unusual. Also in the mid-ninth century, Paschasius Radbertus and Ratramnus of Corbie developed their understandings of the eucharist from their understandings of baptism. See Owen M. Phelan., “Horizontal and Vertical Theologies: ‘Sacraments’ in the Works of Paschasius Radbertus and Ratramnus of Corbie” *Harvard Theological Review* 103:3 (2010) pp. 271–89.

human nature itself—as complicated and imperfect. Because they believed that God accounted for this complexity and imperfection in his plan for man's salvation, they looked for mechanisms which would help maintain a Christian's life of grace. These mechanisms, especially penance and confirmation, supported extended Christian formation. Conceptually, penance and anointing were related to baptism because both enabled Christians to restore or maintain their baptismal purity. Practically, penance and anointing became opportunities for formation and education. Both penance and confirmation became not just theological extensions of the *sacramentum* of baptism, but extensions of sacramental formation.

Jonas and Dhuoda advanced theories of penance which portrayed the practice as derived from baptism. They understood penance to work like baptism: remitting sins, and to have the same ultimate end as baptism: offering access to heavenly reward. Jonas featured penance early in *De institutione laicali*, though not entirely consistently. Like other Carolingian authors, he did not view penance as a *sacramentum* on the same level with baptism or the eucharist and consequently it did not enjoy the same tradition of scrutiny and reflection.¹³² Jonas addressed penance in Book One amid his opening sections on baptism. Penance first appeared in chapter four when he treated remission of sins in the New Testament. Following Isidore, Jonas identified baptism by water as the primary model, baptism by blood—otherwise known as martyrdom—as a secondary model, and baptism by tears—or penance—as a third option. Jonas copied from *De ecclesiasticis officiis*: “third is the baptism of tears which is more laboriously accomplished, like the one who waters his bed with tears each night, or the one who imitates the confession of Manassah and the Ninevites’ humility through which they sought mercy, who imitates the prayer of that publican in the Temple standing for a long time and beating his breast and did not dare to lift his eyes to heaven.”¹³³ Through a confused remembrance of Manassah Jonas advanced a theory of penance as auricular confession. Isidore wrote more clearly “who imitates the conversion of Manassah.”¹³⁴ Jonas returned to this “type” of baptism in his own words in order to encourage his readers to take advantage of the practice. “Not idly is it customary to hold the third [type of

¹³² See Chapter One.

¹³³ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.iv, PL 106.130. “*Est et tertium baptisma lacrymarum, quod laboriosus transigitur; sicut et ille qui per singulas noctes stratum suum rigabat lacrymis; (cf. Ps. 6:7) vel qui imitantur confessionem et stellam [remove et stellam]*; Manassae, et humilitatem Ninivitarum, per quam misericordiam consecuti sunt; et orationem publicani illius in templo stantis a longe, et percutientis pectus suum; quique nec ausus erat oculos levare ad coelum.*” Compare with Isidore, *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, ed. Christopher M. Lawson, CCSL 113 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1989) p. 103. *I prefer the reading in Cologne, Dombibliothek MS 184, folio 10v, the earliest and fullest complete copy of *De institutione laicali*. Bischoff identifies the manuscript as from Orléans c.829–43. Bernhard Bischoff, *Katalog der festländischen Handschriften des neunten Jahrhunderts, Teil I: Aachen-Lambach* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998) p. 403.

¹³⁴ Isidore, *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, p. 103. “*qui imitator conversionem Manasse . . .*”

baptism] very necessary, but not with any dejectedness just as many do, which is dangerous. But with great haste and a most devout purpose of spirit, when the time is right both the day of salvation and the Lord are able to be found, it should be sought and embraced by all Christians.”¹³⁵ Jonas amplified his point immediately in the next chapter when he considered the seven remissions of sins found in the church. He borrowed from a Latin text of Origen’s homily on Leviticus which enumerated seven remissions of sin: baptism, martyrdom, almsgiving, forgiving a brother, turning a sinner from his way, charity, and penance. This list reflected both the importance of maintaining a good interior character and having that character reflected in daily action. This same list appeared earlier in the first diocesan capitulary of Jonas’ predecessor, Theodulf.¹³⁶ In fact, for Theodulf the analogy between baptism and penance was so strong that in the case of incapacitated penitents a *fideiussor* could act.

And also priests are to be cautioned concerning the anointing of the sick, and penance and viaticum, lest anyone die without viaticum. But if anyone in sickness seeks penance, when the priest comes to him, if it turns out that he is deprived of the service of speech, suitable men, who were with him from the beginning of his infirmity, may give true witness, which they heard from him when he was able to speak, either concerning penance or concerning his shaved beard or concerning his monastic state. And then the priest so moved should fulfil his office, and impose his penance on his *fideiussors* for him, so that they may fulfil it for him.¹³⁷

Jonas explained that “there is still a seventh remission of sins, although laborious and hard, through penance, when a sinner washes his bed in tears. His tears are bread for him day and night.”¹³⁸ In the only passage from the chapter not excerpted from another source, Jonas clarified, “when he does not blush to tell his sin to the priest of the Lord, he obtains the medicine according to him who said: ‘I said: I announce against me my injustice, and you forgave the wickedness of my sin’” (Ps. 41:5).¹³⁹ The bishop read Origen as recommending auricular confession.

¹³⁵ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.iv, PL 106.130. “*Tertium valde necessarium non desidiose, nec cum aliqua dejectione, sicut a multis, quod periculosum est, fieri assolet, sed cum magna acceleratione et animi devotissima intentione, dum tempus est acceptabile, et dies salutis, et Dominus inveniri potest, ab omnibus Christianis est appetendum et amplectendum.*”

¹³⁶ Theodulf of Orléans, *First Diocesan Capitulary* c. 36, pp. 134–5.

¹³⁷ Theodulf of Orléans, *First Diocesan Capitulary* c. 21, p. 178. “*Ammonendi etiam sunt sacerdotes de unctione infirmorum et poenitentia et viatico, ne aliquis sine viatico moriatur. Sed et si quis poenitentiam in infirmitate quaerit, dum sacerdos ad eum venerit, si contigerit eum officio linguae privari, constitutum est, ut idonei viri illi, qui cum eo ab initio infirmitatis suae fuerunt, vera testimonia dicant, quae ab illo audierunt, dum loqui poterat, sive de poenitentia sive de barba tondenda sive de monachatu. Et tunc sacerdos commotus officium circa eum adimpleat et fideiussoribus eius poenitentiam eius pro eo imponat, et illi pro eo adimpleant.*”

¹³⁸ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.v, PL 106.131. “*Est adhuc et septima, licet laboriosa et dura per poenitentiam, remissio peccatorum, cum lavat peccator in lacrymis stratum suum, fiunt ei lacrymae suae panes die ac nocte.*” cf. Ps. 41:4. Compare with Origen, *Homeliae in Leviticum*, PG 12.417.

¹³⁹ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.v, PL 106.131. “*Cum non erubescit sacerdoti Domini indicare peccatum, ut acquirat medicinam, secundum eum qui ait: Dixi: Pronuntiabo adversum me injustitiam meam; et tu remisisti impietatem peccati mei.*”

Dhuoda advanced a similar perspective. In a section on the importance of priests to William's temporal and spiritual life, she advised him often to pursue good private confession to the priest. Her explanation drew on the same vocabulary as Jonas insofar as she emphasized a connection with tears and remorse as well as the goal of salvation for one's soul. She also referred to the same authority, Isidore, though to his *Synonyma* rather than *De ecclesiasticis officiis*. "Make your true confession to them [priests] as well as you can, in private with sighs and tears. For as the learned teachers say, a heartfelt confession liberates the soul from death and does not allow the soul to descend into hell."¹⁴⁰ Confession was also formative for Dhuoda. She counselled that confession was not just about attaining heaven when one sinned after baptism, but also about being corrected by the priest and receiving moral instruction. She encouraged William to recognize his sinfulness. She advised him to acknowledge his sins, to confess them, and to complete his penance. "But if later on something harmful should approach you, my son, or when you become sorrowful in spirit, hasten—as you are able—to be corrected in all things. Turn back to him who sees all. Interiorly and exteriorly always show yourself guilty and unworthy, until you make satisfaction."¹⁴¹

For both Jonas and Dhuoda penance was an ecclesiastical matter and one closely associated with priestly ministry, just as was baptism. Jonas described penance as something determined and imposed by a priest on account of the nature of the sacerdotal office and its power of loosing and binding sins.¹⁴² "It is established that the manner of penance and the time of repenting lies in the judgment of priests, to whom the power of binding and loosing was conveyed by Christ."¹⁴³ Jonas' position, again, accorded with that of his episcopal predecessor, Theodulf, and many other Carolingian ecclesiastical leaders of the mid-ninth century, such as Hrabanus Maurus.¹⁴⁴ Dhuoda too associated penance

¹⁴⁰ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 196. "Da illis, ut melius nosti, tuam occulte cum suspirio et lachrymis ueram confessionem. Nam, ut aiunt doctores, uera confessio a morte liberat animam et non patitur ire ad imma." Compare Isidore, *Synonyma*, PL 83.839C.

¹⁴¹ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 272. "Quod si infra aliqua inutilitas tibi accesserit, fili, aut ubi cognosceris tristare animo, festina, ut uales, in omnibus emendari. Reuerte illi qui cuncta conspicit; interioris exteriusque culpabiliem et indignum, donec satisfacias, semper ostende."

¹⁴² On the "binding and loosing of sins" as the essence of the priesthood in the Early Middle Ages see Yves Congar, *L'ecclésiologie du haut Moyen âge : de saint Grégoire le Grand à la désunion entre Byzance et Rome* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1968) pp. 146–8. On the transition to confection of the eucharist as the essential role of the priest see Henri De Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum: L'Eucharist et l'église au moyen âge*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Éditions Montaigne, 1949).

¹⁴³ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.x, PL 106.0138. "modus uero ejusdem poenitentiae, tempusque poenitendi in arbitrio sacerdotum, quibus ligandi atque solvendi potestas est a Christo collata, est constitutus."

¹⁴⁴ See Theodulf of Orléans, *First Diocesan Capitulary* c. 36, p. 134. "Et quia post baptismum peccator denuo non potest baptizari, hoc medicamentum a domino poenitentiae datum est, ut per eam vice baptismi peccata post baptismum diluantur." Also, see Hrabanus Maurus, *De institutione clericorum libri tres*, ed. Detlev Zimpel (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996) pp. 295–7.

with the priesthood. In Book Three, where she treated the importance of respecting the social order, Dhuoda wrote that priests deserved respect because they interceded for our sins. "They themselves [the priests], in the example of the holy Apostles, are binding and loosing, 'eating the sins of the people'" (cf. Hosea 4:8).¹⁴⁵ She specifically mentioned the importance of penance, which she presented as a tool by which priests wrested people from evil spirits and ferried them toward the kingdom of heaven. "And they (priests) will seize the prey from hostile hands, this means ripped away from unclean spirits, and through penance join those captured to the heavenly fatherland by their fellowship."¹⁴⁶

Confirmation, the second post baptismal anointing, also extended Christian formation for Jonas and Dhuoda. Jonas' treatment of confirmation fell in the midst of his discussion of baptism's importance, specifically, during his treatment of the educational responsibilities of godparents. Confirmation was derived from baptism, worked similarly to baptism, and had an end like baptism's. Early medieval theologians numbered confirmation, or chrismation, among the *sacramenta* with baptism and the body and blood of the Lord.¹⁴⁷ Jonas emphasized that chrismation worked like the other *sacramenta* and required priestly, in this case episcopal, administration.

Indeed it ought to be believed that just as the *sacramenta* of baptism and of the body and blood of the Lord were visible ministries through the priest, also through the Lord are they invisibly consecrated, thus without doubt the grace of the Holy Spirit through the imposition of the hands, the ministry of the bishops administered to the faithful is invisibly bestowed.¹⁴⁸

Like baptism, confirmation created spiritual kin, establishing godchildren and godparent relationships.¹⁴⁹ For Jonas, confirmation contributed to Christian formation because it was a vehicle for the Holy Spirit. "Not by priests, but by bishops, the successors of the Apostles, are the foreheads of the believers signed with sacred chrism to receive the gift of the Holy

¹⁴⁵ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 190. "*Ipsi sunt in exemplo sanctorum Apostolorum, ligantes et soluentes, peccata populi comedentes.*" Cf. Hosea 4:8.

¹⁴⁶ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 190. "*capientque praedam ex alienis manibus, hoc est ab spiritibus immundis ereptos, et per poenitentiam captos ad coelestem patriam iungunt consortio.*"

¹⁴⁷ See Chapter One.

¹⁴⁸ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.vii, PL 106.134. "*Credendum vero est quia sicut baptismatis, et corporis, et sanguinis Domini sacramenta, per sacerdotum mysteria [ministeria]* visibilia fiunt, et per Dominum invisibiliter consecrantur, ita nimirum Spiritus sancti gratia per impositionem manuum, ministerium administratum episcoporum fidelibus invisibiliter tribuatur.*" * I read *ministeria* for *mysteria* against the edition of PL, but again following the reading in Cologne, Dombibliothek MS 184, 13v. Also, although Jonas does not describe confirmation as a sacrament, he does describe the functioning of confirmation as analogous to that of the sacraments both of baptism and of the body and blood of the Lord.

¹⁴⁹ Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship*, p. 212.

Spirit.”¹⁵⁰ From the perspective of the history of sacramental theology, it is significant that Jonas understood confirmation as something accomplished only by the bishop; but, it was the transmission of the Holy Spirit that most interested Jonas. “It ought to be noted that the Holy Spirit will have come into none of the baptized, except through the imposition of the hands of the apostles.”¹⁵¹ In chapter eight, Jonas identified the gift of the sevenfold grace of the Spirit as something that children ought to be taught.¹⁵² Dhuoda certainly shared the overall theological outlook, even if her Handbook did not display the same technical discussion of liturgy found in Jonas. Like Jonas she cited Isaiah to identify the particular package of virtues that comprised the sevenfold gift of the Spirit. “There are seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, as is written in the prophet Isaiah: the spirit of wisdom, the spirit of understanding, the spirit of counsel, the spirit of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, the spirit of godliness, and the spirit of fear of the Lord.”¹⁵³ The shift in emphasis on the importance of confirmation, a break with earlier western theologians on the second post-baptismal anointing, underscored the bishop’s interest in supporting formation. The *sacramentum* still conveyed the grace of the Holy Spirit, but with greater purpose and its own justification. Earlier Christian theologians had portrayed confirmation merely as a completion of baptism, such as seen in the Pseudo-Eusebian homilies of fifth and sixth century Gaul.¹⁵⁴ Showing a sensitivity to historical change similar to that for infant baptism, Jonas saw post-baptismal anointing now as a new degree of commitment and responsibility which, evidently, many people shirked until late in life.¹⁵⁵ Confirmation’s relationship to baptism had ceased to be essential and had become analogical.

The reception of the Holy Spirit, which is bestowed by bishops through the imposition of hands, is sought suitably by some and carelessly by others. For there are some nobles—which is praiseworthy—who zealously hasten to sign themselves and their families with a gift of this sort. And there are certain ones—which is

¹⁵⁰ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.vii, PL 106.0134. “non a presbyteris, sed ab episcopis, apostolorum successoribus, credentium frontes ob percipiendum sancti Spiritus donum sacrosancto chrismate signentur.”

¹⁵¹ Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.vii, PL 106.0133–4. “Notandum est quod in neminem baptizatorum venerit Spiritus sanctus, nisi per impositionem manuum apostolorum.”

¹⁵² Jonas, *De institutione laicali*, I.viii, PL 106.0134. “quod parvuli instruendi sunt, cum ad intelligibilem aetatem venerint et fidei sacramento, et baptismatis mysterio, et septiformis gratiae Spiritus dono.”

¹⁵³ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 214. “Septem sunt Sancti Spiritus dona, ut scriptum est in Esaya propheta: spiritus sapientiae, spiritus intellectus, spiritus consilii, spiritus fortitudinis, spiritus scientiae, spiritus pietatis, spiritus timoris Domini.” Cf. Is 11:2–3.

¹⁵⁴ L.A. van Buchem, *L’Homélie pseudo-Eusébienne de Pentecôte. L’Origine de la “confirmatio” en Gaule Méridionale et l’interprétation de ce rite par Fauste de Riez* (Nijmegen: Janssen, 1967).

¹⁵⁵ Peter Cramer, *Baptism and Change in the Early Middle Ages, c200–c1150* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) p. 179.

worthy of emendation—who put off doing it for a long time. Moreover non-nobles, partly from carelessness and partly from ignorance, appear negligent in this matter, so that certain of them do not secure this gift until they are of very old age.¹⁵⁶

The sundering of liturgical customs emphasized a new vision for the rite, one that met a new need observed by Jonas: continued Christian formation. Misunderstanding and ignorance among the ostensibly Christian required new approaches to formation.

