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THE WOUNDED WARRIOR:
A CHRISTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

A Master's Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the Department of Theology
Providence College

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Theology

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Under the Direction of
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INTRODUCTION

On March 3, 2011 my brother Sgt. Matthew M. Wakelee was seriously injured while deployed to Afghanistan with the 504th Military Police Battalion, 42nd Military Police Brigade. He was ground-guiding his team's Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle (MRAP), a truck weighing in at seventeen tons or 34,000 pounds, when his driver lost sight of and ran over him.¹ He sustained significant crush injuries to his abdomen and legs. Surgeons were able to save his right leg by performing an emergency lateral fasciotomy and vascular repair of his popliteal artery. For the next two and a half months, I lived part-time at a hotel near Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) in Washington, D.C. while he underwent countless surgeries and began physical therapy. During his inpatient residency, he was assigned to the Orthopedics Ward, where he was the only long-term, non-amputee patient. Confronted daily with the personal casualties of war, I struggled, and still struggle, to reconcile the lived experience of these "wounded warriors" with the Christian understanding of the human person as a psychosomatic unity and the resurrection of the body as a fundamental object of eschatological hope.

The question necessarily arises: What happens to the servicemen and women or "wounded warriors" who suffer irreparable damage to their bodies, i.e., amputation, disfigurement, loss of normal bodily activity, etc.? It is a query of both doctrinal and pastoral import. First, it raises the question: How is the human person a body-soul unity? What happens to the *whole* of the person when it suffers a *bodily* trauma? What happens to the *whole* of the human person when it suffers a *spiritual* trauma? Second, it raises the question: Who is the wounded warrior in relation to his or her pre-injured self? Does he or she retain the identity of his or her pre-injured self? How is his or her identity preserved pre- and post-injury? Lastly, it

¹ See Appendix, Fig. 1.

raises the question: Will the resurrected bodies of the wounded warriors retain their injuries? What hope can the Church offer these wounded warriors? In this thesis, I will reflect on the previous questions in light of Christ's Body, Resurrected and Mystical. My hope is that these reflections will be a concrete foundation for further theological investigation on the effects of traumatic injury on the human person and in the Church's ministry to these people, especially the wounded warriors.

In Chapters One through Three I will survey the Greek, Hebrew, and New Testament roots for the Christian understanding of the human person as a body-soul union and belief in the resurrection. The Greek tradition is important because of its influence on Scripture and the religious and cultural climate of the audience of early Christian preaching. The most significant contribution of the Hebrew tradition is the development of belief in the resurrection in response to martyrdom. The New Testament tradition is significant because it preserves the accounts of Jesus' Paschal Mystery, the foundation for our belief in the resurrection, and the lens through which we are to read these accounts, the Kingdom of God. In Chapter Four I will consider man in a Christological key: as image of God, realized in man's filial and liturgical relationality, and as a psychosomatic union, of which Christ's hypostatic union is an analogy. In Chapter Five I will reflect on Christ's Resurrected Body. I will examine the confessional and narrative traditions in Scripture and the resurrection belief which flowed out of these traditions. In Chapter Six I will consider the wounded bodies of Christ, the martyrs, and saints who have received the stigmata. In Chapter Seven I will reflect on the Mystical Body of Christ and the importance of the communion of love for the wounded warrior.

I intend to restrict my treatment of the wounded warrior to those who have suffered irreparable damage to their bodies. I will not address those who have suffered "the invisible

wounds of war” like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or traumatic brain injuries (TBI). In both the *Summa Theologiae* and the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Saint Thomas Aquinas examines Christ’s Resurrection, the quality of his risen body, the quality of our risen bodies, his post-resurrection appearances, and the causal effects of Christ’s Resurrection on our own resurrections. Though I will refer to Thomas’ treatment of the wounds of Christ, I will not offer a Thomistic interpretation of the wounded warrior. I will reflect on the question of the wounded warrior from a Christological perspective.

I will argue that the injuries the wounded warriors suffer are not merely physical; they are also spiritual, emotional, and intellectual. Their injuries are as complex as the body-soul union. The effects of their trauma cannot be neatly compartmentalized for scientific analysis. I will attempt to demonstrate that the wounded warriors, despite the irreparable damage done to their bodies, do not require new identities as a consequence of the trauma suffered. I will argue that the wounded warrior is changed by virtue of his or her injuries. Lastly, I will outline some reasons the wounded warriors may retain their injuries, in some manner, in their resurrected bodies by reflecting on the wounds of Jesus, the martyrs, and the saints who have received the stigmata. I will argue that the retention of these wounds can be a source of hope in two respects: the wounded warriors’ resurrected bodies will be more like Christ’s Resurrected Body; and their injuries will be perceived justly, for what they are, by the other members of the Mystical Body of Christ.

Third Isaiah writes, “Such things have never been heard or noted. / No eye has seen [them], O God but You, / Who act for those who trust in You” (Is 64:3). Saint Paul cautions, “What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, / and what has not entered the human heart, / what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Cor 2:9). Joseph Ratzinger argues that the

particulars of the resurrection are beyond what we could conceive or imagine, but we can be confident that we are oriented to a *telos* “in which matter and spirit will belong to each other in a new and definitive fashion.”² This cautionary note does not eliminate the possibility of theological investigation about the resurrected body. On the contrary, Ratzinger’s warning is intended to curtail reckless speculation. The problem posed in the previous questions can only be approached through the Body of Christ. His is the only resurrected body of which we know. The grammar of our exploration must be the language of the Bible, the soul of theology and the principal testimony to Christ’s Resurrected Body, and the creedal, conciliar, devotional, and liturgical language of the Tradition of the Church.³ The following is a Christological reflection on the wounded warrior as a human person whose Christian hope is the resurrection of the body.

² Joseph Ratzinger, *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life* 2d Ed. Trans. Michael Waldstein and Aidan Nichols, O.P. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1988), 194.

³ cf. DV 24., Austin Flannery, OP, ed., *Vatican Council II: Volume I, The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents* (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Co., 2004).

CHAPTER ONE

GREEK ROOTS

The ancient Greek mythological and philosophical traditions preceded the Christian understanding of body and soul and the belief in the resurrection. A cursory survey of the Greek roots is fruitful because the influence of the Greek tradition permeates both Hebrew and Christian Scripture. Furthermore, the Greeks, alongside the Jews, were among the first recipients of the Gospel. Of particular importance to the Greek roots are the contributions of Homer's myths and Plato and Aristotle's philosophical traditions.

For modern readers, myths do not hold the same credibility as history. Conversely, Dag Oistein Endsjo notes, "The Greeks themselves did not make a clear-cut distinction between a mythical and historical past."⁴ He also clarifies that the belief in the immortality of the soul independent from the body which is commonly associated with the Greeks was a late, not an early, development.⁵ Hendrik Lorenz identifies two interpretations of the soul in Homeric myths. First, the soul is that which man "risks in battle and loses in death."⁶ Second, the soul is that which, when man dies, separates from his body, descends to the underworld, and exists as "a shade or image of the deceased person."⁷ The soul is primarily understood as that which makes a man dead or alive.

Unlike later Greek conceptions of the soul, Homer's early understanding does not include the soul as responsible for or constitutive of man's life. Similarly, unlike later Greek conceptions of the soul, Homer's early understanding limits the soul to *human* life. Lorenz

⁴ Dag Oistein Endsjo, "Immortal Bodies, before Christ: Bodily Continuity in Ancient Greece and 1 Corinthians," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 30 (2008), 419f.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 429.

⁶ Hendrik Lorenz, "Ancient Theories of Soul," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2009 <<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ancient-soul/>> (accessed 28 March 2012) §1.

⁷ *Ibid.*

concludes, “In whatever precise way the soul is conceived of as associated with life, it is in any case thought to be connected not with life in general, or life in all its forms, but rather, more specifically, with the life of a human being.”⁸ The Homeric myth tradition understands the soul as principally pertaining to man’s encounter with danger and death.

In *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, N. T. Wright emphatically refutes the claim that Homer professes, or even comments on, belief in resurrection after death.⁹ Wright cites Achilles “comforting” Priam on the death of Hector, Priam’s son as an example: “You must endure, and not be broken-hearted. Lamenting for your son will do not good at all. You will be dead yourself before you bring him back to life.”¹⁰ Wright argues that this lack of tradition in resurrection belief is consistent throughout Greek drama. He cites Apollo’s speech at the Areopagus as another example: “Once a man has died, and the dust has soaked up his blood, there is no resurrection.”¹¹ Wright also mentions Electra lamenting the death of Agamemnon, her father, and Cambyses’ assassination of Smerdis, his brother.¹² He concludes, “Christianity was born into a world where its central claim was known to be false. Many believed that the dead were non-existent; outside Judaism, nobody believed in resurrection.”¹³

Conversely, Endsjo argues that numerous accounts of bodily resurrection are present in Greek religious mythology. He contends, “No matter how Platonically inclined the sceptical Corinthians might have been, they would all be familiar with the mythical stories connected to traditional Greek religion and re-enacted in rituals and theatre, and depicted in art and

⁸ Lorenz, “Ancient Theories,” §1.

⁹ N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God, Christian Origins and the Question of God*, Vol. 3 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 32.

¹⁰ Homer, *Iliad* 24.549-51 qtd. in Wright, *The Resurrection*, 32.

¹¹ Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 647f qtd. in Wright, *The Resurrection*, 32.

¹² Sophocles, *Electra* 137-9 qtd. in Wright, *The Resurrection*, 32. Herodotus 3.62.3f qtd. in Wright, *The Resurrection*, 33.

¹³ Wright, *The Resurrection*, 35.

literature.”¹⁴ The testimony of Plutarch and the Christian writer Origen suggests that these accounts were not foreign to the Greek audience of the Gospel.¹⁵ The Greeks recount tales, similar to Biblical stories, of a human dying and being resuscitated to mortal existence (cf. 1 Kgs 17:17-24; 2 Kgs 4:31-37; Mt 9:18-26; Mk 5:22-43; Lk 8:41-66; Jn 11:17-44, 12:2).¹⁶ Greek religious mythology also contains stories of rejuvenation by dismemberment. Endsjo comments, “Although those who were resuscitated after having been dismembered and stewed in the cauldron became both younger and, apparently, for some time, physically perfect, there is nothing in the sources indicating that these persons became immortal.”¹⁷

In the Greek religious mythological tradition, there is a direct correlation between divinity and immortality. Endsjo cites Achilles, Memnon, and the warriors who fought at Troy and Thebes as examples. Accounts of bodily assumption, similar to Enoch’s and Elijah’s, are also present in the Greek religious mythological tradition (cf. Gen 5:21-24; 2 Kgs 2:9-14).¹⁸ Endsjo notes, “A number of persons in antiquity who disappeared without a trace were also considered to have been deified in this way.”¹⁹ Though *The Resurrection of the Son of God* was written before Endsjo’s “Immortal Bodies, before Christ: Bodily Continuity in Ancient Greece and 1 Corinthians,” Wright responds to an argument similar to Endsjo’s about belief in resurrection in Greek religious mythology made by Stanley Porter.²⁰ Wright concludes, “This [The *Alcestis*] can hardly be said to constitute a ‘tradition of resurrection’; indeed, it indicates a

¹⁴ Endsjo, “Immortal Bodies,” 419.

¹⁵ “The profound influence of these more traditional beliefs makes the disbelief of the Corinthians seem even odder, as these most essential parts of the mythical corpus provide several examples of people who died and were resurrected.” *Ibid.*, 418-419.

¹⁶ Asclepius in Pindar, *Pythian* 3.47-57; Heracles and Alcestis in Euripides, *Alcestis* 840, 1139-42; qtd. in Endsjo, “Immortal Bodies,” 419-420.

¹⁷ Endsjo, “Immortal Bodies,” 424.

¹⁸ Ganymede in *Homerics Hymnum ad Venerem* 202-14; Hylas in Theocritus, *Idylls* 13.48-552, 13.73 and Apollonius of Rhodes, *Argonautica* 1.1324-25, 1221-42, 1261-72; Heracles in Diodorus Siculus 4.38.4-39.1; Alcmena in Plutarch, *Romulus* 28.6; Cleomedes in Plutarch, *Romulus* 28.4-5 and Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 6.9.7-8; Romulus in Plutarch, *Romulus* 28.1-3 and Livy, 1.16.5-8 qtd. in Endsjo, “Immortal Bodies,” 426.

¹⁹ Endsjo, “Immortal Bodies,” 426.

