

The Debt of Glory and the Liturgy as Fitting Payment

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The declaration “It is right and just” appears—insofar as I am aware—in every ancient Christian liturgy and those modern liturgies that are their successors. It is made in response to the call, “Let us give thanks to the Lord our God,” thus implying that it is right and just to give thanks to God, which is true. Yet the liturgy also gives additional layers of meaning to the phrase: in the Extraordinary Form of the Mass, the Preface for Feasts of the Apostles states that it is right and just “humbly to beseech Thee,” while the Preface for Easter states that it is right and just at all times for us “to praise Thee,” or, to be more exact, “to proclaim Thee *glorious*.”¹ Based on this last phrase, we can ask: what does it mean to proclaim the Lord glorious, or to glorify Him, and how is it right and just to do so? This I aim to examine by discussing the idea of reverence and how we owe an adequate response to the value of another; then, from the Scriptures and the Fathers, I will show how we owe praise to God, which will lead to an analysis of the concept of glory; from these last two, I will formulate the concept of a debt of glory and discuss how we can pay it; finally, I will examine how the liturgy recalls this debt and how it is a fitting payment of such. As a caveat, this in no way explains the fullness of the liturgy, for it only analyzes one type of prayer found in the liturgy, that of glorification, and there are many others; the *Catechism* lists blessing, adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving, and praise as types of prayer.² With that outline and caveat, let us begin.

Before investigating glory in itself, let us consider a more general idea, such as reverence. Per Cicero, “Reverence is rightly accorded to all that is supreme.”³ Cicero was particularly speaking of the pagan gods, but the idea of reverence being due is not solely restricted to the divine; we can listen to Confucius teach, “To honor those who are worthier than ourselves is the highest expression of the sense of justice.”⁴ Recognition of the degrees of honor that are due to others—whether through kinship or worthiness—is the basis of social order, or, in Confucius’ term, *li*. A full study of the concept of reverence and honor in either Cicero or Confucius would take us far afield, but we can see the roots of a basic principle from even these non-Christian writers: giving reverence to what is supreme or worthy is right and just—and justice has a connection to duty. Do we not say, “with all *due* reverence” or “with all *due* respect”? The German Catholic philosopher Dietrich Von Hildebrand based a substantial portion of his ethics and philosophy on this idea of paying what is due; in this explanation, I will only point out some items of relevance for our topic. His ethics are founded on the idea of categories of importance which motivate our will and our responses to them: the intrinsically important (also termed *value*), the subjectively satisfying, and the *bonum mihi* (that is, something that, while not having the importance of a value, is an objective good for the

¹ *St. John’s Missal for Every Day*, ed. J. Canon Rea (Belgium: 1963), 676-677, 662-663.

² CCC #2626-2643.

³ Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods* [*De natura deorum*], trans. P.G. Walsh, Oxford World Classics (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 1998), I.45, 19.

⁴ Confucius, *Central Harmony* §VI, in *The Wisdom of Confucius*, trans. Lin Yutang (New York: The Modern Library, 1994), 117.