5.3. CONTEXTUALIZING JONAS AND DHUODA: TEXTS AND MANUSCRIPTS

In addition to Nithard's narrative, a multitude of evidence surviving from the ninth century contextualizes Jonas' and Dhuoda's work with the *sacramentum* of baptism. It was neither isolated nor rare. Rather, their efforts simply showcased widely adopted Carolingian strategies of Christian formation, which display continuity in purpose with the priorities of the Carolingian Renewal originating with the *Admonitio generalis*, the work of Alcuin, and Charlemagne's encyclical letter of 811/812. As mid-ninth century Carolingian writers developed their understanding and application of the sacramental ideas, the *sacramentum* remained central to their understanding of the *imperium christianum*. In numerous instances and across of variety of genres and media—including sermons and prayerbooks, textual and ritual actions, and Latin as well as vernacular instructions—many Carolingian leaders shared and advanced approaches to life and society similar to the visions of lay formation sketched in Jonas' *De institutione laicali* and Dhuoda's *Liber manualis*. Together this evidence attests to the wide scope and sophisticated preparation for Christian formation across Carolingian Europe.

Seemingly conceptually simple sermons and biblical commentaries surviving from the ninth century often conceal impressive textual complexity. Thus it is both surprising and understandable that the Carolingian sermon is

¹⁵⁶ Jonas of Orléans, *De institutione laicali*, I.vii, PL 106.133. “Perceptio sancti Spiritus, quae per manus impositionem ab episcopis tribuitur, a quibusdam congruenter, a quibusdam vero negligenter appetitur. Sunt enim quidam nobiles, quod est laudabile, qui hujusmodi dono se suosque insigniri accelerant ardentem; sunt etiam quidam, quod emendatione dignum est, qui in longum id facere differunt. Porro ignobiles partim incuria, partim ignorantia, in tantum in hac re negligentes existunt, ut etiam quidam illorum, non nisi jam in decrepita aetate, hujus doni consecrationem percipiant.”

among the most understudied genres of early medieval literature.¹⁵⁷ It is surprising because the bulk of written sources from the Carolingian era fall into the categories of sermon or biblical commentary.¹⁵⁸ An understanding of that to which Carolingian writers and copyists devoted considerable—if not most of—their attention requires more thorough consideration. Preliminary work has been underway identifying and classifying important works, but broad understanding remains elusive.¹⁵⁹ It is also understandable that scholars have not mined these quarries of information more extensively. Cursory examinations of them suggest that they were conceptually simple and repetitive. They often carved up and rewrote earlier homilies from luminaries such as Augustine, Gregory the Great, Caesarius of Arles, or others. However, more detailed study has shown that these sources were at the same time textually

¹⁵⁷ The most helpful entry point is Thomas N. Hall, “The Early Medieval Sermon” *The Sermon*, ed. Beverly Mayne Kienzle (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000) pp. 203–47. Hall offers a basic introduction to terminology and concepts, but then importantly settles on the manuscripts. He introduces the importance of manuscript work to understanding sermons and catalogs some of the most influential sermon collections. Editions and studies remain *desiderata*. For surveys, as far as they are possible see Jean Longère, *La prédication médiévale* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1983) pp. 35–54 and Thomas L. Amos, *The Origin and Nature of the Carolingian Sermon* (Ph. D. Diss., Michigan State University, 1983). Important footholds are also provided by McLaughlin, “The Word Eclipsed?,” pp. 77–122; Thomas L. Amos, “Preaching and the Sermon in the Carolingian World” *De Ore Domini: Preacher and the Word in the Middle Ages*, eds. Thomas L. Amos, Eugene A. Green, and Beverly Mayne Kienzle (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1989) pp. 41–60; and Milton McGatch, *Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England: Aelfric and Wulfstan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977) pp. 27–39. Examples of recent pioneering strategies for grappling with early medieval sermons are McCune, “Re-thinking the Pseudo-Eligius sermon collection,” pp. 445–76 and Lisa Kaaren Bailey, *Christianity’s Quiet Success: The Eusebius Gallikanus Sermon Collection and the Power of the Church in Late Antiquity Gaul* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010).

¹⁵⁸ The Carolingians put considerable effort into the Bible, from the material production of Bibles—including editions—to exhaustive and exhausting commentaries on the many books contained therein. For an introduction to Carolingian work on physical Bibles themselves see the essays in *The Early Medieval Bible: Its Production, Decoration, and Use*, ed. Richard Gameson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). On biblical exegesis the broad synthesis remains to be written, delayed by the ongoing but still very incomplete editing of early medieval biblical commentaries. Very helpful and at the same time symptomatic of the difficulties is John Contreni’s important essay which approaches biblical studies from the many prefatory letters which had been edited, John Contreni, “Carolingian Biblical Studies” *Carolingian Essays: Andrew W. Mellon Lectures in Early Christian Studies*, ed. Uta-Renate Blumenthal (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1983) pp. 71–135. A more recent, important, and eclectic introduction is the collection *The Study of the Bible in the Carolingian Era*, eds. C. Chazelle and B. Van Name Edwards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003). An older overview with references to editions, some of which have since been superseded, is Robert E. McNally, *The Bible in the Early Middle Ages* (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1959). Important insights into the wide scope and important influence of Carolingian biblical studies can be gleaned from Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, 3 vols., trans. Marc Sebanc et al. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998–). On the importance of biblical studies to Carolingian education see E. Ann Matter, “Exegesis and Christian Education: The Carolingian Model” *Schools of Thought in the Christian Tradition*, ed. Patrick Henry (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984) pp. 90–105.

¹⁵⁹ Hall, “The Early Medieval Sermon,” pp. 219–27.

sophisticated.¹⁶⁰ Simple and straightforward sermons need not suggest intellectual weakness on the part of Carolingian thinkers, but rather might testify to their discipline and purpose: composing effective tools for Christian formation.

The theology developed in many Carolingian sermons echoed the very themes explored by Jonas and Dhuoda in their respective manuals. They featured similar notions of *sacramentum*. They adopted similar rhetorical frames, such as setting out anthropological assumptions. They assumed a similar context, often liturgical and specifically referencing the baptismal liturgy. A cycle of fifteen sermons attributed to the eighth-century missionary Boniface, but probably compiled during the ninth century, provides a compelling example.¹⁶¹ Most likely the sermons reflected catechesis for Christian laity, rather than a raw missionary effort.¹⁶² The sermons indicated a continued Carolingian interest in baptism and religion along lines drawn earlier by authors like Alcuin.¹⁶³ They also manifested continuity with Jonas and Dhuoda. They adopted the same rhetorical framing, such as concentrating on baptism as a *sacramentum* and foregrounding an analysis of the human condition. They presented a liturgical context for formation and emphasized the faith and moral life established by baptism as well as the proper order of understanding first faith and then moral life. The cycle begins with a discussion “concerning right faith.”¹⁶⁴ The sermon contains a brief discussion of the importance faith before proceeding to a recitation of a Creed. Familiarly, faith’s priority integrates the temporal with the theological. On faith rested good works and, ultimately, salvation. With a reference to the well-worn passage from Hebrews, the sermon begins:

It is necessary most beloved brothers, for anyone who desires to reach the kingdom of heaven, which was prepared and promised to us by Almighty God, firmly and without doubt to hold a right and catholic faith because no one is able to

¹⁶⁰ For examples see James McCune, “Four Pseudo-Augustinian Sermons ‘De concupiscentia fudienda’ from the Carolingian Sermonary of Würzburg” *Revue d’études augustiniennes et patristiques* 52 (2006) pp. 391–431 and Owen M. Phelan, “The Nature of the Soul and the Importance of Reading: Zürich, Zentralbibliothek C64 and Christian Formation in Carolingian Europe” *Viator* 42:1 (2011) pp. 1–23.

¹⁶¹ For a discussion of the sermons, their manuscript contexts, their principal features, and earlier scholarship see Rob Meens, “Christianization and the spoken word: the sermons attributed to St. Boniface” *Zwischen Niederschrift und Wiederschrift: Hagiographie und Historiographie im Spannungsfeld von Kompendienüberlieferung und Editionstechnik*, ed. Richard Corradini (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010) pp. 211–22. Earlier, Bouhot argued that the sermons responded to the Carolingian reform councils of the early ninth century, see Bouhot, “Alcuin et le ‘De catechizandis rudibus,’” pp. 184–91.

¹⁶² Meens, “Christianization,” p. 220 and Amos, “Preaching and the Sermon,” pp. 41–60, at 48. For a bit wider discussion of this point see Lutz E. von Padberg, *Die Inszenierung Religiöser Konfrontationen: Theorie und Praxis der Missionspredigt im frühen Mittelalter* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 2003) pp. 192–212.

¹⁶³ Meens, “Christianization,” pp. 211–12, 216–17 and earlier observed by Amos, “Preaching and the Sermon,” p. 48.

¹⁶⁴ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.843. “De fide recta.”

reach eternal blessedness unless he is pleasing to God and no one is able to please God unless he has right faith (cf. Heb. 11:6). For faith is the foundation of all good men. Faith is the beginning of human salvation.¹⁶⁵

The primacy of faith in the opening statement touched on the social and political underpinnings of the *imperium christianum*—the same points of emphasis hit by Jonas, Dhuoda, and Nithard.

Throughout the sermons, but culminating in the fifteenth and final sermon, the centrality of the *sacramentum* of baptism to the author's project was on full display. The author referred to the promises made at baptism, to reject Satan and believe in God, and to the consequences of the *sacramentum*, Christian moral life. Following the order of the liturgy, as well as of formation, the author began with renunciations. "Listen, brethren, and carefully consider what you renounced at baptism. For you renounced the devil, and all his works and all his pomps."¹⁶⁶ He continued with a reminder of the Creed discussed in the opening meditation. "For earlier you promised to believe in God the Almighty and in Jesus Christ his Son and in the Holy Spirit, one Almighty God in a perfect Trinity."¹⁶⁷ And finally, he embarked on a discussion of the moral implications of baptismal promises. "These are the commands of God which you ought to do and to preserve . . ."¹⁶⁸ The basic catechetical framework for approaching the faith and moral life was not only explicitly offered through the presentation of the Creed, it was reiterated at a general level. The sermons frequently recommended the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. For example, "hold in your memory the Lord's Prayer, because in it is briefly and fully contained all the necessities of this present life and of the future. Christ taught it, and so it is called 'The Lord's' who ordered that we pray so. Also hold in your heart the Creed, because it is written: 'without faith it is impossible to please God' " (Heb. 11:6).¹⁶⁹

The rhetorical tactics of the sermons also matched plans used by Jonas and Dhuoda. Most remarkable is not the originality and sophistication of the presentation, but rather the widespread, consistent, and simple nature of the treatment

¹⁶⁵ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.843. "*Necessarium est, fratres charissimi, unicuique qui desiderat ad regnum coelorum pervenire, quod nobis a Deo omnipotenti promissum est et praeparatum, fidem rectam et catholicam sine dubitatione firmiter tenere, quia ad aeternam beatitudinem nemo pervenire potest, nisi Deo placeat, et nullus Deo placere potest, nisi per fidem rectam. Fides namque omnium bonorum fundamentum est, fides humanae salutis initium est.*"

¹⁶⁶ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.870. "*Audite, fratres, et attentius cogitatis quid in baptismo renuntiastis. Abrenuntiastis enim diabolo, et omnibus operibus ejus et omnibus pompis ejus.*"

¹⁶⁷ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.870. "*Primitus enim promissistis credere in Deum omnipotentem, et in Jesum Christum Filium ejus, et in Spiritum sanctum, unum omnipotentem Deum in Trinitate perfectam.*"

¹⁶⁸ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.870. "*Haec sunt mandata Dei quae facere et conservare debetis . . .*"

¹⁶⁹ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.853. "*Orationem Dominicam memoriter tenete, quia in ea breviter omnis necessitas praesentis vitae et futurae pleniter comprehenditur, et Christus eam docuit, ideoque Dominica dicitur, qui praecepit ut sic oremus. Symbolum etiam ex animo tenete, quia scriptum est: Impossibile est sine fide placere Deo.*" For similar reiterations see PL 89.859 and PL 89.870.

offered. At the most basic level, these tactics included basic organizational decisions, such as featuring the beatitudes as a framework for interpreting moral life, as well as the order and details of the explanations.¹⁷⁰ The first sermon briefly considered the importance of faith and offered a Creed. The second, and more substantial, sermon set the stage for a discussion of baptism, faith, and moral life by treating the fall of man and the effects of original sin. A sermon entitled "Concerning the Origin of the Human Condition" rehearsed the story of Adam and Eve, their temptation by Satan, and their sin against God.¹⁷¹ "They [Adam and Eve] were deceived by the trickery and envy of the devil, so that they ate from the forbidden fruit."¹⁷² The author then explored how this original sin led to earthly suffering. "For this sin, they were thrown out into the misery of this world, and placed under the power of the devil on account of their disobedience to the first command. Everyone born with sin and living in labor lost human life in the sorrows of death."¹⁷³ The sermon continued by explaining how the Fall necessitated the Incarnation, which God rightly placed during Roman rule. Ultimately, Jesus restored the possibility of eternal reward. "There were none who were able to arrive at the happiness of paradise or the blessedness of the kingdom of heaven after the end of this life, until almighty God sent into the world his only begotten Son, born from the Virgin, just as he promised long before to the holy fathers through his prophets."¹⁷⁴ In a moment of summation, the author offered telling clues to his context and his organizational strategy. First, he identified that the context of his discussion as liturgical insofar as he alluded to the feast day that his explanation illumined. Second, he pinpointed his ultimate goal for his audience, entry into the kingdom of heaven. Third, he provided a simple rubric which would govern the rest of his discussion, faith and charity. By faith he meant recognition and adoption of spiritual teachings from the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. By charity he referred to moral life through observance of God's commands. Fourth, he flourished the polysemous language favoured by Jonas and Dhuoda which connected his theological teachings to broader social and political concerns.

¹⁷⁰ The sermons organize moral life around the beatitudes in sermon four, entitled "Concerning the eight evangelical beatitudes" at Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.850-852. A similar presentation is offered by Dhuoda at Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, pp. 234-56. On the commonness of this tactic, its practicality in the early middle ages, and special reference to Dhuoda's debt to Augustine see Marie Anne Mayeski, "The Beatitudes and the Moral Life of the Christian: Practical Theology and Biblical Exegesis in Dhuoda of Septimania" *Mystics Quarterly* 18 (1992) pp. 6-15.

¹⁷¹ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.845. "De origine humanae conditionis."

¹⁷² Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.845. "Sed diabolica fraude et invidia decepti sunt, ut manducarent de fructu interdicto illis."

¹⁷³ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.845. "Pro hac etiam culpa ejecti sunt in hanc miseriam hujus terrae, et facti sunt sub potestate diabolica, propter inobedientiam primi mandati, et omnes cum peccatis nati in laboribus viventes, in mortis doloribus humanam amitterent vitam."

¹⁷⁴ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.845. "Nec ullus fuit qui ad paradisi felicitatem vel regni coelestis beatitudinem post hujus vitae finem pervenire potuisset, donec omnipotens Deus Filium suum unigenitum, natum ex Virgine, misisset in mundum, sicut multum ante per prophetas suos sanctis patribus promisit."