²⁰ Wright, *The Resurrection*, 35.

uniform and universal tradition within which resurrection is known *not* to happen, except in one dreamlike moment of poetic imagination.”²¹

Alternatively, Wright argues that belief in continued existence as shades in Hades more accurately represents ancient Greek afterlife belief. According to Homer, the dead are “shades (*skiai*), ghosts (*psychai*), phantoms (*eidola*). They are in no way fully human beings, though they may look like them; the appearance is deceptive, since one cannot grasp them physically.”²² Wright cites Achilles’ encounter with the dead Patroclus as an example: “Achilles held out his arms to clasp the spirit, but in vain. It vanished like a wisp of smoke and went gibbering underground. Achilles leapt up in amazement. He beat his hands together and in his desolation cried: ‘Ah then, it is true that something of us does survive even in the Hall of Hades, but with no intellect at all, only the ghost and semblance of a man...’”²³

Homer further posits that the shades dwell in Hades where “they are sorry both to be where they are and at much that happened in their previous human existence. They are sad at their present subhuman state... They have lost their wits and much else besides. They remain essentially subhuman and without hope.”²⁴ Wright cites Odysseus’s encounter with Achilles as an example. Achilles laments, “Never try to reconcile me to death, glorious Odysseus. I should choose, so I might live on earth, to serve as the hireling of another, some landless man with hardly enough to live on, rather than to be lord over all the dead that have perished.”²⁵

Plato proposes an understanding of the soul which turns the Homeric mythological understanding of the soul on its head. According to Wright, “Here is the central difference between Homer and Plato. Instead of the ‘self’ being the physical body, lying dead on the

²¹ Wright, *The Resurrection*, 35.

²² *Ibid.*, 43.

²³ Homer, *Iliad* 23.99-107 qtd. in Wright, *The Resurrection*, 40.

²⁴ Wright, *The Resurrection*, 44.

²⁵ Homer, *Odysseus* 11.488-91 qtd. in Wright, *The Resurrection*, 42.

ground, while the ‘soul’ flies away to what is at best a half-life, now the ‘self’, the true person, is precisely the soul, while it is the corpse that is the ghost.”²⁶ Plato posits an immortal soul. In Book X of *The Republic*, Socrates questions Glaucon, “Haven’t you realized that our soul is immortal and never destroyed?”²⁷ Wright notes, “Because the soul is this sort of thing, it not only survives the death of the body but is delighted to do so. If it had known earlier where its real interests lay it would have been longing for this very moment.”²⁸

Plato’s immortal soul has consequences for the Homeric belief in Hades as the dwelling place of the dead. It is no longer “a place of gloom, but (in principle at least) of delight.”²⁹ Men are not condemned as shadows of their former selves to Hades. Rather, “the reason people do not return from Hades is that life is so good there; they want to stay, rather than to return to the world of space, time and matter.”³⁰ Moreover, Plato proposes that the souls which go to Hades undergo judgment. Wright explains, “Judgment, even when negative, is emphatically a good thing, because it brings truth and justice to bear at last on the world of humans.”³¹ Lastly, Plato alludes to the possibility of the transmigration of souls.³² However, he never presents a theory of resurrection. Wright affirms, “Neither in Plato nor in the major alternatives just mentioned do we find any suggestion that resurrection, the return to bodily life of the dead person, was either desirable or possible.”³³

In Book II of the *De Anima*, Aristotle employs his matter-form distinction to discuss the nature of the soul. He identifies three kinds of elements: (1) matter; (2) form; and (3) a

²⁶ Wright, *The Resurrection*, 48.

²⁷ Plato, *The Republic*, Book X, 608d.

²⁸ Wright, *The Resurrection*, 49.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*, 50.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, 53.

composite of matter and form.³⁴ Of particular interest to Aristotle are composites that are alive or “ensouled.” Hendrik Lorenz observes, “Having soul is simply being alive; hence the emergence, at about this time, of the adjective ‘ensouled’ [*empuschos*] as the standard word meaning ‘alive’, which was applied not just to human beings, but to other living things as well.”³⁵ The soul is that which makes the composite alive. According to Aristotle, “The body cannot be the soul; the body is the subject or matter, not what is attributed to it. Hence the soul must be a substance in the sense of the form of a natural body having life potentially within it.”³⁶ The soul is the form of the body.

According to Aristotle, the soul exists with, but not as, the body. He affirms, “The soul does not exist without a body and yet is not itself a kind of body. For it is not a body, but something which belongs to a body, and for this reason exists in a body, and in a body of such-and-such a kind.”³⁷ Although the soul is form not matter, it cannot exist apart from the body. S. Marc Cohen notes, however, that Aristotle “waffles” about the intellect’s existence apart from the body.³⁸ Aristotle’s theory shifts the emphasis from Plato’s immortal soul trapped in the body to a body-soul union in which the mind may or may not exist independently.

The Greek mythological and philosophical traditions influence both the Hebrew and Christian understandings of the body-soul relationship and belief in the afterlife. Endsjo maintains that the similarities between Greek religious mythological “resurrection” stories can be held in tension with their Christian counterparts. Wright, on the other hand, argues that the Greek religious myths do not actually present an authentic belief in the resurrection. The

³⁴ Aristotle, *De Anima*, trans. R. D. Hicks (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2008), II.1.

³⁵ Hendrik Lorenz, “Ancient Theories of Soul,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2009. <<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ancient-soul/>> (accessed 28 March 2012) §1.

³⁶ Aristotle, *De Anima*, II.1.

³⁷ Aristotle, *De Anima* 414a20ff qtd. in S. Marc Cohen, “Aristotle on the Soul,” *History of Ancient Philosophy*, 2004. <<http://faculty.washington.edu/smcohen/320/psyche.htm>> (accessed 9 April 2013).

³⁸ S. Marc Cohen, “Aristotle on the Soul,” *History of Ancient Philosophy*, 2004. <<http://faculty.washington.edu/smcohen/320/psyche.htm>> (accessed 9 April 2013).

development of the Greek understanding of the soul from Homer to Plato to Aristotle exemplifies a variety of beliefs about the human person as a psychosomatic union. These Greek roots, the Homeric mythological tradition, Plato's immortal soul, and Aristotle's soul as the form of the body, provide a new vocabulary and paradigm which aid our attempts to draw out the truths revealed in Scripture and Tradition.

CHAPTER TWO

HEBREW ROOTS

The Christian salvation narrative has its roots in God's self-revelation in ancient Judaism. This divine revelation has been preserved in Hebrew Scripture and intertestamental literature, which were composed over approximately one thousand years.³⁹ The Hebrew notion of the body-soul relationship and the belief in the resurrection underwent significant development during this interval. The New Testament attests to a diversity of beliefs about the afterlife in the various, competing Jewish sects, making any definitive conclusions about the "Hebrew" view of the afterlife difficult.⁴⁰ In general terms, three periods of thought can be identified: primitive, prophetic, and apocalyptic.

The primitive Hebrew period bears a striking resemblance to the Homeric mythological tradition. The Greek Hades is mirrored in the Hebrew Sheol. Zachary Hayes, O.F.M. describes Sheol as a place where "the dead lead a shadowy existence in which they neither thank nor praise God, for in *Sheol* there is no communion with God."⁴¹ According to Ratzinger, Sheol is "more nonbeing than being."⁴² The Hebrew Scriptures confirm this understanding of Sheol and the dead. When King Saul orders the diviner in Endor to call upon the dead prophet Samuel, she describes him as "a divine being coming up from the earth...an old man coming up...wrapped in a robe" (1 Sam 28:13-14). Terence Nichols maintains, "What survives is not an immaterial soul but a shade or ghost that lacks the vitality of the fleshly person but retains personal identity."⁴³ The primitive Hebrew concept of soul is similar to the ancient Greek mythological concept of

³⁹ Terence Nichols, *Death and Afterlife: A Theological Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2010), 19.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 32-33.

⁴¹ Zachary Hayes, O.F.M., *Visions of a Future: A Study of Christian Eschatology* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1989), 31.

⁴² Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity* trans. J. R. Foster (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 303.

⁴³ Nichols, *Death*, 23.

soul. In these traditions, the soul continues to exist in the underworld as a shadow of its bodily self.

Belief in Sheol does not offer substantial comfort or hope. Nichols posits, “The only real hope after death was to be remembered by one’s descendants.”⁴⁴ In *Introduction to Christianity* Ratzinger observes two trends in primitive cultures’ attempts at immortality.⁴⁵ First, man lives on through his progeny. Ratzinger explains, “The largest possible number of children offers at the same time the greatest chance of survival, hope of immortality, and thus the most genuine blessing that man can expect.”⁴⁶ The theme of numerous descendants recurs throughout the Hebrew tradition. It is introduced in the first creation story in Genesis. God commands the man and woman, “Be fertile and increase, fill the earth and master it; and rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and all the living things that creep on earth” (Gen 1:28).

The theme of numerous descendants is most acute in the Abraham narrative. The Lord repeatedly promises that Abraham will be the father of a great and prosperous nation (cf. Gen 12:2-3; 13:15-16; 15:5-6; 17:4-6). He declares, “Because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your favored one, I will bestow My blessing upon you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven and the sands on the seashore” (Gen 22:16-17). The Lord maintains his promise of numerous descendants in the Isaac and Jacob cycles. By the beginning of the book of Exodus, “the Israelites were fertile and prolific; they multiplied and increased very greatly, so that the land was filled with them” (Ex 1:7). The primitive Hebrew tradition shares the belief of other primitive cultures that man achieves immortality through his descendants.

⁴⁴ Nichols, *Death and Afterlife*, 19.

⁴⁵ Joseph Ratzinger, *Introduction*, 303.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

Second, man lives on through his renown.⁴⁷ This theme is closely related to the first. The ancient Hebrews believe that a man lives eternally by being remembered by his progeny.⁴⁸ The more children with which one is blessed, the greater the assurance that the man would live forever in their memories. Ratzinger observes, “The inadequacy of both ways lies partly in the fact that the other person who holds my being after my death cannot carry this being itself but only its echo; and even more in the fact that the other person to whom I have, so to speak entrusted my continuance will not last – he, too, will perish.”⁴⁹ This predicament is best exemplified in the story of the Hebrews’ oppression and enslavement in Egypt. The Pharaoh under whom Joseph and his family enjoy favor dies, and “a new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph” (Ex 1:8). This new Pharaoh imposes hard labor, infanticide, and slavery. Joseph and his family are no longer “remembered” after the passing of the old Pharaoh. Man can only live on through his reputation if there is someone to remember him after he has died.

In the classical prophetic period (eighth to sixth century B.C.), during the tumultuous years of conflict among Israel, Judah, Assyria, and Babylon, the belief in the resurrection of the nation emerges.⁵⁰ Isaiah proclaims the Lord’s victory over suffering and evil. He declares, “He will destroy death forever. / My Lord God will wipe the tears away / From all faces / And will put an end to the reproach of His people / Over all the earth – / For it is the Lord who has spoken” (Is 25:8). The prophet emphasizes the communal nature of the recipients of the Lord’s mercy. He even dares to prophesy, “Oh, let Your dead revive! / Let corpses arise! / Awake and shout for joy, / You who dwell in the dust! – / For Your dew is like the dew on fresh growth; / You make the land of the shades come to life” (Is 26:19). Benjamin Sommer notes two common

⁴⁷ Ratzinger, *Introduction*, 303.

⁴⁸ Nichols, *Death*, 19.

⁴⁹ Ratzinger, *Introduction*, 303.

⁵⁰ Joseph Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy in Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1983), 2.

interpretations of the previous verse. The first interpretation is metaphorical. According to Sommer, “Some understand these vv. as metaphors: They portray the surprising vindication of the downtrodden, who are figuratively compared to the dead.”⁵¹ The second interpretation is more literal and in some cases, is used to justify the Rabbinic belief in the resurrection of the dead. Sommer explains, “According to others, these vv. assert that at least some dead people will return to earth at the end of time, their bodies and spirits restored.”⁵² According to the latter interpretation, in the writings of the prophet Isaiah, there are the beginnings of resurrection belief.

The prophet Ezekiel uses unambiguous resurrection language when prophesying the restoration of the nation. Sommer maintains that Ezekiel’s vision in chapter 37 is strictly metaphorical. He interprets, “The Judeans, having ‘died’ when they lost their land and kingdom, will ‘come back to life’ as they return to their land to reestablish a commonwealth.”⁵³ Speaking as the Lord, Ezekiel announces, “I am going to open your graves and lift you out of the graves, O My people, and bring you to the land of Israel. You shall know, O My people, that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves and lifted you out of your graves. I will put My breath into you and you shall live again, and I will set you upon your own soil” (Ez 37:12-14). The prophet emphasizes the corporate character of the resurrection. As in the Isaian examples, Sommer identifies the plain-sense and metaphorical interpretations of the text.⁵⁴ Nichols maintains, “Hebrew thought, however, conceived of afterlife primarily, but not exclusively, in terms of a reanimated and resurrected body living with others in a world of justice and peace that

⁵¹ Benjamin D. Sommer, Annotations on Isaiah, *The Jewish Study Bible* trans. The Jewish Publication Society (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 834.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 1114.

was governed by YHWH.”⁵⁵ The prophets introduce the concept of a bodily resurrection that enables the Lord to preserve his covenantal relationship with man as a nation.

