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THE DEVELOPMENT OF A THEOLOGY OF TRADITION:
BASIL'S *ON THE HOLY SPIRIT* AND YVES CONGAR'S *TRADITION AND TRADITIONS*

By

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Thesis

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This thesis is the product of contemplation that began in Dr. Despina Prassas's classroom in the summer of 2006, when I first began the MA program at Providence College. When reading Chapter 29 of Basil's *On the Holy Spirit*, I was struck with the reality that everything that developed in the Church could be found in seed form in the Fathers. At that point I knew I wanted to study the Fathers more deeply and to understand tradition more firmly. Because I entered the convent, I had to put my program on hold. I am grateful that Dr. Robert Barry allowed me to re-start my program after my formation as a Dominican Sister of St. Cecilia. In the time that I was away, I did not lose my interest in the idea of tradition and the desire to explore the interaction between liturgy and the fathers and the action of the Holy Spirit forming Christians. I brought with my return a love for Congar, especially in his love for the Holy Spirit.

I am incredibly grateful to Dr. Arthur Urbano for directing this thesis. His patience and encouragement as I taught full-time and worked on the thesis on the side were a great gift. I still marvel that after the entire first semester of "writing," when I gave him the first five pages of my thesis, he told me "Good work," rather than, "Only five pages?" His insights and guidance as I encountered the classical world without any Greek, or much Latin, made this thesis possible. I am also grateful for his questions and sincere interest in what I uncovered or synthesized from my two figures: Basil and Congar.

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INTRODUCTION

The Council of Nicaea is often depicted as establishing a definitive orthodoxy on relations in the Trinity in opposition to Arian subordinationism; however, the period following the Council continued to be rife with opposing explanations of how God is both one and three. As the Church struggled with definitions and teachings, she also implicitly began to establish a methodology for theological explanation or disputation, which inherently included an understanding of what manifests revelation. In this context, the role of the “rule of faith” and tradition becomes a touchstone.¹ As Basil argued for the divinity of the Holy Spirit, he used both tradition and Scripture as witnesses to revelation. This thesis focuses on the way in which Basil’s use of non-scriptural witness, particularly liturgy and the fathers, leads to Yves Congar’s theological discourse on tradition. Basil’s role receiving, preserving, and defending tradition will be shown to enhance the Church’s understanding of traditional witness, as the Trinitarian controversy develops in the fourth century.²

In Chapter 29 of *On the Holy Spirit* Basil of Caesarea appeals to tradition to defend his doxological formula “with the Holy Spirit” from his opponents’ charges of innovation. His appeal refers to both “written and unwritten” sources from the fathers who preceded him.³ He argues that ancient liturgical and customary rites and written works such as letters from Clement and Irenaeus use the doxology in the form “with the Holy Spirit.” Furthermore, Basil argues that long use and the fittingness of

1. Unless otherwise noted, “rule of faith” will refer to the context in which the Church interprets Scripture and practices. The apostolic faith, as handed down in the Church’s life, provided a context in which Christians received and made sense of Scripture.

2. I will normally use “tradition” when speaking broadly of anything handed down, or the concept as Basil refers to what is received from earlier teachers, such as saints and the liturgy. When addressing Congar’s theological work, I will use his distinction of Tradition (that which is Revelatory and is preserved by the Spirit’s action in the Church) and traditions (those data or “monuments” that preserve and hand on Tradition without being identified with it).

3. Basil’s language can be translated as “written and unwritten” or “scriptural and non-scriptural.” Stephen Hildebrand, in his translation of *On the Holy Spirit*, chooses “written and unwritten” in order to draw attention to what is handed down orally and in the practice of the faith. I will often follow him, and as he says, “[I]t should be clear that ‘non-scriptural,’ certainly for Basil, does not mean ‘unscriptural.’” *On the Holy Spirit*, trans. Stephen Hildebrand, (New York: St. Vladimir Seminary Press, 2011), 52, fn. 43.

the doxology allow him to continue to use this doxology liturgically. Basil will appeal to the “rule of faith” to support these claims.

Basil’s argument insists that received tradition and Scripture both manifest authentic teaching. Basil adds to the Church’s understanding of non-scriptural witness, and so is an early witness to what becomes the doctrine of tradition. Even if Basil’s doxology is not novel, his defense is innovative in its expression and clarification of tradition. Basil’s innovation is another witness from Early Christianity supporting the divinity of the Holy Spirit and is a precedent of arguing from tradition. This thesis will explore the interaction of liturgy and doctrinal teaching in Basil’s argument to show that his active reception of tradition safeguards Nicene orthodoxy by reaffirming the unity and distinction in the Trinity while at the same time innovating in its expression. His use of a received doxology in a novel context is challenged by his opponents but defended by Basil as a legitimate liturgical choice because it accurately expresses the relationships within the Godhead, according to Nicene teaching.

This thesis will rely on the idea of Basil’s creativity by Michael DelCogliano and Yves Congar’s “monuments of Tradition” in order to highlight the innovation underlying Basil’s argument from tradition. Both DelCogliano and Congar are interested in the types of non-scriptural theological content and its use for speculation by Basil. This paper seeks to establish that Basil innovates but with material received and venerated as tradition, such as liturgy and the teachings of the fathers. By doing so, Basil contributes both to the development of the Nicene teaching and sets a precedent for the use of non-scriptural material in theological discussion.

To develop this argument, my first chapter will examine the fourth century Trinitarian controversy. The use of the term “trajectories” from Lewis Ayres, especially, will be helpful in identifying the modes of discussion prevalent leading into and out of the Council of Nicaea. By situating the theological controversies prior to Basil’s ascendancy as a bishop, it will be possible to understand how

Basil's arguments for the Holy Spirit's divinity are related to the reception of the Council of Nicaea, and the ongoing theological debate attempting to safeguard unity and diversity in the Godhead.

The second chapter will examine Basil's appeals to both tradition and the rule of faith/baptismal symbol in *On the Holy Spirit* in order to show that Basil's appeals advance the Church's understanding of non-scriptural witness as constitutive of faith. Because this occurs in the context of the debate over the Spirit's divinity, Basil's role in the Trinitarian definition of one God (the divine *ousia*) in three persons (*hypostaseis* and later *prosopōn*) will be highlighted. This definition is the result of recognition first of the Son's equality with the Father and then the Holy Spirit's divinity. Basil argues for the divinity of the Holy Spirit in opposition to challenges that arise after Nicaea uses *homoousios* in relation to the Father and the Son.

In *On the Holy Spirit* Basil defends the Holy Spirit's divinity by reference to earlier statements of the Fathers defending the divinity of the Son. In doing so, he develops them further and so relies on Nicene vocabulary or arguments as a type of precedent or first principle. Similarly, he appeals to liturgy as a source of authentic teaching. By examining the "rule of faith" for the early Church and the role of tradition in Basil's argumentation, it is possible to see that Basil expects that, though Scripture is definitive of faith, it must be interpreted in the context of the rule of faith. This reliance on traditional non-scriptural witness allows him to argue for the divinity of the Holy Spirit in the absence of direct scriptural definitions of the Spirit as divine.

The third chapter of this thesis will discuss and define Tradition in a modern Roman-Catholic context using Yves Congar's work *Tradition and Traditions*. Congar's academic interests and work all rely upon the development of doctrine; he is one of several theologians before and around the time of the Second Vatican Council whose work consisted of retrieval of early Christian sources.⁴ Congar refers often to "the monuments of Tradition," those fragments of the Church's life and work that developed an

4. He is one of the theologians of the "nouvelle theologie", a movement in the 20th century that included theologians such as Jean Daniéleu and Louis Bouyer.

understanding of the faith, explicitly or implicitly, in the faithful.⁵ By outlining his definition of Tradition and its interaction with the Spirit's work and its expression in traditions, it will be possible to place Congar's Tradition as a development in understanding the "rule of faith."

Having established the concept of Tradition both in the work of both Basil and in Yves Congar, it will be possible in the fourth chapter to begin to evaluate the way in which Basil uses liturgy. Basil appeals to liturgy to defend the divinity of the Spirit especially by use of his doxology, but he also legitimates the use of this doxology by appealing to the Fathers and to the celebration of baptism. By returning to the texts discussed in the second chapter of this thesis, it will be possible to see both what Basil considers part of the "rule of faith," but also what Basil adds, particularly by applying *paideia* to his exegesis of the apostolic faith.

The fifth chapter will evaluate the degree to which Basil's use of the Fathers and the liturgy fulfills Congar's ideal of a "monument of tradition." The central question is whether Basil's engagement with tradition is an early point of the development of tradition, leading to the work of Congar. This paper seeks to argue that Basil's arguments in *On the Holy Spirit* become monuments of tradition, both because Basil defines the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and because his method of argumentation relies on tradition in a way that assists the Church in understanding tradition's role in Divine revelation.

5. A fuller explanation of the "monuments of tradition" will be given in chapter 3, but Congar is referring to everything from liturgical texts, works of theology, ecclesiastical customs and discipline, etc., that manifests Revelation in the Church's living faith.

I. THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF BASIL'S *ON THE HOLY SPIRIT*

In order to judge Basil's innovation within *On the Holy Spirit*, it is necessary to contextualize the Trinitarian controversy that arises after Nicaea which profoundly affects Basil's public life and work. This chapter will address the Arian controversy and the political and theological response of the Council of Nicaea in order to show that from the Council's teachings, new questions regarding the Trinity developed which led to Basil's defense of the Holy Spirit. This chapter will also outline the trajectories that resulted from the Council to clarify which elements of both structure and expression were becoming normative for theological discussion. The discussions within these trajectories will shape Basil's defense of the Holy Spirit's divinity.

Life and Work of Basil the Great

Before proceeding into the historical context of the Church and theology of the fourth century, it will be helpful to give a brief outline of Basil's life and career.¹ Basil was born around 330 in Pontus. His family includes a number of canonized saints including his parents and his siblings Gregory and Macrina. Philip Rousseau, referring to the status of their family within both the Christian and the socio-political community, calls them "a host of relatives and ancestors form[ing] a dynasty of provincial privilege and devotion."² Basil's grandmother was a Christian who knew Gregory Thaumaturgus, the first bishop of Neocaesarea, personally; both Basil's parents were particularly known for both their personal piety and greater-than-ordinary Christian charity.³ Most importantly, Basil's family had been Christian before the Edict of Milan, and his family history included perseverance under the persecutions of Maximinus Daia. At this time, the family withdrew, "to remote and wilder parts of Pontus, living roughly on the spoils of

1. Unless otherwise noted, all biographical details in this section found in Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1994).

2. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 3.

3. *Ibid.*, 3-5.

the hunt, and redefining heroism in the language of survival.”⁴ Basil’s Christian pedigree, as well as the family’s formation in piety, would affect the future available to him as a Christian and an ecclesiastic.

Basil was educated first in this home, then at Constantinople under Libanius in rhetoric, and then he went, with his friend Gregory Nazianzus, to Athens, receiving there the classical schooling expected of public figures. This education would include Greek history and literature, and the Greek philosophy that supported the entire curriculum. Though Basil received good training from excellent teachers, he was disturbed by academic rivalries and the lives of the students in Athens.⁵

Basil does not follow his education, as expected, by entering into public service; instead he chose what Gregory Nazianzus referred to as “the philosophical life.” At this time Basil is drawn to Christian asceticism through the teachers and communities he encounters. Inspired by them, he invited a group of young men, including his friend Gregory, to join him in the ascetic life, organized around Christian study at Annisi. It is possible that he and Gregory compiled the *Philocalia* at this time.⁶ While Basil is living in this community, Eustathius of Sebaste visited Basil and encouraged him. Rousseau argues that this was formative for Basil, since Eustathius was a bishop, and therefore a public figure with responsibilities of service, and also a kind of ascetic, seeking to “incorporate the ascetic regime more obviously into the life of the Church as a whole.”⁷ Around this time, Basil is ordained a presbyter, probably by Eunomius of Caesarea.⁸ Basil’s vacillation between the more private ascetic life he has been leading and the public life for which his ordination and training have prepared him is taken by Rousseau to show two essential characteristics of Basil: first, that he desired to be involved in ecclesiastical controversies, and second “his recurrent inability to get on well with pastoral associates” which was shown in some of the figures Basil

4. Ibid., 5.

5. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 37-39.

6. Mark DelCogliano and Andrew Radde-Gallwitz. “Introduction” in *Against Eunomius*, Washington, DC: CUA Press, 2011), 9. Basil and Gregory’s work on this anthology of Origen’s work shows Origen’s importance to Basil’s Christian education.

7. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 74.