For this feast is the beginning of our salvation and the reformation of the human race, in which God descended to man through the mercy of the Lord, so that men would be able to ascend to God through obedience. Through disobedience they were expelled from the happiness of paradise, which happiness not only did God born of the Virgin restore to us, but he also opened the gates of the heavenly kingdom to those believing and preserving his commandments, and pardoned them to be sons of God in faith and charity, who were sons of wrath in sins. He crushed and pulverized every yoke of misery and of diabolical slavery, so that the devil was not any more able to have dominion over any man who wished to serve the commands of God and keep himself from sins.¹⁷⁵

The author used baptism to develop his ideas of right moral action. In the next sermon, entitled "Concerning the Twin Work of Justice," the author identified the first work as the renunciation of Satan. "First, therefore, justice is not to do the evil things which the devil suggests."¹⁷⁶ The second work was the corresponding baptismal promise to follow God's instructions, including the reason why. "Second is to do the good things, which almighty God exhorts us to do, because God desires the salvation of all souls."¹⁷⁷ This simple pairing echoed through the cycle of sermons. In a sermon "Concerning Faith and the Works of Love" the author began "I warn you to be mindful of what you promised to Almighty God at baptism."¹⁷⁸ And again, the same distinction was explored in a homily "Concerning Faith and Charity," where an allusion to baptism grounded the author's emphasis on faith, including reference to the same familiar quotation from Hebrews.¹⁷⁹ He began "first is the faith which joins the soul to God, because recognition of divinity and knowledge of truth is to be taught through the catholic faith, because 'without faith it is impossible to please God.'¹⁸⁰ He continued later with the idea that baptism informed how one should understand and respond to moral obligations. In an echo of Alcuin's advice to Wido of Brittany, the author suggested that the *sacramentum* of baptism was the

¹⁷⁵ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.846–7. "*Haec enim festivitas salutis nostrae initium est, et humani generis reformatio, in qua Deus per Domini misericordiam descendit ad homines, ut homines per obedientiam potuissent ascendere ad Deum, quia per inobedientiam expulsi sunt de paradisi felicitate, quam felicitatem non solum restituit nobis Deus de Virgine natus, sed etiam coelestis regni credentibus et mandata ejus observantibus portas aperuit, et perdonavit filios Dei esse in fide et charitate, qui fuerunt filii irae in peccatis, et miseriae, et omne jugum diabolicae servitutis contrivit et comminuit, ut nullum potuisset ultra dominium habere diabolus in omni homine, qui mandata Dei servare voluisset et se a peccatis custodire.*"

¹⁷⁶ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.847. "*De gemina justitiae operatione.*" "*Prima ergo justitia est mala non facere quae diabolus suggerit.*"

¹⁷⁷ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.0847–0848. "*Secunda est bona facere quae Deus omnipotens hortatur nos facere, quia Deus desiderat salutem animarum nostrarum.*"

¹⁷⁸ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.852. "*De fide et operibus dilectionis. . . Admoneo vos ut remiscamini quid omnipotenti Deo in baptism promissistis.*"

¹⁷⁹ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.856. "*De fide et charitate.*"

¹⁸⁰ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.857. "*Fides est prima quae subjugat animam Deo, quia cognitio divinitatis et scientia veritatis per fidem discenda est catholicam, quia sine fide impossibile est placere Deo.*"

primary basis for moral decision making. "If, perchance, anyone asks who is his neighbor, he knows that every Christian is rightly said to be his neighbour, because we are all sanctified sons of God in baptism so that spiritually we are brothers in perfect charity."¹⁸¹

The liturgical context of the homilies, clear throughout the cycle, was exploited for the purpose of formation. The author, both by his own explanations and the exhortations seasoning his discussion, urged his audience to maintain their baptismal *sacramentum*. The discussion moved far beyond identifying the feast day around which the sermons revolved. Two of the sermons were devoted to Lenten fasting, appropriate preparation for Easter. Sermon twelve was an exhortation to fasting during the Quadragesima. This discipline was presented as having a twofold significance. On the one hand, it strengthened individuals allowing them more easily to preserve their baptismal *sacramentum* through obedience to the commands of the Lord. On the other hand, it led to the destruction of the "empire of death" (*mortis imperium*), the dominion of the devil and the opposite of the *imperium christianum* composed of those who faithfully preserved their *sacramentum*.

Therefore we ask that with a serious mind and with dutiful zeal you strive diligently to do the commands of the Lord in each hour, so that strengthened in divine charity, you will not be separated from them by any temptations. Always doing what is good, you will overflow with the hope and power of the Holy Spirit, so that through his grace the faith which you received at baptism you preserve before the gaze of the highest God and our savior Jesus Christ. We were created for the praise of his holy name, who loved us and in his blood washed us from the sins we sustained, so that through his death he destroyed him who had the empire of death, that is the devil, and snatching the human race from his power, opened the kingdom of heaven to believers, where the faithful enjoy eternal life.¹⁸²

Sermon thirteen also featured Lent, considering why Lenten fasting was superior to other fasts.¹⁸³ The cycle then concluded with two sermons, one on the solemnity of Easter and another on the importance of the baptismal renunciations themselves.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.857. "Si forte quislibet quaerat quis sit proximus, sciat omnem Christianum recte proximum dici, quia omnes in baptismo Filii Dei sanctificamur, ut fratres simus spiritualiter in charitate perfecta."

¹⁸² Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.865. "Ideo rogamus ut intenta mente et pia devotione Domini mandata in omni hora diligenter facere studeatis, ut, in charitate divina firmati, nullis tentationibus ab illa separemini, sed semper facientes quod bonum est, abundetis in spe et virtute Spiritus sancti, ut per ejus gratiam fidem quam accepistis et baptisma conservare valeatis ante conspectum summi Dei et Salvatoris nostri Jesu Christi, quia creati sumus ad laudem sui sancti nominis, qui dilexit nos et lavit nos a peccatis nostris in sanguine suo, quia mortem pro nobis sustinuit, ut per suam mortem destrueret eum qui habebat mortis imperium, id est, diabolum, et humanum genus ab ejus potestate eripiens, aperuit credentibus regna coelorum, ubi perfruuntur vitam aeternam fideles."

¹⁸³ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.867–8. "Quare jejunia Quadragesimae magis aliis jejuniis veneranda sint."

¹⁸⁴ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.868–70. "In die solemnitis paschalis." And also Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.870–872. "De abrenuntiatione in baptisate."

Throughout the sermons, the liturgical setting of Lent and Easter was not used to frame conversion to Christian life. As with Dhuoda and Jonas, the setting rather provided a backdrop for an exploration of how most effectively to maintain Christian life. The sermons' author featured penance throughout as a means of getting back on the right track. A side note on penance was tucked into the recapitulation of the Creed in the first sermon. The author touched on the importance of baptism to the Christian faith and immediately offered a clarifying remark on the importance of penance. "We must firmly believe in the remission of all sins in baptism. No catholics doubt that the future judgment for the good and wicked is after the end of this life. For the pagans, the treacherous, and the sinners who neither wished to confess their sins nor emend them through penance, punishment will be eternal."¹⁸⁵ Thrown into the same peril were those with no *sacramentum*, those who betrayed their secular *sacramenta*, and those who forsook their religious *sacramenta*. Sins eroded the *sacramentum* of baptism, placing people into slavery. Penance restored it.

So, those who do not fear to sin and do not hasten to confess their sins or to emend them through penance are slaves of the devil. Indeed those who hasten to preserve themselves from sins or wash their sins through confession and penance and rejoice to live in the commands of God, are the sons of the love of God and the inheritors of eternal beatitude.¹⁸⁶

A whole sermon was devoted to the importance of the maintenance of one's *sacramentum* in this life, because of its portent for the future life. The author concluded "therefore, after the *sacramentum* of baptism he [God] set a second purgation by penance so that the evil things which we do after the washing of baptism, are healed by the medicines of penance."¹⁸⁷ He introduced penance in his discussion of the origins of the human condition, after he discussed the baptismal reformation brought about by Jesus.

The cycle's author also stressed the importance of maintenance through an emphasis on formative education. The sermons' content featured well-known staples of formation, such as the Creed unwound in the first sermon.¹⁸⁸ Exhortations embedded in all the sermons continually stressed the need for education,

¹⁸⁵ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.0845. "Omnium peccatorum remissionem in sancto baptis-mate firmiter credere debemus. Futurum quoque iudicium esse bonis et malis statim post hujus vitae terminum, nulli catholicorum dubium est. Paganis, impiis et peccatoribus, qui sua scelera confiteri noluerunt, nec per poenitentiam emendare, supplicium sempiternum erit. Poenitentibus et iustis gloria sempiterna manebit."

¹⁸⁶ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.0847. "Igitur illi qui peccare non metuunt, nec sua peccata curant confiteri, vel per poenitentiam emendare, servi sunt diaboli; qui vero se a peccatis custodire curant, vel sua peccata per confessionem et poenitentiam abluere, et in mandatis Dei vivere gaudent, hi sunt filii dilectionis Dei et haeredes aeternae beatitudinis."

¹⁸⁷ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.858. "Ideoque post baptismi sacramentum secundam poenitentia posuit purgationem, ut mala quae post baptismi ablutionem agimus, poenitentiae medicamentis sanentur."

¹⁸⁸ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.844–5.

often identifying who was expected to educate and who required education. The author wrote of formation in both intellectual and moral terms. In the sermon on the double work of justice, he noted “thus adolescents and younger should be obedient to their elders in every spiritual teaching, doing nothing without the advice of their elders.”¹⁸⁹ The sermon on faith and the works of love offered more specifics. Immediately after extolling the importance of the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed, the author identified parents and godparents as responsible for formation, and baptism as the appropriate context and criteria for good formation. “And therefore you yourselves, just as was said there [in the Creed], believe and hand over this very faith to your children and also those whom you have received in baptism, because you stood as *fideiussors* for them so that they ought to thus believe what you teach them.”¹⁹⁰ He continued suggesting that not only did the *sacramentum* of baptism establish the obligation for formation, but also created criteria by which appropriate formators may be identified. “Also know that you ought not to be baptized more than once and you ought not to approach confirmation more than once, because the apostles placed their hands on the believers once, so that they received the Holy Spirit.”¹⁹¹ Sometimes the exhortations were generic. “It is also a command for parents to instruct their children in the fear of God.”¹⁹² Other times they are quite wide ranging. “Teach your children to fear God, and your household similarly.”¹⁹³ Some sermons were specific about who and what. Several exhortations accorded with the thoughts of Jonas and Dhuarda in terms of content and responsibility, as noted above, “hold the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed, and hand them on to your children and your godchildren, whose *fideiussores* you stood as in baptism.”¹⁹⁴

There is little reason to consider the pseudo-Bonifacian cycle unique. Other sermon collections surviving from the ninth century contained similar patterns.¹⁹⁵ As more collections are edited and studied, more evidence of common themes and concerns will likely emerge.¹⁹⁶ What has been identified is

¹⁸⁹ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.849. “Adolescentes itaque et juniores sint obedientes senioribus in omni doctrina spiritali, nihil sine consilio seniorum agentes.”

¹⁹⁰ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.853. “Ideoque vos ipsi, sicut ibi dicitur, credite, et filiis vestris, necnon et eis quos in baptismo suscepistis, hanc ipsam fidem tradite, quia ideo pro ipsis fideiussores exististis, ut sic credere vobis docentibus deberent.”

¹⁹¹ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.854. “Scitote etiam vos semel non amplius baptizari debere, semel et non amplius ad confirmationem accedere, quia et apostoli semel manus super credentes imponebant, ut acciperent Spiritum sanctum.”

¹⁹² Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.861. “Parentibus quoque praeceptum est ut erudiant filios suos in timore Dei.”

¹⁹³ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.870. “Filiis docete ut Deum timeant, familiam similiter.”

¹⁹⁴ Ps.-Boniface, *Sermones*, PL 89.870. “Orationem Dominicam et Symbolum tenete, et filiis vestris tradite et filiis vestris, quorum in baptismo fideiussores exististis.”

¹⁹⁵ See, for example, several sermons in *XIV homélies du IXe siècle d’un auteur inconnu de l’Italie du Nord*, ed. Paul Mercier, SC 161 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1970).

¹⁹⁶ A brief overview along with bibliographies fore and summaries of identified collections of early medieval homilies is in Thomas Hall, “The Early Medieval Sermon” *The Sermon*, ed. Beverly Mayne Kienzle (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000) pp. 203–47.

consistent and across a suggestively wide geography, in different social contexts and with varied sophistication and complexity. From the eastern and western Frankish world as well as from Italy, the same themes dear to “Boniface,” Jonas, and Dhuoda appear in sermon collections, independent sermons, and fragments of manuscripts. Two ninth-century sermons featuring penance and evidently crafted for Carolingian soldiers survive.¹⁹⁷ The first begins by reminding the soldiers of their *nomen christianum* and exhorted them to consider their dual baptismal promises: to believe in God and to renounce the devil. The sermon encouraged the soldiers to maintain their zeal in preserving their *sacramentum*.

It is agreeable, most beloved brothers, to consider in divine fear the Christian name which we hold, so that what we are called shines in us in fitting behavior. The Christian name, indeed, takes its beginning from Christ, because we promised ourselves to our Lord Christ at baptism and we renounced the devil and all his works and all his pomps. Therefore it is very appropriate that what we promised to Christ we render with all zeal and devotion, and just as we renounced the devil, we are not again enticed by the concupiscence of the flesh or as the dog we return to our vomit, but rather persevering in the confession of the true faith we stand manfully in the sight of Christ.¹⁹⁸

That said, the sermon recognized that soldiers did not always maintain the moral purity they received in baptism. Consequently, the author extolled the importance of penance to the Carolingian fighting man.

When a sinner holds back his sins up to the last moment and does not cast them out from himself though confession and penance, he will die in eternity. However, whoever is not embarrassed to confess his sins immediately, so that he has confessed, through the tearful penance of fasting and also by the earnestness of holy prayerful vigils with an abundance of alms, he achieves eternal forgiveness.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ On religious conventions in Carolingian warfare, especially habits of pastoral care, see David Bachrach, *Religion and the Conduct of War, c.300–1215* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003) pp. 32–63. On confession in particular see David Bachrach, “Confession in the *Regnum Francorum* (742–900): The Sources Revisited” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 54:1 (2003) pp. 3–22.

¹⁹⁸ Albert Michael Koeniger, *Die Militärseelsorge der Karolingerzeit Ihr Recht und Praxis* (Munich: J.J. Lentnerschen, 1918) pp. 68–9. “*Libet, fratres karissimi, cum timore divino considerare nomen christianum, quod (Hs. quem) tenemus, ut dignis etiam moribus in nobis fulgeat, quod vocemur. A Christo enim nomen christianum sumpsit exordium et quia Christo nos (Hs. vos) domino nostro in baptismum spopondimus et diabolo renuntiavimus et omnibus operibus eius et omnibus (Hs. omni) pompis eius, ideo maxime nobis oportet, ut, quod Christo promisimus, omni studio ac devotione reddamus, et sicut diabolo renuntiavimus, non iterum concupiscentiis carnis inlecti vel ut canis revertamur ad vomitum, sed potius in confessione verae fidei perseverantes stemus viriliter in acie Christi.*”

¹⁹⁹ Koeniger, *Die Militärseelsorge*, p. 69–70. “*Sic et peccator, cum peccata penes se usque ad ultimum tempus retentaverit et ea per confessionem atque paenitentiam a semetipso non eicit, in aeternum peribit. Quisquis autem peccata sua confiteri non erubescit, statim, ut confessus fuerit, per paenitentiam lacrimosam ieiuniorum ac vigiliarum simulque orationum sanctarum instantia cum elemosinarum largitate veniam consequitur sempiternam.*”

In another example, a “southern French” homily from the late ninth century treats the conduct of Christian life from baptism, focusing on promises of belief in God, a renunciation of the devil, and the moral implications of these promises.²⁰⁰ Confession and penance atoned for any breach of these promises, especially for those interested in eternal reward. Other collections of ninth century sermons also raised these issues. For example the Ps.-Eligius collection, formerly thought to be from the seventh century but now known to be a ninth-century effort, included a homily considering the *nomen Christianum*, how it was assumed at baptism and maintained by confession and penance.²⁰¹

In addition to sermons, Carolingian prayer books—known as *libelli precum*—circulated throughout Europe in the ninth century. These too testify to the drive of Carolingian leaders to make basic Christian formation available and useful to ever widening audiences.²⁰² Surviving manuscripts contain groups of prayers ranging from the extremely simple to moderately complex. The prayers covered many of the themes connected to Christian formation and were drawn from the Bible, sayings of the Church Fathers, and liturgical prayers. The books advanced many of the same themes championed by Jonas and Dhuoda and observed in Carolingian homilies and sermons. They displayed continuity with Alcuin’s program of formation and earlier court concerns. They emphasized maintenance of Christian observances and moral life and were clearly connected to Christian liturgical practices. Already at the end of the eighth century, Alcuin himself provided an impetus for *libelli precum*, which he understood as advancing Christianization and reform across the Frankish world. Specific *libelli* were attributed to Alcuin’s monastery of St. Martin at Tours and he was known to have recommended such *libelli* to his contacts across Europe.²⁰³ In a letter to Arn

²⁰⁰ Giles Constable, “The Anonymous Early Medieval Homily in MS Copenhagen GKS 143” *Ritual, Text and Law: Studies in Medieval Canon Law and Literature Presented to Roger E. Reynolds*, eds. Kathleen Cushing and Richard Gyug (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004) pp. 161–70.

²⁰¹ Ps.-Eligius, *Homelia*, PL. 87.650–4. See McCune, “Rethinking the Pseudo-Eligius sermon collection,” pp. 445–76.

²⁰² Carolingian *libelli* survive from the end of the eighth century. Evidence of continual use, of copying, and of references to *libelli* testify to their enduring significance. For background on Carolingian *libelli*, see Michael S. Driscoll, “Penance in Transition: Popular Piety and Practice” *Medieval Liturgy: A Book of Essays*, ed. Lizette Larson-Miller (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997) pp. 121–63, esp. pp. 132–9. For a larger appraisal of *libelli*, see Pierre-Marie Gy, “The Different Forms of Liturgical “Libelli” *Fountain of Life*, ed. Gerard Austin (Washington, D.C.: The Pastoral Press, 1991) pp. 23–34, Michael S. Driscoll, “The *Precum Libelli* and Carolingian Spirituality” *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy* (1990) pp. 68–76, Pierre Salmon, *Analecta Liturgica. Extraits des manuscrits liturgiques de la bibliothèque vaticane: Contribution à l’histoire de la prière chrétienne* (Vatican Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana 1974) pp. 121–94, D.A. Wilmart, *Precum Libelli Quattuor Aevi Karolini* (Rome: Ephemerides Liturgicae, 1940).

