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*A Service of Love: Papal Primacy, the Eucharist and Church
Unity* by Paul McPartlan (review)

Adam G. Cooper

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to understand metaphysics and theology. The book is very well-documented with extensive quotations and footnotes, thus allowing the reader to turn to these sources should he or she wish.

William E. Carroll
Blackfriars
Oxford University
Oxford, England

A Service of Love: Papal Primacy, the Eucharist and Church Unity by Paul McPartlan (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2013), vii + 100 pp.

THE SENSATIONALIZING ATTENTION given by popular media to Pope Francis has certainly brought the papal office into the world spotlight in a new and unprecedented way. Many of us may wonder how long the enthusiasm will last before it descends again into boredom, scorn, and attack. Yet, the dramatic and obvious differences in “style,” for want of a better word, between the three most recent popes invite us to consider afresh the foundations and characteristics of the papal office and to reread the Church’s recent declarations about the papacy against the background of the broad sweep of doctrinal history.

McPartlan’s little book on the topic is a handy place to start. Not much longer than an extended essay, it is an immediately accessible, if unsystematic, study. The content outline suggests a historical treatment, but going in reverse: the second millennium is handled before the first. But the movement makes sense, since the entire essay appears prompted by the 2007 publication of the Catholic-Orthodox dialogue statement, *Ecclesial and Canonical Consequences of the Sacramental Nature of the Church*, otherwise known as the Ravenna document. The key thrust of the Ravenna document, echoing an emphatic shift since the Second Vatican Council, is upon the mutual interdependence of primacy and conciliarity, itself a corollary of the relation between ecclesial governance and Eucharistic communion.

As McPartlan develops it, this inter-relation profoundly qualifies the legal terminology of “jurisdiction” that, to his mind, overly dominated the ecclesiological landscape for most of the second millennium. In contrast, it is now “urgent for Catholics and Orthodox to discern once again the true characteristics of universal primacy aside from administrative and juridical considerations” (26). To this end, it is above all the Eucharist itself—its practice and theology—that can guide us. When interpreted Eucharistically and liturgically, episcopacy has less to do

with juridical authority and more to do with preserving the unity of the Spirit in the bond of love. According to McPartlan, drawing on the resources of the early Church deepens this sense of the limits of papal power, whose proper exercise remains always at the service of Eucharistic communion and ecclesial fellowship.

There is much to admire in this approach, and McPartlan does well in bringing to light numerous sources that highlight the way in which the bishop of Rome's universal primacy has, from the earliest centuries, been linked to presidency at the Eucharist. I wonder, however, whether McPartlan does justice to the first millennium, particularly to problematic evidence that undermines the neat exclusion of juridical factors from the pope's episcopal role. For example, McPartlan underlines a repeatedly expressed contemporary view that, for most of the first millennium, the authority of Rome's bishop, while widely accepted, "was never understood as an authority 'by divine right,' and in particular the East never shared the West's basic understanding of the link between the bishop of Rome and Peter" (54). But is this in fact correct? Was for example the Greek theologian Maximus the Confessor a rare exception when, in the seventh century, he directly connected Christ's promise to Peter to the unique foundational status of the Church of Rome among all the Churches, and to its abiding orthodoxy in the face of widespread apostasy? What of the famous declaration of the Council Fathers gathered in Chalcedon—"Peter has spoken!"—after the reading aloud of Pope Leo's Letter to Flavius?

A more pointed concern has to do with McPartlan's effort to minimise the juridical aspects of Rome's episcopal primacy. Latching on to the phrase "primacy of honour" or, as he prefers to render it, "honour of primacy," McPartlan argues that the early Church regarded the bishop of Rome more as a "messenger of love, unity, and peace" (87) than doctrinal arbiter or ecclesiastical prince. But what does this make of numerous studies, such as that by Brian E. Daley,¹ that demonstrate that the phrase "primacy of honour," first used by the second ecumenical council (381), implied not just an honorific position or moral authority, but real prerogatives of office with practical, effective juridical implications. In fact, McPartlan cites Daley's study (55), but completely omits to mention Daley's central thesis that, in its original Christian context, "primacy of honour" included—these are Daley's terms—"final executive and juridical power," "practical leadership,"

¹ "Position and Patronage in the Early Church: The Original Meaning of 'Primacy of Honour,'" *Journal of Theological Studies* 44, no. 2 (1993), 529–553.

and “the ability to act as referee.” Among other sources, Daley refers to canons 6 and 7 of the Council of Nicaea, which affirm the practical authority (*exousia*), prerogatives (*presbeia*), and “consequences of rank” attending episcopal leadership in general, and Rome’s in particular.

None of this is to say that McPartlan’s argument about the primarily “communional configuration” (82) of the papal office is wrong. It simply calls for a widening in his account of Eucharistic presidency (and, by implication, of universal jurisdiction) to include the often very difficult practical task of judging whom to admit to the Church’s communion and whom to exclude. In other words, the practice of Eucharistic presidency must include the practice of excommunication—which, on a large scale, can implicate entire jurisdictions. This, in part, is what is meant by the office of the keys, given to be exercised by all bishops, but chiefly and in a unique way by Peter’s successor, the first among equals, servant of the servants of God. It goes without saying that all such judgements must concretely express the charity and solicitude proper to Christ’s redemptive office. Here the burden of McPartlan’s book is spot on. For it is only thereby that the papacy, in addition to exercising its other responsibilities and prerogatives, will continue to serve the truth of the Gospel and the unbreakable unity of the one true Church. N-V

Adam G. Cooper

John Paul II Institute for Marriage and the Family
Melbourne, Australia

Incarnation Anyway: Arguments for Supralapsarian Christology by Edwin Chr. van Driel (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 194 pp.

AT LEAST FROM THE TIME of Rupert of Deutz, Edwin Chr. van Driel observes, Christian theologians have considered the place of redemption from sin amongst the motives for the Incarnation. Responses have divided into two camps, or “families”—infralapsarians and supralapsarians. He summarizes those positions as follows: for infralapsarians, “the divine will to become incarnate logically follows the divine will to allow sin,” while for supralapsarians, “the divine will to become incarnate logically precedes the divine will to allow sin” (4–5). According to van Driel, Western theology has favored the former; that is, until a resurgence of supralapsarian positions in nineteenth- and twentieth-century theology. He therefore selects three