Lastly, apocalyptic eschatology arises in the Hebrew tradition in response to persecution and martyrdom under the Greeks. During this period, the Jews expand upon the primitive and prophetic understanding of the soul, resurrection, and judgment. The Jewish theology of judgment clearly articulates reward for the just and punishment for the wicked. The idea that the just and the wicked are both equally condemned to a life apart from God seems inconceivable. In the Second Book of Maccabees, the fourth brother’s dying declaration expresses this hope unequivocally, “It is my choice to die at the hands of men with the God-given hope of being restored to life by him; but for you, there will be no resurrection to life” (2 Mac 7:14). The seventh brother emphasizes justification of the righteous and condemnation of the wicked. He declares, “My brothers, after enduring brief pain, have drunk of never-failing life, under God’s covenant, but you, by the judgment of God, shall receive just punishments for your arrogance” (2 Mac 7:36).

The persecution and martyrdom of the righteous poses a serious theological dilemma that cannot be resolved by the earlier notion of Sheol or the restoration of the nation. Wright argues that the promise of resurrection develops in direct response to the historical problem of martyrdom. He explains, “Israel’s god will reverse the actions of the wicked pagans, and raise the martyrs, and the teachers who kept Israel on course, to a glorious life. Simultaneously, he will raise their persecutors to a new existence: instead of remaining in the decent obscurity of Sheol or ‘the dust’, they will face perpetual public obloquy.”⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Nichols, *Death*, 23-24.

⁵⁶ Wright, *The Resurrection*, 113-114.

The apocalyptic concept of resurrection in the face of persecution and martyrdom is not simply reward for the just and punishment for the wicked. It is more nuanced. The author of Second Maccabees describes the Jews performing works of expiation for the dead. Judas and his troops pray for their fallen brethren, that the Lord might forgive them for wearing amulets dedicated to the gods of Jamnia (2 Mac 40-42). The author recounts, “In doing this [Judas] acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view; for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death. But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought” (2 Mac 12:43-45).

The author of the book of Daniel records one of Daniel’s visions of judgment. He recalls, “Many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to eternal life, others to reproaches, to everlasting abhorrence. And the knowledgeable will be radiant like the bright expanse of sky, and those who lead the many to righteousness will be like the stars forever and ever” (Dan 12:1-3). According to Lawrence Wills, what is being described in the previous verses stands in contrast to the prophetic notion of resurrection. The author of the book of Daniel is referring to the resurrection of some individuals, the just and the wicked.⁵⁷ The apocalyptic authors present a belief in the resurrection which differs from the prophetic restoration of the nation. They focus more on the individual in judgment than Israel as a whole.

The development from the primitive to the apocalyptic Hebrew understanding of the relationship between body and soul and belief in the resurrection evolves with the concerns of the nation. Nichols argues,

All these beliefs flowed from Israel’s basic belief that God, YHWH, was the creator and king of the world and that YHWH was faithful to his covenant with Israel. God would not abandon his faithful ones to the wicked or to the forces of death and underworld. One

⁵⁷ Lawrence Wills, Annotations on Daniel, *The Jewish Study Bible*, 1665.

day at the end of the age he would come again to restore a kingdom of justice, peace, and prosperity and would restore his (resurrected people) to their land.⁵⁸

Although, by the time of the New Testament, there is no systematized theology of the body-soul union or the resurrection, a distinct trend emerges relating resurrection to judgment. The persecution and martyrdom of the Maccabean era is comparable to the early Christians who suffer under Roman occupation. The Christian understanding of the relationship between body and soul and belief in the resurrection is at once continuous with the Hebrew foundations and transformed by the Paschal Mystery.

⁵⁸ Nichols, *Death*, 33.

CHAPTER THREE

NEW TESTAMENT ROOTS

The Christian notion of the body-soul union and belief in the resurrection develops in light of the New Testament accounts of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Although the Resurrection of Jesus is a singularly unique event, it is not radically discontinuous with the fundamental content of his preaching nor with his miracle-working. His central message is the in-breaking of the Kingdom of God.⁵⁹ His working of miracles is evidence of the already-present Kingdom. The Kingdom of God is the *leitmotiv* of the pre-Easter message. According to Hayes, “As a metaphor of salvation, it [the Kingdom-metaphor] is part of a much larger metaphorical structure pertaining to the final salvific action of God with regard to the world of creation.”⁶⁰ The *leitmotiv* of the post-Easter message is Christology. The pre- and post-Easter messages are continuous. Ratzinger maintains that “Jesus *is* that Kingdom since through him the Spirit of God acts in the world. Here we glimpse the inner unity of the pre-Easter and post-Easter *kerygma*. The motif of the Kingdom is transformed into Christology, because it is from Christ that the Spirit, the reign of God, comes.”⁶¹ The New Testament understanding of the relationship between body and soul and its teaching on resurrection is intimately related to the preaching of Jesus, of the Kingdom of God, and the preaching of the Church, of Jesus Christ.

The Gospels unequivocally identify Jesus’ preaching with the Kingdom of God. Benedict observes that kingdom or *basileia* occurs 122 times in the New Testament, 99 times in the Synoptic Gospels alone, and 90 times on the mouth of Jesus himself. While Mark and Luke refer to the Kingdom of God, Matthew, with a view to his Jewish audience and their reverence

⁵⁹ Hayes, *Visions*, 44.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁶¹ Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 35.

for the divine name, refers to the Kingdom of Heaven.⁶² By “Kingdom,” the evangelists mean “God’s rule, his living power over the world” or the imminence of God.⁶³

In Mark’s Gospel, Jesus begins his ministry with the proclamation, “This is the time of fulfillment. The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel” (Mk 1:15; cf. Mt 3:2). Ratzinger interprets, “Jesus himself belongs to the tradition of prophetic expectation. This is nowhere clearer than in his promise of God’s Kingdom to the poor, in the many meanings of the term, and his linking of the Kingdom, in indissoluble manner, with repentance.”⁶⁴ In the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew records Jesus promising the kingdom of heaven to the poor in spirit (Mt 5:3; cf. Lk 6:20). Mark, Matthew, and Luke record Jesus’ saying that children and the childlike will be the true inheritors of the Kingdom (cf. Mk 10:14-15; Mt 19:13-14; Lk 18:16-17). Jesus’ preaching is principally concerned with the Kingdom of God and what one must do to inherit the Kingdom.

The Gospels are replete with images of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed. “It is the smallest of all the seeds, yet when full-grown it is the largest of plants” (Mt 13:32; cf. Mk 4:30-34; Lk 13:18-19). The Kingdom of God is like a seed which grows and yields fruit of its own accord (Mk 4:26-29). The Kingdom of God is like yeast which leavens dough (Mt 13:33; Lk 13:20-21). The Kingdom of God is like “a treasure buried in a field,” “a merchant searching for fine pearls,” and “a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind” (Mt 13:44-47). The Kingdom of God is like the vineyard owner who, throughout the course of the day, hires workers for the same wage regardless of the time worked (Mt 20:1-16). The Kingdom of God is like a wedding feast (Mt 22:1-14). “Many are invited, but few are chosen” (Mt 22:14). The Kingdom of God is like a great feast (Lk 14:15-24). After all the

⁶² Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 24-25.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 28.

invited guests have made their excuses, the host will “go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the towns and bring in here the poor and the crippled, the blind and the lame... to the highways and hedgerows and make people come in” (Lk14:21, 23). Ratzinger notes, the images of the Kingdom are “signs of joy, festivity and beauty... and images of powerlessness.”⁶⁵ The images of the Kingdom of God in the parables are full of contrasts between littleness and greatness and expectation and fulfillment.

The miracles Jesus works both prefigure and make present the Kingdom of God. Hayes argues, “The miracles are themselves parables of the Kingdom in miniature... They indicate, further, that the meaning of the Kingdom cannot be limited to the realm of the interior life. Body and soul are the objects of God’s loving concern, for God wills the salvation of creatures in their entirety, not only in one part of their sins.”⁶⁶ This is especially clear in Jesus’ healing miracles.

Mark, Matthew, and Luke recall the healing of a paralytic in which both physical and spiritual cures are effected (Mk 2:1-12; Mt 9:1-8; Lk 5:17-26). In Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus heals the paralytic in two ways: “Courage, child, your sins are forgiven... Rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home” (Mt 9:2, 6). Jesus’ cure is both physical and spiritual, and the spiritual precedes the physical. Mark recalls the gritty healing of a deaf man. Jesus “put his finger into the man’s ears and, spitting, touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him “*Ephphatha!*” And immediately the man’s ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly” (Mk 7:33-35). In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus cures a man’s withered hand on the Sabbath. The outraged scribes and Pharisees fail to see that Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath and that it is “lawful to do good on the Sabbath rather than to do evil, to save life rather than to destroy it” (Lk 6:9).

⁶⁵ Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 32.

⁶⁶ Hayes, *Visions*, 46.

In John's Gospel, in an account similar to the Markan and Lukan accounts, Jesus expounds on the spiritual-physical dynamic in the healing of the man born blind. He states, "Neither he nor his parents sinned; it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him... When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his eyes, and said to him, 'Go wash in the Pool of Siloam'. So he went and washed and came back able to see" (Jn 9:3, 6-7). This miracle is a restoration of the body which prefigures the resurrection of the body after death. Jesus' miracles are testimony to the omnipotence of God. Nothing is beyond his reach. Anything, body or soul, material or immaterial, can be touched by the healing power of God.

The pre-Easter images of the Kingdom, the parables and miracles of Jesus, are invitations to and depictions of a life of grace. Ratzinger posits a Kingdom of "redemption which is pure gift, something sheerly received... God's transformation of the lopsided order of this world."⁶⁷ Hayes notes, "God offers the grace of the Kingdom to human beings. The divine offer must be freely accepted and responded to. God never bypasses the human, nor does God do what human beings are called to do. Therefore, the Christian experience of grace involves an ongoing polarity between the present and the future, between the already and the not-yet. Grace is already the eschatological mystery of God."⁶⁸ Nichols affirms

Love is the master key to the kingdom. And in this vision, the full coming of the kingdom is at the end of time. Only then will Jesus return in all his glory... The kingdom is therefore already present in this world but will be consummated only in the next world, when radical evil will finally be defeated... The kingdom is already present to us now, and we need to respond now. The kingdom, after all, requires a radical conversion to love of God and neighbor.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 31.

⁶⁸ Hayes' statement seems to be contradicted by Christ's redemptive and substitutionary suffering. However, it is in and through the Incarnation that Christ's substitution for us is accomplished. God does not bypass the human; he becomes human. Hayes, *Visions*, 47.

⁶⁹ Nichols, *Death*, 38.

The pre-Easter images of the Kingdom are images of a life transformed by grace, a life already present in the miracle-working of Jesus and a future life of communion with God and his faithful ones.

As stated previously, Jesus' preaching and miracle-working both prefigure and make present the Kingdom God. In an infinitely more perfect way, the death and resurrection of Jesus also herald and inaugurate the Kingdom of God, a new order of grace. This image of the Kingdom as grace of redemption and of transformation is fundamentally clarified by the post-Easter image of the Kingdom – the Crucified Christ. Ratzinger asserts, "Jesus did not proclaim an explicit Christology. But the great lines of his preaching converge upon himself as the eschatological son of God. They point to his destiny as the 'now' of God."⁷⁰ Jesus is the first and only man who has died *and* been raised to new life in a resurrected body, never to die again.⁷¹ He is the "first-born of the dead" (Rev 1:5). The new life as members of the Kingdom which Jesus promises throughout his earthly ministry is substantiated by his resurrection.

According to Hayes

What has happened in Jesus is the anticipation of what God wills for humanity as a whole and for the world. The resurrection of Jesus, while it is his personal destiny, is not only that. It is the beginning of the recreation of the world... God is revealed as one whose power transcends life and death and whose fidelity is stronger than death. Resurrection-faith is not a belief in a supposedly natural immortality of the soul, but a faith in the creative power and fidelity of God's love.⁷²

Jesus' death and resurrection, as the fulfillment of his earthly ministry, are signposts of the *telos* to which mankind and the whole cosmos is directed. Similarly, Nichols asserts, "Jesus's resurrection was taken by early Christians as an indication that the end times were near (or had already begun); that Jesus's faithful followers could expect the Lord to return soon, perhaps in

⁷⁰ Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 32.