²⁰³ Driscoll, “Penance in Transition,” pp. 133–4; Radu Constantinescu, “Alcuin et les Libelli *Precum* de l’époque carolingienne” *Revue d’histoire de la spiritualité* 50 (1974) pp. 17–56; Bernhard Bischoff, “La vie intellectuelle” *Charlemagne: Oeuvre, Rayonnement et Survivance* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1965) p. 198. That Bischoff saw his manuscript as not an original made by Alcuin, but of a copy emphasizes that the *libelli precum* were understood to be worthy of being copied and therefore probably distributed to others.

of Salzburg, Alcuin wrote “I have sent to you a *manualem libellum* treating many subjects concerning diverse things, that is brief commentaries on the seven penitential psalms, also on the 118th psalm, and similarly on the 15 gradual psalms. Also, in this *libellus* is a small Psalter, which is said to be of the Psalter of the blessed priest Bede.”²⁰⁴

Although the diversity of the prayerbooks make it difficult to know by whom and how they were used, the existence of a treatise like Dhuoda’s *Manualis* shows the familiarity that Carolingian lay aristocrats had with these devotional aids.²⁰⁵ Throughout her book for William, Dhuoda drew material from and exhorted her son to make use of such prayerbooks. *Libelli precum*, as explained by Dhuoda, were tools for extended Christian formation.²⁰⁶ Many of the prayers possessed a strong penitential character, which indicates the premium placed on confession by the compliers of the *libelli*. In one example, a confessional formula survives testifying to auricular confession to a priest and the explicit connection of penance to baptism. “I confess to the Lord and to you, my lord priest, all the sins and my crimes, whatsoever I did and am able to remember from the beginning that I renounced the devil at baptism.”²⁰⁷ Some of the prayers contained in *libelli precum* quoted biblical passages to explain virtues and vices in a manner not unlike those mentioned in Jonas, Dhuoda, or earlier Carolingian penitential literature.²⁰⁸ Dhuoda specifically recommended the seven penitential Psalms to William as proper preparation for confession and penance in the final chapter of her work.²⁰⁹ One representative prayer began with a theological foundation, in this case the Trinity, before proceeding to a list of sins, much like an examination of conscience.

O Lord, omnipotent God, inseparable Holy Trinity, Father and Son and Holy Spirit—Lord, I seek forgiveness for my sins, I beg and I ask and I pray and I beat and I humbly beseech and I bend my knee before you, my God, and I bend my neck, and I confess my sins before you, because I sinned deeply against the Law which you handed to me and against your precepts which you entrusted to me. I sinned in word, in deed, in thought, in will, in going, in stirring, in hearing, in tasting, in smelling and touching, and in work. I sinned in secret, in fornication,

²⁰⁴ Alcuin, *Epistola* 259, p. 417. “*manualem libellum multa continentem de diversis rebus, id est breves expositiones in psalmos septem poenitentiae, in psalmum quoque CXVIII, similiter in psalmos XV graduum. Est quoque in eo libello psalterium parvum quod dicitur beati Bedae presbyteri psalterium.*”

²⁰⁵ Pierre Riché, “Les bibliothèques des trois aristocrates laïcs carolingiens,” *Le Moyen Age* 49 (1963) pp. 87–104.

²⁰⁶ See, for example, the prayer habit recommended by Dhuoda at Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 130. In the note on the following page, Riché noted the correspondence to *libelli precum* and even to Alcuin’s advice to Charlemagne in Alcuin, *Epistola* 304, p. 462.

²⁰⁷ Wilmart, *Precum libelli*, p. 63. “*Confiteor domino et tibi domine sacerdos omnia peccata et scelera mea quaecumque feci et memorare possum inprimis quod in baptismo diabolo renunciavi.*”

²⁰⁸ For an example of the seven penitential psalms in *libelli*, see Wilmart, *Precum Libelli*, p. 53.

²⁰⁹ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, p. 362.

in false testimony, in perjury, in sacrilege, in homicide, and from every sin I am infected and from the eight principal vices which I have in me.²¹⁰

The picture of Christian life painted by the *libelli precum* depicted the themes of Christian formation found by Jonas and Dhuoda. The prayers of the *libelli* were highly repetitive meditations on extremely simple theological and moral teachings. Some prayers considered basic catechetical ideas like the triune God or the persons of the Trinity.²¹¹ Others offered catalogues of virtues and vices for reflection.²¹² Many tried to capture simple images and theological ideas in polysemous language that wove together vocabulary from the Creed, the liturgy, and the secular world. The following example captures the simplicity of the Latin and of the theology of many of the prayers.

Holy Trinity, you are an aide to me. Hear me, hear me my God. You are my God, living and true. You are my holy Father. You are my dutiful Lord. You are my great king. You are my just judge. You are my one master. You are my ready helper. You are my most capable doctor. You are my most beautiful beloved. You are my living bread. You are my priest forever. You are my leader from the fatherland. You are my true light. You are my holy sweetness. You are my clear wisdom. You are my pure simplicity. You are my catholic unity. You are my peaceful harmony. You are my total protection. You are my good portion. You are my eternal salvation. You are my great mercy. You are my most firm wisdom, the Savior of the world, who lives and rules forever without end. Amen.²¹³

Carolingian *libelli* continued individual formation by encouraging engagement with the liturgy, especially private meditation on liturgical prayers. Many prayers found in the *libelli* were drawn from liturgical sources and the Bible. For example, in several *libelli*, the following Roman collect was placed after an exhortation to pray Psalm 129. “Lord, we beseech that the ears of your pity strain to hear our prayers of supplication, because with you is atonement of

²¹⁰ Wilmart, *Precum libelli*, p. 56. “Domine deus omnipotens, trinitas sancta inseparabilis, pater et filius et spiritus sanctus, mea culpa, domine, veniam peto, et precor et quero et oro et pulso et supplico et genua mea flecto coram te, deus meus, et cervicem meam curvo, et confiteor coram te peccata mea, quia graviter peccavi in lege quam tradidisti mihi et in praeceptis tuis quae mihi comisisti. Peccavi in verbo, in facto, in cogitatu, in voluntate, in gressu, in motu, in auditu, in gustu, in odoratu et tactu, et in opere. Peccavi in furtu, in fornicatione, in falso testimonio, in periurio, in sacrilegio, in homicidio, et de omni culpa sum coinquinatus et de octo viciis quae habeo in me.”

²¹¹ See, for example, Wilmart, *Precum libelli*, p. 139.

²¹² Wilmart, *Precum libelli*, pp. 10, 23, 37, 75 et al.

²¹³ Wilmart, *Precum libelli*, p. 13. “Auxiliatrix es tu mihi trinitas sancta. Exaudi me exaudi me deus meus. Tu es deus meus vivus et verus. Tu es pater meus sanctus. Tu es dominus meus pius. Tu es rex meus magnus. Tu es iudex meus iustus. Tu es magister meus unus. Tu es adiutor meus oportunus. Tu es medicus meus potentissimus. Tu es dilectus meus pulcherrimus. Tu es panis meus vivus. Tu es sacerdos in aeternum. Tu es dux meus a patria. Tu es lux mea vera. Tu es dulcedo mea sancta. Tu es sapientia mea clara. Tu es simplicitas mea pura. Tu es unitas mea catholica. Tu es concordantia mea pacifica. Tu es custodia mea tota. Tu es [portio] mea bona. Tu es salus mea sempiterna. Tu es misericordia mea magna. Tu es sapientia mea robustissima salvator mundi qui sine fine vivis et regnis in saecula saeculorum amen.” Another version of this prayer is found in Wilmart, *Precum libelli*, p. 42. See also a very similar prayer offered in Alcuin, *De usu psalmodum*, PL 101.477.

sins, so that you may not look at our iniquities, but give us your mercies through the Lord.”²¹⁴ Other liturgically connected prayers and prayer aids are sprinkled liberally throughout the *libelli*.²¹⁵

In addition to the Latin evidence of sermons and prayerbooks, attention to eruptions of vernacular language texts in ninth-century manuscripts opens another window on extended Christian formation as envisioned by Jonas and Dhuoda.²¹⁶ Vernacular language texts were strategically placed in a wide variety of early medieval manuscripts including canonical materials, narrative sources, pedagogical aides, liturgical works, and poetic pieces. Many examples betray the importance Carolingian leaders assigned to programs of extended Christian formation within the *imperium christianum*. Ninth-century writers distinguished, albeit somewhat ambiguously, between *lingua Latina*, *lingua Romana*, and *lingua Thiotisca*. Indirect evidence of Carolingian engagement with non-Latin speaking people appeared in both Carolingian conciliar and chronicle texts. While as early as the *Admonitio generalis* Charlemagne indicated that he wished the clergy to make Christian faith and morals understood by the people under his rule, the idea that this instruction could occur in a language other than Latin first appeared in the Reform Councils of 813, which followed on the heels of Charlemagne’s encyclical letter on baptism. The canons of the Council of Tours, for example, ordered priests not just to transmit the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed, but also to aid the laity’s understanding of them through translations of model sermons into the vernacular, both Romance and German.²¹⁷

Celebrated instances of this instinct appear in mid-ninth century narrative sources. Again, Nithard is illuminative. A remarkable passage detailing an oath, a *sacramentum*, between the armies of Charles the Bald and Louis the German appears in the third book of his *Histories*. Strikingly, he not only wrote about how the *sacramenta* were exchanged in vernacular languages, but went so far as to record the texts of the oaths in Romance, German, and Latin.²¹⁸ These “Strasbourg Oaths” testify to two widespread convictions, shared by Jonas and Dhuoda. First, *sacramenta* were broadly constitutive of

²¹⁴ Wilmart, *Precum libelli*, pp. 30, 53, and 78. This example is noticed and commented upon in Driscoll, “Penitential Practice,” p. 136.

²¹⁵ See, for example, Wilmart, *Precum libelli*, pp. 25, 55, 68, or 91 among others.

²¹⁶ For a helpful introduction to the problems associated with studying vernacular languages in the early middle ages, see Marc Van Uytenghe, “The consciousness of a linguistic dichotomy (Latin-Romance) in Carolingian Gaul: the contradictions of the sources and of their interpretation” in *Latin and the Romance Languages in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Roger Wright (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991) pp. 114–29.

²¹⁷ *Concilium Turonense* c. 17, ed. A. Werminghoff, *MGH Concilia aevi karolini I*, (Hannover: Hahn-sche, 1906) p. 288. “in rusticam Romanam linguam aut Theotiscam.”

²¹⁸ On the oaths themselves, their historicity, and their deliberate place in Nithard’s narrative see Patrick Geary, “Oathtaking and Conflict Management in the Ninth Century” *Rechtsverständnis und Konfliktbewältigung: Gerichtliche und aussergerichtliche Strategien im Mittelalter*, ed. Stefan Esders (Cologne: Böhlau 2007) pp. 239–53.

society, theologically, socially, and politically. Second, like the *sacramentum* of baptism, all *sacramenta* should be explained and understood, their implications for behavior accepted by all parties involved. Toward the end of the third book Nithard recorded a meeting between Charles and Louis at Strasbourg on 14 February 842. He immediately announced that the significance of the meeting was the *sacramenta* exchanged by the leaders, Louis the German in the Romance intelligible to Charles's company and Charles the Bald in the Old High German intelligible to Louis' retinue. Nithard subtly highlighted the importance to the chapter of knowing and understanding with his extended description of the meeting site, especially his clarification of the site's name. "Therefore on February 14th Louis and Charles gathered in the city which was formerly called Argentaria, but now popularly (*vulgo*) called Strasbourg. They swore *sacramenta*, which are recorded below, Louis in Romance and Charles in the German tongue."²¹⁹ Unsurprisingly, the brothers addressed those gathered in order to explain their *sacramentum* and its significance, again in the vernacular so that all would understand. "And thus, before the *sacramentum*, they address the gathered people, the one in German, the other in the Romance tongue."²²⁰

Nithard had Louis make clear through his speech, which Nithard portrayed as Louis' own words, a diversity of concerns driving the brothers to this *sacramentum* against Lothar. As with Jonas and Dhuoda, temporal and spiritual concerns were thoroughly integrated in the presentation of the issues, the stakes, and the results. Louis lamented "since neither fraternity nor Christianity nor any innate talent whatsoever was able to help preserve justice so that there would be peace between us, we were finally compelled to submit the matter to the judgment of Almighty God."²²¹ The pregnant ambiguity observed especially in Dhuoda—in the instance of who was the "Lord" for example—was on full display in the oaths reported by Nithard. Here, again, the close relationship of temporal to spiritual goods played out in the stakes seen by the participants—and imposed by Nithard—on the *sacramenta*. He initially emphasized their relationship to God, then their relationship to others, and finally everyone's good. In disagreement reminiscent of that over Dhuoda's intent, scholars have disagreed on whether "salvation" possessed a temporal or spiritual meaning.²²² The *sacramentum* was meant to secure both and its double

²¹⁹ Nithard, *Histoire* III.5, pp. 100–2. "Ergo XVI kal. marcii Lodhuvicus et Karolus in civitate quae olim Argentaria vocabatur, nunc autem Strazburg vulgo dicitur, convenerunt et sacramenta quae subter notata sunt, Lodhuvicus romana, Karolus vero teudisca lingua, juraverunt."

²²⁰ Nithard, *Histoire* III.5, p. 102. "Ac sic, ante sacramentum, circumfusam plebem, alter teudisca, alter romana lingua, alloquuti sunt."

²²¹ Nithard, *Histoire* III.5, p. 102. "Cum autem nec fraternitas nec christianitas nec quodlibet ingenium, salva iusticia, ut pax inter nos esset, adjuvare posset, tandem coacti rem ad iudicium omnipotentis Dei detulimus."

²²² Jonathan Beck, "Pro . . . salvament in the Strasbourg Oaths: 'Safety' or 'Salvation'?" *Romance Philology* 30:1 (1976) pp. 144–51.

meaning was clear and important to the participants as Nithard described the occasion. In Romance first Louis's *sacramentum* ran

for the love of God and for the Christian people and for our common salvation, from this day forward as far as God grants me knowledge and power, I shall treat my brother in aid and in other things and in everything else a man should rightfully treat his brother on the condition that he do the same to me. And I shall not enter into any dealings with Lothar which might with my consent injure this my brother Charles.²²³

Immediately Charles followed similarly in German

Out of love for God and the Christian people and the salvation of us both, from this day on, to the extent that God gives me knowledge and capability, I will proceed with my brother as one by right ought to with his brother, so that he may do likewise with me, and I will enter into no agreement with Lothar, which, with my allowing it, would redound to his harm.²²⁴

The episode concluded with each army swearing in its own language to obey its leader, provided each kept his *sacramentum* to his brother. For Nithard these second *sacramenta* were important both explicitly for the participants and implicitly for the narrative. They firmly established that everyone knew and understood what was happening and—equally importantly—were prepared to accept its implications for behavior in the Frankish world.

The impulse presented so clearly by Nithard is confirmed by the appearance and content of other early medieval vernacular texts, especially those in German. Sadly, few rewards await those who search for evidence of religious instruction in Romance during the early ninth century.²²⁵ However, the lack of textual and manuscript support does not definitively rule out the existence of instruction in a Romance language. Unlike German, whose speakers would have had no way to understand or communicate in Latin without significant training in a foreign language, the relationship of early Romance speakers with Latin was more fluid. Romance emerged from Latin as a language in its own right over the course of the eighth and ninth centuries.²²⁶ Furthermore, the

²²³ Nithard, *Histoire* III.5, pp. 114–16. “*Pro Deo amur et pro Christian poblo et nostro commun salvament, dist di in avant, in quant Deus savir et podir me dunat, si salvarai eo cist meon fradre Karlo et in aïudha et in cadhuna cosa, si cum om per dreit son fradra salvar dift, in o quid il mi altresi fazet et ab Ludher nul plaid nunquam prindrai, qui, meon vol, cist meon fradre Karle in damno sit.*”

²²⁴ Nithard, *Histoire* III.5, p. 116. “*In Godes minna ind in thes christanes folches ind unser bedhero gealtnissi, fon thesemo dage frammordes, so fram so mir Got geuizci indi madh furgibit, so haldih tesan minan bruodher, soso man mit rehtu sinan bruher scal, in thiū thaz er mig so soma duo, indi mit Ludheren in nohheiniu thing ne gegango, the, minan uuillon, imo ce scadhen uuerhen.*”

²²⁵ See, for example, from near the end of the ninth century, perhaps 890, survives the Eulalia sequence in Old French, *Les Plus Anciens Monuments de la Langue Française* (ix, x siècle), ed. Gaston Paris (Paris: Librairie Firmin-Didot Et Cie, 1875) Plate 2.