8. DelCogliano and Radde-Gallwitz. “Introduction,” 1.

isolated when addressing these ecclesiastical controversies.⁹ Basil ultimately chose the more public life, and so he worked under Eusebius of Caesarea in Cappadocia. He demonstrated his gifts in the able administration of goods during a famine in the area in 369, leading to a prominence among the people of Caesarea.¹⁰ He was, therefore, a probable successor to Eusebius.¹¹ Basil's episcopacy was marked not only with the Trinitarian controversies, but also with political entanglements with, especially, the emperor Valens.¹²

Basil as a theological figure is intimately related to Basil as a bishop. From the accounts of his involvement with Church affairs, it becomes clear that Basil viewed himself as a defender of orthodoxy beyond the borders of his own church. Lienhard argues that, once consecrated a bishop, Basil, "began almost immediately to work to unify the church. Theologically, this meant reaching agreement on the doctrine of the Trinity....Politically, union had to begin with the elimination of the schism at Antioch, which at the time had three competing bishops."¹³ That Basil considered his job in Caesarea to address the church at Antioch shows a decided interest in affairs which did not directly involve Basil. It was politically consequential for Basil to make allies with neighboring regions, and so he repeatedly involved himself in the affairs of other important patriarchates. For instance, Basil attempted to get Athanasius and the Western Church on his side to condemn Marcellus and appoint Meletius as the Patriarch of Antioch, but he is ignored.¹⁴ Another incident that shows Basil's involvement beyond Caesarea is Basil's attempt in 377 to get the Egyptian bishops to reject both Apollinaris' teaching and Marcellus', both of which he condemns as forms of Sabellianism. The Egyptian bishops responded to Basil's meddling by complaining to the Patriarch of Alexandria, Peter. Peter wrote to Basil, asking him to account for his actions. Basil's

9. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 84-85.

10. DelCogliano and Radde-Gallwitz, "Introduction," 13.

11. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 147-9; DelCogliano and Radde-Gallwitz, "Introduction," 13.

12. cf. DelCogliano and Radde-Gallwitz, "Introduction," 14; Hubertus R. Drobner, *The Fathers of the Church*, trans. Siegfried S. Schatzmann (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 269. Valens is responsible both for the splitting of Basil's diocese, and therefore, the resulting consolidation of power by Basil through appointing friends to nearby dioceses.

13. Joseph T. Lienhard, "Basil of Caesarea, Marcellus of Ancyra, and 'Sabellius,'" (*Church History*, 58:2, 1989): 159.

14. *Ibid.*, 161-2.

response did apologize for not informing Peter of his actions, but then argued that he was as much entitled to meddle in neighboring dioceses as Peter of Alexandria was.¹⁵ The political maneuverings of Basil often took the form of championing the Nicene faith, as Basil understood it, which shows an interaction between the more political activities tied to the public life Basil chose and the more theological activities of his earlier formation as a student and ascetic.

Enduringly Basil's defense of the Nicene faith is connected with his defense of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Though Basil's works on the Trinity include letters and homilies as well, his role in the adoption of Nicene language and the development of pro-Nicene theology is primarily tied to his *Against Eunomius* and *On the Holy Spirit*. *Against Eunomius* was written in the mid-360s to combat Eunomius's rising influence in ecclesiastical discussion. Eunomius was the leader of a heteroousion faction; they emphasized the distinction of the Father and the Son and, therefore, the fundamental difference between the *ousia* of the Father and the *ousia* of the Son.¹⁶ Eunomius would later respond with his *Apology for the Apology*, but not until after Basil was made bishop in 370.¹⁷ *On the Holy Spirit* is a later and more developed defense of the Trinity, addressing the arguments of the opponents Basil refers to as the *pneumatomachians*. In this work, Basil's theological reflection affirms Nicaea's insistence on the shared nature of the Father and the Son. At the same time, Basil elaborates and innovates in order to address the *pneumatomachian* concern that Nicaea is modalist. While Basil is recognized, rightly, as a champion for the Nicene term *homoousios*, both with reference to the Son and the Holy Spirit, his own terminology develops over the twenty or so years that he writes about the Holy Spirit. He moves from a preference for *homoiousios* to a preference for *homoousios* at some point in the 360s.¹⁸ Furthermore, Basil is not bound

15. *Ibid.*, 165.

16. DeICogliano and Radde-Gallwitz, "Introduction," 33. The work is believed to be based on conversations between Basil and Eustathius of Sebaste, although it could possibly be an attempt to ingratiate Basil to Emperor Valens.

17. *Ibid.*, 34.

18. Stephen M. Hildebrand, *The Trinitarian Theology of Basil of Caesarea: A Synthesis of Greek Thought and Biblical Truth*, (Washington, D.C.: CUA Press, 2007), 76-82.

to the use of *homoousios* alone in order to affirm Nicene faith; he uses other terminology to explain the concept received from the Council in light of the controversy over the Holy Spirit.¹⁹

In addition to the treatises on divinity, the letters, ascetical works, homilies and other liturgical writings collected over time reflect Basil's involvement with the entirety of the Church's life.²⁰ As a bishop, he was involved in the political life of the empire, but also in inculcating devotion in his people; as a theological figure he sought to enter the discussion resulting from Nicaea's reception and ongoing development, but with a pastoral sensitivity to the people with whom he is arguing. In his last years Basil preached a series of homilies on Creation, collectively referred to as the *Hexaemeron*. Basil died in January of 379 having left a corpus that manifests the diversity of his concerns and which continued to be debated, referenced, and received by the Church.

Historical and Political Developments Leading to Nicaea (313-325)

The Roman emperors were concerned with consolidating power, primarily through a unified culture. With the signing of the Edict of Milan in 312 Constantine allowed the Church the freedom not only of cult, but also of development within the culture of the Empire.²¹ This began a transition from the unifying power of the pagan cult to that of the Christian cult as a locus of sacred power bestowed upon the emperor, and through him the empire.²² Most of the emperors who followed him did the same; they exercised their

19. More will be said on this below. See Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*.

20. It is beyond the scope of this paper to determine the extent to which Basil is responsible for the family of liturgies that bears his name, but I follow the work of D. Richard Stuckwisch accepting them as rooted in an authentic practice in Basil's church and time. *Essays on Early Eastern Eucharistic Prayer*,. Ed. Paul F. Bradshaw, (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2017), 109-130. On the ascetical works (including letters that reflect this theme), cf. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 190-232.

21. Drobner, *The Fathers of the Church*, 187.

22. *Ibid*, 191.

imperial role on the Christian Church by summoning councils, supporting or rejecting conciliar decisions, and approving or deposing bishops.²³

With the public exercise of Christianity in the empire, the intensity of theological speculation increasingly led to factions among the Christian citizens. This threatened imperial unity and invited the emperor's involvement. The Arian controversy began when the presbyter Arius taught controversial doctrine about the nature of the Son of God. At first, Constantine believed this merely a difference of philosophy, but once it spread widely enough to cause disunity impacting his empire, he called a Council at Nicaea in 325. Traditionally, 318 bishops are said to be present, and all but three signed the creed at the end of the Council proclaiming the Son of God *homoousios* with the Father. Constantine exiled the three who did not sign the creed, and he expected these outcomes to resolve tensions and lead to peace in the empire. Instead there was further fragmentation as various bishops and teachers interpreted the creed differently, and even rehabilitating Arius a few years later did not solve the theological disputes.²⁴

Theological “Trajectories” Leading to Nicaea

If the Nicene Creed is recognized as an early source of theological definition, the roots of Creed and Council are earlier. Arius began teaching some time before 318 that the notion that Father and Son are co-eternal implies two gods.²⁵ To explain the relationship between the Father and the Son, Arius taught that the Son of God was the highest of creatures, but a creature nonetheless. In 318 Alexander of Alexandria called a synod which condemned Arius's teaching as heresy.²⁶ Arius refused to stop teaching and moved

23. Ibid, 191. Emperors were not the authority within the Church, but as head of Empire, they affected life throughout the Empire, including upon the Church.

24. Ibid, 194; Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004), 100-101.

25. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 16-17. Ayres provides more of the political background to the controversy in this account, as well.

26. Ibid.

to Asia Minor, gathering more disciples from Lucian of Antioch.²⁷ Attempts to resolve the dispute eventually led to Constantine convoking the Council of Nicaea in 325.

Arius is not exactly the root of the problem, however. As Lienhard writes:

The crisis of 318 was part of a larger movement: a movement from the rule of faith to theology, from the language of confession to the language of reflection, from belief to speculation on what was believed. The rule of faith and the *lex orandi* were clear and were accepted by all. For centuries Christians had believed in one God, the Father, and in His Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit. They had prayed to God the Father through His Son Jesus Christ, their Lord. And they had baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Christians of the early fourth century looked at the Christ of the Gospels and saw one who was so much more than a man, and yet not identical with God the Father. Characteristically, the Fathers of the early fourth century can readily quote creedal statements, but cannot so readily explain them. Since Origen, no great theologian had come along to explain the faith in the language of reflection and speculation....In many ways the questions brought suddenly to the fore in 318 caught the Church unawares.²⁸

Lienhard's characterization of this period as one of transition that caused crisis is apt. He addresses different speculative "theologies" that were developing prior to, and after the proclamation of, the Nicene Creed. He argues that there were two theological traditions, neither of which could be wholly successful in answering the questions that were being asked. All sides agreed on these Christian tenets: it was monotheistic; Jesus was not simply an ordinary human; through Christ salvation had come to mankind; the Scriptures were God's word and "read rightly, they revealed all that Christians needed to know about God and His relation to the world."²⁹ While differences appear in the interpretation of all four of these fundamental tenets, the root of the "Arian" controversy is how to resolve the paradox of the first two. How is Christianity monotheistic, yet Jesus Christ is no mere human? Christianity was, "search[ing] for a way of expressing what was singular and what was plural in God."³⁰

27. Ibid.

28. Joseph T. Lienhard, "The 'Arian' Controversy: Some Categories Reconsidered" *Theological Studies* 48 (1987): 420.

29. Ibid., 420-421. See also Khaled Anatolios' lists of common elements and common negative boundaries shared by the figures in these disputes. Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea*, (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 36-38.

30 Ibid.

This central concern would affect not only the Christological controversy provoked by the teachings of Arius, but the further Trinitarian controversy provoked by the ongoing reception of the Council of Nicaea over the next seventy years. Three theologians: Lienhard, Ayres, and Anatolios, attempt to describe the varying trajectories developing out of Nicaea. Lienhard will use the language of the dyohypostatic and miahypostatic trajectories, while Ayres discusses the trajectories (Eusebian, Athanasian, Marcellan) leading into the Council and those resulting from it (Pro-Nicene) in terms of whether they seek to establish the sameness of the Father and the Son or the difference as fundamental to understanding the divinity, and Anatolios favors dividing theologies resulting from the Council into those that emphasize sameness in the divine persons as a result of unity of will or unity of being.³¹ Modern readings of Nicaea all emphasize that the result of the Council was not a universal acceptance of the term *homoousios*, or clearly defined orthodoxy and heterodoxy. Instead, the raging of theological controversy was still to peak, and it was the attempt to resolve the meaning of the Creed that would cement the authority of the Council and determine which of its interpretations became Nicene orthodoxy.

The ongoing attempt to understand what divinity is, in the person of the Son, would shape the theological question of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Given that the Father and the Son are both divine, is the Spirit another version of the Son? Does the Spirit share in divinity? In the same way as the Son? What is the relationship between the three? The question of the Holy Spirit develops from the Christological controversy and provokes attempts to define the boundaries of human understanding of the Trinity: the reality of mystery means neither that nothing can be said, nor that all interpretations are valid. As Nicene orthodoxy addresses new queries, interpretations that conflict with this faith are gradually rejected. New data such as formula, definitions, and analogies become content for speculation on the nature of divinity itself.

31. Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea*, 18-20.

Lienhard discusses two different approaches to reconciling plurality and unity in God under the names dyohypostatic and miahypostatic theology. The words *hypostasis* and *ousia* become technical terms to express what is really existent, as opposed to a quality that exists within something else.³² In the early part of the fourth century, these words are used interchangeably. After Nicaea, however, the employment of each of these words becomes narrower; the use of particular words is not enough for orthodoxy, but rather a right understanding of what is meant by the words.³³

Understanding miahypostatic and dyohypostatic positions is a way to clarify the development in the understanding and use of *ousia* and *hypostasis* after the Council. The emphasis in dyohypostatic theology is on God's transcendent incomprehensible being; His being can only be described by what cannot be said of Him. Because He is incomprehensible, and the Son is not utterly incomprehensible, there must be a second *hypostasis*, to account for the Incarnation. The Son is a creature but the highest and first of creatures. Again, to avoid diluting the incomprehensibility of God, they deliberately avoid the language of begetting or emanating to avoid thinking of divinity in a materialistic way.³⁴ Lienhard argues that underlying the dyohypostatic explanation of divinity is the Greek notion of the "great chain of being;" as long as God (meaning the Father) is at the top (then the Son) and inanimate matter at the bottom, then the line between God and creatures is relatively unimportant to their explanation of divinity.³⁵ The Holy Spirit is confessed, but not really understood.³⁶ This tradition is often associated with Arius, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Eusebius of Nicomedia. The miahypostatic tradition, on the other hand, emphasizes the unity of God. "There is one God. This one God is one real existent: one *hypostasis*, one *ousia*, and (in some authors), one *prosōpon*."³⁷ The Incarnation is the source of "plurality" in the divinity; what is human is subordinate to the Father, but the divinity is not because, "The Son, for the

32. Lienhard, "The 'Arian' Controversy," 420-421.

33. Ibid, 421-422. For instance, at the 362 synod in Alexandria Athanasius "admitted that the phrase 'three *hypostaseis*' might be understood of God in an orthodox way."