⁷¹ Hayes, *Visions*, 51.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 54.

their lifetime; and that they would then be resurrected or raised themselves.”⁷³ In a manner akin to the miracles which Jesus works, his death and resurrection give man concrete evidence for their hope that the Kingdom of God has been inaugurated by Jesus and will be brought to fulfillment in the future.

The New Testament roots for the Christian understanding of the body-soul relationship and teaching on resurrection begin with Jesus’ preaching and miracle-working. The central content of his preaching and the key to understanding his miracle-working is the in-breaking of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom enlarges the Hebrew understanding of grace and radicalizes any previous notion of man’s *telos*. However, Jesus’ death and resurrection even further transform the Christian understanding of the human person and the afterlife. Just as Jesus is the focal point of the pre-Easter kerygma, so too is he the lynchpin of the post-Easter preaching. The Christian conception of the relationship between body and soul and belief in the resurrection is radically Christocentric, mediated through the paradigm of the Kingdom of God.

⁷³ Nichols, *Death*, 45.

CHAPTER FOUR

MAN: IMAGE OF GOD & PSYCHOSOMATIC UNITY

Man is created in the image and likeness of God. The Incarnation of Christ is fundamental to understanding how man is made in God's image. It is the interpretive key to the relationship between humanity and divinity. A Christological reflection on man must also include an examination of the relationship between his body and soul. In *Marks of His Wounds: Gender Politics and Bodily Resurrection*, Beth Felker Jones posits Christ's hypostatic union as an analogy for man's psychosomatic union.⁷⁴ After considering man as the image of God and as a psychosomatic unity, I will apply this Christological grammar to the question posed in the Introduction: how is the human person a body-soul unity.

Man is the image of God. According to the first creation story, "God created man in His image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Gen 1:27). Because God has made man in his image, man possesses a special dignity which distinguishes him from the rest of creation. In *Called to Love: Approaching John Paul II's Theology of the Body*, Carl Anderson and Jose Granados reason, "The dignity of the person is indeed absolute, Vatican II is telling us, but this dignity is itself based on the absolute Source of all dignity: God."⁷⁵ Man is the crown of creation because he is the image of God.

Such an affirmation is significant in terms of man's *genesis* and of his *telos* insofar as not only is man created *in* the image and likeness of God, man is also created *for* God. Anderson and Granados contend, "Original solitude is thus another way of expressing man's special dignity, which rests on the basis of his unique privilege of being fashioned in the image and

⁷⁴ Beth Felker Jones, *Marks of His Wounds: Gender Politics and Bodily Resurrection* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 69-85.

⁷⁵ Carl Anderson and Jose Granados, *Called to Love: Approaching John Paul II's Theology of the Body* (New York: Doubleday, 2009), 57.

likeness of God as his partner in a dialogue of love.”⁷⁶ The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* affirms, “Being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone. He is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons. And he is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give in his stead” (§357).

Thus, man is also made for God. He is made for communion, in knowledge and love, with God (CCC §356). It is for this reason that man’s work has a special, *liturgical* character. According to Anderson and Granados, “To work is to shape the world into a reflection of our relationship with God; it is to incorporate the world into our worship. Every human action, every work man performs, no matter how humble, has a liturgical dignity.”⁷⁷ This liturgical character of man and his work, that everything is and is done in and for relationship with God, is perfectly embodied in the person of the Son.

In *Introduction to Christianity*, Ratzinger emphasizes the openness of the filial relationship: “The concepts ‘word’ and ‘son’ are intended to convey the dynamic character of this existence, its pure *actualis*. Word never stands on its own; it comes from someone, is there to be heard, and is therefore meant for others. It can only subsist in this totality of ‘from’ and ‘for’. We had discovered the same meaning in the concept ‘son’, which signifies a similar tension between ‘from’ and ‘for’.”⁷⁸ Christ is not only the image of God for man; he is also the image of man for man. The essential relation between man and God is liturgical and filial. The *Catechism* confirms that the mystery of man is made intelligible only through the mystery of the

⁷⁶ Anderson and Granados, *Called*, 27.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁷⁸ Ratzinger, *Introduction*, 210.

Incarnation (*CCC* §359). The Incarnate Word of God reveals what it means to be human. He is the interpretive key to humanity.

Moreover, man is created and subsists in a body-soul union. The Biblical account testifies, “The Lord God formed man from the dust of the earth. He blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being” (Gen 2:7). Man is both material and immaterial, corporeal and spiritual. The psychosomatic unity of man is not accidental; it is by design. Man is willed into existence *by God for* life with God. That which God wills includes man’s body and his soul. According to the *Catechism*, “The human body shares in the dignity of the ‘image of God’: it is a human body precisely because it is animated by a spiritual soul, and it is the whole human person that is intended to become, in the body of Christ, a temple of the Spirit” (*CCC* §364).

Following in Aristotle’s footsteps, the Church articulates the relationship between the body and soul in terms of matter and form. The soul is the form of the body. The relationship between body and soul characterized thus points to the seriousness of the union of body and soul, such that the soul makes the body human: “Their union forms a single nature” (*CCC* §365). The Church also maintains the immortality of the soul, as Plato did, but with a minor modification. God is the creator of man’s spiritual and immortal soul. Death is the separation of the soul from the body. In that instant, the soul is not annihilated. Rather, it persists in existence, anticipating its reunion with the body on the last day (*CCC* §366). The grammars provided by Plato and Aristotle, though helpful, are insufficient to fully describe the relationship between the body and soul.

The Incarnate Word of God also reveals, by virtue of the hypostatic union, what it means to be a union of body and soul. The hypostatic union is the interpretive key to the psychosomatic

union. Beth Felker Jones presents three possible interpretations of the statement, “I am a composite creature, body *and* soul.”⁷⁹ First, the *and* can be interpreted as an utterly false claim: “There *is* nothing but the body. To speak rightly, we must speak of human beings as bodies, full stop. Human beings are constituted by materiality.”⁸⁰ Second, the *and* can be interpreted dualistically: “This ‘and’ marks a sharp disconnection between two separable and differentially value laden entities.”⁸¹ Third, the *and* can be interpreted as the true key to understanding how man is a composite creature: “This ‘and’ is indicative of a real unity.”⁸² Jones argues that the third interpretation is the most compelling for Christian theology. However, she cautions that man is not merely the sum of his body and soul. Rather, “while understanding ourselves as psychosomatic unities presents a variety of theological advantages, the particular created relationship between humanity and God is all that makes us human.”⁸³ Here Jones echoes Anderson and Granados and the *Catechism*. Man exists in liturgical relationality to God.

The psychosomatic union is analogous to the hypostatic union. In the Incarnation, the divine person of the Son, who always and already has a divine nature, has assumed human nature to himself. According to the Chalcedonian definition, these two natures subsist in the one divine person of the Word without confusion, without change, without division, and without separation.⁸⁴ Jones conceives of the psychosomatic union in a similar way. She contends, “God holds body and soul in unity, and the attributes of the body are communicated to the soul and those of the soul to the body. Because God has made human creatures such irreducible unities,

⁷⁹ Jones, *Marks*, 70.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁸⁴ Norman P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* Vol. 1 (Georgetown: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 86.

we relate to God as such, and God redeems us as such.”⁸⁵ Jones maintains the union of the body and soul but also the difference between the body and soul. She argues, “Jesus’ divinity is not separate or separable from his humanity just as my body is not separate or separable from my soul.”⁸⁶

However, this analogy has its limitations. According to Jones, “The second person of the Trinity can exist without a body in a way that the human soul, if human beings are truly psychosomatic unities, cannot.”⁸⁷ By virtue of the hypostatic union or special mode of existence, there is a communication of idioms or exchange of attributes between Christ’s human and divine natures.⁸⁸ Jones posits, “If we continue to speak of the body-soul relation on the analogy of the hypostatic union, then we may speak of a communication of attributes between body and soul in the human being. The two are so united that whatever we claim of one may be claimed of the other.”⁸⁹ The analogy of the hypostatic union for the psychosomatic union clarifies our understanding of the relationship between body and soul. However, Jones’ application of the communication of idioms oversteps the bounds of the analogy and confuses the body-soul union.

The human person is the image of God and a psychosomatic unity. Both of these qualifiers can be understood Christologically. Man, as image of God, possesses a special dignity which raises the status of his work from mundane to liturgical. The liturgical character of man’s work is necessarily in relation to another. The Son perfectly embodies this existence in and for another. The filial relationship requires relation and communion; father cannot be father without

⁸⁵ Jones, *Marks*, 80.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 80-81.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁸⁸ Tanner, *Decrees*, 86.

⁸⁹ Jones, *Marks*, 82.

son, nor can son be son without father. Man subsists in a union of his body and soul in a way analogous to how Christ subsists in a union of his human and divine natures.

This Christian belief in the unity of body and soul has profound implications for how we understand the life-changing injuries suffered by servicemen and women. Because of the complex nature of the human person, it is difficult, maybe even unfair, to compartmentalize traumas as either *bodily* or *spiritual* alone. This is evident when one considers that, in addition to the 50, 581 wounded, there are also an estimated 400,000 service members returning from deployment who suffer from “combat-related stress, major depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder” (PTSD).⁹⁰ Furthermore, my reflection on the wounded warrior does not specifically address the estimated 320,000 service members who suffer from a traumatic brain injury (TBI), which is a physical wound that affects the psychological, emotional, and intellectual well-being of the warrior.⁹¹ It would be more accurate to say that the human person suffers a trauma that, due to the psychosomatic nature of man, affects the whole of the person: body, spirit, heart, and mind. Such a holistic understanding of the human person is preserved in a Christological grammar.

⁹⁰ Wounded Warrior Project, “Who We Serve,” 1 April 2013, <<http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/mission/who-we-serve.aspx>> (accessed 15 April 2013).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER FIVE

CHRIST'S RESURRECTED BODY

The primary source for understanding Christ's resurrected body is the New Testament. In *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection*, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI identifies two kinds of testimony: confessional tradition and narrative tradition.⁹² Gerald O'Collins, S.J. cautions against extreme interpretation of this testimony. He observes the tendency to both under- and over-belief.⁹³ The Church has interpreted these traditions and made them the foundation for her resurrection belief.

Confessional Tradition

The confessional tradition or kerygmatic formulae are the most ancient witness of the resurrection in the New Testament.⁹⁴ Although these formulae are the oldest, their structure indicates that there was an interval between the event and the record of these statements. PHEME PERKINS posits, "Thus, the preaching and liturgical practice of the early church appear to have shaped resurrection traditions in three areas: kerygmatic formulae, in linking them with the development of Christological titles for Jesus, and in hymnic expressions of Jesus' exaltation."⁹⁵ Most scholars agree that the most significant confession is recorded by Saint Paul in chapter fifteen of the First Letter to the Corinthians.⁹⁶

The opening verses of chapter fifteen indicate that the resurrection confession is a universal belief. Paul declares, "Now I am reminding you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you indeed received and in which you also stand. Through it you are also being

⁹² Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection*, trans. Vatican Secretariat of State (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011), 248-272.

⁹³ Gerald O'Collins, S.J., *What Are They Saying About the Resurrection?* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1978), 42-55.

⁹⁴ PHEME PERKINS, *Resurrection: New Testament Witness and Contemporary Reflection* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1984), 215.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 216.

⁹⁶ Benedict, *Jesus*, 249.

saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I handed on to you as of first importance what I also received” (1 Cor 15:1-3). The ancient confessional statement reads:

That Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures;
that he was buried; that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures;
that he appeared to Cephas then to the Twelve.
After that, he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at once, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.
After that he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.
Last of all, as to one born abnormally, he appeared to me (1 Cor 15:3-8).

Most scholars also agree that the original confession extended only through verse five. Benedict explains, “For Saint Paul’s self-understanding and for the faith of the early Church I find it significant that Paul felt entitled to add on to the original confession, with equally binding character, the risen Lord’s appearance to him and the apostolic mission that came with it.”⁹⁷ The resurrection confession in Corinthians is typical of kerygmatic formulae in the New Testament.