²²⁶ Marc Van Uytanghe, “The consciousness of a linguistic dichotomy” p. 115. For longer treatments of the emergence of Romance see the definitive Michel Banniard, *Viva Voce: communication écrite et communication orale du IVe au IXe siècle in occident latine* (Paris: Institute des études augustiniennes, 1992).

point at which Romance speakers stopped speaking Latin was not necessarily the same point at which they ceased to understand spoken Latin.²²⁷ Finally, Carolingian Latin itself was neither unified, nor perfectly classical in orthography, grammar, or syntax. Through treatises, poetry, charters, and hagiography, the quality of Carolingian Latin varied widely from a high complex style to a low simple style that flirted with the borders of Romance.²²⁸

Perhaps because Old High German did not share the same ambiguous relationship to Latin that the early Romance language did, numerous instances survive of Carolingians marshalling the German language specifically for catechesis. This evidence shows how Carolingian leaders brought Christian formation to those unable to access Latin. The relationship of Latin to German in the early Middle Ages was complicated, especially as Latin Christianity attempted to appropriate the German language for its missionary goals. By the mid-ninth century, Christians realized that German was important to the *imperium christianum*, especially for its political and social stability. On the one hand, Germanic texts depicted the complicated ways in which Christianity negotiated German culture in the vernacular.²²⁹ On the other hand, such texts painted vivid portraits of Carolingian attempts at providing Christian formation to German-speaking Europeans.²³⁰ Through texts in German, such as the *Heliand*, which depicted Christ as a Germanic war leader, Carolingian intellectuals tried to convey crucial religious, political and social information to non-Romance speakers.²³¹ Through Germanic glosses, such as those offered by Walafrid Strabo in his book on ecclesiastical practices, mid-century Carolingians commented on the German language in Latin treatises.²³² These texts carried the Christian stories, the Christian faith, and Christian moral teaching to

²²⁷ Van Uytenghe, "The consciousness of a linguistic dichotomy," p. 120, Michael Richter, "A quelle époque a-t-on cessé de parler latin en Gaule? A propos d'une question mal posée" *Annales ESC* 38 (1983) pp. 439–48.

²²⁸ Van Uytenghe, "The consciousness of a linguistic dichotomy," p. 122, Michel Banniard, "Théorie et pratique de la langue et du style chez Alcuin: rusticité feinte et rusticité masquée" *Francia. Forschungen zur Westeuropäischen Geschichte* 13 (1986) pp. 579–601, Jacques Fontaine, "De la Pluralité à l'unité dans le 'latin carolingien'?" *Nascita dell'Europa ed Europa carolingia: un'equazione da verificare. Settimane di studio sull'alto medioevo* 17 1979, Vol. II (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1981) pp. 765–805.

²²⁹ *Heliand: Text and Commentary*, ed. James E. Cathey (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2002), see also *Heliand: The Saxon Gospel: A Translation and Commentary*, trans. G. Ronald Murphy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

²³⁰ For a vivid interpretation of how this process might have occurred see Rachel Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800–1200* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002) pp. 9–59.

²³¹ On a reading of the *Heliand* as designed to convey the notion of "faith" in all its senses, see František Graus, "Über die sogenannte germanische Treue" *Historica* 1 (1959) pp. 71–121. More generally, see Klaus Ganter, *Akkommodation und eingeschriebener Kommentar: Untersuchungen zur Übersetzungsstrategie des Heliands* (Tübingen: G. Narr, 1998).

²³² *Walafrid Strabo's Libellus de exordiis et incrementis quarundam in observationibus ecclesiasticis rerum. A Translation and Liturgical Commentary*, ed. and trans. Alice L. Harting-Correa, (New York: Brill, 1996).

bilingual clergy, to clergy unable by reasons of time or ability to learn Latin, and of course, to the laity. Examples include baptismal vows, brief sample sermons, translations of the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, basic catechisms, and simple prayers.²³³ Having texts in multiple languages increased the size of the potential audience across a diverse Carolingian Empire.

The liturgy presented another important context that reveals how sacramental assumptions spread throughout the Carolingian world—not only through sermons, which likely had a liturgical setting, but also through participation in the liturgy itself, especially on important feast days like Easter, where the *sacramentum* of baptism would have been featured. Reaching back to the end of the eighth century, Angilbert of St-Riquier (d. 814) rebuilt the important monastery of Saint-Riquier across the 790s, after the *Admonitio generalis* and while court thinkers like Alcuin of York were developing understandings of the Carolingian *imperium christianum*. Angilbert was an admired poet and court intimate, earning the nickname Homer.²³⁴ Alcuin was a frequent correspondent of Angilbert and in honor of the new monastery's dedication in 800 he composed a new *vita* of the abbey's patron, Saint Richardus.²³⁵ The architecture, the decoration, and the liturgies of the monastery addressed the theological concerns of the Carolingian court during this important decade.²³⁶ Angilbert's descriptions of his work at Saint-Riquier, especially the liturgy, open windows onto the avenues through which large numbers of people could be exposed to the kind of thinking displayed by Dhuoda and encouraged by Jonas.²³⁷

²³³ A brief overview is offered by Cyril Edwards, "German vernacular literature: a survey" *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) pp. 141–70. Fuller discussions appear in Joachim Heinze, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zum Beginn der Neuzeit, Vol. 1: Von den Anfängen zum hohen Mittelalter* (Königstein: Athenäum, 1984) and J. Knight Bostock, *A Handbook of Old High German Literature*, 2nd ed., rev. K.C. King and D.R. McLintock (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976).

²³⁴ See Peter Godman, *Poets and Emperors: Frankish Politics and Carolingian Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987) pp. 64–8, and Mary Garrison, "The Social World of Alcuin: Nicknames at York and the Carolingian Court" *Alcuin of York: Scholar at the Carolingian Court*, eds. L.A.J.R. Houwen and A.A. MacDonald (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1998) pp. 59–79, at 61.

²³⁵ On Alcuin's correspondence with Angilbert see Alcuin, *Epistolae*, ed. Ernst Dümmler, *MGH Epistolae IV* (Berlin: Weidmanns, 1895). On the *vita* see Alcuin, *Vita Richarii confessoris Centulensis*, ed. Bruno Krusch, *MGH SRM 4* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1902) pp. 381–401. On Alcuin's view of Angilbert see Simone Viarre, "Un portrait d'Angilbert dans la correspondance d'Alcuin?" *De Tertullien aux Mozarabes: Mélanges offerts à Jacques Fontaine*, eds. Louis Holtz and Jean-Claude Fredouille (Paris: Institut d'études augustiniennes, 1992) pp. 267–74.

²³⁶ Susan A. Rabe, *Faith, Art, and Politics at Saint-Riquier: The Symbolic Vision of Angilbert* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995); Carol Heitz, "Saint-Riquier en 800" *Revue du Nord* 69 (1986) pp. 335–44.

²³⁷ For more on monastic liturgy and the laity in the ninth century see Ildar H. Garipzanov, *The Symbolic Language of Authority in the Carolingian World c.751–877* (Leiden: Brill, 2008) pp. 74–83. On a specific example of such liturgical activity in the East Frankish world see the analysis of the Plan of St. Gall in Lynda Coon, *Dark Age Bodies: Gender and Monastic Practice in the Early Medieval West* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011) pp. 208–15.

Monasticism, an important focus of Carolingian reform efforts, had a profound and, perhaps, transformative impact on the Frankish world. Certainly the model of “minster” culture monasticism familiar to Alcuin and others influenced by the Anglo-Saxon world privileged engagement with the laity.²³⁸ More reserved assumptions about Carolingian monastic engagement with the laity appear, upon closer scrutiny, to be unfounded.²³⁹ Angilbert described how on important feast days, especially during Holy Week, from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday, the monks at Saint-Riquier actively engaged the laity. On Palm Sunday the monks went out to the local populace and processed with them, leading them back into the church for Mass.²⁴⁰ On Good Friday the monks again invited the laity into the church for services involving adoration of the cross. On Holy Saturday, the laity participated in the Easter vigil liturgy, which included prayers over the baptismal font.²⁴¹ Easter itself included more processions with the laity and the celebration of Easter Mass, during which time Angilbert mentioned specifically that the laity received communion with the monks.²⁴² Inclusion in the liturgical life of the community for the central feast of the Christian calendar, Easter, allowed the monks to instruct the laity in basic catechetical matters through words, gestures, and art.²⁴³ Attention to Angilbert’s activities at Saint-Riquier is especially appropriate for interpreting Nithard’s reading of the social and political turmoil of the mid-ninth century. Nithard was the son of Angilbert and Bertha, one of Charlemagne’s daughters. In the fourth book of his *Histories*, Nithard recalled his father, his mother, and his father’s achievement at Saint-Riquier, something that had left an indelible impression on him. Nithard wrote that Angilbert “from a daughter of the same great king [Charlemagne] named Bertha begot my brother Hartnid and me, Nithard. At Centulum, he built a magnificent work in honor of Almighty God and Saint Richardus, and ruled the (monastic) family committed to him.”²⁴⁴ A striking image in a near contemporary liturgical manuscript, the early tenth

²³⁸ Sarah Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England, c.600–900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), John Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), Alan Thacker, “Monks, preaching and pastoral care in early Anglo-Saxon England” *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, eds. John Blair and Richard Sharpe (Leister: Leister University Press, 1992) pp. 137–70.

²³⁹ See, for example, Sullivan’s provocative re-interpretation of the famous Plan of St. Gall, complete with a survey of earlier studies of Carolingian monasticism. Richard E. Sullivan, “What Was Carolingian Monasticism?” *After Rome’s Fall: Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History. Essays presented to Walter Goffart*, ed. Alexander C. Murray (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998) pp. 251–87.

²⁴⁰ Angilbert, *Institutio de diversitate officiorum*, Corpus Consuetudinum Monasticarum I, ed. Kassius Hallinger (Siegburg: F. Schmitt, 1963) p. 294.

²⁴¹ Angilbert, *Institutio de diversitate officiorum*, p. 295.

²⁴² Angilbert, *Institutio de diversitate officiorum*, p. 296.

²⁴³ Rabe, *Faith, Art, and Politics*, pp. 122–31.

²⁴⁴ Nithard, *Histoire* IV.5, p. 150. “Qui ex ejusdem magni regis filia nomine Berehta Hartnidum fratrem meum et me Nithardum genuit. Centulo opus mirificum in honore omnipotentis Dei sanctique Richarii construxit, familiam sibi commissam mirifice rexit.”

century Fulda Sacramentary, captured just the scene that may have been common at important monasteries like Saint-Riquier, Fulda, or Peter's Nonatola across the ninth century. On folio 214r, amid the instructions for the scrutinies, is depicted monks teaching and testing families with children who had come to the monastery for the Lenten catechumenal program.²⁴⁵

Other early medieval manuscripts witness to the complicated interaction of Latin and German, revealing the liturgical context within which were forged and disseminated ideas consistent with Jonas' and Dhuoda's assumptions about Christian formation. Liturgy supplied an opportunity for vernacular instruction on *sacramenta*. Several ninth-century manuscripts offer suggestive examples of the kinds of formation offered by ecclesiastical leaders like Jonas, sponsored by abbots like Angilbert, and witnessed to by laity like Dhuoda and Nithard. One example of such a manuscript is Merseburg, Bibl. des Domstifts Hs. 136. Presently, it contains 92 folios from six different manuscripts. However, folios two through twenty-one were written at Fulda, probably under Hrabanus Maurus, between 820–840—and so perhaps offer more insight into the pastoral work of monks.²⁴⁶ The contents include an Old High German renunciation and profession of faith set between liturgical commentaries, the very texts most useful to a priest at Fulda or a nearby baptismal church during the Easter or Pentecost liturgies. Probably a reference work or a training guide, the fragment begins on folio two with a commentary on the Mass. Commentaries on the Mass were popular fare during the ninth century and were often connected to baptism. Most of the ninth-century commentaries on baptism, including *Primo paganus*, concluded with the celebration of the Lord's Body and Blood, as did the elaborate Easter liturgy described by Angilbert. This particular commentary on the Mass was especially popular. At least seventeen ninth-century manuscripts containing commentaries on baptism also contain this commentary on the Mass.²⁴⁷ The commentary was associated, in ninth-century manuscripts at least, with the writings of Carolingian luminaries like Theodulf of Orléans, Hrabanus Maurus, Amalarius of Trier, and Alcuin, who may even have had a hand in composing it.²⁴⁸ It consisted of brief explanations of the meanings of the prayers used by the priest during the Mass. Some of the explanations covered

²⁴⁵ Göttingen, UB Cod. theol. 231, fol. 214r. See *Sacramentarium Fuldense saeculi x : Cod. Theol. 231 der K. Universitätsbibliothek zu Göttingen: Text und Bilderkreis*, eds. Gregor Richter und Albert Schönfelder (Fulda : Fuldaer Actiendruckerei, 1912) Plate 42. The image also appears on the dust jacket of this book.

²⁴⁶ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 32; Bernhard Bischoff, "Paläographische Fragen deutscher Denkmäler der Karolingerzeit" *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 5 (1971) pp. 101–34, *Denkmäler deutscher Poesie und Prosa aus dem VIII–XII Jahrhundert*, 3rd edition, 2 Vols., ed. E. Steinmeyer (Berlin: Weidmanns, 1892) pp. 2, 319–23.

²⁴⁷ Keefe, *Water and Word*, Vol. II, p. 15. The text of the commentary is printed in J.M. Hanssens, *Amalarii Episcopi Opera Liturgica Omnia*, Vol. I (Vatican Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, 1948) pp. 284–338.

²⁴⁸ This is suggested in C.M. Nason, "The Mass Commentary Dominus vobiscum. Its Textual Transmission and the Question of Authorship" *Revue Bénédictine* 114:1 (2004) pp. 75–89.

phrases while others focused on specific words. All connected the liturgical rites to basic catechetical teachings. After the commentary on the Mass, the manuscript contains a treatment of the rite of baptism. A closer look at the details of the texts underscores the cohesiveness of the concerns revolving around the *sacramentum* of baptism in the mid-ninth century. The section began with a baptismal renunciation of Satan and a profession of faith—the two pacts of the baptismal liturgy—both written in Old High German.²⁴⁹ These are the features of the baptismal liturgy emphasized by authors like Jonas as most crucial for godparents or catechumens to understand. After the Old High German passages followed instructions for conducting baptism. These instructions were not unique. For example, some were found in other sacramentaries such as the aforementioned Fulda Sacramentary.²⁵⁰ Moreover, the prayers themselves reflect continuity with earlier Carolingian concerns, especially Alcuin's. The first prayer, an exorcism, was prefaced with an explanation drawn from *Primo paganus*. "The evil spirit is exorcized so that he withdraws and leaves, giving the place to God."²⁵¹ This further draws ninth-century baptismal instruction into the trajectory set by Alcuin and advanced by his students and friends across the early ninth century. The final item from the Fulda portion of the manuscript fragment is a baptismal commentary that glossed the important words from the baptismal rite.²⁵² This glossing, too, was not unique to this manuscript. It was copied into at least eight others.²⁵³ The glosses offered very simple explanations of key words from the baptismal liturgy. For example, "'Almighty,' that is because he is able to do everything and created everything without evil or deceit."²⁵⁴

Other surviving manuscripts offer similar glimpses of the extended Christian formation seen in Jonas and Dhuoda. These manuscripts integrated Old High German baptismal formulae into larger considerations of Christian formation and practice, especially penance. Vatican manuscript Palatinus Latinus 577 provides a striking example.²⁵⁵ Dated to the eighth or ninth century from

²⁴⁹ Printed editions of these prayers are found in Müllenhoff and Scherer, *Denkmäler deutscher Poesie und Prosa*, vol. 1, p. 199.

²⁵⁰ *Sacramentarium Fuldense saeculi x: Cod. Theol. 231 der K. Universitätsbibliothek zu Göttingen: Text und Bilderkreis*, eds. Gregor Richter und Albert Schönfelder (Fulda: Fuldaer Actiendruckerei, 1912).

²⁵¹ Adalbert Bezzenberger, "Das Taufritual der merseburger Handschrift No. 58" *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 8 (1877) p. 217. "Exorcizatur malignus spiritus, ut exeat et recedat dans locum deo" Compare with the text of *Primo paganus*, Keefe, *Water and the Word*, vol. 2, p. 241. "Exorcizatur, id est coniuratur malignus spiritus, ut exeat et recedat dans locum deo." For more discussion of the manuscript and prayers see the rest of the article, Bezzenberger, "Das Taufritual" pp. 216–26. Note that the shelf mark of the manuscript has changed from Merseburg Bibl. des Domstifts Hs. 58 to Merseburg Bibl. des Domstifts Hs. 136.