34. Ibid., 422-425.

35. Ibid., 425.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid. Lienhard is describing in this section what he terms the "typical or ideal form" of his miahypostatic tradition. His purpose is to later show how Marcellus' theology departs from this typical form.

miahypostatic tradition, is God in the same way that the Father is.”³⁸ Exactly what is distinct in the divinity is difficult to understand within this trajectory, as it has “difficulty explaining, in speculative language, the essence or nature of the Word and the Spirit.”³⁹ This tradition is associated with Eustathius, Athanasius, and Marcellus of Ancyra.

For Lienhard, the Trinitarian controversy has its roots in these various ways of understanding and expressing what is one and what is many in God. Prior to the adoption of *homoousios* at Nicaea, there was not “orthodoxy” and “heresy” regarding these two trajectories; rather, they both express a desire to preserve what has been passed down in the rule of faith, and yet both struggle to preserve what Christianity professes by means of theological speculation. Even though Nicaea does define the Son as *homoousios* with the Father, in the early and mid-fourth century, there is not yet a deep understanding of what that means; employing *homoousios* is an attempt to explain the relationship of the Father and the Son more than an explanation of what divinity is. In part, because of this lack of clarity both in the term itself and in the role of the Council for theological speculation, “The Council of Nicaea did not enjoy any unique authority until several decades after it was held. Writers in the two or three decades after Nicaea make no appeal to its creed as uniquely authoritative or to the term *homoousion* as a touchstone of orthodoxy.”⁴⁰

While Lienhard reflects on the language associated with plurality and unity to understand Nicaea, for Lewis Ayres, the root of the Trinitarian controversy is four “trajectories” that express different ways of resolving two “trends”: “In talking about the status of Son...some prefer language that emphasizes the *sameness* of Father and Son, while others emphasize *diversity* between the two.”⁴¹ He typifies the first, those who emphasize sameness, by their use of language that “predicates the same quality univocally of

38. Ibid. Of the miahypostatic tradition: “In general, in speaking of God, saying ‘one’ is always safe, whereas saying ‘two’ is always dangerous. Plurality is rather located in the Incarnate.”

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid., 418.

41. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 41.

Father and Son,” or use analogies that, “liken the Son to one aspect or feature of the Father’s existence.”⁴² Those who emphasize diversity tend to use “relational language,” that is, “frequently hierarchical.”⁴³ His approach is qualified by recognizing that all Christians confess the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and so the difference is one of priority, determining which one, “govern[s] how the other should be understood.”⁴⁴

Khaled Anatolios, in his review of the various categories of theological works after Nicaea, points to the problems with both Lienhard’s and Ayres’ approaches. Lienhard’s is too dependent on the use of language, particularly forms of *ousia*, to categorize the trends in the post-Nicene period.⁴⁵ Ayres’ approach is too dependent on what is later characterized as orthodox, and so cannot account for the differences of theology in the context of the fourth and early fifth centuries.⁴⁶ Instead, Anatolios posits that more consistent trajectories can be constructed by looking at how the various figures categorize the union in diversity that the Trinitarian formula implies: a union based in being or a union based in will.⁴⁷ Ayres and Anatolios are both helpful in discussing the aftermath of Nicaea, and are discussed more below.

The Interaction of Scriptural and Non-Scriptural Witness in the Fourth Century

As an important note on the period leading into Nicaea, the nature of authority is itself a complicated one. The Church preserved and handed on the rule of faith as it had been received from the apostolic time, and her teachers speculated about what had been received in light of new questions. In the course of these activities, the question of who or what reflects the rule of faith surfaces. First, as mentioned above, all

42. Ibid., 41-42.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., 41.

45. Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea*, 30.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid, 30-31.

Christians accepted that Scripture is the word of God, even if they did not agree on a canon, so Scripture is “the fundamental resource for knowledge of God.”⁴⁸ To depart from scriptural language, as at Nicaea, was only done with reservations.⁴⁹

Regardless of the theological faction or trajectory, the bishops and teachers of the fourth century realized that they and their opponents could both use Scripture to defend their theological positions.⁵⁰ Furthermore, in trying to explain what the Scriptures mean in light of the controversies, the introduction of language which is not in Scripture is controversial. In fact, Athanasius acknowledges that this is precisely the source of trouble in the reception of the Council; he asks about the Eusebians, “So why then, do they bring forward unscriptural phrases for the sake of impiety, and yet accuse those who use unscriptural phrases piously?”⁵¹ This concern reflects the widespread recognition that some interpretative “key” was needed in order to interpret Scripture in an orthodox manner. The key providing a context for Scripture was the “rule of faith” sometimes reflected in a particular creed or catechesis.⁵² For the pro-Nicene theologians, the creed resulting from Nicaea would gradually become an important hermeneutical key.⁵³

The concept and language of the rule of faith at this time occurs alongside an increased use of both the word and the concept of tradition. Everett Ferguson provides an in-depth study of the use of *paradosis* and *traditio* from the first centuries. In Christian authors, the term tradition is used more in the

48. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 38: “Christians insisted that the text of Scripture is, at this stage in the drama of redemption, the fundamental resource for knowledge of God and a resource that shapes how we engage existing human perceptions of the world and all it contains.”

49. Drobner, *The Fathers of the Church*, 43.

50. For more in this regard, see Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), 36. “But how is Athanasius’ deductive exegesis to be differentiated from that of his opponents? They too assembled texts to show the truth to which scripture pointed. They too argued with a similar complexity of textual data and theological assumption.... In the end Athanasius’ discernment of the mind of scripture was found more convincing than that of the Arians, but it was a close-run thing. From now on the ‘mind’ of the church, as expressed in tradition, as documented from the writings of distinguished Fathers, will increasingly come into play as the struggle to discern the ‘mind’ of scripture continues.”

51. Khaled Anatolios, *Athanasius*, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 157-158.

52. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 39, 85-88.

53. Lienhard, “The ‘Arian’ Controversy,” 418. See also Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 100, and Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea*, 18-23.

sense of the what is being handed on rather than the act of handing on.⁵⁴ The object, depending on context, might be the “Christian message,” “apostolic or ecclesiastical practices,” or some other teaching or content.⁵⁵ For instance, Eusebius of Caesarea in his *Church History* says that “Clement of Alexandria in his *Hypotyposesis* ‘mentions by name Pantaenus as his teacher and sets forth his interpretations of the Scriptures and traditions.’”⁵⁶ Here Eusebius is distinguishing Scripture and tradition from each other, but as Ferguson notes, this case distinguishes Scripture and traditions as different content, together received from a predecessor. The passing on of both written and unwritten witness as the content of faith becomes more common in this period. Eusebius appeals to tradition to promote or acknowledge the value of scriptural witness, as when he “refers to ‘the catholic church of God confirming the testimonies of the divine Scriptures from the unwritten tradition’ (*Against Marcellus* 1.1.36).”⁵⁷ Tradition can also refer to the way of life handed down from the apostles, such as in Ignatius of Antioch’s exhortation to “hold fast to the tradition of the apostles.”⁵⁸ Athanasius uses tradition to mean ecclesiastical discipline, such as when he complains about the method used in appointing a bishop as “contrary to ancient tradition.”⁵⁹ Athanasius also uses tradition as a reference to what the Church teaches as Revelation and its interpretation. “In his *Defense of the Nicene Definition* he appealed to the letter of Eusebius of Caesarea to his church, saying that what was approved at Nicaea was ‘the faith of the church and the tradition of the fathers’ (2.3).”⁶⁰ Ultimately, as Ferguson analyzes the development of the term “tradition” he says,

In a broad sweep the meaning of tradition changed from an act (delivering) to content (what is delivered) to the mode of delivery (oral). The meaning of delivery predominated in classical Greek and Latin; in Christian usage the meaning was primarily what was delivered; by the end of the fourth century the last meaning was coming to prominence.⁶¹

54. Everett Ferguson, “*Paradosis and Traditio*” in *Tradition and the Rule of Faith in the Early Church*, edited by Ronnie J. Rombs and Alexander Hwang (Washington, D.C.: CUA Press, 2010), 4, 9, 28-29.

55. *Ibid.*, 4. He lists these among others as his classification of the use of the term before moving into particular examples and works.

56. *Ibid.*, 24.

57. *Ibid.*, 25.

58. Quoted in *ibid.*, 25.

59. Quoted in *ibid.*, 26.

60. *Ibid.*

61. *Ibid.*, 28.

Basil's use of tradition, largely connected with the idea of oral transmission, is what Ferguson refers to as a "nodal point in the later development of the doctrine of tradition."⁶² The development of the term happens within the doctrinal arguments of the fourth century and becomes, "a part of the doctrines it was designed to defend."⁶³ Though Basil contributes to what becomes the doctrine of tradition, he and the other fourth century figures rarely use the term. Ferguson's assessment is that while the reality of tradition is attested to in early works, "Tradition was not '*the* term' for it—gospel, truth, faith, the rule were more common terms."⁶⁴ In examining Basil's appeal to tradition, the concept and not the word is the locus of theological reflection.

By the middle of the fourth century, neither the text of Scripture nor the creeds answer the controversy directly, and so the concept of tradition develops. Interpretations of the content of faith must happen within the believing community, and with reference to those who have come before and taught the protagonists of the current debates, even though they have not spoken explicitly on the Trinitarian controversy. Because of the arguments at the Council over *homoousios*, any language used must conform to the received apostolic faith. Therefore, intense debate surrounded the use of terms like *homoousios*, *hypostasis*, and later *prosōpon*, in the context of creedal statements since these expressions would then be used to interpret Scripture. As Ayres says,

Reading the scriptural text to discern the character of God and the structure of Christian existence involved early Christians in a constant discussion about which terminologies and philosophical resources are best suited to explicate the plain sense. We might think of Scripture in the fourth century as the fundamental resource for the Christian imagination. The phrase recognizes the existence of a variety of *other* resources and the necessity of negotiating between competing attractions.⁶⁵

62. Ibid., 27.

63. Ibid., 28.

64. Ibid., 29.

65. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 39.

Philosophical teaching and the received culture will help to shape Christian theology throughout the patristic period. In the period after Nicaea as the Council and especially its Creed is received, the interpretation of all of these sources leads to a further splintering of theological trajectories.

Theological “Trajectories” After Nicaea (325-380)

At Nicaea, the deliberations about how to describe the Son were specifically chosen to condemn Arius.⁶⁶ Referencing Athanasius’ writings, Ayres explains that other, more scriptural, terms were considered possibilities: “‘like’ the Father or ‘exactly like the Father in all things’ and as being ‘from God’.”⁶⁷ But *homoousios* was chosen to exclude Arian teaching, in part because it was vague enough to allow for a variety of interpretations both at the Council and for the next several decades. After the Council the two trajectories are not resolved, but instead they splinter into other trajectories from the struggle to understand Trinitarian nature and develop the corresponding language. Therefore, the terms *homoousios*, *homoiousios*, *homoean*, and *heterousios/anomoean* arise or continue as Nicaea is taught, debated, and received among various groups of Christians.

Non-Nicene Positions

The *heterousian* or *anomoean* positions are technically ruled out by the adoption of *homoousios* at the Council of Nicaea. These theologians, like Arius, want to secure monotheism by claiming the Son is unlike the Father. The condemnation of Arius results in this position fading for a time, until Aëtius and Eunomius of Cyzicus teach a new form around 355. Their positions are rationalistic and deny the transcendence of God.⁶⁸ Both argue that the language of generation is problematic for understanding the

66. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 90: “The term *homoousios* seems to have been motivated in large part because Arius was known to reject it.”

67. *Ibid.*

68. Drobner, *The Fathers of the Church*, 218. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 144-149. There is a nominalistic tendency in these positions that seems to result from their strictly rational logic.

Father and the Son as being *homoousios*. For Aëtius, the same essence cannot be both begotten and unbegotten, so it makes no logical sense to use generation language of God. For Eunomius, the same ‘thing’ cannot be both begotten and unbegotten, and therefore the scriptural generation language requires that the Father and the Son be separated as two distinct entities; therefore, they cannot be *homoousios*.⁶⁹ These positions result in some form of subordinationism, and are often grouped together as ‘neo-Arian’.

Homoean Positions

Though not used at the time, the term *homoean* refers to a group of adherents that were seeking the broadest possible term to maintain that the Son was “like” the Father. In the *homoean* teaching, the Son is like the Father “according to the Scriptures,” which allows for almost every interpretation to co-exist.⁷⁰ This position was promoted by Acacius of Caesarea and mainly used by Constantius and Valens to secure a loose unity of Christianity within the empire. It fell out of favor as better solutions to explain the Trinity were found.⁷¹

Homoiousian Positions

The use of *homoiousios* does not exclude, necessarily, adhering also to *homoousios*. There were people, like Basil of Caesarea, who considered it possible to say that the Son was of a similar substance as the Father, and still uphold the Nicene faith. Basil used *homoiousios* in his correspondence with Apollonaris of Laodicea to preserve the distinction of Father from the Son, rather than to identify them as the exact same thing.⁷² Similarly, the Eusebians used it in order to avoid the two extremes of “Arianism” or

69. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 146ff.

70. *Ibid.*, 138.