The phrase “in accordance with the scriptures” occurs twice in the confessional statement. Perkins maintains, “Though some interpreters think that ‘according to Scripture’ was a later addition, it represents a fundamental element in a number of kerygmatic interpretations of the events of Jesus’ death and resurrection. Thus, we would argue that it is a necessary element in proclaiming those events as salvific.”⁹⁸ The first instance of this phrase in the resurrection confession refers to the death of Jesus. Benedict interprets, “It is an event in which the words of Scripture are fulfilled; it bears within itself Logos, or logic; it proceeds from the word and returns to the word; it surrounds the word and fulfills it.”⁹⁹ The qualifier “for our sins” points to the kind of death Jesus died: expiatory. It also alludes to the Scriptural tradition that is fulfilled by his death: the Suffering Servant tradition of Isaiah. Benedict notes, “It is a death in the

⁹⁷ Benedict, *Jesus*, 250.

⁹⁸ Perkins, *Resurrection*, 222.

⁹⁹ Benedict, *Jesus*, 252.

context of his service of expiation – a death that achieves reconciliation and becomes a light for the nations.”¹⁰⁰ The opening verse of the ancient confessional statement is rich with Biblical allusions and interpretations.

The following clause in the resurrection confession reads “he was buried.” This raises the question of the empty tomb which preoccupies so many modern exegetes. Perkins’ concern with this clause or, in Greek, word, *etaphē* is structural. She comments that its brevity serves to highlight the preceding clause.¹⁰¹ Conversely, Benedict’s interest is that of the empty tomb. He notes both the insufficiency of the empty tomb and the insurmountable obstacle posed by an occupied tomb to prove Jesus’ resurrection. According to Benedict, Peter’s Pentecost sermon in the Acts of the Apostles contributes to a theological interpretation of the empty tomb (cf. Acts 2:14-36). Peter makes evident that “Jesus is revealed as the true David, precisely because in him this promise is fulfilled: ‘You will not let your Holy One see corruption.’”¹⁰² Benedict asserts, “This is virtually a definition of resurrection. Only with corruption was death regarded as definitive. Once the body had decomposed, once it had broken down into its elements – marking man’s dissolution and return to dust – then death had conquered.”¹⁰³ The early Christians do not sharply distinguish their belief in Jesus’ resurrection and their belief in the empty tomb.

The third clause in the ancient confessional statement “he was raised on the third day” reiterates the “in accordance with the Scriptures.” This qualifier applies to both parts of the statement: the truth of Jesus’ resurrection and the timing of it. Benedict argues, “The essential point is that the Resurrection itself is in accordance with the Scriptures – that it forms part of the

¹⁰⁰ Benedict, *Jesus*, 253.

¹⁰¹ Perkins, *Resurrection*, 223.

¹⁰² Benedict, *Jesus*, 256.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

whole promise that in Jesus became, not just word, but reality.”¹⁰⁴ However, a theological interpretation of “the third day” is not supported by Scripture. Passages like Hosea 6:1-2 “could become an anticipatory pointer toward resurrection on the third day only once the event that took place on the Sunday after the Lord’s crucifixion had given this day a special meaning.”¹⁰⁵

The third day is significant because it affirms the concreteness and specificity of the resurrection event. Benedict also maintains, “For me, the celebration of the Lord’s day, which was a characteristic part of the Christian community from the outset, is one of the most convincing proofs that something extraordinary happened that day – the discovery of the empty tomb and the encounter with the risen Lord.”¹⁰⁶ The third clause simultaneously affirms that Jesus’ resurrection is the fulfillment of Scriptures and a truly historical event.

The final clause in the ancient confessional statement “that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve” emphasizes apostolic witness of the resurrection. The purpose of this witness is to substantiate the resurrection claim.¹⁰⁷ These witnesses are the founders of the Church. According to Benedict, the twofold nature of the witness indicates a twofold character of the early Church: Peter’s preeminence and the role of “the Twelve.” He observes, “On the one hand, ‘the Twelve’ remain the actual foundation stone of the Church, the permanent point of reference. On the other hand, the special task given to Peter is underlined here.”¹⁰⁸ Benedict posits an intimate relationship between the resurrection and the birth of the Church: “So the Resurrection account flows naturally into ecclesiology; the encounter with the risen Lord is mission, and it

¹⁰⁴ Benedict, *Jesus*, 257.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 258.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 259.

¹⁰⁷ Perkins, *Resurrection*, 223.

¹⁰⁸ Benedict, *Jesus*, 259-260.

shapes the nascent Church.”¹⁰⁹ The kerygmatic formulae are significant because they record the content of resurrection belief and authentic preaching.

Narrative Tradition

The narrative tradition fleshes out the confessional resurrection tradition. Benedict identifies the primary difference between the narrative and confessional traditions:

They are not binding in every detail in the same way as the confessions; but by virtue of being taken up into the Gospels, they are clearly to be regarded as valid testimony, giving content and shape to the faith. The confessions presuppose the narratives and grew out of them. They express in concentrated form the nucleus of the narrative content, and at the same time they point back toward the narratives.¹¹⁰

There is no account of the act of resurrection itself; the resurrection is a mystery of faith.

According to Benedict, “None of the evangelists recounts Jesus’ Resurrection itself. It is an event taking place within the mystery of God between Jesus and the Father, which for us defies description: by its very nature it lies outside human experience.”¹¹¹ The narrative tradition is principally composed of appearance stories.

In both Luke and John’s Gospel accounts, Jesus appears to the disciples in Jerusalem and because of their incredulity, offers evidence of the physicality and transcendence of his resurrected body. The transcendental nature of his glorified body is apparent because it is not constrained by time and space. He can appear and disappear at will. Luke recounts, “While they were still speaking about this, he stood in their midst and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost” (Lk 24:36-37). Similarly, John attests, “On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, ‘Peace be with you’”(Jn 20:19).

¹⁰⁹ Benedict, *Jesus*, 260.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 261.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

John's account gives the distinct impression that the disciples, though they were privy to the preaching, and miracle-working of Jesus' earthly ministry, in light of his crucifixion, harbored grave doubts about his claim, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn 2:19) and "A little while and you will no longer see me, and again a little while later and you will see me"(Jn 16:16). Luke's account makes this prediction more explicit, "The Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised"(Lk 9:22).

The disciples had been informed, prior to the event itself, of Jesus' resurrection, yet they do not immediately believe when they see him for the first time. Luke recalls, "But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. Then he said to them, 'Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts?'" (Lk. 24:37-38). John does not describe the disciples' fearful reaction. Rather, he proceeds directly to the proof Jesus gives them, "When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord" (Jn. 20:20). Similarly, Luke recounts Jesus saying, "'Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have.' And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet" (Lk. 24:39-40). Both Luke and John emphasize the wounded hands, feet, and side as confirmation that the resurrected Christ in their midst is the same Christ who suffered and died on the Cross. Luke further proves the physicality of Jesus' resurrected body, "While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, he asked them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' They gave him a piece of baked fish; he took it and ate it in front of them" (Lk. 24:41-43). The resurrected body of Christ is physical; he can consume food just as he did prior to his death and resurrection.¹¹²

¹¹² Thomas notes that the Risen Jesus eats only to prove the reality of his resurrection, not because he requires food for nutritive or augmentative value. For more on Jesus' consumption of food in his resurrected body, see Saint

Arguably the most famous post-resurrection narrative concerning the nature of Jesus' resurrected body is the story of Thomas Didymus, found only in the Gospel account of John. Thomas is cited as being absent from the company of the disciples at the time when Jesus appeared to them in the upper room. The disciples joyfully announce to him, "We have seen the Lord" (Jn. 20:25). Thomas declares, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe" (Jn. 20:25). Thomas unequivocally affirms the importance of the wounds of Christ to his identity as a person, even going so far as to say his resurrected body must still possess them to truly be the same person.

Thomas' demand for physical proof is answered a week later. John attests, "Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe.' Thomas answered and said to him, 'My Lord and my God!'" (Jn. 20:26-28). The narrative begins with reference to the transcendent nature of the resurrected body of Christ. However, the focal point is Thomas' physical encounter with Christ in his resurrected body. Christ's wounds are the lynchpin of this encounter. This is made explicit in Caravaggio's painting "The Incredulity of Saint Thomas."¹¹³ In Caravaggio's depiction, Thomas' finger is intrusively probing the fleshy wound in Jesus' side. The edges of Jesus' wound are puckered and unhealed; they have not closed by scab or scar. Jesus' resurrected body is physical, yet unlimited by time and space, and retains characteristic marks, even wounds, which distinguish him as Savior.

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles* Book Four: Salvation, trans. Charles J. O'Neil (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), 311-320.

¹¹³ Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas*, 1601-02, Oil on canvas, 107 x 146 cm, Schloss Sanssouci, Potsdam. See Appendix, Fig. 2.

In Luke and John's resurrection narratives, the Gospel writers describe a resurrected body which is physical, material, and corporeal yet spiritual, immaterial, and transcendent. The resurrected body retains defining physical characteristics of the person's earthly body, so that those who encounter the person are able to recognize him. Though this recognition may be gradual, as in the case of the disciples on the road to Emmaus (cf. Lk. 24:13-35), the person is nonetheless identifiable in the context of their unique relationship. When Jesus appeared to the disciples in Jerusalem, they mistook him for a ghost because they could not conceive of something like a resurrection (cf. Lk. 24:36-37). However, they were still able to recognize him as their friend, teacher, and the one who suffered and died on the Cross.

Furthermore, Jesus' resurrected body retains his wounds from the lance of the soldier who pierced his side and the nails which held his hands and feet to the cross (cf. Lk. 24:40; Jn. 19:34, 20:27). Indeed, the wounds of Christ's resurrected body identify him as the savior who took upon himself the sins of the world. The resurrected body of Jesus is also concrete. He has flesh and bones (cf. Lk. 24:39) and can partake of food (cf. Lk. 24:41-43). However, the resurrected body is not subject to the laws of time and space. It properly belongs to God, Heaven, and eternity.

In Luke's resurrection narrative, he recounts the women's bewilderment and amazement upon discovering the empty tomb. The evangelist notes, "When they were puzzling over this, behold, two men in dazzling garments appeared to them. They were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground. They said to them, 'Why do you seek the living one among the dead? He is not here, but he has been raised. Remember what he said to you while he was still in Galilee...' And they remembered his words" (Lk 24:4-8b). It is only at the prompting of the angelic messengers that the women are able to make sense of the empty tomb. In reaction to the

women's testimony, "Peter got up and ran to the tomb, bent down, and saw the burial cloths alone; then he went home amazed at what had happened" (Lk 24:12).

The *Catechism* clarifies, "In itself it is not a direct proof of Resurrection; the absence of Christ's body from the tomb could be explained otherwise. Nonetheless the empty tomb was still an essential sign for all. Its discovery by the disciples was the first step toward recognizing the very face of the Resurrection" (§640). The resurrection narratives' accounts of the empty tomb are preparatory; it is the initial movement toward recognition of the Risen Jesus.

Moreover, Jesus' resurrection is attested to by the eyewitness testimony of the disciples to whom Jesus appeared after Easter. In the Gospel according to Matthew, the Evangelist observes that Jesus first appeared to the holy women who were keeping vigil at his tomb (Mt 28:1-10). The women were "overjoyed" and "approached, embraced his feet, and did him homage" (Mt 28:8-9). They believed immediately upon seeing the Risen Jesus. He then appeared to the eleven disciples in Galilee (Mt 28:16-20). Like the holy women, the eleven "when they saw him, they worshipped"; but unlike the women, they also doubted (Mt 28:17). In the Gospel according to Luke, the author recounts that Jesus first appeared to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35).

Like the bewilderment at the empty tomb, the two disciples do not immediately recognize the Risen Jesus. Luke notes, "Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him" (Lk 24:15-16). Jesus draws out their recognition by the sharing of Scripture and breaking of bread (Lk 24:25-30). It is only then "that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight" (Lk 24:31). Following this initial encounter, Jesus appears to the disciples in Jerusalem (Lk 24:36-49). Again, the disciples are slow to believe. They think that Jesus is a ghost. Jesus questions them, "Why are you

troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have” (Lk 24:38-39). According to the *Catechism*, “As witnesses of the Risen One, they remain the foundation stones of his Church. The faith of the first community of believers is based on the witness of concrete men known to the Christians and for the most part still living among them” (CCC §642). These eyewitness testimonies lend credulity to the historicity of Jesus’ resurrection.

Resurrection Belief

The resurrection of Christ is the foundation for Christian hope. In the Apostles’ Creed we profess, “On the third day he rose again from the dead.”¹¹⁴ The Church teaches that Jesus’ resurrection “is the fulfillment of the promises both of the Old Testament and of Jesus himself during his earthly life” (CCC §652). In the Nicene Creed we confess, “For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.”¹¹⁵ In the Baptismal liturgy the parents, godparents, or adult catechumens are asked to profess faith in “Jesus Christ... who rose from the dead” and “the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.”¹¹⁶ Belief in Jesus’ resurrection is as ancient as the New Testament itself and as relevant as the Church’s contemporary liturgical and sacramental life. It is central to the Christian faith.