²⁵² Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, pp. 550–6.

²⁵³ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 550.

²⁵⁴ Keefe, *Water and the Word*, Vol. II, p. 550. "'omnipotens,' id est quia omnia potest et omnia creavit absque malum et mendatium."

²⁵⁵ Hubert Mordek, *Bibliotheca capitularium regum Francorum manuscript. Überlieferung und Traditionszusammenhang der fränkischen Herrscherelasse* (Munich: MGH, 1995) pp. 774–8. I.B. DeRossi, *Codices Palatini Latini Bibliothecae Vaticanae* (Rome: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1886) pp. 191–2.

the area of Mainz, the manuscript contains two texts in Old High German, again a baptismal renunciation and a profession of faith.²⁵⁶ The German texts anchored a larger program of simple Latin texts which explained the Christian faith and moral life. Most of the material relating to the faith comes in the form of canonical material or creeds drawn from Latin translations of late antique church councils such as I Constantinople or Chalcedon, two early church councils revered by Carolingian theologians. The moral texts dealt with church discipline: a basic course in virtues and vices. Some texts warned readers to maintain their Christian obligations and avoid non-Christian practices. For example, a copy of a warning against pagan superstitions was inscribed immediately after the German profession of faith.²⁵⁷ Most of the topics had to do with heathen rites or practices, which clerics would have wanted to discourage or at least reinterpret, such as *Concerning Things Which They Do over Rocks* or *Concerning Incantations*.²⁵⁸

Other entries in the manuscript aimed to reinforce a Christian outlook. Most of the items are moral rules drawn from eighth century canonical materials, interspersed with exhortations from Jerome, Julianus Pomerius, and pseudo-Clement. The manuscript also contains unattributed texts, which mirrored the work of Jonas and Dhuoda insofar as they focused on Christian lay holiness. Two texts considered the sanctity of marriage.²⁵⁹ A first sermon addressed Christians and encouraged them to reject sexual practices forbidden to Christians. The sermon described many of these practices in a list. For example, "no one should be made impure with his mother, nor with his stepmother, nor with a sister born from his father. . . ." ²⁶⁰ The stakes set up by the sermon were those common both to missionary activity and to the general Christian formation promoted by Jonas and Dhuoda: eternal punishment and eternal reward. "God forbid, God forbid that our silence make your destruction; if we love, we ought to forsake what wounds, lest that come which kills. Therefore, turn your attention to the calls of our God, by which he forbids you from criminal marriages, so that you may live for his heavenly rewards."²⁶¹

²⁵⁶ The text of the renunciation and Creed are printed in K. Müllenhoff and W. Scherer, *Denkmäler deutscher Poesie und Prosa*, p. 198 and *Interrogationes et responsiones baptismales*, ed. A. Boretius, *MGH Capitularia regum francorum I* (Hannover: Hahnsche, 1883) p. 222.

²⁵⁷ This text is printed in *Indiculus superstitionum et paganiarum*, *MGH Capitularia regum francorum I* pp. 222–3.

²⁵⁸ *Indiculus*, p. 223. "De his quae faciunt super petras" and "De incantationibus."

²⁵⁹ "Uidet filii carissimi quale novis incumbit periculum . . ." and "Rogamus uos carissimi filii . . ." are on folios 7v–9r, immediately after the *Indiculus*. Both texts are printed as *Allocutio sacerdotum de conjugii illicitis ad plebem* and attributed to Boniface, PL 89.0818–20.

²⁶⁰ *Allocutio sacerdotum*, PL 89.0819. "ne quis polluat cum matre, non cum noverca, non cum sorore ex patre nata."

²⁶¹ *Allocutio sacerdotum*, PL 89.0819. "Absit, absit, ut nostrum silentium vestrum fiat exitium; si vos amamus, proderere debemus quod laedit, ne veniat quod occidit. Ergo diligenter advertite voces Dei nostri, quibus vos vetat a conjugiiis criminalibus, ut vivatis aeternis ejus muneribus."

A second sermon reiterated the eternal stakes involved in life. "If you know how great is the gift shown to us in his passion, hear his precept more quickly, lest while we are disobeying his commands, we are judged ungrateful for his favors."²⁶² Strikingly, one sermon identified its context as Easter preparations. "That one [God] is the one who speaks to you through the service of our tongue, whose favors you celebrated a little before the Easter services."²⁶³ That the author of this sermon mentioned Easter, the date recommended for baptism in most Carolingian legislation, connected these sermons with the renunciation and profession that precede the sermons in this manuscript. The manuscript's composition combined with internal textual connections illuminates the larger context within which teachers like Jonas and Dhuoda, as well as chroniclers like Nithard, worked and provides an oblique angle on mid-ninth century extended Christian formation based on a catechumenate program.

By the mid-ninth century the ordering concept of baptism as a *sacramentum*, developed by earlier Carolingian thinkers like Alcuin and consistently advocated by Charlemagne, had become a basic assumption of theological, social, political life. Jonas of Orléans and Dhuoda of Septimania organized their advice around deeply ingrained habits of faith and moral life. Their voices were certainly exceptional, though not widely influential. They were, however, representative of widely held instincts on how to organize and manage life in an *imperium christianum* successfully installed by Charlemagne's administrative machinery. Even as they had internalized sacramental thinking, they developed the implications of their convictions and applied them to contemporary problems. Rather than the construction of an *imperium christianum*, they focused on the maintenance of Christian moral lives. Thus, they treated baptism as a foundation for life under the guidance of mentors, such as godparents, and reinforced by religious tools, such as penance and confirmation. Other surviving evidence verifies the ubiquity of such perspectives. Lay aristocrats, such as Nithard, viewed the political and social crises of the 830s through the same lenses. Anonymous sermons picked up and reinforced the centrality of the *sacramentum* of baptism to Carolingian renewal. Prayerbooks circulating throughout Carolingian Europe used the same categories to address spiritual growth and reinforce basic Christian ideas on faith and moral life. Vernacular texts embedded in several genres of Carolingian literature from narrative sources to canonical materials, further underscore the broad hold of the *sacramentum* on Carolingian leaders' approaches to the world, even as they help provide context to understand how and why Jonas, Dhuoda, and Nithard wrote as they did.

²⁶² *Allocutio sacerdotum*, PL 89.0820. "Si agnovistis quantum nobis munus in passione ejus praestitum, celerius ipsius audite praeceptum, ne dum jussionibus ejus inobedientes existimus, ingrati beneficiis judicemur."

²⁶³ *Allocutio sacerdotum*, PL 89. 0819–20. "Ille est qui ad vos per linguae nostrae servitium loquitur, cujus paulo ante paschalia beneficia celebrastis."

Conclusion: Loss and Legacy

Vigorous efforts on the part of court intellectuals and political and ecclesiastical reformers across the late eighth and early ninth centuries led to the establishment of an *imperium christianum* in Europe. Baptism provided the foundation for this society. It had a broad hold on the lives of early medieval people. It unified people theologically, socially, and politically. As an abstract concept, the *sacramentum* of baptism supplied the legal, moral, social, political, and theological ideas reformers used to organize their approach to society. As a widely practiced ritual, baptism provided a means for reformers to include large numbers of Europeans in understanding, internalizing, and sharing a common vision of an *imperium christianum*. It was widely experienced, familiar, and popularly discussed across Europe. As such it helped make crucial decisions on faith and moral life intelligible to people. Through experiences and teaching about baptism, people across Europe absorbed key words and principal concepts which allowed the Carolingian Reform to take hold and an *imperium christianum* to be established.

This study has surveyed why, how, and with what consequences Carolingian reformers turned to the *sacramentum* of baptism in their efforts to erect an *imperium christianum*. Chapter One explained how *sacramentum* served as an important ordering concept for Latin authors from Antiquity to the early Middle Ages. It showed how Carolingian reformers took advantage of overlapping senses of the word to interpret theological and legal commitments, ultimately using baptism as a *sacramentum* to organize their political, theological, and cultural agendas. Chapter Two tracked how baptism helped Carolingian leaders order public life in an ideologically consistent, publicly available, and socially useful manner. Whether justifying the scope of Charlemagne's authority, drawing the legal lines of community, or managing interactions with Jews, the baptismal *sacramentum* provided a very basic continuity to Carolingian thought. Chapter Three unpacked the rich evidence of a particularly influential court intellectual. Alcuin of York worked through the complexities of using the *sacramentum* of baptism as a theological and practical tool for implementing reform and building a stable *imperium christianum*. He then pressed his case

with secular and ecclesiastical leaders across Europe during the late eighth century. Chapter Four tracked the depth and breadth of the Carolingian consensus that had formed around the *sacramentum*. Across the early years of the ninth century, Christian formation through baptism guided Carolingian approaches to theological disputation and inspired reform efforts among leading bishops and Charlemagne himself. In 811/812 Charlemagne circulated a questionnaire on the *sacramentum* designed to assess Carolingian teaching about and practice of baptism, the essential tool for formation in the *imperium christianum*. He then followed up with a series of actions to impose or promote formation. Chapter Five assessed the importance of the *sacramentum* to Carolingian authors of the mid-ninth century. Ecclesiastical and lay authors had come to assume that the *sacramentum* was the theoretical foundation for society and explored its implications not for establishing an *imperium christianum*, but rather for maintaining the *imperium christianum*. Developments in the understandings of godparenthood, penance, and confirmation testified to the deep hold baptism had on the imaginations of representative authors as well as the continuing evolution of thought about the implications of the *sacramentum*. Supporting materials from sermons to prayerbooks to vernacular texts confirm the success and continued effect of the *sacramentum* of baptism in ordering Carolingian society.

However, by the end of the ninth-century evidence shows that things were going badly wrong. The *imperium christianum* as wrought by Charlemagne would not endure, a reality evident to many leaders and intellectuals.¹ In a way at once poignant and charming, late Carolingian authors betrayed just how deeply internalized their ideals had become, as they analyzed and lamented lost opportunities for society. In the mid-880s from the celebrated monastery of St. Gall, Notker the Stammerer (840–912) composed for the West Frankish Emperor Charles the Fat (839–888) a *Gesta Karoli Magni Imperatoris* (*The Deeds of the Emperor Charlemagne*).² Notker was a child oblate to the monastery who, coming from a prominent local family, ran in circles of power and influence. He received a fine education at St. Gall and excelled in learning. Eventually he became a famous teacher and author, influencing many abbots and bishops. He composed a series of letters to his former pupil, the newly ordained Bishop Salomon III of Constance, on what every bishop should know. For another bishop, Liutwald of Vercelli, he composed his famous *Book of Hymns*, containing the earliest collection of Latin sequences. Among his other surviving writings are a short historical work as a continuation of Erchanbert's *Breviarium* and a *Life of St. Gall* in both prose and verse versions. Notker's *Gesta*

¹ Karl Leyser, "Concepts of Europe in the Early and High Middle Ages" *Past and Present* 137 (1992) pp. 25–47, at 38–9.

² The title itself is not original to the work. Notker the Stammerer, *Gesta Karoli Magni Imperatoris*, ed. Hans F. Haefele, MGH SRG 12 (Berlin: Weidmannos, 1962).

has been read as a slightly eccentric *speculum principis* from the end of the century.³ More recently, it has been studied as a richer and more subtly political document, ostensibly concerning Charlemagne, but often eliding past and present in order to comment on current events.⁴ The work consists of thematically organized vignettes emphasizing the consequences of God's favor and education, church reform, and the importance of empire. In the background are earlier Carolingian biographies, like Einhard's *Life of Charlemagne* and the biographies of Louis the Pious by Ermoldus, Thégan, and the Astronomer. Various annals and oral traditions likely supplied other story elements.⁵ Of a planned three books—one on educational, religious, and ecclesiastical reform, a second on military and diplomatic exploits, and a (planned) third on private life—most of two books survive. Missing from the first book is its preface. The second book ends somewhat abruptly, signalling a section of the work was perhaps lost, but more likely abandoned, indicating the deteriorating political situation around Charles the Fat.⁶ Throughout, the monk made generous use of humor to convey his meaning. Often the humor, as befitting an experienced teacher, revolved around the failures of comprehension, not just of language but also of broader cultural and social cues.⁷ Thus, the surviving portions function both as a testament to the failure of Carolingian reform in Europe and as a sarcastic indictment of the late Carolingian world, even as they underscore the continuing attraction of earlier ideals. Tellingly, Notker featured the *sacramentum* of baptism.

Near the end of what survives from Book Two, Notker offered a withering critique of Norse participation in the *sacramentum* of baptism. He described how Norsemen arrived annually to pay tribute to the emperor, first Charlemagne and then his son, Louis the Pious. Notker recorded that on one such occasion Louis invited the Norse warriors to be baptized. The Norsemen accepted and were delighted to be received as godchildren by members of the royal household, who lavished on them white robes and other costly gifts.

³ Theodore Siegrist, *Herrscherbild und Weltsicht bei Notker Balbulus: Untersuchungen zu den Gesta Karoli* (Zürich: Fretz und Wasmuth, 1963); Heinz Löwe, "Das Karlsbuch Notkers von St. Gallen und sein zeitgeschichtlicher Hintergrund" *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte* 20 (1970) pp. 269–302.

⁴ Simon Maclean, *Kingship and Politics in the Late Ninth Century: Charles the Fat and the End of the Carolingian Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) pp. 199–229.

⁵ Matthew Innes, "Memory, Orality, and Literacy in an Early Medieval Society" *Past and Present* 158 (1998) pp. 3–36.

⁶ The difference in tone between the books is noticed by Haefele in his introduction to the critical edition, p. xiv. The inference is drawn by Maclean, *Kingship and Politics*, p. 227.

⁷ David Ganz, "Humor as History in Notker's *Gesta Karoli Magni*" *Monks, Nuns, and Friars in Mediaeval Society*, eds. Edward B. King, Jacqueline T. Schaefer, and William B. Wadley (Sewanee: The Press of the University of the South, 1989) pp. 171–83; Paul Kershaw, "Laughter After Babel's Fall: Misunderstanding and Miscommunication in the Ninth-Century West" *Humor, History, and Politics in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Guy Halsall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) pp. 179–202.

Notker wrote that this ritual became an annual event and that more and more Norsemen came each year. He noted that the Norsemen arrived on Easter Eve. He observed that many of the same men returned each year, coming not for Christ, but for earthly advantage, and paying homage to the emperor more as vassals than as foreign envoys. Notker concluded the episode with a lament about how few people valued Paul's words regarding baptism, and with this Notker offered three scriptural quotations on the significance of baptism.

In each of the three elements of the episode (the general practice of Easter diplomacy, the particular example of the elder and the botched clothing, and the Pauline catena), Notker's tale brought into sharp focus the importance of *sacramenta* for coordinating religious, political, and social life in Carolingian Europe. He identified baptism as paradigmatic for Carolingian identity, but wittily condemned Carolingian leaders for what he saw as a fundamental and tragic flaw in their understanding of the *sacramentum*. Many tiny details suggest that Notker's criticism was subtle and complicated. The point lay as much in what he did not say as in what he said. For example, the baptism of the Northmen was not a theological problem for Notker. He said nothing about the efficacy of baptism. He assumed that baptism would work its saving effects regardless of the preparation. Interestingly, he did not even address the topic of re-baptism. An infamous problem in the late antique and early medieval worlds, Notker let the issue pass without comment. The crux of the matter was proper understanding of baptism, and thus not sacramental efficacy but sacramental fruitfulness. The portrait was one of ineptitude stemming from a deep misunderstanding of the sacramental nature of an *imperium christianum*. The humor revolved around the disharmony and disorder engendered by both the Carolingians and the Northmen misunderstanding what was at stake in baptism. Disharmony arose from Carolingian failure to coordinate properly the complementary theological, political, and social dimensions of baptism. Disorder resulted from allowing one dimension to dominate the others. In this example then, rather than disclosing the *sacramentum*'s foundational importance, Louis the Pious was depicted as betraying its deep organizing significance by dropping its theological weight, and understanding it solely as a matter of political and social expediency which resulted not only in disordered belief, but in disordered behavior as well.

Notker's presentation displayed continuity with earlier Carolingian ideas of the *sacramentum* of baptism. Profound appreciation for the ideals of the Carolingian Renewal and his deep learning, likely anchored by the impressive library and educational curriculum preserved at St. Gall, laid the foundation for his critique.⁸ Notker identified what ought to have been distinguishing characteristics of Christian thought, the key elements that should have been offered by

⁸ Anna Grotans, *Reading in Medieval St. Gall* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) pp. 49–110.