71. Drobner, *Fathers of the Church*, 222; Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 133-140.

72. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 38-39. At this time Basil was not using *hypostasis* or *prosōpon*.

modalism. Basil of Ancyra, in 358, insisted that there were three *ousiai* and three *hypostaseis* in God; all of them are similar (*homoiousios*). He argues that the essence of the Father and the Son can be recognized as being similar because their actions (*energeia*) are similar.⁷³ He uses the language of generation to show that like essences come from like essences, but avoids trying to explain what this unknowable essence (the divinity) is.⁷⁴ This group splits as some recognize and begin using *homoousios* exclusively (such as Basil and Meletius of Antioch), while others adopted the Dedication Creed which does not use *homoousios*,⁷⁵ and others deny the divinity of the Holy Spirit (the Macedonians or *pneumatomachians*).

The “Macedonians” emerge in the last several decades of the fourth century.⁷⁶ They are named for the deposed bishop of Constantinople, and seem to have been largely against what they feared was a modalist/Sabellian interpretation of Nicaea.⁷⁷ Though some were *homoiousian*, others were actually accepting of *homoousios* with regard to the Son, but denied the full divinity of the Spirit. Eustathius of Sebaste taught subordinationism with regard to the Holy Spirit.⁷⁸ Basil’s *On the Holy Spirit*, along with works of Gregory of Nyssa, will address the *pneumatomachians*, and eventually refine the Trinitarian language into one *ousia*, three *hypostaseis*.

Homoousian Positions

The *homoousian* position is the pro-Nicene position. Despite the adoption of this term by the Council, however, it does not become a test of orthodoxy for several decades. Hildebrand speculates that Basil was “uncomfortable” with the term because of a lack of clarity in its interpretation, but later (in Epistle 9)

73. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 150-152.

74. Ibid.

75. Drobner, *Fathers of the Church*, 211, 220. The Dedication Creed comes out of the “dedication synod” at Antioch in 341. It does not use *homoousios* because of the recognition that the term was condemned with Paul of Samosota’s theology in 268. It does affirm three *hypostaseis* in God.

76. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 214-215.

77. Ibid., 214.

78. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 215.

comes to consider it less “open to perversion” than *homoiousios*.⁷⁹ *Homoiousios* does not have a single interpretation as seen in the adoption by disparate figures such as the Athanasius and Marcellus. It was adopted primarily to exclude the Arian interpretations anathematized at Nicaea. Athanasius’ theology, developed further by the Cappadocians, is included in this group, but so are “Sabellian” positions like those of Marcellus of Ancyra and Photinus of Sirmium.⁸⁰ Apollinaris of Laodicea will also subscribe to *homoiousios*, but his theology will attempt to make the Father and the Son the same in such a way as to deny the full humanity of Christ.⁸¹

Khaled Anatolios acknowledges the work of both Lienhard and Ayres as being rooted in history, and so valuable.⁸² However, he points out a few flaws with dividing the groups according to terminology. First, the members of these groups would only have recognized themselves as either believers in the true faith or heretics. They never named themselves, and so all naming will be influenced by later developments that apply standards of orthodoxy retroactively.⁸³ Secondly, in trying to fit positions like Alexander’s, Athanasius’s, and the Cappadocians’ together, this orthodox standard undermines real distinctions and developments within the conception of divinity.⁸⁴ As noted above, the use of *homoiousios* did not imply the same definition by all figures, and so fitting positions together based upon terms is problematic. Anatolios applies his own hermeneutical key as a solution: figures who emphasize that the source of unity in the Trinity is the will of the Father or the being of Father.⁸⁵ In doing so, he foregrounds the discussion of unity and diversity in the Trinity and the attempts to come to language that expresses the experience of the Christian life and worship in community.⁸⁶ As he states, “The church of the fourth

79. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 45, 76-82. Additionally, it is politically advantageous because Athanasius uses it, and he is more powerful than Basil.

80. Drobner, *The Fathers of the Church*, 220.

81. *Ibid.*, 263.

82. Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea*, 28-30.

83. *Ibid.*

84. *Ibid.*, 29.

85. *Ibid.*, 30-31.

86. *Ibid.*, 15, see also: “I have come to the conclusion that the development of Nicene trinitarian doctrine involved most decisively not so much the creation of a certain vocabulary, or the use of certain analogies, or indeed any one thing, but rather comprehensive interpretations of many aspects of Christian faith and life,” (*Ibid.*, 11).

century inherited a tradition of Trinitarian discourse that was pervasively embedded in its worship and proclamation, even if it was lacking in conceptual definition.”

Conclusions

In the second half of the fourth century, the use of *homoousios* by the Nicene Creed becomes a critical moment in theological development as different figures interpret the apostolic faith in a way that preserves an understanding of God that is neither Arian nor modalist. As the various interpretations are clarified and argued, certain ways of using *homoousios* become accepted. While the protagonists of the Trinitarian controversy all appeal to Scripture and the faith of the Church, the ways to read and engage with these sources is influenced by the conclusions each figure seeks to defend. In the back-and-forth of argumentation, clarity on definitions is gradually reached. For this thesis, what is important about this period is what Anatolios notes: the Trinitarian debate is shaped by the teaching of the figures such as apostles and early bishops and the worship of the Christian community. Basil in his *On the Holy Spirit* will appeal to the body of Christian knowledge, written and unwritten, both speculative and practical, to defend the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Basil’s work not only expressed a way forward in understanding the relationships of the Trinity, but also provided an early witness to the doctrine of tradition which will be developed over centuries and seen in the work of Yves Congar.

II. THE STRUCTURE OF *ON THE HOLY SPIRIT* AND A CLOSE READING OF CHAPTERS RELYING ON THE RULE OF FAITH AND APPEAL TO THE FATHERS

Basil's *On the Holy Spirit* continues much of his thought already presented in *Against Eunomius*.¹ The latter is a polemical work written for his opponents, while the former is written to a young bishop, Amphilochius of Iconium, who looks up to Basil as a father-figure.² Basil had written a number of letters to Amphilochius, explaining his theological positions and giving him encouragement to work for the good of the Church; he then writes and dedicates *On the Holy Spirit* to him in 375.³ Basil had spent much of the previous fifteen years dealing with ecclesiastical controversy, theological arguments, and political maneuvering. Rousseau argues that, after this experience, to be able to write *On the Holy Spirit* as an encouragement to Amphilochius is a pleasant task, and so the tone of this work is one of, "confidence more dependent on a deep sense of what religion means...Basil's understanding of the 'place' where human beings meet their God had shifted inwards."⁴ This text refutes the arguments of those who deny the divinity of the Spirit, the *pneumatomachians*,⁵ and in order to provide arguments that would win them over, "uses none of the technical terms that the Macedonians would find offensive or controverted—*homoousios* and *homoios* (and its cognates) are conspicuously absent."⁶ Basil defends his teaching on the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and specifically addresses opponents who argue that Basil is using an innovative doxology. This thesis will focus on the methodology and sources that Basil uses to defend his doxology to show development of the Roman Catholic doctrine of tradition.

1. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 264.

2. Hildebrand, "Introduction" in *On the Holy Spirit*, trans. Stephen Hildebrand. (New York: SVS Press, 2011), 19-20.

3. Ibid.

4. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 264.

5. Two terms, "Macedonians" and "*Pneumatomachoi*" tend to be used interchangeably for those who either questioned or denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit. The problem is that there are different groups at different time periods that are grouped together (see Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 214). Athanasius's *Letters to Serapion* deal with a group in the Nile Delta, and a group is ranged around Macedonius of Constantinople, both around 360. However, by the 380s, Meletius of Antioch has formed a church which (among other things) rejects the divinity of the Holy Spirit, and they also are referred to as *pneumatomachoi*. (see also Drobner, *The Fathers of the Church*, 205, 222, 291).

6. Hildebrand, "Introduction," 23. Here Hildebrand identifies Basil's term with the Macedonians.

First, a brief outline of the work will situate the defense of Basil's doxology. *On the Holy Spirit* has a tripartite structure. In the first and last treatises (2.4-8.21 and 25.58-29.75), Basil argues about the prepositions that can be used of the Son and the Holy Spirit; he argues that acceptable phrases using the conjunction "and the Holy Spirit" and the preposition "in the Holy Spirit" allow also for the use of the preposition "with the Holy Spirit."⁷ The purpose is not solely to defend his doxology, but to submit his doxology as a proof that the Church confesses the divinity of the Spirit. In the middle treatise (9.22-24.57), Basil argues for positive statements about the Spirit that point to shared divinity with the Father and the Son. In defending the Spirit's divinity, Basil is careful both to use what Scripture says and to refute misstatements of his opponents.⁸ His purpose is to establish both that the Holy Spirit is divine, and that the Spirit's divinity is part of the Church's "rule of faith." The last treatise (25.58-29.75) explicitly defends Basil's doxology "with the Holy Spirit."

The first two chapters of this last part (25-26) show the use of the prepositions ("with" and "in") and the conjunction ("and") in both scriptural and liturgical statements of the Trinity. Basil states a preference for "with the Holy Spirit" because it is, "not easily attacked by [his] opponents," and because those who say, "that the Son is with the Father, simultaneously indicate both the particularity of the persons and the inseparability of their communion."⁹ Basil's defends the words of his doxology in order to defend the conception of the Trinity that they express: there is distinction in the persons but a unity in their nature. Basil claims his opponents, aside from not confessing the divinity of the Spirit, also charge him with innovation.¹⁰ So, he explicitly argues that he is not introducing novelty with the liturgical use of his doxology; he says that his doxological formula can be attested to through apostolic tradition and

7. For example, *On the Holy Spirit*, 25.58-27.68.

8. *Ibid.*, 23.

9. *Ibid.*, 25.59, adjusted slightly for subject-verb agreement.

10. Basil of Caesarea, *On the Holy Spirit*, 27.65: "Why then...if the word 'in' is particularly suitable for the Spirit and is quite enough for our every thought about him—why, then, do you *introduce this new word* by saying 'with the Spirit' instead of 'in the Holy Spirit' and utter words that are neither especially necessary nor made customary by the churches?" (emphasis mine).

liturgical uses by earlier figures.¹¹ Basil's argument against the accusation of innovation is to establish legitimacy for his doxology and therefore also for its theological implications.

The basic structure of Basil's argument defending his doxology and, implicitly, the use of non-scriptural sources, proceeds as follows. First, Basil claims that his practice of the faith, including his doxology, is "received" and is "apostolic."¹² This portion establishes earlier authority for the doxology and denies that Basil has innovated by using it. Basil then gives a list of witnesses to attest to this apostolicity—and/or long custom—and then concludes, "How, then, am I an innovator and a coiner of new words, when I furnish on my behalf whole peoples and cities, a custom older than all human memory, and men, pillars of the Church, who were distinguished in all knowledge and power of the Spirit and were the originators and authors of the word?"¹³ These witnesses, whether individuals or communities, are used as proof that Basil is not alone in using the doxology, and so cannot be accused of novelty on that account. This thesis will argue that in the structure of his argumentation, Basil introduces a new form of argument from tradition which elevates proof from traditional sources to that of scriptural witness.¹⁴ Basil explicitly argues for the value of non-scriptural witnesses to the faith when he says, "...if most of our mysteries are authorized without Scripture, we will receive this one along with the many others. Standing fast in non-scriptural traditions is, I think, apostolic."¹⁵

While Basil indeed is not an innovator in the negative sense in which he claims he is accused by his opponents, this thesis hopes to show that he is an innovator in his creative use and interpretation of traditional sources. This chapter will show that Basil's reliance upon the rule of faith, expressed in non-scriptural sources such as worship, custom, and the writings of the fathers, makes possible his defense of

11. *On the Holy Spirit*, 27-29, to be evaluated below. Drobner says this is one of the earliest uses of an appeal to the fathers; *Fathers of the Church*, 273. I will not evaluate that claim but note it to show that Basil's argument is an early point in the development of tradition.

12. *Ibid.*, 29.71.

13. *Ibid.*, 29.75.

14. Here and throughout this chapter when I refer to "tradition" or "traditional sources" I am using it with the notion of "received" or "apostolic" unless otherwise noted. I am grateful to Dr. Urbano for the concept of tradition in Christian *paideia*. For more see below.

15. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.71.

the divinity of the Holy Spirit. In order to reconcile Basil's claim that he is not an innovator with his unique role in the development of tradition, this chapter will rely on the idea of Christian *paideia* and insights from Mark DelCogliano's assessment of Basil's creativity. This chapter will then use a close reading of chapters 27 and 29, both of which appeal to tradition, to illustrate the ways in which Basil engages with traditional sources creatively to preserve the rule of faith.