individual).⁵ These “three fundamentally different categories of importance” are “three essential points of view of any possible motivation.”⁶ For von Hildebrand, there is a hierarchy of importance, and one *must* choose a higher good over a lower or commit an immoral act. The highest importances are *values*, one of which is *glory*, the “infinite intrinsic goodness of God”; von Hildebrand claims that we all function based on an implicit concept of values, and he even uses the theme of this conference in this context: “*dignum* and *justum* either refer to values or these words have no meaning whatsoever.”⁷ Of the many attributes of values that von Hildebrand explores, one point of his ethics is essential for this paper: the concept of a *value response*. A response is an intentional experience, *intentional* meaning “directed towards an object”; such experiences “imply a consciously accomplished and meaningful direction toward an object.”⁸ These responses are divided into three main categories: theoretical, volitional, and affective, corresponding to the three spiritual centers of man, that is, the intellect, the will, and the heart.⁹ (The category most important to our analysis is the *volitional* response, the response of the will.) A response is prompted by and directed toward some object that falls within the categories of importance mentioned above; a value response, then, is directed towards a *value*, not something merely satisfying. The key difference between responses to these two categories—the value and the subjectively satisfying—is that “Only in the value response do we find that such a response is objectively *due* the object.”¹⁰ “Every being endowed with a value calls for a due and adequate response” (though these responses, of course, are arranged in a hierarchy based on the hierarchy of values themselves, with God at the peak), and this response presupposes perceiving and knowing the value in question.¹¹ The *oughtness* of the response to a value—as von Hildebrand calls it—means that “the objective disharmony of an inadequate response to a good endowed with a value” can even be immoral, though it is not always, as when one is ignorant of the value; however, this disharmony does not harm the value-endowed object (as is seen most clearly in God, who is owed praise yet is not harmed by lacking it), but the person responding inadequately.¹² To summarize this brief overview of von Hildebrand’s idea of value response: we have a duty to respond adequately and in due proportion to the values, the intrinsic importances, of objects. The idea of the “debt of glory” outlined in this paper is merely a specific value response explained in a different manner from von Hildebrand.

If what is supreme or worthy is due honor, and—per Confucius—there are degrees of such honor, it follows that what is most supreme and most worthy is due the most honor. Who

⁵ See Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Ethics* (Chicago, IL: Franciscan Herald Press, 1953), Ch. 3, “The Categories of Importance,” 34-63.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 60-61.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 78.

⁸ See *ibid.*, 193; 195.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 197.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 218.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 244; see 229, 249.

¹² *Ibid.*, 246-7, 254.

could accept such a title but the true Lord? Thus, due to His unsurpassable supremacy and worthiness, the Lord is due the greatest honor and reverence. And this is not merely my conclusion, but it is found in Scripture. Take Psalm 64:2: “To You, proper is a hymn, O God,” or “To You belongs a hymn.”¹³ The word used in the Septuagint translation for “proper is” or “belongs” is *πρέπει*, a word that recurs in the Byzantine Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, when the priest declares to the Lord, “For proper to You is all glory, honor, and veneration...” But that this psalm verse declares that honor is due to God, Athanasius also affirms while commenting on the same text: “Not, it says, to those we consider gods do we send up hymns, seeing as to them it is not proper to hymn, being trees and stones and demons; but to You alone such *debt* is most proper.”¹⁴ The same word for debt, *φειλημα*, is used in the Lord’s Prayer in St. Matthew’s Gospel, where we pray “forgive us our debts,” *φειλήματα*; a verb with a shared root occurs in St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans, where he exhorts, “Owe nothing”—or, “be indebted in nothing”—“to anyone if not to love one another.”¹⁵ So we already see a debt of honor, even using the word “debt,” in Athanasius, inspired by the Psalms, and, as with every just debt, it is a sin against justice to refuse to pay it; as St. Anselm declares, “To sin is nothing other than not to render to God what is due.”¹⁶

Now that we have found the debt of honor, we must briefly examine the concept of *glory* before seeing more precisely the debt of glory. We can see two senses of the word in the *Gloria*. Let us examine the opening line: “Glory to God in the highest.” This could be seen to mean either the indicative “Glory *is* to God” or the imperative “Glory *be* to God.”¹⁷ This grammatical ambivalence points to the two meanings of “glory” which are specified later in the text. First is the proclamation, “We glorify You,” in other words, “We give You glory” or “We make You glorified.” This is a verb, an action on the part of the worshippers: they are bestowing glory on the Lord. Second is the later statement, “We give You thanks *for Your great glory*.” In this, the worshippers give thanks for glory that is already present in the Lord. So glory can be seen as both a value that resides in a being—thus being a value as von Hildebrand would use the term—and a gift that is bestowed on a being. We could additionally divide the sense of glory as a gift into two sub-senses: a gift of glory can make a non-glorified being into a glorified one, or it could be a giving glory that does not affect the being’s fundamental value of glorification. In

¹³ All Old Testament quotations are translated from the Septuagint, as found in *H PALAIA DIAΘHKH KATA TOYΣ EBAΔOMHKONTA* (’ θηναί: ’ κδοσις της ’ ποστολικης Διακονίας της ’ κκλησίας της ’ λλάδος, 2009).