¹¹⁴ “The Order of Mass,” *Roman Missal* 3d ed. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2010. <<http://old.usccb.org/romanmissal/order-of-mass.pdf>> (accessed 31 March 2012).

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ “Rite for the Baptism of One Child” *Roman Missal Second Edition*, 1970, The Catholic Liturgical Library <<http://www.catholicliturgy.com/index.cfm/FuseAction/TextContents/Index/4/SubIndex/67/TextIndex/7>> (accessed 4 April 2012).

The resurrection of Christ is a mystery of faith which transcends the merely historical. During the Easter Vigil liturgy, the *Exsultet* is sung, proclaiming, “Oh, how blessed is this night, which alone was worthy to know the season and hour in which Christ rose again from hell!” (qtd. in CCC §647). No one and no account can point an eyewitness of or explain how Jesus was raised from the dead. The Church teaches, “Still it remains at the very heart of the mystery of faith as something that transcends and surpasses history. This is why the risen Christ does not reveal himself to the world, but to his disciples” (CCC §647).

The Resurrection is also “a transcendent intervention of God himself in creation and history. In it three divine persons act as one, and manifest their own proper characteristics” (CCC §648). The whole Trinity participates in Jesus’ resurrection. The Father raises him, and the Son rises through the power of the Spirit. A Trinitarian understanding of the resurrection of Jesus sheds light on the passage from John’s Gospel in which Jesus declares to Martha before raising Lazarus, “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die” (Jn 11:25-26). In conclusion, Christ’s resurrection is the hope and source of our own resurrections.¹¹⁷

The belief in the resurrection of the dead or the resurrection of the body is the manifestation of our hope in the resurrection of Christ. The Church maintains that the reality of the resurrection was revealed to God’s people in phases, so as to encourage the greatest belief possible (CCC §992). This dynamic is progressive, like the progression from the discovery of the empty tomb to the disciples’ encounters with the Risen Christ. The progressive revelation of the resurrection is twofold: it hinges upon “faith in God as creator of the whole man, soul and

¹¹⁷ Saint Paul writes to the Philippians that “He [Christ] will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power the enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself” (3:21). Not only is Christ’s resurrection the hope and source, it is also form of our own resurrections. Saint Paul does not outline how it is the form, as by a simple equation or by a transformation, only that our resurrections will conform to the manner of Christ’s resurrection.

body”; in addition to which, he “is also the one who faithfully maintains his covenant with Abraham and his posterity” (CCC §992).

With respect to the former, the Church preserves her belief in the psychosomatic unity of man, even in the resurrection of his body: “The ‘resurrection of the flesh’ means not only that the immortal soul will live on after death, but that even our ‘mortal body’ will come to life again” (CCC §990). God is both creator and sustainer, as the Lord of the covenant. Jesus himself recalls the covenant history in light of the resurrection, “Are you not misled because you do not know the scriptures or the power of God?... As for the dead being raised, have you not read in the Book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God told him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, [the] God of Isaac, and [the] God of Jacob’? He is not God of the dead but of the living. You are greatly misled” (Mk 12:24, 26-27). The dead are raised to life. Jesus proclaims that God is the God of the living. God as creator and covenant keeper prepare the path to faith in the resurrection, revealed more plainly.

Christ’s resurrection is the source of Christian hope for resurrection, and it is also the means by which our resurrection will be effected. The dead will be redeemed and raised in their earthly bodies, though they will be radically new and transfigured. I will first consider the latter, with reference to the sacramental life. In the sacrament of baptism, the catechumen participates in the death and resurrection of Jesus and is thus absolved of original sin. The *Catechism* states, “United with Christ by Baptism, believers already truly participate in the heavenly life of the risen Christ, but this life remains ‘hidden with Christ in God’” (CCC §1003). Likewise, believers are “nourished with his body in the Eucharist” and thus “already belong to the Body of Christ” (CCC §1003). In this way, the communion shared by participation in the sacrament of the Eucharist is an instance and foreshadowing of the last day on which believers’ bodies and

souls will “participate in the dignity of belonging to Christ” (CCC §1004). By entering into the sacramental life of the Church, the believer is, in some mysterious way, participating in the resurrection of Christ which will be fulfilled on the last day.

However, just as Jesus’ resurrection transcends the merely historical, so too does the resurrection of the dead transcend the limits of human knowledge and imagination. According to the *Catechism*, “This ‘how’ exceeds our imagination and understanding; it is accessible only to faith. Yet our participation in the Eucharist already gives us a foretaste of Christ’s transfiguration of our bodies” (§1000). Saint Irenaeus contends, “Just as bread that comes from the earth, after God’s blessing has been invoked upon it, is no longer ordinary bread, but Eucharist, formed of two things, the one earthly and the other heavenly; so too our bodies, which partake of the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, but possess the hope of resurrection” (qtd in CCC §1000).

Participation in the sacraments, specifically, partaking of the Eucharist, are not merely signs or symbols of the transformation which will come at the end of time, it is a foretaste of what resurrected life will be like. Christ is the only man who has been raised from the dead to everlasting life. Any consideration of the resurrection of the dead must proceed from his resurrection. It is only through Jesus’ resurrection that the resurrection of the dead is possible. Lastly, the Church maintains, “To rise with Christ, we must die with Christ” (CCC §1005). Glorified or condemned existence is the consequence of man’s participation in or failure to enter into Christ’s Passion and Death. Although most aspects of the resurrection of the dead exceed human capacity to comprehend or imagine, some particulars may be gleaned by considering the resurrection of Jesus. This is especially true in the Church’s theology of wounded bodies.

CHAPTER SIX

WOUNDED BODIES

The Church Fathers are divided on the quality of Christ's and our resurrected bodies. Some posit a body which retains its scars. Others, like Gregory of Nyssa, posit an angelic body which has no blemishes.¹¹⁸ Origen denies that Christ's body can be a paradigm for our own resurrected bodies.¹¹⁹ Saint Thomas Aquinas addresses the quality of Christ's risen body systematically in Question 54 of the Tertia Pars of the *Summa Theologiae* and the quality of our resurrected bodies in Chapters 79 through 97 of Book Four of the *Summa Contra Gentiles*.¹²⁰

Thomas argues that it is fitting that Christ retains the wounds of his crucifixion in his resurrected body for five reasons. First, it is fitting Christ's glory that he "wear them as an everlasting trophy of His victory."¹²¹ Secondly, it is fitting that Christ bear his wounds in his risen body so as to cultivate the disciples' belief in the resurrection. Thirdly, it is fitting Christ's role as mediator between man and God that he always present the wounds which won salvation for mankind to the Father when he intercedes on man's behalf. Fourthly, it is fitting that Christ's resurrected body bears the marks of his death as a testimony to God's mercy toward mankind. Lastly, it will be fitting at the Final Judgment: "Christ knew why He kept the scars in His body. For, as He showed them to Thomas who would not believe except he handled and saw them, so will He show His wounds to His enemies, so that He who is the Truth may convict them."¹²²

¹¹⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *De hominis opificio* 17.2 qtd. in J. Warren Smith, "The Body of Paradise and the Body of Resurrection: Gender and the Angelic Life in Gregory of Nyssa's *De hominis opificio*," *Harvard Theological Review* 92 (2006): 220.

¹¹⁹ Henry Chadwick, "Origen, Celsus, and the Resurrection of the Body," *Harvard Theological Review* 41 (1948): 100.

¹²⁰ For more on Thomas' theology of the resurrection and the quality of risen bodies, see *SCG* Bk IV, 297-349.

¹²¹ Bede qtd. in Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* Vol. 4 (Part III, First Section) trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007), Q.54, A.4.

¹²² ST.III, Q.54, A.4.

Thomas maintains that it is fitting that Christ retains the wounds of his crucifixion in his resurrected body.

The glory which flows forth from the wounds in Christ's risen body is intimately related to his mission as Savior. Thomas affirms, "The scars that remained in Christ's body belong neither to corruption nor defect, but to the greater increase of glory, inasmuch as they are the trophies of His power; and a special comeliness will appear in the places scarred by the wounds."¹²³ The wounds in Christ's resurrected body are a testament to his victory over death and evil. Matthew Levering explains, "The scars reveal that Jesus' power is that of the good shepherd who freely sacrifices himself for us. As trophies of his self-sacrificial power, the scars tell of his eschatological judgment and restoration of the people of God through his supreme love."¹²⁴ Thomas further argues that Christ's risen body is more perfect with the wounds than it would be without them. The wounds of Christ's resurrected body attest to his mission and victory as Savior.

The martyrs of the early Church strove to imitate Christ perfectly. In the Letter to the Romans, Saint Ignatius of Antioch unequivocally expresses his desire for martyrdom: "Let me be food for the wild beasts, through which I can attain to God. I am the wheat of God and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts so that I may be found the pure bread of Christ."¹²⁵ He pleads, "Let me be an imitator of the passion of my God."¹²⁶ The Church at Smyrna recounts Polycarp's martyrdom: "For the fire took the form of an arch like the sail of a ship filled by the wind and encircled the body of the martyr like a wall. And he was in the center of it not like burning flesh

¹²³ ST.III, Q.54, A.4, R.1.

¹²⁴ Matthew Levering, *Jesus and the Demise of Death: Resurrection, Afterlife, and the Fate of the Christian* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2012), 39.

¹²⁵ "The Letters of Ignatius of Antioch," trans. Robert M. Grant, *The Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Jack N. Sparks (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1978), 99.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 100.

but like baking bread or like gold and silver being refined in a furnace; for we also perceived a fragrant odor like the scent of incense or some other precious spice.”¹²⁷ The Smyrnaeans’ cult of devotion to Polycarp included reverence for the martyr’s body. They “took up his bones, more precious than costly stones and finer than gold, and deposited them in a suitable place.”¹²⁸ The wounded and broken body of the martyr is more laudable, because it is more Christ-like, than a perfectly unblemished corpse.

The early Church fathers wrote extensively on the subject of the resurrection, in particular the resurrection of the martyr. In *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336*, Caroline Walker Bynum observes, “The specific adjectives, analogies, and examples used in treatises on resurrection suggest that the palpable, vulnerable, corruptible body Christ redeems and raises was quintessentially the mutilated cadaver of the martyr.”¹²⁹ She cites the works of Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Saint Irenaeus, and Tertullian as examples. Bynum argues, “Thus we should not find it surprising that early exhortations to martyrdom both express in graphic (even exalted) prose the suffering entailed and offer hope of resurrection as protection against it.”¹³⁰ The crucified, burned, and dismembered bodies of the martyrs pose the greatest problem to the resurrection of the body. According to Bynum, “Martyred flesh had to be capable of impassibility and transfiguration; suffering and rot could not be the final answer.”¹³¹

The martyrs drew hope from the promise of a resurrected body so much so that they could endure the creative tortures of their persecutors. Bynum notes, however, “Irenaeus and Tertullian avoided any suggestion that the attainment of impassibility or glory entailed a loss of

¹²⁷ “Polycarp of Smyrna,” trans. William R. Schoedel, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 147.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 148.

¹²⁹ Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 43.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 45.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

the particular self that offered up its own death for Christ. Identity was a crucial issue.”¹³² The martyrs’ resurrected bodies retain the wounds of their self-sacrifice for Christ as a symbol of honor. Bynum concludes, “Resurrection was finally not so much the triumph of martyrs over pain and humiliation as the triumph of martyrs’ bodies over fragmentation, scattering, and the loss of a final resting place. And the resurrection promised especially to heroes and heroines was offered to all Christians as well.”¹³³ The early Church’s, like the Jews’, understanding of resurrection developed in light of the problem of persecution and martyrdom, but her resurrection belief extended far beyond that particular predicament to all Christians.

The wounded bodies of saints who have received the stigmata are similar to the wounded bodies of the martyrs. Understandably, the accounts of such saints are scrutinized and doubted. However, the Church does recognize the validity of stigmatized saints. She distinguishes between visible and invisible stigmatics. According to Augustin Poulain, “History tells us that many ecstasies bear on hands, feet, side, or brow the marks of the Passion of Christ with corresponding and intense sufferings.”¹³⁴ Saint Francis of Assisi was the first person to receive the stigmata. In *The Journey of the Mind to God*, Saint Bonaventure alludes, “While I dwelt there, pondering on certain spiritual ascents to God, I was struck, among other things, by that miracle which in this very place had happened to the blessed Francis, that is, the vision he received of the winged seraph in the form of the Crucified.”¹³⁵ He further comments, “This love

¹³² Bynum, *The Resurrection*, 46.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 50.