The Terms “Innovation” and “Innovator” in Basil’s Works

Before evaluating Basil's claim that he is working within the rule of faith rather than innovating, one must evaluate Basil's use of the term “innovate” to see what he explicitly rejects. First, in a number of Basil's letters, he uses “innovation” (καινοτομία) either to defend himself against critics or to complain of others whose orthodoxy he questions. For instance, in Letter 105, Basil extols the deaconesses for, “not yielding to their deceits when you were surrounded by the great perverseness of men who corrupt the doctrine of truth, and of your not abandoning the apostolic pronouncement of the faith, turning to the innovations prevalent at the present time....”¹⁶ In referencing these men who appear to be Arian,¹⁷ Basil equates corrupting truth, abandoning the apostolic tradition, and heresy.¹⁸ Basil implies a similar definition of innovation when he is accused of worshipping three gods in his letter to Eustathius; “They accuse us of innovation, thus framing the charge against us because we confess three Persons....[T]hey allege in their charge that their custom does not have this, and that Scripture does not agree.”¹⁹ Here, Basil says that his opponents charge as innovation his “confess[ion of] three Persons,” and connects this with the use of a different doxological formula when he says, “their custom does not have this,” without

16. Basil, *Letters, Volume 1 (1-185)*, trans. Agnes Clare Way and Roy J. Deferrari, (Washington, D.C.: CUA Press), 229-230.

17. Later in the letter he says, “But they who say that either the Son or the Spirit is a creature, or who in general reduce the Spirit to the ministering or servile order, are far from the truth.” (ibid.)

18. He explains that he will teach the deaconesses, “so that from Scriptural proofs you may be able to recognize the strength of the truth and the weakness of heresy.”

19. Basil, *Letters, Volume 2 (186-368)*, trans. Agnes Clare Way and Roy J. Deferrari, (Washington, D.C.: CUA Press), 25-33.

some sort of scriptural text justifying its use. He then argues both that the words he uses do not confess three gods, and that there is scriptural and non-scriptural precedent for their use.

The letters also include a reference that Basil makes to innovation that implies it is not only the use of new words or words in a new way, but the desire to be novel, the motive, that makes one in error and possibly heretical.²⁰ Basil says that Apollinaris', "explanations concerning the Incarnation produced such confusion among the brethren that few now of those who have read them preserve their former standards of true religion, and many, being intent on innovations, have been diverted into inquiries and contentious investigations of these unprofitable words."²¹ This statement not only accuses Apollinaris of the motive of innovating, but shows that the fruit of innovation is destructive of living the faith ("few...preserve their former standards of true religion..."). Furthermore, if they, "wish contentiously to maintain the innovations," then they should be declared separated from the Church.²² From these references in the letters, it is clear that Basil connects innovation with moving away from custom and the rule of faith, putting the innovator outside the communion of the Church.²³

In *On the Holy Spirit*, Basil uses the word "innovator" (*kainotomos*) to characterize his opponents' accusations against him. "What reproachful name have they not called us—innovators, revolutionaries, and wordsmiths?"²⁴ and "How, then, am I an innovator and a coiner of new words, when I furnish on my behalf whole peoples and cities, a custom older than all human memory, and men, pillars of the Church, who were distinguished in all knowledge and power of the Spirit and were the originators and authors of the word?"²⁵ The first accusation places innovators, revolutionaries, and wordsmiths in the same category; it shows that the accusation of innovation, and the act of innovating, should be repudiated.

20. This letter, 263, is a letter in which Basil wants to convince the Western ecclesiastics to censure Eustathius of Sebaste and Apollinaris.

21. *Ibid.*, 237-242.

22. *Ibid.*

23. Basil's use of the word "innovation" in *Against Eunomius* is similar in its expressions of heresy, creating new doctrines, and departing from tradition. Basil of Caesarea, *Against Eunomius*, trans. Mark DelCogliano, (Washington, D.C.: CUA Press, 2011), 83, 84, 88, 103, 132, 140, and 185.

24. *On the Holy Spirit*, 6.13.

25. *Ibid.*, 29.75.

The second accusation draws out Basil's method of argumentation; he can furnish examples of men who have used the same doxology or taught the same beliefs prior to this current argument over Basil's doxology. Basil rejects the claim that he is using a novel doxology, and he therefore is not introducing novelty of ideas, which for him leads to heresy.

Basil's Methodology in Employing Tradition

To understand the role of tradition and the way in which Basil engaged with it, two important elements should be examined. First, the role of *paideia* which informed how Basil read texts, imitated earlier figures, and shaped his philosophy will be briefly outlined to show that Basil was writing and thinking from within a Christian tradition. Then, the creativity with which Basil engaged this tradition will be examined using categories derived from Mark DelCogliano's reading of one of Basil's homilies.

Towards a Christian *Paideia*

Basil and the other Cappadocians are heirs to the philosophical and theological concepts of Clement of Alexandria through Origen and of Athanasius.²⁶ Werner Jaeger argues that the role of Christianity as the official religion of the empire is to unite the people with a *paideia* that is as intellectually fruitful as the Greek *paideia* was. A Christian *paideia* does not just remove pagan gods and oracles from texts, but applies the same types of intellectual exegesis and argumentation to Christian texts as was applied to Homer or Pindar.²⁷ Basil participates in this emerging synthesis of Greek and Christian learning. He was trained in rhetoric by Libanius and also studied the liberal arts, rhetoric, and philosophy, in Athens.²⁸

26. Jaeger, *Early Christianity*, (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 1961), 68-73.

27. *Ibid.*, 68-75.

28. *Ibid.*, 78; Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 27-60, recounts the movements of Basil's own education and his discussions of the value of Greek education for Christianity.

Basil's *To Young Men* encourages study in the schools in order to prepare young men for study of Scripture when they are old enough.²⁹ Applying the methods of the schools to Christian texts would enable rigorous thinking about the wisdom received from Christian teachers.³⁰

According to Jaeger, the formation of a Christian *paideia* is the contemplation of Scripture in order to imitate Christ.³¹ Christian authority comes from the Holy Spirit, through the inspired writers, but also in imitation of a teacher who is guiding the student to read Scripture properly.³² Furthermore, the role of studying Scripture is to form the Christian in virtue by imitation of biblical figures.³³ Assuming Jaeger's assessment of *paideia*, Basil's argumentation seems to be influenced by this emerging Christian *paideia*. Therefore, when Basil appeals to Christian teachers, such as Gregory Thaumaturgus, Basil implies a Christian inheritance to be preserved and handed on that is as valuable as the pagan tradition passed on through the teaching of the schools. Basil imitates Gregory who, "walked by the same Spirit as [the apostles and prophets],"³⁴ and so Basil too imitates the apostles and prophets in receiving and preserving the action of the Spirit. Imitation, the evaluation of teaching and of texts, and inheritance from Greek *paideia*, all inform Basil's assessment of the tradition or inheritance he received from his Christian teachers.

Basil's Creativity According to Mark DelCogliano

29. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 2.

30. Stephen M. Hildebrand points to three streams of assessment of the role of Hellenistic thought played in Christianity: 1) Greek corruption of biblical truth, 2) Christian "takeover" of Greek forms by replacing pagan texts with Christian ones, and 3) what he calls "hybrid" theory, which shows a mutual interaction of methods and ideas between Christian and Greek forms. Basil is seen in this third stream. (Ibid., 6-10.)

31. Jaeger, *Early Christianity*, 91-93. He is evaluated Gregory of Nyssa's thought, especially *De Perfectione*.

32. Ibid., 93-94.

33. Ibid., 94-98.

34. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.74.

Mark DelCogliano argues that Basil's use of this tradition derived from the fathers who preceded him, "is always critical, selective, and creative."³⁵ Furthermore, "in many of his writings we encounter a blend of retrieval and innovation as he makes the tradition of the fathers his own."³⁶ In this article, DelCogliano illustrates Basil's use especially of Origen to show that he does not rigidly follow the fathers' opinions in all things, but accepts, rejects, and adjusts as needed to make his own theological and homiletic points. His conclusion is that Basil's use of tradition falls into seven categories that show Basil appealing to authority and rejecting what is not consistent with reason or later orthodoxy:

(1) *wholesale adoption* in which Basil borrows...without any modification...; (2) *adoption with tweaking*, in which Basil takes over...ideas with slight modification...; (3) *expansion*, in which Basil adopts an idea...but develops it further...; (4) *supplementation*, in which Basil takes over a basic idea...but adds to his reasoning or argumentation for it...; (5) *abridgement*, in which Basil summarizes Origen's ideas, to the point of obscuring the original points or nuances...; (6) *redeployment*, in which Basil adapts ideas...for an entirely new purpose...; (7) *refutation*, in which Basil brings up a viewpoint of Origen only to reject it...³⁷

DelCogliano gives many examples of Basil's critical use of traditional sources in his "Homily on the Theophany," which shows Basil does not simply repeat or compile explicit data. For instance, in questioning why Mary was betrothed to Joseph (Mt. 1:18), DelCogliano gives Basil's, "four possible reasons: 1) to spare Mary the disgrace of being thought to have defiled her virginity, 2) to conceal Mary's virginity, 3) to honor the state of marriage, and 4) to anticipate the preordained time for the incarnation to arrive."³⁸ DelCogliano says the first reason is Ignatius of Antioch's by way of Origen, and is a form of adoption. The second shows Basil's expansion or supplementation of Origen because Origen says that Mary's virginity is concealed to protect the fetus, but Basil speculates further that it is, "in order to

35. Mark DelCogliano, "Tradition and Polemic in Basil of Caesarea's Homily on the Theophany" *Vigiliae Christianae* 66 (2012), 31.

36. *Ibid.*, 31.

37. *Ibid.*, 55. I have removed most references to Origen to generalize DelCogliano's insights and apply them to *On the Holy Spirit*.

38. *Ibid.*, 33, referencing *Chr.* 3,93-119.

deceive the devil.”³⁹ The third and fourth are expansions to Origen’s two reasons, and DelCogliano speculates that third might be to specifically counter those who, “exalted virginity to the detriment of marriage.”⁴⁰ This may express a form of refutation, if in fact, he is countering this tendency. DelCogliano similarly considers examples in portions of the homily dealing with Joseph’s reasons for fear, whether Mary was a maiden, whether her perpetual virginity is attested to, and the details of the Magi and the prophecy of the newborn king. DelCogliano shows that Basil sometimes considers earlier teachings, only as, “a mere point of departure for Basil, whose comment is mainly his own.”⁴¹ Basil’s creative engagement with earlier sources, such as preaching and speculative texts, allowed him to give insights of his own based on and within the patrimony he received.

Basil’s Imitation of and Engagement with Traditional Sources in *On the Holy Spirit*

In *On the Holy Spirit* the same kind of adoption, expansion, supplementation, abridgement, redeployment or refutation is apparent. In order to illustrate some of the ways in which Basil uses tradition in this work, the following examples will apply DelCogliano’s language to instances from *On the Holy Spirit* in order to be able to refer to these same categories at points in later analysis and to establish that Basil is using received sources for exegetical and rhetorical purposes in this work. In doing so, Basil is employing Christian sources in his rhetoric and exegesis in a way that imitates the use of pagan authorities in Greek *paideia*.

One example of refutation and redeployment is Basil’s use of Origen’s exposition of the psalms. In this instance, Basil is trying to show that a received, non-scriptural text is a venerable source for

39. Ibid., referencing Luigi Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers*, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999). Connecting these two reasons to other Fathers, DelCogliano also references Origen’s fragments 11 and 13 and Eusebius’s *Ad Stephanum*.

40. Ibid., 34, referencing David G. Hunter, *Marriage, Celibacy, and Heresy in Ancient Christianity*, (New York: Oxford UP, 2009).

41. Ibid., 50, referencing Basil’s commentary upon Origen on the magi.

customary uses of the phrase “giving glory with the Holy Spirit.”⁴² Basil says, “In fact we have discovered that even Origen, in many of his expositions of the psalms, renders glory with the Holy Spirit, though he is a man who does not have perfectly sound notions in all respects about the Spirit.” In this text, Basil shows “refutation” of the ideas in his source which do not accord with his own, and “redeployment” of a text, the doxology, in a different context from the source. Basil is legitimizing his own liturgical choice by means of a predecessor’s use in a teaching context, a commentary upon the psalms. Basil argues he is imitating a previous tradition, attesting with several different instances in which Origen references the Spirit’s divinity, while creatively employing this tradition in a new context.⁴³

A second example is Basil’s repetition of the words of Dionysius of Alexandria in 29.72,

In accordance with all these, and having received from the elders before us the pattern and rule, we offer thanks in the same language as they and now conclude our letter to you: to God the Father, and to the Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

Basil sees the use of “with the Holy Spirit” and “wholesale adopts” it, but at the same time he is “redeploying” the doxology for an entirely different purpose. Dionysius is closing with a thanksgiving that invokes the Trinity, but not as a liturgical usage, as Basil’s is. Basil perhaps is also “abridging” in the sense that he does not address what exactly Dionysius means by “offer thanks in the same language as they.” Is he referring to a prototype doxology, or the custom of thanksgiving, or just literally the same vernacular? It is unclear, but the quote seems to give the force of custom to the doxology in a way that Dionysius may not have intended, but is useful for Basil’s purposes.

Lastly, the category of “expansion” occurs in Basil’s use of the prayer giving thanks for the evening light and the hymn of Athenogenes as devotional examples which prepare the way for Basil’s

42. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.73.

43. *Ibid.*

glorifying the Spirit in a liturgical doxology.⁴⁴ This example would also be a type of redeployment, in that Basil is transferring from a non-liturgical usage to a liturgical usage the doxology he is defending.