¹⁴ St. Athanasius, *Commentary on the Psalms* on Ps 64:2 (PG 27:284A).

¹⁵ Mt 6:12; Rom 13:8. All New Testament quotations are translations made from *H KAINH DIAΘHKH: The New Testament: The Greek Text Underlying the English Authorised Version of 1611* (London: Trinitarian Bible Society, 1976), which is an edition of the Byzantine Textus Receptus.

¹⁶ St. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo* I.11.

¹⁷ Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῷ (Lk 2:14). Joseph Ratzinger discusses this ambiguity and sides with the indicative “Glory *is* to God,” as the German translation of Scripture he uses does; see Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI), *Jesus of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives*, trans. Philip J. Whitmore (New York: Image, 2012), 74-77 and the translator’s footnote on 76, n. 2.

one way, we could see glory as something merely indicating that others have a high opinion of the glorified being: we could think of the “glorified ones” in Psalm 149, who are, obviously, not holy, since the just are meting out judgment upon them, and thus their being called “glorified” appears to only mean that their fellow-men think highly of them. Another sense of glory, the one we will focus on here, is the glory intrinsically related to holiness. Thus in this form of glory, the first sub-sense of “giving glory” would apply to the saints: these are those that God made glorious. In return for the value of “glory” that the saints received from God, we on earth, in recognizing that value from God, bestow our own earthly “glory” upon them in canonization, or glorification, as the Orthodox fittingly refer to it. This leaves, now, the second sub-sense of giving glory: the glory that does not affect one’s status of glorification, that is, that does not bestow the value of glory upon a being. This is the only type of glory we can give to God, and it is the type of “glory”—if we wish to use that word—we give to the saints when we remember them in their feasts. Thus, for instance, the Copts have a special type of liturgical service called the “Veneration” or “Glorification” structured simply around glorifying the saints, which declares, “A crown of gold, a crown of silver, a crown of pearl stones on the head of” the one being glorified.¹⁸ This does not make that saint to be glorified when before he was not: rather, this simply gives glory to one already glorified.

To summarize, then, we can think of glory as a value or as a gift. As a value, it can either reside in a being by nature, as with God, or it can be bestowed. This value can be bestowed by man—in which case it is similar to honor—or by God—in which case it is a value intrinsically connected to holiness. As a gift, glory could be considered as the bestowing of the value of glory, or it can be considered as a gift given to a being that is already glorious. This last is the meaning of glory that is considered in our analysis of the debt of glory, and it is equivalent with praise of a glorious being’s glory, as the above-quoted line from the *Gloria*, “We give You thanks for Your great glory.” (And, in the truest sense, this is also equivalent with the declaration, “We glorify You,” since men cannot make the already-glorious Lord glorious—we can merely praise the present glory.¹⁹ In addition, we should specify the difference between *thanksgiving* and *glorification*: the former is bestowed because of a gift that is given, while the latter is bestowed in response to an intrinsic value. A definition of “prayer of praise” from the *Catechism* can be used interchangeably with “glorification” here: It “is entirely disinterested and rises to God, lauds

¹⁸ *The Service of Deacons: Rites and Hymns of the Liturgies and Services of the Coptic Orthodox Church* (Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States, 2010), 622.

¹⁹ All of this is seen in the English definitions of “glory” and related words like “glorification.” “To glorify” can thus mean “to make glorious; invest with glory” or “to praise the glory of”; likewise, “glory” can mean “something that is a source of honor, fame, or admiration” or “adoring praise or worshipful thanksgiving.” See *Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary*, rev. and upd. (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1996), pp. 812-813.