Christians to the Northmen: faith and baptism. Notker introduced his discussion “and because I dropped mention of the Northmen, how much they had faith and baptism, I will lay out a few things from the time of your grandfather.”⁹ Faith and baptism were the same features identified by Alcuin of York as distinctive of Christians in his dialogue of advice for the Frankish king nearly a century earlier.¹⁰ Notker’s affinity for the former abbot of St. Martin of Tours is well-known, secured by the prominent mention of the Anglo-Saxon teacher at the very beginning of the *Gesta*, where Notker featured him in the work’s second paragraph. Notker noted “he [Alcuin] was learned in the whole breadth of sacred scriptures beyond all others of present times.”¹¹ The presence of Alcuin’s *Disputatio de rhetorica et de virtutibus* at St. Gall is similarly well-attested with no fewer than four ninth century manuscripts from its library used in the critical edition.¹² Whereas ideas of faith and baptism offered Alcuin a way to frame the cardinal virtues for the Charlemagne, here the absence of understanding faith and baptism provided Notker with a reason to ridicule all involved in Louis the Pious’ Easter services.

The real dissonance was not between the Franks and the Northmen. It was between the characters in the story and Notker, who felt he understood the truth of the matter—the sacramental underpinnings of an *imperium christianum*. The juxtaposition of religious, political, and social confusion was not a simple contrast. The episode did not pit the Franks against the Northmen and it did not contrast religious with political and social dimensions of the *sacramentum*; rather, the monk of St. Gall cleverly lamented that neither the Franks nor the Northmen recognized that properly understood *sacramenta* had simultaneous religious, political, and social import.

Another familiar cue supplied by Notker, helping knowledgeable readers interpret his criticism, was Jesus’ Great Commission from the Gospel of Matthew, which the monk of St. Gall provided with some additional packaging in order to drive home his disappointment with Louis’ practice. “He [Louis] ordered them [the Northmen] to be baptized, of whom the most learned Augustine said: “If there were no Trinity, the Truth would not have said: ‘Go (*Ite*), teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son

⁹ Notker, *Gesta*, p. 89. “*Et quia de Nordmannis mentio incidit quanti fidem habeant et baptismum, in temporibus avi vestri gestis paucis evolam*.”

¹⁰ See Alcuin, *The Rhetoric of Alcuin and Charlemagne: A Translation, with an Introduction, the Latin Text, and Notes*, ed. Wilbur Samuel Howell (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941) pp. 146–7 and the relevant discussion in Chapter Three.

¹¹ Notker, *Gesta*, p. 3. “*Qui erat in omni latitudine scripturarum supra caeteros modernorum temporum exercitatus*.”

¹² St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek 64, St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek 273, St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek 276, and St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek 855. See the introduction to Howell’s edition at Alcuin, *Rhetoric*, p. 9. The first and fourth manuscripts may now be consulted online at the Virtual Manuscript Library of Switzerland <<http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch>>.

and of the Holy Spirit.”¹³ The quotation from Matthew itself drew Notker’s discussion into the well-worn Carolingian treatments of baptism. The additional context of Augustine obliquely accented Notker’s affirmation of an earlier interpretation of the Great Commission, like that advanced by Alcuin. On the one hand, the specific reference to Augustine emphasized to the reader the importance of learning and exegesis through the example of understanding Matthew via Augustine. Notker subtly underscored this point by characterizing Augustine as *doctissimus* as opposed to *sanctus* or some other epithet. On the other hand, the passage signaled to attentive readers what faults the monk would find with Louis and the Northmen. The importance of knowing the Trinity and understanding the Truth of the reason for baptism emphasized Notker’s appreciation of the catechetical aspect of formation.

The subsequent details littering Notker’s account developed the theme of sound formation and proper catechesis. He showed painstakingly that under Louis the Carolingians had all the correct elements of baptism with all the wrong understandings. Miscommunication undermined actions meant to solidify relationships. *Sacramenta*, especially baptism, could only establish firm foundations for enduring relationships when commitments were understood. Notker’s criticism touched all the participants, the Northmen who received instruction and the Franks who gave it. Just before the pointed quotation from Augustine, Notker recorded that Louis asked the Northmen whether they wanted to receive the Christian religion. They responded that they would be obedient to Louis. This brief exchange highlighted that both Louis and the Northmen failed to understand the *sacramentum*. Notker recounted Louis as asking if the Northmen would receive the Christian religion, but it quickly became clear that rather than the doctrine which Notker, through his citation of Matthew, hinted ought to have been presented first, that Louis meant only the ritual itself. The confusion rendered somewhat ambiguous whom the Northmen were ready to obey. The episode proceeded as if the answer were the Emperor Louis, instead of the heavenly emperor which would have been the right answer to a question on conversion. “Once the most religious Emperor [Louis] took pity on their [the Northmen’s] envoys and asked them if they were willing to receive the Christian religion and received the answer that they were prepared to obey him always, everywhere, and in all things.”¹⁴ Notker emphasized the tragedy when

¹³ Notker, *Gesta*, pp. 89–90. “*iussit eos in eius nomine baptizari, de quo doctissimus ait Augustinus: Si non esset trinitas, non dixisset veritas: Ite, docete omnes gentes baptizantes eos in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti.*” See Augustine, *De trinitate libri xv*, ed. W.J. Mountain, CCSL 50a (Turnhout: Brepols, 1968) p. 533. It is not inconceivable that Notker’s copy survives. Mountain omits *omnes* from his edition on the strength of the majority of early manuscript witnesses. In the minority, and containing *omnes* added by a ninth century corrector, is Sangallensis 175 (St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek 175) from the ninth century.

¹⁴ Notker, *Gesta*, p. 89. “*Quorum legatos religiosissimus imperator tandem aliquando miseratus interrogatos, si christianam religionem suscipere vellent, et responso accepto, quia semper et ubique atque in omnibus essent obaediare parati.*”

he described how the Franks offered the Northmen worldly goods and not spiritual teachings. That the gifts offered by Louis were the white vestments associated with baptism made more appalling that a spiritual teaching was not conveyed with them, as underscored by the use of language from the baptismal liturgy. Frankish nobles received the Northmen as godchildren, but instead of helping them become Christians, they helped the Northmen become like Franks. "They [the Northmen] were received (*suscepti*) by the nobles of the palace just as in the adoption of sons. From the chamber of the caesar they received a white garment and from their godparents the dress of the Franks, arms, and other adornments."¹⁵ Instead of providing spiritual instruction in the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, the nobles supplied a kind of sartorial instruction by offering material goods and local fashions.

Unsurprisingly then, the Northmen misunderstood the significance of the *sacramentum* of baptism. The details, such as the date of Easter, again connected the episode to earlier Carolingian traditions on baptism, even as the outcome showed misunderstanding of the stakes. The *sacramentum* of baptism ought to have ordered Frankish relationships with the Northmen. The palace nobles, identified as godparents (*patrinis*) for the Northmen, provided them with new clothes and arms and not Christian instruction or formation. That they interpreted the material goods politically and not in any Christian symbolic fashion—as true subjects of the *imperium christianum* would have—Notker made clear through his description of the clothing as Frankish (*Francorum*). Confusion on many levels ensued, reflecting the different religious, social, and political levels now uncoordinated by the *sacramentum*. Drained away was the proper religious dimension and consequently the Northmen failed to observe the proper political dimension. Rather than the envoys they were supposed to be, they came to behave like vassals. Notker dispelled any ambiguity when he explained the motivation of the Northmen as material things and not Christ. "More and more did this repeatedly year after year on Easter, and not on account of Christ, but on account of earthly profits, now not as envoys but as most devoted vassals in obedience to the emperor."¹⁶ Misunderstanding reigned.

In the second element of the chapter, Notker selected a single colorful scene to exemplify his general critique. On one occasion when fifty Northmen arrived, Louis ordered that they be baptized immediately upon their consent without any instruction or preparation at all. "The emperor asked them if they wished to be baptized and he ordered that consecrated water be poured

¹⁵ Notker, *Gesta*, p. 90. "*Qui a primoribus palatii quasi in adoptionem filiorum suscepti, de camera quidem caesaris cadidatum, a patrinis vero suis habitum Francorum in vestibus preciosis et armis caeterisque ornatibus acceperunt.*"

¹⁶ Notker, *Gesta*, p. 90. "*Quod cum diutius actitaretur et non propter Christum, sed propter comoda terrena ab anno in annum multo plures, iam non ut legati sed ut devotissimi vassalli ad obsequium imperatoris in sabbato sancto paschae festinaret occurrere.*"

without delay upon those who assented.”¹⁷ Consequently, it does not surprise that the elders of the Northmen did not properly understand what was happening. In fact, any spiritual or religious connotations of the Easter service were missed or ignored. Only the material gifts mattered. Notker wrote that not enough white garments had been prepared. In haste older clothes were cut up and re-sewn into tunics. Upon donning his “new” white clothing the elder betrayed both the appalling behavior of the Franks and his own utter lack of appreciation for the *sacramentum* of baptism. Notker suggested that the Franks baptized some Northmen as many as twenty times, seemingly never conveying to them what the Franks ought to have thought was at stake. As the elder revealed that his principal interest was the clothing, he directed his outrage at the clothes and at Christ, not at Louis. The acknowledgement of Christ should not be interpreted as a result of sound catechesis, but rather as Notker’s indication of how confused and disintegrated was the elder’s understanding of *sacramentum*. “I have been washed here already twenty times and been dressed in the finest and whitest clothing, but look, this sack is fit for swineherds, not soldiers! And if I were not embarrassed by nakedness, having had my clothes taken away and not been given new ones by you, I would leave behind your garb with your Christ!”¹⁸ So, ironically, the baptismal liturgy ended not with a neophyte’s knowledgeable embrace of Christ, but with a confused and frustrated Northman’s abjuration.

Notker delivered the final—and perhaps most damning—part of his pillory of Carolingian baptismal practices via three juxtaposed passages from the New Testament. He identified as enemies of Christ those who confused or ignored the gravity and importance of the *sacramentum* of baptism, grounding his analysis in quotations from Paul’s letters to the Galatians and to the Romans and the Epistle to the Hebrews. The first quotation highlighted for the reader, in case one missed it, just what Notker was doing by emphasizing the clothing so crucial to Louis, the court, and the Northmen, especially the elder. The true importance of the clothing was its spiritual meaning. “So much do the enemies of Christ weigh what the apostle of Christ said ‘All of you who have been baptized in Christ have been clothed in Christ’” (Gal. 3:27).¹⁹ The second quotation in the sequence sat in a kind of oblique irony clarified by the biblical context of the quotation itself. Notker continued, “and also, ‘we who were baptized by Christ Jesus were baptized into his death’” (Rm. 6:3).²⁰ The verse prior

¹⁷ Notker, *Gesta*, p. 90. “*Quos imperator interrogatos, si baptizari votum haberent, et confessos iussit aqua sacrata sine mora perfundi.*”

¹⁸ Notker, *Gesta*, p. 90. “*Iam vities hic lotus sum et optimis candidissimisque vestibus indutus; et ecce talis saccus non milites sed subulcos addecet. Et nisi nuditatem erubescerem, meis privatus nec a te datis contactus, amictum tuum eum Christo tuo tibi relinquerem.*”

¹⁹ Notker, *Gesta*, p. 90. “*Tanti pendunt hostes Christi, quod ait apostolus Christi: Omnes qui in Christo baptizati estis, Christum induistis.*”

²⁰ Notker, *Gesta*, p. 90. “*et illud: Quicumque baptizati sumus in Christo Iesu, in morte ipsius baptizati sumus.*”

ran “for how shall we who are dead to sin still live in it?” (Rm. 6:2), highlighting the tragedy of Louis and his court so misrepresenting the *sacramentum*. The verse after continued “for we were buried with him by means of baptism into death, in order that just as Christ has arisen from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life” (Rm. 6:4), which accented the tragedy of the missed opportunity at true conversion for the Northmen. The oblique and ironic quotation required learned understanding from the reader to recognize the author’s intended barb. The final quotation landed the fiercest blow by stressing that the target of the humor in the paragraph was not just the Northmen, but misguided Carolingians. Notker returned to the fundamental notions of faith and baptism to accent just how acute and devastating the episode was for all involved, Frank and Northman. With an echo of Augustine’s warning at the beginning of *De trinitate*, Notker inveighed “and what aims especially at despisers of the faith and violators of *sacramenta*: ‘they crucify again for themselves the Son of God and make of him a mockery’” (Heb. 6:6).²¹ Notker was explicit that the judgement fell on the Franks at least as much as on the Northmen, concluding “If only this were to be found among the gentiles and not also often among those who are reckoned by the name Christian!”²² In sum, this episode demonstrates the centrality of the *sacramentum* of baptism to the Frankish *imperium christianum*. Notker’s vignette highlighted both the successes and the failures of the Carolingian Renewal in shaping a holistic and coherent Carolingian approach to the world. On the one hand, the *sacramentum* was clearly an important political and social ritual for the individuals depicted by Notker. On the other hand, the baptism described by Notker did not convey any key theological or moral themes which lay at the heart of the Carolingian formation. In his *Gesta Karoli*, Notker lamented Louis the Pious’ baptism of the Northmen as ossified, misunderstood, and ultimately counter-productive; it emblemized Carolingian decline in the late ninth century.

Notker’s work showed that even as the Carolingian reform failed to bring about a stable and unified Frankish Christendom, it inaugurated a deeper success. Europe did become a society of the baptized. Carolingian efforts are essential for understanding medieval and even early modern Europe because of the profound influence of Carolingian thinking on subsequent Europeans, even if not in the richly integrated manner early Carolingians had hoped. The legacy of early medieval thinkers, albeit in a fragmented and uneven way, is evident in how Carolingian luminaries were added to the pantheon of Christian authority, in the sheer number of surviving manuscripts used and copied

²¹ Notker, *Gesta*, p. 90. “*et quod maxime contra contemptores fidei violatoresque sacramentorum vigilat: Rursum crucifigentes sibi filium Dei et ostentatui habentes.*” On similar language in Augustine, suggested by the editor, see Augustine, *De trinitate*, p. 27.

²² Notker, *Gesta*, p. 90. “*Quod utinam apud gentiles tantum et non etiam inter eos, qui Christi nomine censentur, sepius inveniretur!*”

by succeeding generations, and in the largely unacknowledged adoption of Carolingian ideas into later thinking.

The ascension of Carolingian authors to Christian authorities was in process even as the Carolingian project unraveled. Library catalogues and medieval bibliographical resources enshrined the contributions of prominent Carolingian thinkers to the intellectual patrimony of the West. For an early example we can turn again to the work of Notker the Stammerer. Two of his letters to Salomon III considered books and authors with which the new bishop should be familiar. These two letters were detached from the original collection and transmitted separately as additions to or comments upon the *De viris illustribus* tradition.²³ *De viris illustribus* was a major type of bibliography out of the patristic era.²⁴ The first was written by Jerome at the end of the fourth century. Jerome catalogued 135 early Christian authors, largely to support his co-religionists and to demonstrate to detractors the rich and impressive intellectual tradition of Christianity.²⁵ Significant additions to Jerome's list were made at the end of the fifth century by Gennadius of Marseilles, who added 91 authors, and at the beginning of the seventh century by Isidore of Seville, who added 33 more.²⁶ Adjustments and tinkering continued throughout the Middle Ages. At the end of the ninth century, Notker added prominent Carolingians like Alcuin of York. His *Notatio* included

What can I say about Alcuin, teacher of the emperor Charlemagne, who—as you usually acknowledge—wished to be second to no one, but strove to surpass all in heathen and sacred letters. He produced work on grammar such that Donatus, Nicomachus, Dositheus and our Priscian seemed to be nothing in comparison with him, and to you a fool! Likewise he discussed many things concerning dialectic, faith, hope, and charity, so that he even dared to put a hand on the Gospel of John. Indeed he wrote very many things for his friends, special things for Wido, letters certainly I dare not recommend to you, because when you were a little boy they seem written with arrogance. But I do not think so because he spoke and

²³ Erwin Rauner, "Notkers des Stammers 'Notatio de illustribus uiris' Teil I: Kritische Edition" *Mittelateinisches Jahrbuch* 21 (1986) pp. 34–69, at 43. See also Bernice M. Kaczynski, "Reading the Church Fathers: Notker the Stammerer's *Notatio de illustribus uiris*" *Journal of Medieval Latin* 17 (2007) pp. 401–12.

²⁴ Mary A. Rouse and Richard H. Rouse, "Bibliography before Print: The Medieval *De viris illustribus*" Mary A. Rouse and Richard H. Rouse, *Authentic Witnesses: Approaches to Medieval Texts and Manuscripts* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991) pp. 469–94. On Carolingian bibliographical practices more generally, including their use of *De viris illustribus*, see Rosamond McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) pp. 200–10.

²⁵ Jerome, *Liber de viris illustribus*, ed. E.C. Richardson (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1896).