More examples could be given of Basil's engagement with the tradition of the fathers and devotional practices, but these suffice to show that Basil's methodology as described by DelCogliano is also at work in *On the Holy Spirit*. Basil's use of texts and customs shows that his arguments are appeals to the apostolic faith. His use also shows that he is employing his own creativity as he passes on what he has received. In the following analysis, DelCogliano's categories will sometimes be referenced in order to show Basil's argument more clearly. More importantly, recognizing that Basil is engaging with traditional sources in order to legitimize a liturgical choice helps demonstrate that Basil is an early figure in the development of the doctrine of tradition.

Chapter 27: Appeal to Liturgical Witness

Basil begins chapter 27 with a hypothetical interlocutor asking, "Why use 'with the Holy Spirit' at all if 'in the Holy Spirit' appears to be the most ideal for defending the divinity and work of the Holy Spirit?"

To answer, Basil takes on a sort of corollary argument defending non-scriptural teachings. He states:

Of the dogmas (δόγματα) and proclamations (κηρύγματα) that are guarded in the Church, we hold some from the teaching of the Scriptures, and others we have received in mystery as the teachings of the tradition of the apostles. Both hold the same power with respect to true religion. No one would deny these points, at least no one who has even a little experience of ecclesiastical institutions.⁴⁵

Basil writes as if his argument is non-controversial, but this statement defends his appeal to non-scriptural witness. First, he makes a distinction between what is outwardly proclaimed (*kerygmata*) and what is received in another way (*dogmata*). Later he further distinguishes between kerygma and dogma as

44. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.73.

45. *On the Holy Spirit*, 27.66.

what is public and what is passed on “in mystery.”⁴⁶ Both *kerygmata* and *dogmata* are, “guarded in the Church,” and therefore valuable regardless of whether received by proclamation or “in mystery.” Then Basil distinguishes between teachings that come from the Scriptures and those that come from the “tradition of the apostles.” Regardless, “Both hold the same power with respect to true religion.” Basil then says that the equality of scriptural and non-scriptural tradition should be uncontroversial since, “No one would deny these points, at least no one who has even a little experience of ecclesiastical institutions.”

Protecting non-scriptural customs is important for preservation of the faith; Basil asserts, “For if we attempt to reject non-scriptural customs as insignificant, we would, unaware, lose the very vital parts of the Gospel, and even more, we would establish the proclamation merely in name.”⁴⁷ Basil then defends the use of customary actions and words as valuable for teaching by giving examples of non-scriptural traditions revered in the Church. He references: the sign of the cross, turning to the East, the words of the epiclesis as well as other parts of the Eucharistic prayer not included in Scripture, the blessing of water, chrism, and the one to be baptized. Some of these customs involve words, which may be written in letters and other forms of testimony, and so are customary, non-scriptural, and written, but others are actions which are important and not written in Scripture or necessarily in any other place.⁴⁸ Basil also uses the sacraments to show how unwritten traditions are valuable:

Does it [the practices related to the baptismal ritual] not come from this secret and unspoken teaching, which our fathers guarded with a simple and unprying silence, since they were well taught that the solemnity of the mysteries is preserved by silence? Such matters must not be seen by the uninitiated, and how is it appropriate that this teaching be published abroad in writing?⁴⁹

46. Ibid., He says of *kerygma* that, “what is made known for a public and casual hearing is no mystery at all...” while *dogma* are not shared with the unbaptized, or perhaps being handed on in “mystery” means “by means of the mysteries,” the sacraments.

47. Ibid. In this section, many of the customs Basil refers to are actually not only non-scriptural, but also unwritten, unlike when he references the writings of his predecessors.

48. See the discussion attempting to classify Basil’s examples within *dogmata* and *kerygmata*, and the difficulties of doing so in both Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 140-149 and Emmanuel Amand De Mendieta, “The Pair ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ and ΔΟΓΜΑ in the Theological Thought of St. Basil of Caesarea.” *The Journal of Theological Studies* n.s. 16 (1965):129-142.

49. *On the Holy Spirit*, 27.66.

If the practices were not valuable, there would be no necessity to guard them; furthermore, they are unwritten because “the solemnity of the mysteries is preserved by silence.”⁵⁰ Basil’s categories of both *dogma* and *kerygma* as well as written and unwritten are a source of debate; this chapter will discuss some modern scholarship in order to discern what type of texts or actions he might be referencing in order to understand this inheritance.

First, the use of the terms *kerygma* and *dogma* by Basil require closer attention.⁵¹ In examining this pairing of *kerygmata* and *dogmata*, De Mendieta draws the distinction between the two; *kerygma* is “the public and official proclamation by the Church of the Christian truth” while *dogmata* is “the liturgical and doctrinal tradition refused to the multitude, namely to non-baptized Christians, and transmitted in secret to a few, namely the initiated.”⁵² He goes on to explain that the *kerygma* for Basil included, “the open or public teaching of the Church, for the content of the normal and very well known Christian faith and behaviour, the public apostolic tradition, as it may be known even to pagans and catechumens.”⁵³ De Mendieta makes his interpretation more explicit in that *kerygmata* includes statements from the Bible as well as public proclamations of the Church in the areas of “faith, morals, and discipline.” Regarding the teaching on the Holy Spirit, De Mendieta claims that kerygmatic statements in Basil’s letters include that the Holy Spirit: is not a creature, is holy, and “cannot be separated from the Father and the Son.”⁵⁴ On this reading, Basil considers the Holy Spirit’s divinity to be *kerygma* that is supported by *dogma*. The public nature of *kerygmata* contrasts with *dogmata*, which De Mendieta connects with the *disciplina arcani*.⁵⁵ By making these terms synonymous, De Mendieta invokes the

50. Basil appeals to both liturgical words and actions to denote the action of the Holy Spirit in the Christian church. This will be discussed more below and in later chapters.

51. Stephen Hildebrand also evaluates these three scholars: De Mendieta, Hanson, and Florovsky in order to establish what *kerygmata* and *dogmata* mean for Basil. His argument is that there is legitimate difficulty, and that there is reason to connect *kerygmata* often with scriptural sources and *dogmata* with liturgical ones. *Trinitarian Theology*, 142-149. In the following, I analyze the three sources directly, along with Hildebrand’s assessment.

52. De Mendieta, “The Pair KHPTTMA and ΔΟΓΜΑ,” 133.

53. *Ibid.*, 134.

54. *Ibid.*, 135.

55. Not all scholars agree with this assessment, for instance, R.P.C. Hanson argues that Basil’s *dogmata* includes both the *disciplina arcani* and a “practice of reserve in communicating advanced or difficult doctrine, so that weak or badly educated Christians should not be shocked or upset...” “Basil’s Doctrine of Tradition”, 250-251.

mystagogical tradition of the ancient Church. He argues that the *dogma* being received “in mystery” is not a claim that these teachings are handed down “in secret” like Gnostic teachings, but rather “in secrecy” in that they are proclaimed to the initiated.⁵⁶ De Mendieta concludes,

Basically the Basilian *dogma* is the Church liturgical tradition, implying the knowledge of the theological doctrines contained in this tradition. In the context of section 66 (ch. xxvii), τὰ δόγματα are practically synonymous with the total complex of ‘unwritten’ customs and practices, τὰ ἄγραφα τῶν ἐθῶν, or, in fact, with the whole structure of liturgical and sacramental life, covered and protected at this time by the *disciplina arcani*.⁵⁷

If De Mendieta is correct, not only that which is received would be *dogma*, but also that process of reception (“the whole structure of liturgical and sacramental life”) is also *dogma*. Therefore, De Mendieta claims, “the second and derivative meaning of δόγμα...is the theological interpretation or significance of these rites and liturgical prayers and customs.”⁵⁸ De Mendieta gives two classes or layers to these *dogmata*; one of which is for the general community of baptized Christians, and one for ascetics who are particularly given to “living a quiet and pious life in silence.”⁵⁹ All *dogmata* must be both implied by the “sacraments, liturgical rites, and customs of the Church, and must be consonant with the clear teaching of Scripture.”⁶⁰

De Mendieta’s analysis of *kerygmata* and *dogmata* could be expressed as: *kerygmata* are public proclamations, available to all, which may be written or not while *dogmata* are everything that is passed down to only the initiated as well as the teachings implied by them. Therefore, *kerygmata* is available even to non-Christians as a source of teaching, while *dogmata* are reserved for initiated Christians. Basil

56. De Mendieta, “The Pair ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ and ΔΟΓΜΑ,” 135-6. See also Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 145; Georges Florovsky, “The Function of Tradition,” *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 9 (1963), 195-6.

57. Ibid., 135. Note that De Mendieta says “covered and protected” by the *disciplina arcani*; he is not equating this discipline with liturgical tradition. The tradition seems to be both large and of greater depth than the discipline of worship.

58. Ibid., 136 and the definition on 137:” [A]n important theological doctrine implied in a liturgical custom (as, for instance, a Trinitarian doxology), rite, or prayer. This doctrine, which must be in agreement with the clear meaning of the New Testament, and be recognized as a Church doctrine by her best and orthodox theologians, is, however, not (or not yet) officially proclaimed by a formal and dogmatical definition (or κηρύγμα) of the Church.”

59. Ibid., 136.

60. Ibid., 138-139.

appeals to unwritten sources, including his *dogmata*, because they are the inheritance of Christians, though not publically proclaimed like Scripture. Basil's distinction between scriptural and non-scriptural sources does not imply that one is more valuable for teaching.

R.P.C. Hanson, however, sees in Basil's use of extra-scriptural authority a weakness in Basil's doctrine of the Holy Spirit.⁶¹ He argues that Basil is not simply asserting that Scripture has to be read with the "mind of the church" and that there is apostolic provenance for passing down and preserving liturgical customs, but that Basil is claiming a secret tradition that derives in whole from the apostles and has been perfectly preserved from their time.⁶² Hanson sees this as an appeal to sources which cannot be corroborated done because scriptural sources are lacking.⁶³ Hanson's argument does not seem to give full weight to Basil's plentiful use of scriptural and written witness in conjunction with the *disciplina arcani*. However, Hanson's argument that Basil would prefer to have greater resources of Scripture about the divinity of the Holy Spirit,⁶⁴ is not only just, but reflects the emphasis on scriptural authority that arose in the Church especially in the wake of the questions that arose from Nicaea's reception. Hanson, like De Mendieta, sees Basil's appeal to *dogmata* as an appeal to tradition even if, unlike De Mendieta, he views it as an invalid appeal.

A central confusion in how to define *dogmata* is whether Basil's words are translated "in mystery" or "in secret" or "in silence." Hildebrand analyzes the positions of both De Mendieta and Hanson, finding neither fully satisfactory, and then introduces Georges Florovsky's study of tradition in

61. R.P.C. Hanson, "Basil's Doctrine of Tradition," (*Vigiliae Christianae* 22, 1968), 252.

62. Ibid. Hanson is arguing that there are better ways of establishing the authority of tradition than an appeal to "secret tradition." He will go on in this text to use Gregory of Nazianzus' appeal to exegesis as a better model.

63. Hanson even says, "it was a doctrine which was destined to cause a great deal of confusion and mischief in later ages." 253.

64. Hanson, "Basil's Doctrine of Tradition", 252-3. Hanson argues that Eustathius insisted so much on scriptural documentation that Basil was forced to invent a doctrine in order to counter Eustathius. Hanson's analysis of the situation seems to be correct, but not Basil's response. It is clear that Basil appeals to tradition in other places, such as his letters, which are not countering Eustathius's arguments, as can be seen in some of the analysis of the letters, above.

the early Church.⁶⁵ Hildebrand claims, following Florovsky and against Hanson, that what Basil is emphasizing is not how widely known a particular aspect of the faith is, but rather the method of transmission. Basil places emphasis on a liturgical transmission, which by definition is only to those within the Church, as opposed to written and proclaimed truths which are shared even with those who are not yet initiated. Furthermore, Florovsky insists on the interior connection between Scripture and tradition for the early Church. He says, “For that reason Tradition, the tradition of faith as handed down through generations, was for St. Basil an indispensable guide and companion in the study and interpretation of the Holy Writ....The *viva vox Evangelii* was indeed not just a recitation of the words of the Scripture. It was a proclamation of the Word of God, as it was heard and preserved in the Church, by the ever abiding power of the quickening Spirit.”⁶⁶ So, what can be said about *dogma* is: its transmission is more private than *kerygma*, is transmitted at least to some degree with or within the liturgy, and is valuable as a source for Christian teaching and speculation.

Furthermore, Basil says that *dogma* is handed down not only “in mystery”, but also “as the teachings of the traditions of the apostles.”⁶⁷ This apostolic provenance, for Basil, is not an attempt to claim the origin of a particular custom in a particular (or all twelve) apostle(s), rather Basil is claiming that the Church is apostolic, and is maintaining her traditions as the apostles have ordained. This argument will be explained more fully, below, in the section on chapter 29.

Basil’s argument is developed in the next paragraph with an appeal to liturgical tradition. He says,

If from the tradition of baptism we make a confession similar to baptism (according to the logic of piety, as we baptize, so we ought to believe), then let them grant to us from this same logic to give glory in a way similar to our confession. But if we reject this way of giving glory as non-

65. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 144-146, quoting and discussing Georges Florovsky, “The Function of Tradition.”