Him, and gives Him glory for His own sake, quite beyond what He has done, but simply because HE IS.”)²⁰

With this foundation, we can return to the true topic: the debt of glory. We saw above that honor or reverence is due to a multitude of beings depending on their value, and the same is true of glory, that is, praise of the value of glory residing in a being. Insofar as saints are glorious, we have a debt to give them their due glory. The famous hymn of the Byzantine Rite declares, “It is truly *proper*”—or *worthy*—“to bless you, the Theotokos,” and we could accurately replace *bless* with *glorify*.²¹ Thus the concept of this debt of glory could explain more secondary aspects of the liturgy, by arguing that we have a duty to remember the saints, to hold feasts for them, and to glorify them, as the above-mentioned Coptic service does so clearly. But the primary focus of the liturgy is God, and so I return to our debt of glory to *Him*, the All-Glorious One.

Being the highest and most glorious Being, God is due the highest glory; indeed, His glory is such that is different even kind from man’s glory. We could say that God is *hyperglorious*, while saints are only *glorious*; thus we owe God a debt of *hyperglory*, while we would only owe a debt of *glory* to the saints. (If Pseudo-Dionysius never used such terminology, I doubt he would reject it.) “Not as your ways [are] my ways,” He proclaims through Isaiah, and He would likewise declare, “My glory is not your glory.”²² The debt of glory is not the same as the debt of thanksgiving; the former praises God for Who He is, while the latter praises for what He does. The Scriptures command us to do both, and both are aspects of the liturgy, but I focus here on the former. Which is the most central, the most necessary debt, is not at issue here, for this is not a question of only paying one or the other, as if we had only one twenty-dollar bill and we had to decide between making the monthly payment on a student loan or a credit card. Though, on earth, we are limited by the constraints of time, it is not to such an extent that we can only pay one of these debts.

We have seen that we must pay reverence to the reverent, honor to those worthy of honor, and glory to the glorious. Such is a response to their intrinsic value. The question is, how do we determine when that debt is paid? If it were a simple fiscal debt—say, a thousand-dollar loan with no interest or late fees—then the answer is easy: once we have paid a thousand dollars to the creditor. “The very last penny” is easy to calculate here. Even with simple or compound interest, or fees issued according to strict rules, the answer is still determinable by the debtor, though more arithmetic is needed. But what of a debt with interest and fees applied via a hidden metric that only the creditor knows? Then the debtor is fully at the creditor’s mercy: he can

²⁰ CCC #2649.

²¹ ξιόν ἐστιν ὡς ἄληθως, μακαρίζειν σε τὴν Θεοτόκον. The equivalent hymn in the Liturgy of St. Basil ends, “In you rejoices, O Full-of-Grace, all creation: *glory* to you” (ὅτι σοι χαίρει, Κεχαριτωμένη, πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις ὁδῶς σοι).

²² Is 55:8 LXX.

never decide for himself when the debt is paid, but he must rely on the creditor's proclamation that the debt is truly paid. Our debt of glory is closer to this, as we can never comprehend the greatness of the Lord's glory and the amount we must pay to it—we must wait for the Lord to say, "Well done, good and faithful debtor." Yet this analogy fails—as do all—for this debt is truly infinite. The infinitely glorious One is owed an infinite debt of glory. This debt is such that we can *never* fully pay it; similarly Origen says, "There is not a single hour of night or day in life when we are not in debt."²³ It is for this that Christ became one of us, a son of man yet the Son of God, the only one who could truly pay such a debt. It is because of the infinite nature of the debt that my title declares the liturgy as *fitting* payment, not as *full* or even *adequate* payment.