¹³⁴ Augustin Poulain, “Mystical Stigmata,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1912
<<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14294b.htm>> (accessed 13 March 2013).

¹³⁵ Bonaventure, *The Journey of the Mind to God*, trans. Philotheus Boehner, O.F.M. (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993), 1.

so absorbed the soul of Francis too that his spirit shone through his flesh the last two years of his life, when he bore the most holy marks of the Passion in his body.”¹³⁶

The Dominican tertiary Saint Catherine of Siena was also purported to have received the visible stigmata. However, due to her profound humility, she prayed that the stigmata would be made invisible, which they were.¹³⁷ The wounds of the stigmatics are characterized by: inability to be cured by medical means; lack of foul odor; and, in some cases, a pleasant scent.¹³⁸

Although many alternative explanations have been offered, I find most compelling the argument that the saints who have received the stigmata are victims of supernatural grace as a result of their profound love for and union with Christ.¹³⁹

From the perspective of Christ’s wounds, it is likely that the warriors will also retain their wounds in their resurrected bodies. The wounds of Christ attest to his mission and person as Savior. Christ’s wounds are salvific. In the First Letter of Peter, the author writes, “He committed no sin, / and no deceit was found in his mouth.’ When he was insulted, he returned no insult; when he suffered, he did not threaten; instead, he handed himself over to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body, so that free from sin, we might live in righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed” (1 Pt 2:22-24). Peter is quoting Second Isaiah’s fourth Suffering Servant song: “Yet it was our infirmities that he bore, / our sufferings that he endured, / While we thought of him as stricken, / as one smitten by God and afflicted. / But he was pierced for our offenses, / crushed for our sin, / Upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, / by his stripes we were healed” (Is 53:4-5). It is only by suffering and dying,

¹³⁶ Bonaventure, *The Journey*, 2. Bonaventure does not offer any subsequent reflection on Francis’ resurrected body in this text.

¹³⁷ Poulain, “Mystical Stigmata,” *TCE*.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

and subsequently, consenting to suffer and acquire these wounds, that Christ fulfilled his mission and is truly known as Savior.

Christ retains his wounds in his resurrected body as external signs of his redemptive suffering. At the beginning of the Easter Vigil liturgy, the priest prepares the Paschal candle. He places five pieces of incense in the candle as symbols of the wounds of Christ. The priest blesses the candle, “By his holy / and glorious wounds / may Christ our Lord / guard us / and keep us. Amen.”¹⁴⁰ Christ’s hands, feet, and sides are “held more worthy of a special cult than the others, precisely because they suffered special pains for our salvation, and because they are decorated with these wounds as with an illustrious mark of love.”¹⁴¹ Moreover, as a consequence of a long, historical tradition of private devotion to the wounds of Christ, the Church has assigned to the Friday after the third Sunday in Lent, a feast in honor of his wounds.¹⁴²

Just as Christ’s wounds affirm his identity as Savior, the wounds of the warriors signify something about themselves and their identities as members of the armed forces. Their wounds indicate a disposition toward and willingness to sacrifice on behalf of another, i.e. a fellow service member, friend, family, or for a common good, i.e. the preservation of peace, justice, the safety of others. This desire and will to sacrifice also intimates an attitude of self-giving and love. The quality of wounds in the resurrected body is shrouded in mystery. The Evangelists do not detail the specifics of the nature of Christ’s wounds; they only record that the wounds are still present in his resurrected body. Any hypothesis about the character of the wounds in the resurrected bodies of the wounded warriors remains just that: conjecture or theory. All that can

¹⁴⁰ “The Easter Vigil” *Roman Missal Third Edition*, 2011 <http://rcdok.org/_documents/Worship/Guidelines/The%20Easter%20Vigil%20Script.pdf> (accessed 15 April 2013).

¹⁴¹ Nilles “De Rat. Fest. SS. Cord. Jesu et Mariae,” I, 126 qtd. in Frederick Holweck, “The Five Sacred Wounds” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1912 <www.newadvent.org/catehn/15714a.htm> (accessed 4 April 2012).

¹⁴² Holweck, “The Five Sacred Wounds,” *TCE*.

be argued is that the wounds of the warriors will remain in their resurrected bodies just as the wounds of Christ's crucifixion remain in his resurrected body. If Christ had not retained his wounds in his risen body, there would be no reason to suspect that anyone else will either.

The accounts of the martyrs' wounds and the saints' stigmata are confirmation of this hypothesis. The early Church's cultic devotion to martyrs was preoccupied with the woundedness and brokenness of the martyrs' bodies. They confidently affirmed that God could raise the martyr to a glorified body no matter the extent of his injuries.¹⁴³ Neither fire nor dismemberment could rival the omnipotence of God. The early Christians revere the wounded and broken bodies of the martyrs because these martyrs hold nothing back from God. Martyrdom is the perfect imitation of Christ. Likewise, the saints who have received the stigmata are held in high esteem because the holiness of their lives has been rewarded by the grace of bearing the marks of Christ's wounds. While the modern world obsesses over the ideal of a flawless body, the Church worships the wounded body of her savior and those who, by virtue of their holiness, imitate him to the fullest. The retention of these wounds can be a source of hope because, in this way, the wounded warriors' resurrected bodies will be more like Christ's Resurrected Body.

However, a distinction must be made between the warriors' suffering and wounds and Christ's suffering and wounds. Christ's suffering is salvific, and his wounds are external signs of his redemptive suffering. On the other hand, the warriors' suffering is not necessarily salvific. Consequently, the wounds of the warriors are not necessarily signs of their redemptive suffering;

¹⁴³ For more on Thomas' understanding of glorified bodies, see *SCG* Bk IV, 325-328. He states the glorified body will "be entirely subject to the spirit... it will be lightsome, incapable of suffering, without difficulty and labor in movement, and most perfectly perfected by its form." Contrast with Thomas' presentation on the quality of the risen bodies among the damned. See *SCG* Bk IV, 330-334. He states the risen bodies among the damned "will be restored to integrity." However, "by its affection their soul will be carnal "their bodies... will be burdensome and heavy"; and "they will also remain capable of suffering, as they now are, or even more so."

their suffering may not have been redemptive in the first place. This does not exclude the possibility that the warriors' suffering may be salvific and their wounds signs of their redemptive suffering. For this to be true, the warrior must also be a martyr or saint. It is more likely that the wounds of the warriors are potentially external signs of charity.

On these grounds, it is reasonable to posit that the wounded warrior retains the identity of his or her pre-injured self. The warrior does not need a new name post-injury as if his previous one no longer belongs to him. In some sense, the accident which the wounded warrior suffers is like any accident suffered, event experienced, or passage of time. The warrior remains inextricably tied to his specific body, experiences, and history. The wounded warrior cannot shed his wounds any more than he could shed his personal history. His wounds have become part of his personal history. It is in his wounded body that God will redeem the warrior.

However, the wounded warrior is unquestionably changed by the accident, his wounds, and his response to living with these wounds. The warrior may now possess and have to learn to live with intellectual or physical deficiencies. Further, he may respond to living with these wounds positively or negatively. In some cases, the wounded warrior undergoes such a dramatic change in appearance, bodily function, or personality that his family and friends make a sharp distinction between the warrior pre- and post-injury. He himself may also make this division between his "old" and "new" selves. Post-injury, the warrior possesses the identity of his or her pre-injured self and the body, experiences, and history of that identity to a lesser (wounds) and greater (experiences and history) degree.

God, the creator and sustainer of life, is responsible for preserving the identity of the pre- and post-injured warrior, just as he is responsible for preserving the identity of man in his earthly and resurrected existence. The human person is more than the sum of his body and soul. The

human person subsists in a liturgical and filial relation to God. This relationship, effected by Christ, is indicative of what it means to be truly human.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST

The conclusion that the resurrected bodies of the wounded warriors will likely retain the wounds which they suffer as a sacrifice of love still poses a dilemma for the Christian. The root of the problem concerns how the wounded warriors and their injuries are perceived by others, especially by strangers. The perfection of the Mystical Body of Christ will transform the way in which the members know and love one another such that there will be no misunderstanding or derision of the injured bodies of these wounded warriors. In *Called to Love*, Anderson and Granados argue that the Trinity is the interpretive key to the communion of persons in the Mystical Body of Christ. After a consideration of Christ's Mystical Body through a Trinitarian lens, I will address the questions from the Introduction: what hope can the Church offer these wounded warriors.

The Church maintains that though the Mystical Body of Christ is already present, i.e. participated in by the faithful on earth and the blessed in Heaven, it has not yet come to fulfillment. *Lumen Gentium* states, "The Church, to which we are all called in Christ Jesus, and in which we acquire sanctity through the grace of God, will attain its full perfection only in the glory of heaven, when there will come the time of the restoration of all things."¹⁴⁴ For this reason, we distinguish between the pilgrim Church on earth (the Church Militant) and the Church in Heaven (the Church Triumphant).

The communion of knowledge and love shared by the members of the pilgrim Church is not perfect: "The pilgrim Church in her sacraments and institutions, which pertain to this present time, has the appearance of this world which is passing and she herself dwells among creatures

¹⁴⁴ LG VII, 48.

who groan and travail in pain until now and await the revelation of the sons of God.”¹⁴⁵ From our own experience, we know the ease with which we can misunderstand one another. Likewise, the selfless love to which we are called is fraught with shortcomings. The pilgrim and imperfect nature of man and the Church on earth testify to the likelihood of misunderstanding or deriding the injured bodies of the wounded warriors.

The perfection of the pilgrim Church awaits the perfection of the men who are her members. Nonetheless, the pilgrim Church is eschatologically oriented to and united with the Church in Heaven. *Lumen Gentium* also affirms, “For just as Christian communion among wayfarers brings us close to Christ, so our companionship with the saints joins us to Christ, from Whom as from its Fountain and Head issues every grace and the very life of the people of God.”¹⁴⁶ Until the last day, the Mystical Body of Christ and the communion of the members with Christ and one another will remain imperfect. Perfect knowledge and love of God and one another will be attained when the faithful are united in the New Heaven and New Earth.

In the encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi*, Pope Pius XII affirms that the foundation of the Church’s teaching on the Mystical Body of Christ is Christ Himself.¹⁴⁷ In the Gospel according to John, Jesus tells the disciples, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower... Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing” (Jn 15:1, 4-5).

¹⁴⁵ LG VII, 48.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ Pope Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis Christi*, 29 June 1943

<http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_29061943_mystici-corporis-christi_en.html> (accessed 28 March 2012) §1.

Pius notes that Saint Paul further develops this concept: “For as in one body we have many parts and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another” (Rom 12:4-5). In the First Letter to the Corinthians, Paul also writes, “As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit... Now you are Christ’s body, and individually parts of it” (1 Cor 12:12-13, 27). The communion that is shared by the members of Christ’s body is unique and singularly important. Saint Paul declares, “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of his body, which is the church” (Col 1:24). Scripture testifies that the Mystical Body of Christ consists of communion with Jesus himself, the head of this Body, and Christians, by virtue of Baptism, are members of his Body.

The Church knows herself to be the Body of Christ by virtue of her communion with him. Jesus considered his disciples extensions of himself. He “revealed the mystery of the Kingdom to them, and gave them a share in his mission, joy, and sufferings” (CCC §787). As stated previously, Jesus identifies himself intimately with his present and future disciples. Jesus is the vine, and the disciples are the branches (cf. Jn 14:4-5). Furthermore, he “proclaimed a mysterious and real communion between his body and ours: ‘He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him’” (CCC §787). Jesus explicitly affirms communion with himself as the source of life and future resurrection. He declares, “Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day” (Jn 6:53-54).

After Jesus ascends into Heaven, he does not abandon the disciples. Rather, he sends his Spirit whom he has promised. Jesus proclaims, “I have told you this while I am with you. The Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name – he will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you” (Jn 14:25-26). *Lumen Gentium* states, “Rising from the dead He sent His life-giving Spirit upon His disciples and through Him has established His Body which is the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation... Therefore the promised restoration which we are awaiting has already begun in Christ is carried forward in the mission of the Holy Spirit and through Him continues in the Church.”¹⁴⁸ The Spirit is the continuity, the bond of love, which unites the pilgrim Church with Christ.

In the Apostles’ Creed, we also profess belief in the communion of saints.¹⁴⁹ According to the *Catechism*, the communion of saints is simply the Church (CCC §946). This communion is twofold: it is a communion “in holy things (sancta)”; and it is a communion “among holy persons (sancti)” (CCC §948). The communion in holy things can be further distinguished as: communion of faith; communion of the sacraments; communion of charisms; communion of material goods; and communion in charity (CCC §949-953). Of particular concern in the case of the wounded warrior is communion in charity. Saint Paul writes, “But God has so constructed the body as to give greater honor to a part that is without it, so that there may be no division in the body, but that the parts may have the same concern for one another. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy” (1 Cor 12:24-26).