66. Florovsky, “The Function of Tradition,” 197.

67. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 27.66.

scriptural, let them give to us the scriptural proof of the confession of faith and the other points that we listed.⁶⁸

Again, the assumptions within this one statement are multiple. First, Basil assumes a principle similar to Prosper of Aquitaine's *lex orandi, lex credendi* (for Basil, "as we baptize, so we ought to believe"). Basil is specifically invoking the baptismal formula and saying that if belief must follow the professed faith of baptism, which is central to Basil's conception and explanation of salvation, then any prayer ("giving glory") must also accurately reflect the Church's faith. Furthermore, if an opponent dismisses the authority which Basil claims for his doxology, then this opponent must also find the confession of faith for baptism within Scripture in order to prove *its* authority. The full logic of the corollary is stated explicitly: "Now, let them teach us not to baptize as we have received, or not to believe as we have been baptized, or not to give glory as we have believed. Let someone prove either that the coherence of these with each other is not necessary and unbroken or that the introduction of novelty among them is not the dissolution of the whole."⁶⁹ Basil's argument is both positive and negative in its approach. He concedes that his doxology is non-scriptural, but requires his opponents to be consistent and prove all the customs and formulae they acknowledge are explicitly stated in Scripture. His positive contribution is to argue not just that non-scriptural witness is valid, as he will do elsewhere, but to argue that liturgical and customary practices do express and teach the faith of the Church. Because Basil assumes his opponents will concede this point rather than argue it, the principle seems established in custom, if not generally acknowledged in theological argumentation. Basil's contribution is to use this principle of believing according to one's baptism to ground his argument that the Holy Spirit is accorded "equal glory" with the Father later in the treatise.

68. *Ibid.*, 27.67.

69. *Ibid.*, 27.68

Chapters 28 and 29: Appeals to the Fathers

In chapter 28, Basil gives scriptural defense of the use of the phrase “with the Holy Spirit” by showing that in various places man will be “with” Christ or “with God,” and so how much more can we say that the Holy Spirit is “with God” or “with Christ.” A few of Basil’s scriptural examples from this section will suffice. Paul says, “he made you to live together in Christ” (Col 2.13), and Basil argues the interpretation is that the dead are “with Christ” and have life in Christ, but his opponents then deny to the Spirit what they would readily concede to the saints.⁷⁰ He also says, “The life of those who hope in the Lord, it seems, ‘is hidden with Christ in God,’ and ‘when Christ, our life appears, then they will appear with him in glory (Col 3.3-4). Is the very Spirit of life, who makes us free from the law of sin, in no way with Christ, either in the unnoticed and hidden life with him or in his manifestation in glory...?’”⁷¹ He also contrasts the promise that all believers will be “glorified with Christ” (Rom 8.17) and “reign with Him” (cf. 2Tim 2.12), but refuse to allow glory and power to the Spirit. This argument seems to equate the promise of glory and reigning given to men in Christ to the giving of equal glory to the Spirit, but Basil is actually arguing that the Spirit should be accorded greater dignity than men because the Spirit is the source of mankind’s life and sanctification. He says, “[w]e invoke him as the source of life and despise him as a fellow-slave. We receive him with the Father and the Son, and dishonor him as a part of creation.”⁷² Here Basil moves closer to his rhetorical end: to establish “equal glory” (*homotimos*) with the Father and the Son in prayer, which will allow Basil to defend the divinity of the Spirit. In arguing for this equal glory (*homotimos*), Basil is claiming that the way we acknowledge the Spirit in prayer shows us what we think the Spirit *is*. If the only options for giving glory are the glory given to saints and angels, and the glory due to God alone, then Basil’s argument works and is sufficient. However, it seems that his opponents could use similar arguments to those advanced by the Arians that the Spirit is the highest of creatures. Basil therefore cannot allow this argument to stand alone in making a case for the divinity of

70. Ibid., 28.69.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid., 28.70.

the Spirit, but he uses it alongside other arguments to demonstrate what is at stake in Basil's doxology so that Basil can appeal to the words of the fathers in showing this *homotimos* in their writing and prayer.

Basil rationally defends his argument from antiquity to establish his doxology as legitimate. He says, "If we were clearly to demonstrate to you that a long period of time supports our case, would we not seem reasonable to you to say that the case against us cannot be maintained? For ancient dogmas are somehow venerable, as if they can arouse respect by a sort of grey antiquity."⁷³ This argument has four distinct elements that, together, make a justification of "long custom" acceptable. These elements are as follows: 1) long custom, 2) many witnesses to the custom, 3) given "in mystery" and received, according to the injunction of St. Paul, and 4) originating in apostolic authority. By examining these elements of the argument, it is possible to recognize both Basil's acceptance of tradition and his innovation in engaging with it.

First, Basil advances a negative argument against the necessity of only using scriptural language and practices for worship:

In response to the claim that giving glory with the Spirit is unattested and non-scriptural, we say that if nothing else is non-scriptural, then this should not be received either, but that if most of our mysteries are authorized without Scripture, we will receive this one along with the many others. *Standing fast in non-scriptural traditions is, I think, apostolic.*⁷⁴

Basil justifies why non-scriptural traditions are, in fact, apostolic with two quotations from St. Paul's epistles. First Corinthians states, "I praise you that you remember me in all things, and hold fast to the traditions, just as I have handed on to you" (1 Cor 11.2). He also quotes, "Keep the traditions that you have received, either by word or by letter" (2 Thess 2.15). With these quotes, Basil emphasizes two aspects of "traditions" in St. Paul. First, that these traditions are *received* and *apostolic*. He calls the apostles, "those, who arranged it from the beginning and handed it over to their successors," implying it is valuable both in its origin "arranged from the beginning" and in being received and preserved when it was

73. *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.71.

74. *Ibid.*, 29.71, (emphasis mine).

“handed...over.”⁷⁵ Furthermore, Basil finds his doxology spoken and written by other saintly men, who are to be revered, “both because of their antiquity and because of their exactness in knowledge.”⁷⁶ Second, Basil emphasizes the *custom or long use* of practices, in this case of the doxology. He says the doxology has been, “implanted in the churches by long custom,” and that, “ancient dogmas are somehow venerable, as if they can arouse respect by a sort of grey antiquity.”⁷⁷ In a sense, this second emphasis seems to imply the first, since Basil explains that lasting customs are tacitly approved by all of those who participate or are witness to them when he explains the practice of thanksgiving for evening light. “...[W]e cannot say who is the father of those words of thanksgiving at the lighting of the lamp. Yet the people put forth the expression as an ancient one, and no one ever considered them impious when they said, ‘we glorify the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit of God.’”⁷⁸ Therefore, a long-lasting custom’s preservation implies approval and value, even if the source is unknown. Importantly this helps to establish unwritten authority, since many customs and practices are unwritten but received from a teacher in the faith.

Basil’s teacher from whom he received customary action was sometimes Gregory the Wonderworker, who established the Church at Neocaesarea. Basil explicitly defends the value of his witness saying,

“Where shall we put Gregory the Great and his words? Why not with the apostles and the prophets? He is a man who walked by the same Spirit as they, who walked his whole life in the footsteps of the saints, who successfully kept the demands of the Gospel’s way of life for his whole life. Because of the co-working of the Spirit he held a fearful power over demons, and he was graced with such an eloquence ‘for obedience of faith among the nations’ (Rom 1.5), that though he started with only seventeen Christians, he led the whole people, both in the city and in the country, through knowledge to God.”⁷⁹

75. *Ibid.*, 29.71. This seems to be in line with Irenaeus’s arguments that scripture and the rule of faith which allows it to be interpreted are only possible within the believing Church, see Florovsky, “The Function of Tradition,” 183-188. Florovsky’s argument in this section that Irenaeus and Tertullian were both adopting the idea of having to read the scriptures within the “mind of the Church” in the same way that students read Homer by means of received teaching is convincing.

76. *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.71.

77. *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.71.

78. *Ibid.*, 29.73.

79. *Ibid.*, 29.73.

In this quote, which is followed by more examples of Gregory's miracles and lasting devotion of the Church of the region, Basil is advancing proofs of Gregory's value as origin of the regional church and teacher, and as Basil's own father in the Christian faith. First, he argues Gregory's faith is an imitation of the apostles and therefore a source of apostolic faith because he "walked by the same Spirit as they." Second, the Spirit is shown working in Gregory because of the works which he does such as having "power over demons" and working miracles. Third, the fruit of Gregory's work in the Church is that it grew from seventeen Christians into a larger regional Church, which reveres his memory. Basil is arguing that the fruit of Gregory's life and work establishes him as worthy of imitation because the Holy Spirit worked through him as through the apostles. Gregory imitated the apostles and passed on an inheritance to Basil, and therefore this inheritance, including the doxology, is apostolic.⁸⁰ That Gregory is even able to imitate the apostles is because of the power of the Spirit. Therefore, not only Gregory's doxology, but Gregory's person attests to the divinity of the Spirit.

When Basil invokes the tradition he has received from Gregory in customary actions and words, he is adding to his argument about *dogmata*. Basil said *dogmata* were teachings that, "we have received in mystery as the teachings of the tradition of the apostles."⁸¹ Whether the "in mystery" means not written down or by means of the sacraments, Basil is arguing that the act of passing liturgical customs down is of apostolic origin, and Basil reads Paul's statements in this manner. Basil may also claim that doctrinal or moral teachings are valid when passed down from one to another, but Basil specifically invokes this principle to defend liturgical words. By invoking St. Paul, he is giving apostolic provenance not only to the teachings received themselves (such as his doxology), but also to the *custom of receiving* what has been preserved by the Church through generations.⁸² When this is joined with his argument from the fathers in chapter 28, the authority of unwritten sources is stronger. The customs are venerable from long

80. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.71: "I...guard this word as a paternal inheritance..."

81. *Ibid.*, 27.66.

82. Gribomont qtd. in Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 147-148.

use, as an imitation of the teachers who came before, and because the custom of reception from these earlier sources is attested to scripturally.

Establishing reception as an apostolic teaching allows for a flexibility beyond customs handed on by the apostles themselves. For Basil, “‘Apostolic’ means consistent with the teaching of the apostles preserved in the Fathers.”⁸³ Apostolic teaching is not only derived in the apostolic period, but the act of preservation and transmission itself is both apostolic and bestows value upon what is preserved and transmitted because it is the inheritance of the apostolic faith. As problems such as the Trinitarian controversy arose, new words were needed to guarantee that old ideas were preserved. It is in this that Basil was able to innovate within the rule of faith. The liturgical rites and the apostolic teaching shape what one says about God and the faith; the rule of faith guides the interpretation of scriptural and non-scriptural teaching.

After Basil’s defense of long custom as apostolic, Basil addresses the second element of the four in 29.71: many witnesses. He points out that when several people attest to something, it is more likely to be accepted as truthful. Basil compares this to legal witness: “Why, then, if we furnish a plethora of witnesses against you, as in a courtroom when we have no proof in writing, would we not obtain a vote of acquittal from you. I think so, for ‘every word will stand on the mouth of two or three witnesses’ (Dt 19.15).”⁸⁴ Basil argues that a practice which has continued over time, without contention, has therefore been “witnessed to” by the tacit approval of all accustomed to it. Furthermore, everyone does not have to approve or practice the same customs. As Hildebrand states:

...Basil is not naïve. He has shown, e.g., in his canonical letters to Amphilochius, that he is “very knowledgeable of the variety and flexibility of customs.” Basil “loves to join in one voice ‘the Apostles and the Fathers;’” thus he expresses the continuity so important to tradition and to his vision of the Church’s unity in history. “Apostolic” means consistent with the teaching of the apostles preserved in the Fathers.⁸⁵

83. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 148.

84. *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.71.

85. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 148, in an analysis of Gribomont.

This unity is not a formal unity expressed by universal customs, but a unity based on the rule of faith handed down from the apostolic church which informs customs. Throughout the treatise, Basil insists different doxologies are acceptable because they emphasize different truths about the faith.⁸⁶ Because traditions vary, Basil's argument recognizes the value both of preserving local tradition and of different expressions of the apostolic faith. For instance, earlier he defended the use of both "in the Holy Spirit" and "with the Holy Spirit" saying, "And so, where the communion is proper, naturally united, and inseparable, 'with' is the more meaningful word since it suggests the thought of inseparable communion, but where the grace of the spirit naturally is added and taken away again, 'exist in' is properly and truly spoken..."⁸⁷ Each viable expression is fruitful for some understanding of the faith, but none have to stand alone in teaching the entirety of the faith. Therefore, these varied customs from antiquity, so long as they have "many witnesses," are legitimate expressions of the "rule of faith."