Now we come to the paying of the debt. The debt of glory, of course, is paid by giving glory. And how do we give glory? The Prince Apostle Paul tells us simply: "Indeed, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which is of God."²⁴ This is to be a glorification with our entire selves, loving God "in all your heart, and in all your soul, and in all your mind."²⁵ There will be some who downplay the physical nature of this payment—thus Origen, commenting on the Psalm verse discussed above, declares, "In sensible things is a hymn not due to God; therefore, we do not psalm in body or letter, but in the spirit, and not in senses, but in mind"—but we, being physical creatures, must needs glorify God with our bodies.²⁶ Not only do we have countless examples of physical, bodily worship in the Old Testament, but it is present in the New as well—above all, we can behold Christ's physical sacrifice of Himself, an act that gives glory to the Father. The simple fact, too, is that men are composites of body and soul, and we are called to give glory with all of ourselves; consequently, we must glorify God in both body and spirit. [Rom 12:1?] The liturgy, flowing from our very nature, thus incorporates both bodily worship and spiritual worship.

There are many ways to give both bodily and spiritual worship apart from liturgy—though we would do well to keep the advice of St. Josemaría Escrivá that even our personal prayer should be liturgical.²⁷ Any prostration before the Lord, any lifting up of hands, any bowing of knees can be an act of bodily worship; the burning of incense²⁸ or lighting of a candle can praise God through corporeal things. Any vocally-pronounced prayer necessitates the use of the body, and even a simple raising of the eyes of Heaven can be worship. (And these are only

²³ Origen, *On Prayer* XXVIII.4, in Origen, *An Exhortation to Martyrdom, Prayer, First Principles: Book IV, Prologue to the Commentary on the Song of Songs, Homily XXVII on Numbers*, trans. Rowan A. Greer, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1979).

²⁴ 1 Cor 6:20.

²⁵ Mt 22:37.

²⁶ Origen, *Commentary on the Psalms* (?), 64:2 (PG 12:1493A-B).

²⁷ See St. Josemaría Escrivá, *The Way*, #86.

²⁸ The Coptic Church deeply understands the importance of burning incense as praise, as they have an entire liturgical service, which can be celebrated in the morning or evening, centered around this act, and thus fittingly called "The Offering of Incense."

direct examples, not counting more indirect uses of the body that could become worship, such as performing corporal acts of mercy or surrendering one's body to the pains of martyrdom.) Likewise, any prayerful thought, any tending of the tabernacle in the soul, can be an act of spiritual worship. Focusing on God's presence, reciting prayers or psalms in the mind, meditating on Scripture...any can worship the Lord in the spirit. Any of these and similar acts can give glory to God and thus be a payment of our debt—yet, I would say, the liturgy has a particular fittingness.

We are greatly lacking in time to trace the rich tradition of communal and liturgical worship throughout the Scriptures, at the very least seen, we might say, in the sacrifices of Abel and Cain: for does it not seem that they offered their sacrifices together, as a communal act? Yet we can pull out just a few words about such worship. We can think of the Psalms: "I will declare Your Name to my brothers, in the midst of the church I will hymn You," and "In the churches, bless God, the Lord from the founts of Israel."²⁹ Once again, let us return to our Psalm verse discussed above and see further Patristic comments. For the full verse reads, "To You belongs a hymn, O God, *in Sion*, and to You will be repaid a prayer *in Jerusalem*."³⁰ Eusebius hones in on the references to Sion and Jerusalem, declaring, "Not every hymn belongs to God, but the one sent up in Sion, namely, the one in His Church," for he states that only those in the Church of God have been "taught the proper hymn from Him, the Savior," since what is called "theology" of all those outside the Church is *improper* to God.³¹ (Another aspect is that the improper hymns are those given to what is not God, while, to be a proper, a hymn *must* be given to the true God.)³² Cyril of Alexandria teaches the verse refers to the Heavenly Sion, the Church of the First-Born, which he also refers to as *Kallipoli*, that is, Beautiful City.³³ Yet the simplest statement might be that by the 12th-century Byzantine monk Euthymius Zigabenus: "In Sion to You belongs a hymn, it says; for there to worship You have *commanded*."³⁴ It is not only that it is most fitting for hymns to be sung to God and glory given in the midst of the congregation of Sion—that is, in the liturgy of the Church—but He even *commands* that such be done. We do not have time to examine the full basis of the command for communal, liturgical worship, but we might say that, on top of the debt of glory owed to God due to His glorious nature, we have a secondary debt of *liturgical* glory due to His command.