The *Catechism* expounds, “In this solidarity with all men, living or dead, which is founded on the communion of saints, the least of our acts done in charity redounds to the profit of all” (CCC §953). The communion among holy persons refers to the aforementioned

¹⁴⁸ LG VII, 48.

¹⁴⁹ “The Order of Mass”

communion between the pilgrim Church and the Church in Heaven (*CCC* §954). The *Catechism* reaffirms the teaching of *Lumen Gentium* on the subject, noting the union and exchange of spiritual goods between the wayfarers and those who “sleep in the peace of Christ,” the intercessory power of the saints, the communion with the saints, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist, the communion of the dead, and the familial character of those united in Christ by the worship of the Triune God (*CCC* §955-959).

Moreover, the *Catechism* restates, “Exactly as Christian communion among our fellow pilgrims brings us closer to Christ, so our communion with the saints joins us to Christ, from whom as from its fountain and head issues all grace, and the life of the People of God itself” (LG 50 qtd. in *CCC* §957). The already not-yet dynamic at work in the Resurrection also applies to the Mystical Body of Christ. The suffering of the wounded warriors is shared by family, friends, and fellow servicemen and women. Though the co-sufferers cannot share in the unique specificity of the wounded warriors, they do share in the sacrifice of their wounds.

For example, a wife and expectant mother whose husband was injured in an improvised explosive device (IED) attack and consequently had both legs amputated suffers with her husband by virtue of his wounds. She receives an opportunity to demonstrate a more Christ-like love, recognizing how her husband is already the object of that love. Her suffering and sacrifices may include giving birth to their child without the companionship of her husband and attempting to care for their newborn without his assistance, and in some cases, caring for him and his injuries as a non-medical assistant (NMA). However, she cannot fully and directly share in his suffering because her knowledge of his suffering is imperfect. She does not have the same experiential knowledge of the agony of the IED attack, the suffering he underwent waiting for help, the pain of being transported to the field hospital, to the regional medical center in

Landstuhl, a trans-Atlantic flight home, the anxiety over multiple surgeries, and the recovery from those surgeries.

Moreover, she cannot share in his particular psychological and spiritual suffering. Though she can imagine what it is like to lose her legs, she has not actually lost her legs. Although we can speculate on the consequences of such a violent loss of part of one's body, we cannot conceive what the ramifications this has on the body-soul union. Though she may question why bad things happen to good people, it is her husband who has suffered a worse thing. Her suffering is a direct consequence of his suffering. Though she may question why her husband lived and others did not, her husband's sense of guilt and confusion over surviving is more acute. This communion of suffering in charity between husband and wife is an actualization and prefiguration of the communion shared by the Mystical Body of Christ.

The hope of the New Heaven and the New Earth is intimately related to the hope in the resurrection of the body. The New Heaven and the New Earth is the "resurrection" of the entire cosmos. It is the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God (CCC §1042). *Lumen Gentium* states, "The Church, to which we are all called in Christ Jesus, and in which we acquire sanctity through the grace of God, will attain its full perfection only in the glory of heaven, when there will come the time of the restoration of all things. At that time the human race as well as the entire world, which is intimately related to man and attains to its end through him, will be perfectly reestablished in Christ."¹⁵⁰

In the Book of Revelation, John describes his vision of the New Heaven and New Earth: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev 21:1-2). John also recalls,

¹⁵⁰ LG VII, 48.

“I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold God’s dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them as their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away’” (Rev 21:3-4).

A response to the question of the wounded warrior can be further developed in light of the transformation of material reality, the renewed cosmos, the New Heaven and Earth. The *Catechism* teaches, “For man, this consummation will be the final realization of the unity of the human race, which God willed from creation and of which the pilgrim Church has been ‘in the nature of sacrament’” (CCC §1045). Furthermore, the Church “will not be wounded any longer by sin, stains, self-love, that destroy or wound the earthly community. The beatific vision, in which God opens himself in an inexhaustible way to the elect will be the ever-flowing well-spring of happiness, peace, and mutual communion” (CCC §1045). The implications of the New Heaven and Earth for the wounded warrior are significant.

In this new cosmic order, there will be no sin, suffering, or selfishness which are obstacles on the way to perfect knowledge and love of God and one another. In addition, because the Church attributes this renewal to the last day, the communion of the Mystical Body of Christ (the Church Militant, Suffering, and Triumphant) will be perfected. This should be a great source of hope for the wounded warrior, whose suffering and pain was hitherto only imperfectly known. Moreover, knowledge of the wounded warriors’ wounds will also be perfect. The members of the Mystical Body of Christ will be united in a communion of knowledge and love of God and one another. Not only will the members of this Body perfectly know the nature of the wounded warriors’ suffering and wounds, they will also love the wounded warriors with complete charity, retaining no derision or repulsion at the sight of their wounds.

This notion of unrestricted knowledge and love is also present in the Church's teaching on particular and final judgment: "In the presence of Christ, who is Truth itself, the truth of each man's relationship with God will be laid bare. The Last Judgment will reveal even to its furthest consequences the good each person has done or failed to do during his earthly life" (CCC §1039). The *Catechism* affirms, "The Last Judgment will reveal that God's justice triumphs over all the injustices committed by his creatures and that God's love is stronger than death (CCC §1040). For the wounded warrior, the Last Judgment may be a moment of vindication; he will be seen in light of his self-sacrifice, by which he sustained his wounds, that were frequently misunderstood or derided during his earthly life.

CONCLUSION

The recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq have yielded a significant number of casualties, and among the wounded in action, a great percentage of servicemen and women have suffered irreparable damage to their bodies in the form of amputation, disfigurement, and loss of normal bodily activity. This does not take into account other kinds of injuries, specifically, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or traumatic brain injuries (TBI). The lived experience of these personal casualties of war cannot be easily reconciled with the Christian understanding of the human person as a psychosomatic unity and the resurrection of the body as a fundamental object of eschatological hope. The interpretive key to reconciling the experience of the wounded warrior and the Christian conception of the person and resurrection is Christ.

First, by virtue of the Incarnation, Christ is the mediator between God and man. He reveals both the divine and human to man. The human person is called to a filial and liturgical communion with God. In addition, Christ, by virtue of the hypostatic union, illuminates how man can be a union of body and soul by revealing how he is a union of divine and human. Man subsists in a body-soul union. As a human person, the wounded warrior suffers physical, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual injuries. Just as the human person is neither just body nor just soul, the injuries of the wounded warrior are neither just physical nor just spiritual. The wounded warrior suffers these injuries as a human person who is more than a composite of fragments that, when added together, form man. The effects of the wounded warrior's trauma cannot be compartmentalized for systematic examination.

Secondly, Christ retains the wounds of his crucifixion in his resurrected body. This must be the starting point for arguing that the wounded warrior will also retain his wounds in his resurrected body. Christ retains his wounds as marks of his mission and victory as Savior.

Furthermore, the broken and wounded bodies of the martyrs and the saints who have received the grace of the stigmata testify to the same. Peter affirms, “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps” (1 Pt 2:21).

Saint Augustine posits, “Perhaps in that kingdom we shall see on the bodies of the Martyrs the traces of the wounds which they bore for Christ’s name; because it will not be a deformity, but a dignity in them; and a certain kind of beauty will shine in them, in the body, though not of the body.”¹⁵¹ However, a distinction must be noted between the wounds of the martyrs and saints and the wounds of the warriors. The former, like Christ’s wounds, are salvific. The warriors’ wounds are not necessarily salvific, though in an extraordinary case, if the warrior was a martyr or saint, they could be. The wounds of the martyrs and stigmatics are honored because they are marks of their communion with Christ.

Lastly, Christ’s wounds will vindicate him as the Savior in the face of his enemies at the Last Judgment. Similarly, when the Mystical Body of Christ is perfected in heaven, the injuries of the wounded warriors will be perceived justly, for what they are, by the other members of the Mystical Body. The communion of knowledge and love in which all the faithful will participate is an image of the Trinitarian communion of persons. The Mystical Body of Christ offers the wounded warriors a twofold hope: like Christ, they will be vindicated by their wounds; and there will be a perfect communion of knowledge and love.

The tension between the lived experience of the wounded warriors and the Christian understanding of the human person and hope in the resurrection need not be unbearable. A Christological reflection on the particular problem of the wounded warriors in light of the Christ’s Body, Resurrected and Mystical, alleviates this tension. My hope is that these

¹⁵¹ Saint Augustine qtd. in ST.III, Q.54, A.4.

reflections will be a concrete foundation for further theological investigation on the effects of traumatic injury on the human person and in the Church's ministry to these people, especially the wounded warriors.

APPENDIX



Fig. 1

MINE RESISTANT AMBUSH PROTECTED VEHICLE

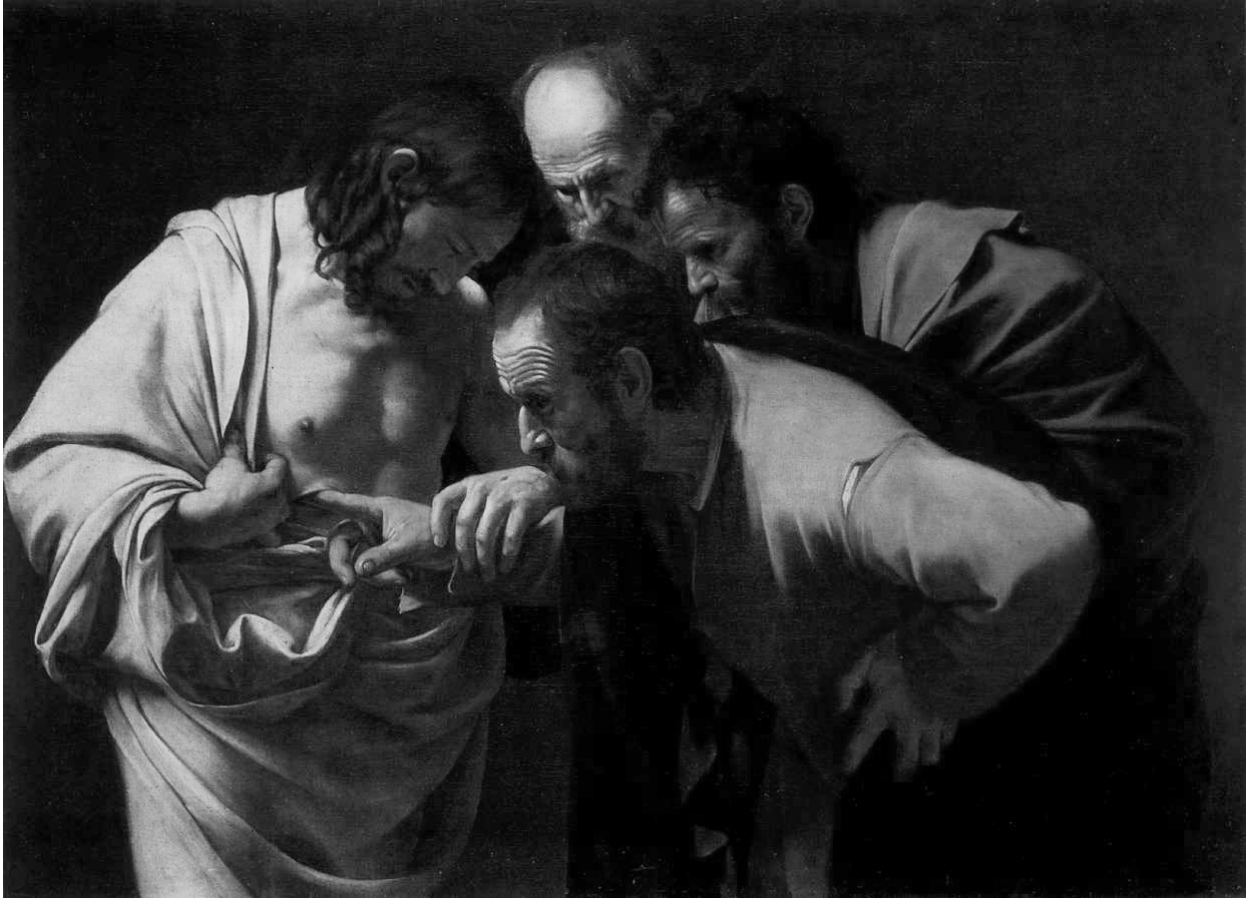


Fig. 2

THE INCREDULITY OF SAINT THOMAS

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