²⁶ Gennadius, *Liber de viris illustribus*, ed. E.C. Richardson (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1896); Isidore of Seville, *De viris illustribus*, ed. Carmen Merino (Salamanca: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Instituto "Antonio de Nebrija," Colegio Trilingüe de la Universidad, 1964).

lived and wrote according to his authority, by which he excelled all after the most powerful king.²⁷

It is beyond the scope of this conclusion to track the memory of Alcuin through the Middle Ages. That said, Alcuin remained on the list of important authors compiled by Johannes Trithemius, abbot of Sponheim, who released his *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis* in the 1490s. Before a list of Alcuin's works, he wrote

Alcuin or Albinus, monk and deacon, abbot of the monastery of St. Martin of Tours, of the English race, once a disciple of the priest Bede, a man most learned in Sacred Scripture, expertise in secular letters second to no one in his time, distinguished in poetry and prose, called out of Britain by the emperor Charlemagne, was held in such intimacy before him that he was called "*deliciosus*" of the great emperor, whose teaching the emperor himself was diligent to be initiated in all the disciplines of the liberal arts. He wrote many splendid volumes about what he considered.²⁸

In addition to specific authors, the importance of Carolingian manuscripts to knowledge in the Latin West cannot be overstated. Carolingian authors secured for later generations the heritage of the classical and patristic worlds. For example, no earlier copies of Cicero's rhetorical and philosophical works survive.²⁹ Carolingians also composed and transmitted original commentaries upon classical and patristic works, as well florilegia and epitomes which shaped how subsequent Christians interacted with earlier authors.³⁰ While only around

²⁷ Rauner, "Notkers des Stammlers 'Notatio de illustribus uiris,'" p. 64. "*Quid dicam de Albino, magistro Caroli imperatoris, qui, ut tu ipse fateri solitus es, nulli secundus esse uoluit, sed in gentilibus et in sacris literis omnes superare contendit. Ille talem grammaticam condidit, ut Donatus, Nicomachus, Dositheus et noster Priscianus in eius comparatione nihil esse uideantur, sed tibi stulto. Idem de dialectica, fide, spe et caritate multa disputauit, adeo ut etiam in euangelium Iohannis manum mittere presumeret. Scripsit enim ad amicos plurima, precipua ad Uuitonem; epistolas uero eius tibi commendare non audeo, quia tibi puerulo cum supercilio scriptae uidentur. Sed ego non ita sentio, quia ille iuxta auctoritatem suam, qua omnes post regum potentissimum precellebat, et locutus est et uixit et scripsit.*"

²⁸ Johannes Trithemius, *Liber de Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis* (Basel: J. Amerbach, 1494) fols. 52b–3. "*Alcuinus siue Albinus monachus et diaconus, abbas monasterii S. Martini Thuronensis, natione Anglicus, S. Bedae presbiteri quodam auditor, vir in diuinis scripturis eruditissimus, et in secularium literarum peritia nulli suo tempore secundus, carmine excellens et prosa, de Britannia ab imperatore Carolo magno euocatus, in tanta familiaritate apud eum habitus est, ut imperatoris magni deliciosus fuerit appellatus, cuius magisterio ipse imperator omnibus liberalium artium disciplinis initiari satagebat. Scripsit multa praeclara volumina, de quibus feruntur.*" Alcuin was not himself a student of Bede. He was, however, a student of a student of Bede. On the problems with identifying Alcuin of York as "*deliciosus*" see Donald Bullough, "Aluinus deliciosus Karoli regis. Alcuin of York and the Shaping of the Early Carolingian Court" *Institutionen, Kultur und Gesellschaft im Mittelalter. Festschrift für Josef Fleckenstein zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, eds. L. Fenske, W. Rösener, and T. Zotz (Sigmaringen: J. Thorbecke, 1984) pp. 73–92.

²⁹ David Ganz, "Book Production and the Spread of Caroline Miniscule" *New Cambridge Medieval History II c.700–c.900*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) p. 801.

³⁰ With special emphasis on St. Gall see Bernice M. Kaczynski, "The Authority of the Fathers: Patristic Texts in Early Medieval Libraries and Scriptoria" *Journal of Medieval Latin* 16 (2006) pp. 1–27.

500 manuscripts survive from Merovingian Gaul, more than 7000 survive from Carolingian scriptoria.³¹ The influence of Carolingian manuscripts is due to the ease of their use as well as the importance of their content. Carolingian leaders invested tremendous resources in developing an impressive scale of book production across the Frankish world and early medieval scribes pioneered the Caroline miniscule script which offered standardized and easily legible letter forms, as anyone who has studied medieval palaeography can attest.³² Individual manuscripts also had an impact. From the ninth and tenth centuries survive more than 200 manuscripts containing Alcuin's complete opera. While his anti-Adoptionist works were not widely read after the ninth century, his *De virtutibus et vitiis* and his *De fide sanctae trinitatis* continued to be read, with periodic popular revivals.³³ Hrabanus Maurus' *De rerum naturis* survives in a remarkable number of manuscripts, testifying to consistent popularity from the ninth to the sixteenth century.³⁴ Hrabanus' *De institutio clericorum* also deeply influenced later medieval thinkers, appearing in the writings of luminaries from Rupert of Deutz to Thomas Aquinas to Gabriel Biel.³⁵ Notker recommended Hrabanus in his *Notatio* and Johannes Trithemius also singled him out for praise.³⁶

Finally, later medieval thinkers retained numerous elements of Carolingian work on religious, political, and social life as largely unacknowledged assumptions about Christian theology, political stability, and social order. Let us examine just two examples of high medieval theologians taking up Alcuin's work on the proper order of baptismal formation, the interpretation of Jerome and of Bede surveyed in Chapter Three. Baptismal formation appeared in the fourth book of Peter Lombard's (c.1100–60) *Sententiae*, the basic textbook of high medieval theology.³⁷ Book Four treats the sacraments, placing formation under the heading of catechetics. Formation's inclusion shows that the issue was of some importance. Its relative importance, however, is suggested not only by the fact that it is the thirty-first and final paragraph on baptism, but also that the topic was conceptually joined with and subordinated to exorcism. The *Sententiae* preserved the

³¹ Bernhard Bischoff, *Latin Palaeography: Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, trans. Dáibhí Ó Crónín and David Ganz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) p. 208.

³² David Ganz, "Book production," p. 786.

³³ Donald A. Bullough, "Alcuin's Cultural Influence: The Evidence of the Manuscripts" *Alcuin of York: Scholar at the Carolingian Court*, eds. L.A.J.R. Houwen and A.A. MacDonald (Groningen: E. Forsten, 1998) pp. 1–26.

³⁴ William Schipper, "Rabanus Maurus, *De rerum naturis*: A Provisional Check List of Manuscripts" *Manuscripta* 33 (1989) pp. 109–18.

³⁵ Hrabanus Maurus, *De institutione libri tres*, ed. Detlev Zimpe (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1996) pp. 125–36.

³⁶ Rauner, "Notkers des Stammlers 'Notatio de illustribus uiris,'" p. 62; Johannes Trithemius, *Liber de Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*, fols. 64–5.

³⁷ On Peter see the exhaustive treatment Marcia Colish, *Peter Lombard* (Leiden: Brill, 1994). On Book Four in particular, see the translation and introduction in Peter Lombard, *The Sentences, Book 4: On the Doctrine of Signs*, trans. Giulio Silano (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2010).

early medieval sense of order to catechetical formation, but not the purpose. It emphasized the theology of baptism over the transmission and understanding of faith. Teaching was very deliberately separated from baptism and not treated as essential to the rite. Catechesis was sacramental, but not sacrament. Peter's textual dependence on Hrabanus Maurus only underscores the new and different interests of the Parisian thinker. Peter drew from Hrabanus' *De institutione clericorum*, from the very section where Hrabanus interpreted Matthew's Great Commission. However, Peter selected text from around the abbot of Fulda's interpretation and then juxtaposed his selections with passages from Augustine's *De symbolo*. The impetus for considering baptism through the lens of mission and society had diminished by the twelfth century when theological reflection began to shift from issues of implementation toward questions of efficacy.³⁸ Peter used Hrabanus' language, but did not communicate Hrabanus' concern when he wrote

Catechism and exorcism pertain to neophytes, and are to be called sacramentals rather than *sacramenta* . . . And so these precede baptism: not that there cannot be true baptism without them, but so that the one to be baptized may be instructed concerning the faith, and that he may know whose debtor he will afterwards become, and that the power of the devil may be diminished in him. Hence Hrabanus: "The office of catechizing the candidate is to precede baptism, so that the catechumen may receive the rudiments of the faith and know whose debtor he will afterwards become."³⁹ Also Augustine: "Children are breathed over and exorcized, so that the devil's power may be expelled from them;"⁴⁰ "lest he strive to subvert them so that they do not attain baptism."⁴¹ "And so in children it is not God's creature which is blown over and exorcized, but"⁴² the devil, so that he may go out of the person.⁴³

³⁸ The twelfth century has long been seen as a period of dramatic change in Western Europe, for an introduction consult the essays in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, eds. Robert Benson, Giles Constable, and Carol Lanham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982). On the vibrancy of the theological tradition in the twelfth century see M.-D. Chenu, *La théologie du douzième siècle* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1957). For a darker perspective on the period see R.I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950–1250* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987).

³⁹ Hrabanus Maurus, *De institutione clericorum*, p. 318.

⁴⁰ Augustine, *De symbolo ad catechumenos*, ed. R. Vander Plaetse, CCSL 46 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1969) p. 186.

⁴¹ Hrabanus Maurus, *De institutione clericorum*, p. 321.

⁴² Augustine, *De symbolo*, p. 186.

⁴³ Peter Lombard, *Sententiae in iv libris distinctae*, ed. Ignatius Brady, OFM, Vol. 2 (Grottaferata: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae Ad Claras Aquas, 1981) p. 276. "Catechismus et exorcismus neophytorum sunt, magisque sacramentalia quam sacramenta dici debent . . . Haec igitur praecedunt baptismum: non quod sine istis non possit esse verus baptismus, sed ut baptizandus de fide instruat et sciat cui debitor fiat deinceps, et ut diaboli potestas in eo muniatur.—**Rabanus, De instructione clericorum.** Unde Rabanus: "Ante baptismum catechizandi debet in hominem praevenire officium, ut fidei catechumenus accipiat rudimentum, et sciat cui debitor deinceps fiat."—**Augustinus, in libro De symbolo.** Item Augustinus: "Parvuli exsufflantur et exorcizantur, ut pellatur ab eis diaboli potestas." (**Rabanus:**) "ne iam contendat eos subvertere ne baptismum consequantur."—**Augustinus:** "Non ergo in infantibus creatura Dei exufflantur vel exorcizatur, sed" diabolus, ut recedat ab homine.

While the burning ninth century concern for a reasonable catechetical order for formation had faded and new theological anxieties about sacramental efficacy had moved to the fore, the order imposed by Alcuin and his Carolingian students and friends remained.

Another example is found in Hugh of St. Victor's (1096–1141) *De sacramentis christianae fidei*, a sizeable compendium of Christian theology.⁴⁴ Hugh took up the *sacramentum* of baptism in Book Two, part six of *De sacramentis*.⁴⁵ As with Peter Lombard, the order of topics reflected Hugh's interests. Catechesis was the ninth entry in the section on baptism. Clues to the concerns guiding Hugh's interests surface in the writings of Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153). Around 1125, Hugh wrote to Bernard asking for his opinion on four questions concerning baptism. While Hugh's letter is lost, Bernard's reply survives, and lengthy excerpts were incorporated into Hugh's treatment of baptism in *De sacramentis*. Bernard's letter addressed the four questions in order and at some length.⁴⁶ The first three were clearly derived from the opinions of the famous philosopher Peter Abelard.⁴⁷ The first was whether one could be saved without baptism. The second revolved around the extent of faith possible before the time of Christ. And the third considered the culpability of one who sinned out of ignorance. The fourth question addressed Bernard's novel opinions on the Blessed Virgin Mary. Bernard's antipathy toward Peter Abelard is well-known. Hugh's concern may have been derived from Abelard's strident philosophical and theological opinions, or perhaps from Abelard's coarse treatment of his teacher, then adversary, William of Champeaux (d. 1121), who established the canons of St. Victor in 1108. Whatever the reason, Hugh's interest in the sacrament differed from that of the early medieval theologians insofar as he prioritized the theology of baptism over its application. Nevertheless, Hugh's explanations retained continuities with late antique and early medieval thought. He evaluated

⁴⁴ In 1115, Hugh joined the Canons Regular of St. Augustine and moved to the monastery of St. Victor in Paris, where ultimately he became head of the monastic school. While personal details of his life are few, numerous of his writings survive, covering the whole range of contemporary knowledge in the arts and sciences. For an overview of Hugh and his work see Paul Rorem, *Hugh of St Victor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁴⁵ Hugh Feiss, "St Bernard's Theology of Baptism and the Monastic Life" *Cistercian Studies* 25:2 (1990) pp. 79–91 and idem, "Bernardus Scholasticus: The Correspondence of Bernard of Clairvaux and Hugh of St. Victor on Baptism" *Bernardus Magister*, ed. John R. Sommerfeldt (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1992) pp. 349–78.

⁴⁶ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epistola* 77, ed. J. Leclercq and H.M. Rochais, *Sancti Bernardi Opera* 7 (Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1974) pp. 184–200. See also the introduction and translation in Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Baptism and the Office of Bishops*, trans. Pauline Matarasso, intro. Martha G. Newman and Emero Stigman (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2004).

⁴⁷ For orientation on Peter Abelard see Michael Clanchy, *Abelard: A Medieval Life* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997) and John Marenbon, *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Jesus' instruction as imposing order on catechetics, but not to the extent emphasized by Alcuin. After a definition of catechumen well-known from the early Middle Ages, the Victorine offered a streamlined recapitulation of Jerome's order, *sans* moral instruction.⁴⁸ Hugh preserved Alcuin's preferred liturgical reading of Matthew's Gospel. Interestingly, he included the quotation from Mark first seen in Paulinus of Aquileia's record from the Synod on the Danube.⁴⁹ He wrote

A catechumen is interpreted as one instructed or as one hearing; for to catechize is to instruct, since those to be baptized are first instructed and are taught what the form of the Christian faith is in which they must be made safe and receive the sacrament of salvation, as it is written: 'Go (*Ite*), teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Mt. 28:19). First teach, afterwards baptize. Teach unto instruction, baptize unto cleanness. Teach unto faith, baptize unto remission of sins. Therefore, teach since you baptize him who has believed because 'he that is baptized, shall be saved (Mk 16:16).' So, this form of catechization was instructed from the earliest period of the Christian faith.⁵⁰

Echoes of Carolingian efforts are heard through Hugh's synthesis of what had become "tradition," even as Hugh's own interests moved discussion in new directions.

Thus, while the early Carolingians' carefully laid plans for the political realization of an *imperium christianum* ultimately crumbled, the underlying ideal of a society constituted by the *sacramentum* of baptism endured. Carolingians' voices became authoritative and their views on baptismal formation enshrined in principal theological works. Sacramental formation as a directive had failed, but formation as a process transcending Carolingian temporal ambitions became normative for medieval and early modern Christianity. The individual formation Carolingian leaders had hoped would fashion an enduring empire came instead to shape common theological, social, and political expectations across the splintered political scene of medieval Europe, both through the general expectation of baptism for Europeans and in the myriad

⁴⁸ This definition is repeated in many early medieval discussions of baptism, for example see the letter by Magnus of Sens (d. 818) in Susan A. Keefe, *Water and the Word: Baptism and the Education of the Clergy in the Carolingian Empire*, Vol. II (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002) p. 266.

⁴⁹ See the discussion in Chapter Three.

⁵⁰ Hugh of St. Victor, *De sacramentis christiane fidei*, ed. Rainer Berndt (Münster: Aschendorff, 2008) p. 390. "Catechumenus instructus uel audiens interpretatur. Catechizare enim instruere est quando baptizandi prius instruuntur et docentur que sit forma fidei christiane in qua eos saluos fieri et sacramentum salutis suscipere oportet. Sicut scriptum est. Ite, docete omnes gentes baptizate eos in nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti. Prius docete. postea baptizate. Docete ad instructionem. baptizate ad emundationem. Docete ad fidem. baptizate ad peccatorum remissionem. Ideo docete quia qui crediderit. Ideo baptizate quia qui baptizatus fuerit saluus erit. Hec igitur forma catechizationis a primis temporibus christiane fidei instituta est."

individual elements concerning the practice of Christianity in general and baptism in particular. The basic views of baptism woven into European life by the Carolingians would not be substantially challenged until the sixteenth century appearance of radical Protestant reformers, such as the Anabaptists, who were viewed as theologically and socially heterodox by Catholic and early Protestant leaders alike.⁵¹

⁵¹ On the persecution of Anabaptists see Brad S. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999) pp. 197–249. On their thought more generally, see Werner O. Packull, “An Introduction to Anabaptist Theology” *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology*, eds. David Bagchi and David C. Steinmetz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) pp. 194–219.

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