Now to focus on the liturgy: first, how it recalls this debt of glory, and, second, based on what has been said until now, how the liturgy is a fitting payment for this debt. While references to such a debt could be found in, I suspect, every liturgy, I will draw some examples from the

²⁹ Ps 21:23; 67:27 LXX.

³⁰ Ps 64:2 LXX.

³¹ Eusebius, PG 23:625B-D.

³² Ibid., PG 23:625D-628A.

³³ Cyril of Alexandria, PG 69:1125D-1127A.

³⁴ PG 128:637C.

Church of the East—that is, the Chaldean or Assyrian tradition, which uses the East Syrian Rite—due to their preponderance of the term “glory” and their focus on praising and glorifying the Lord: as Fr. Andrew Younan writes, “This is a Church that is quite happy praising God, and does not need always to ask for something.”³⁵ Thus the Church of the East has many prayers similar to the following: “It is right at all times for us to thank, adore, and glorify the great and awesome, holy and blessed, lofty and incomprehensible Name of Your Glorious Trinity.”³⁶ Such sentiments are common, even frequently stating that, “It is our *duty*, O Lord, to lift up glory, honor, confession, adoration, and constant thanksgiving.”³⁷ After Communion, a thanksgiving hymn of the *Qurbana* even pleads God, “Let us compete to repay You praise.”³⁸ We can thus see explicit mention of it being *right* and a *duty* to give glory and praise to God, and even mention of *repaying* a debt. Perhaps it is an implicit understanding of this debt that led the Church of the East to include a simple hymn of glorification, the *Lakhu Mara*, near the opening of almost every liturgical service:

“We give you thanks,
O Lord of all,
we glorify You,
Jesus Christ;
You raise our bodies
into life,
You are the Savior
of our souls.”³⁹

These few quotes are merely representative examples of the fact that the Church’s liturgies recognize this debt of glory, though its prevalence depends on the individual liturgy. Now we combine all we have said to explain the title: how is the liturgy a *fitting payment* for the debt of glory? We already saw that the debt of glory is repaid by giving glory to God: such is the proper currency of this debt. We also saw that it is an infinite debt, so no action by man can ever be a full payment, merely a fitting one. In some sense, any giving of praise or glory to God is a “fitting” payment, since it is a payment made in the proper currency, and thus the liturgy would be such a payment, whenever it gives praise or glory. But does not the liturgy do more than this? We saw how the Church Fathers recognized a command to pray within the Church, and it is even fitting to do so: “How right it is to glorify / within this one, holy house,” to quote again

³⁵ Andrew Younan, “Translator’s Preface: Being the Church of the East in the 21st Century,” in *Emmanuel*, ed. and trans. Sarhad Yawsip Jammo and Andrew Younan (San Diego, CA: Chaldean Catholic Diocese of St. Peter the Apostle, 2013), cv.

³⁶ *Emmanuel*, 5.

³⁷ *Emmanuel*, 309.

³⁸ *Emmanuel*, 311.

³⁹ *Emmanuel*, 5.

from the liturgy of the Church of the East.⁴⁰ It is right to glorify God within the holy house, within the temple, because that is a place dedicated for worship, and not just for individual worship, but for communal worship, for the liturgy. There has been a people of God glorifying Him in a communal liturgy since the earliest days of man, slowly growing from a single family, as in Abraham's day, to the scattered people of Israel at the coming of Christ, to the world-encompassing Church of God that exists today. To join in the liturgy is not only to fulfill a command of God, but it is a way to pool our payments of our debt. In the Church, our debts are shared, and the effects of our payments are shared too. We may think of a teaching of Starets Zosima in *The Brothers Karamazov*: "We are all responsible to all for all."⁴¹ By being united to the Church, the family of God and the Mystical Body of Christ, we share much more than we know; it is because of this intrinsic connection, this sharing, that the communion of saints has meaning. Because of the Mystical Body of Christ, the hermit in his cell can pray the hours with the rest of the Church, thereby joining in the liturgy, and the glory he gives to God can pay our debt. The liturgy is the privileged place for such sharing and for such joint payment of debt—and this payment, we might say, grows geometrically, not arithmetically, when praises are joined, so that the sum is greater than the whole of its parts—for it both amplifies the payment and accords with the command of God. Finally, the liturgy on earth joins us with the liturgy in heaven, the liturgy of those who no longer must struggle to pay the debt, as we do here. In sum, the liturgy is where our payments are pooled and mystically increased, where we fulfill God's command of communal worship, and where we join with those whose debt is satisfied—and thus the payment in the liturgy is truly a fitting payment.

Before concluding, a final coda could be given on the concept of *mutual glorification* as a way to interpret the liturgy. The idea and phrase are not originally mine, but I have lost track of whom I learned it from, though my foggy memory claims Jean Corbon as the source. An image of this concept could be found in the opening words of the *Gloria*: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace and goodwill to men." In the liturgy, we give glory to God, as this paper has proclaimed; however, we also *receive* glory from God, described here as "peace and goodwill." Such is not God praising us for our own virtue; rather, it is God's *bestowing* glory upon us. In some sense, we could view this as a response to our initial act of glorifying Him; as a life of St. Eugenios and his daughter Maria, attributed to St. Symeon Metaphrastes, describes "Christ, the Savior of all, the one forever glorifying those glorifying Him."⁴² More properly, we would say that God gives us the gift of grace first in order to glorify Him; then, because we cooperated with His grace by glorifying Him, He bestows glory upon us. Even if the concept of "glory" may be too restricted in this area, the concept of a dialogue of gifts in the liturgy—our

⁴⁰ *Emmanuel*, 44.

⁴¹ Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, trans. Constance Garnett (New York: The Modern Library, 1929), 371.

⁴² St. Symeon Metaphrastes, *Life of Eugenios and Maria His Daughter* (PG 115:353C).

worship, glory and sacrifice to God, His grace and blessings and (possibly) glory to us—underlies much of the liturgy, even if implicit.

In conclusion, we all owe a debt of glory to God due to His intrinsic glory. Our glorification of Him is a value response, as Dietrich von Hildebrand would say, and one that is necessarily due to God, such that—if we knowingly and willingly provide an inadequate response to this value of glory—we can be held morally liable. Such a debt can be found, either implicitly or explicitly, in the Scripture, Fathers, and the liturgy. We can pay this debt through a variety of bodily and spiritual acts of glorification—though we can never repay it in full, as it is an infinite debt—but the liturgy is a fitting, and possibly the *most* fitting, way to pay the debt, for the Lord commanded us to glorify Him in the liturgy, and, through the liturgy, all the members of the Mystical Body of Christ pool their acts of glorification in order to assist each other in paying this debt. And, in return for glorifying the Lord, He also glorifies us. Thus, as we end this conference, let us join in the vesperal act of worship and glorification, and though we will pray the words of the Roman Rite, we are also united with the vesperal prayer of the Byzantine Rite, which exclaims, “It is proper for You at all times to be hymned with voices of praise, O Son of God, the One giving life; therefore the world glorifies You.”⁴³ With the world, let us glorify Him.

⁴³ ξιόν σε ἔν πασι καιροῖς ὑμνεῖσθαι φωναῖς αἰσίαις, γίε Θεου, ζῶην ἑ διδούς ἑ δι κόσμος σε δοξάζει.