The next two elements are necessarily united: that the tradition is received "in secret" or "in mystery" from an authoritative source. Basil explains that he received it from a teacher who bequeathed to him all that he himself had received. "I...guard this word as a paternal inheritance, since I received it from a man who spent his life in the long service of God. I was baptized by him and introduced to the ministry of the Church by him."⁸⁸ Basil is arguing for Gregory's legitimacy as a Christian model and teacher, and for the "rule of faith" since he received this inheritance in Baptism. Georges Florovsky says,

"When Christians spoke of the 'Rule of Faith' as 'Apostolic', they did not mean that the Apostles had met and formulated it... What they meant was that the profession of belief which every catechumen recited before his baptism did embody in summary form the faith which the Apostles had taught and had committed to their disciples to teach after them. This profession was the same everywhere, although the actual phrasing could vary from place to place. It was always intimately related to the baptismal formula."⁸⁹

86. For instance, 25.59, 26.62, 26.64. In each of these assessments of prepositions, Basil values each for a different truth it expresses about the Holy Spirit.

87. *On the Holy Spirit*, 26.63.

88. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.71.

89. Florovsky, "The Function of Tradition," 183, quoting C.H. Turner.

Basil is defending his own adherence to his doxology as part of the patrimony given to him by his bishop, whose role in the Church was to teach the “rule of faith.”

Knowing that one witness would not content his opponents, Basil proceeds to enumerate examples of other men of “antiquity” that have used both doxologies. His purpose is to show that, “Of these men, some united the words of the doxology with the preposition, others, with the conjunction, but they were not thought to make any distinction, at least when it comes to the right thinking in religion.”⁹⁰ First, Basil refers to quotes from the works of Irenaeus (180), Clement of Rome (96), Dionysius of Rome (d. 268), and Dionysius of Alexandria (d.265), all of whom are venerated as teachers of the faith from the first three centuries, and therefore worthy of imitation.⁹¹ Basil’s employment of these sources in his argument is creative; each gives honor and glory to the Spirit or uses the doxology Basil uses, but not in Basil’s context of the Trinitarian controversy.⁹²

Basil’s quote from Dionysius of Alexandria is particularly crafty in that it illustrates several different arguments Basil is making. Dionysius wrote in a letter,

In accordance with all these, and having received from the elders before us the pattern and rule, we offer thanks in the same language as they and now conclude our letter to you: to God the Father, and to the Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.⁹³

This quotation refers to the reception of tradition (“having received from the elders before us the pattern and rule”), liturgical or devotional usage (“we offer thanks in the same language as they”) and Basil’s doxology (“to God the Father, and to the Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit be glory and

90. *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.71.

91. *Ibid.*, 29.72. While several of the quotes are accurate to the works, as seen from Hildebrand’s footnotes, it is unclear if Basil is interpreting them in the way the authors intended. Basil would not be concerned with that restriction, however, as what they actually say and how they can be interpreted by the rule of faith is his primary concern. For more on the doxologies in use at the time in reference to Basil’s doxology see Josef Jungmann, *The Place of Christ in Liturgical Prayer*, 172-190 and, below, in chapter 3.

92. This might best be described as a mixture of DelCogliano’s expansion, in which Basil take over an idea and develops it, and supplementation, in which Basil takes the main idea and adds arguments for it. With these sources, Basil is seeking to show an understanding in the fathers that was not the argument they were making in the letter or text.

93. Quoted in *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.72.

power for ever and ever”). Basil’s use of Dionysius seems to support Basil’s use of the doxology in a liturgical context, because of its appeal to received custom in a liturgical context.

What Basil establishes with these quotations is that the Holy Spirit is united to the Father and the Son, and therefore does receive equal glory in the way the fathers speak of him. Basil is layering the argument about the witness of tradition with the arguments of the divinity of the Holy Spirit that he put forward earlier in *On the Holy Spirit*. This proceeds logically from his, and the ancient world’s, conception of the “rule of faith.” Basil is proving both his orthopraxy in using the doxology and his orthodoxy in teaching its meaning within one dense rhetorical structure. Basil’s layering has the effect of illustrating the prevalence of the lived rule of faith in the Church because he does not only appeal to “theological” sources and genres, but also to those that are more customary or casual, such as this letter from Dionysius. Any source may be part of tradition, if it is passed down and transmits the rule of faith. Basil does not limit the sources of tradition to what is formally and explicitly passed down. This would seem to be an innovation beyond simply admitting non-scriptural texts for argument. The witness of holiness of life and right understanding of the faith of earlier figures situates all of their writings and teachings as potential bearers of the rule of faith: tradition.

Basil then makes careful references to Origen and to the historian Julius Africanus. He shows that Origen did give glory, “with the Holy Spirit, though he is a man who does not have perfectly sound notions in all respects about the Spirit.”⁹⁴ This statement is interesting, in that it shows that Basil is willing to use Origen’s works because of his importance, even if some of his ideas were controversial. Basil says, “Moreover, in many places he himself was constrained by the force of custom and put forth orthodox words about the Spirit... Thus, I think, the strength of tradition often leads men to contradict their own teachings.”⁹⁵ Basil qualifies his use of Origen, so as to not give his opponents an opportunity to accuse him of teachings now disputed. He does not want them to equate all of Origen’s teachings with

94. *Ibid.*, 29.73.

95. *Ibid.*

Basil's, but only those that witness to the rule of faith and support the Spirit's divinity. This shows that Basil has an idea of what is and is not attested to by the rule of faith, but also illustrates the difficulty of discerning tradition. Basil's rejection of Origen's disputed teachings illustrates the role of reception in discerning what belongs to the apostolic faith.

Basil ends his argument with the rhetorical question: "How then am I an innovator and a coiner of new words, when I furnish on behalf of whole people and cities, a custom older than all human memory, and men, pillars of the Church who were distinguished in all knowledge and power of the Spirit and were the originators and authors of the word?"⁹⁶ He argues his custom has four defenses: 1) there are saints who have used this doxology, 2) it has been received and preserved communally, 3) custom has confirmed it by long usage (without controversy), and 4) it has a "pious and holy" meaning.⁹⁷ The last of his defenses seems circular. It would appear Basil defends his doxology because it is a defense of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Yet, he is claiming this "pious and holy meaning" as a defense of his doxology, closing a circular claim. In reality, what Basil wants to establish is that his doxology is not an innovation, but rather customary at least in some places, and that the use of "with the Holy Spirit" is part of the received apostolic "rule of faith" coming from the salvation begun for each Christian at baptism. For this purpose, Basil gives not only these four defenses of his use of the doxology, but also his own experience of the value of the tradition. He says:

What defense have we prepared for ourselves at the Great Judgment? That the honor from the Lord, when he associated the Spirit with himself and the Father at baptism, first led us to glorify the Spirit. Then, there was also the leading of each of us through a sort of mystagogy to the knowledge of God. But, above all, is the fear of the [Lord's] threats, which prevent the thought of all indignity and of lowly understanding.⁹⁸

It is the primacy of baptism, and that in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that Basil is ultimately defending. He shows that through the various stages of the Christian life—glorifying the

96. *Ibid.*, 29.75.

97. *Ibid.*

98. *Ibid.*

Trinity without knowledge, then learning about the Trinity on the path of mystagogy, and finally looking eschatologically to praising the Trinity forever—that the baptismal formula confesses the rule of faith. Basil appeals to this rule of faith or tradition to show that the Church has always believed that the Holy Spirit is divine, even if it has not explicitly stated it as *kerygma* because she has professed it in giving him *homotimia*. If Christians must be baptized in the name of the Holy Spirit, and communion with God is through Him, then growth as a Christian also demonstrates the power and divinity of the Holy Spirit. Finally, Basil's desire not to blaspheme or transgress against this received tradition spurs Basil to defend it. The conclusion of this treatise, and the work as a whole, is a rhetorical defense of Basil's own involvement in defending the faith.

III. THE “DEVELOPMENT OF DOCTRINE” REGARDING SACRED TRADITION AND THE 4TH CENTURY

Having addressed the Nicene context and read closely chapters 27-29 in *On the Holy Spirit*, the next thread of this thesis to be examined is the work of Yves Congar. Congar, a French Dominican who lived from 1904-1995, is best known for his contributions to theology in the areas of ecumenism, ecclesiology/the role of the laity, and Scripture and Tradition. He studied under Ambroise Gardeil, taught at Le Saulchoir, and served as a *peritus* at the Second Vatican Council, contributing especially to *Dei Verbum*.¹ His work *Tradition and Traditions* is a seminal work in understanding Tradition in the light of the Roman Catholic theology of Revelation. This chapter will primarily sketch portions of his historical and theological essays within *Tradition and Traditions* to show that Basil’s arguments from tradition are an early witness to the Roman Catholic doctrine of Tradition as taught by Congar. Particular attention will be paid to Congar’s concept of “monuments” of Tradition to show that Basil both is a “monument” according to Congar’s definition, and can be said to appeal to earlier “monuments” in chapters 27-29 of *On the Holy Spirit*.² This chapter will show Congar’s *ressourcement* as he relies on Basil’s and other fathers’ understanding of the role of tradition in the Church.

Congar’s Historical Essay: Tradition in the Ante-Nicene and Classical Eras

Both the noun and the verb forms of “tradition” are used rarely in the earliest centuries of the Church, but the concept is present. According to Congar, Tradition in the first three centuries of the Church is the handing on of the faith originating in the Revelation of Christ to the apostles and also the apostolic

1. Avery Cardinal Dulles, “Forward” in Yves Congar, *The Meaning of Tradition*, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), vii.

2. Congar’s term “monuments” is explained more than explicitly defined. Probably one of the more succinct expressions is: “In fact, the monuments of tradition are not tradition itself, which transcends them; they are the concrete expression of various aspects of it and thus, for us, a means of reaching this tradition and identifying it.” *The Meaning of Tradition*, 151. Monuments include liturgical rituals and texts, expressions of the fathers, customs both disciplinary and devotional, and other expressions of the Church’s life.

mission to hand on that faith to others.³ The most commonly used phrase in this period for what Congar defines as Tradition is the “rule of faith” (or sometimes “rule of truth”) as in Irenaeus.⁴ Congar defines the rule of faith as “the doctrine taught by the Church in accordance with what it received from the apostles.”⁵ This rule of faith as an inheritance passed on is manifested in the early Church’s catechumenate, with the receiving and giving back of the Creed by the catechumens, the *traditio* and *redditio symboli*. Congar argues that the reality of a Christian inheritance precedes these institutions connected to the liturgical rite.⁶ Tradition is the whole faith of the Church, often expressed in her Scripture, Creeds, and the oral tradition which traces its roots to the believing Church gathered around the apostles.⁷ The Church determines Tradition, not in the sense of making formal dogmatic declarations, but in the sense that Tradition brings forth communion and at the same time is an expression of it, and so it properly comes from and constitutes the Church as a people.⁸ As such, the apostles and their successors are responsible for maintaining and handing on that which belongs to the Church given by the Holy Spirit as guarantor and life-giver.⁹ This understanding of Tradition Congar traces from the earliest expressions of the faith. Congar does not claim explicit teaching of Tradition in the earliest centuries, but rather that early witness is made to an inheritance that must be preserved and passed on. In the fourth and fifth centuries, there is greater development in understanding and expression of Tradition as the Church encounters controversy, particularly over the nature of Christ and the Trinity.

Congar discusses the third and fourth centuries as a period of creativity and genius. He says,

The men of this age, many of whom were simultaneously geniuses and saints or instruments of the Holy Spirit, are not for nothing called “fathers.” This is the time of the first four ecumenical councils, the basis of all the others. It is the time when the canons governing ecclesiastical life are laid down, when the essential liturgical forms are fixed, when monasticism and the Christian life assume their basic features. As early as this the doctrinal tradition of the Church is completed on

3. Yves Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*. (San Diego: Basilica Press, 1966), 23-26.

4. *Ibid.*, 27.

5. *Ibid.*, 27.

6. *Ibid.*, 29.

7. *Ibid.*, 29.

8. *Ibid.*, 36.

9. *Ibid.*, 42, cf. Ch. 3 of the “Theological Essay,” 308-347.

the most fundamental points by the interpretations of the Fathers and councils, an interpretation that became, at least taken as a whole, part of the normative data of Christian thought.¹⁰

Because this era expresses both creativity and preservation, the men of this period have a privileged influence on Tradition. Congar shows that Tradition is “the manifestation, *in the time of human history*, of the ‘mystery’ of salvation.”¹¹ There is a sense of developing or “unfolding” over time of that which has already been given in Revelation, and that this unfolding is connected to the mission of the Church through individuals. He adds, “The Fathers of the classical age [fourth and fifth centuries], without mixing the Christian faith with a philosophy in the technical sense of the word, had the vocation and grace to show forth, explain and defend revelation by adopting the forms of the classical culture in which they had been brought up.”¹² Because the fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries were actively engaged in the political and social life of the empire, through them Christianity met, “widely with a literary and philosophical culture still very much alive, in the tradition of the pagan authors.”¹³ The Fathers of this time had a dual vocation, to preserve the tradition inherited from the apostles, and to respond to current controversies with all their learning, derived from the schools and Christianity.

Congar proceeds to outline the idea of tradition as found in the Fathers of the fourth and fifth century. First, it is apostolic; this is what ensures that the Church is continually in communion with her source, God in Christ Jesus.¹⁴ Second, Scripture and tradition are not separated; rather they are “*two ways, two modes* in which the apostolic deposit comes to us in its plenitude and authenticity.”¹⁵ Scripture is complete, and Tradition is also complete, since both express the whole faith of the Church.¹⁶ These two ideas about Tradition are consistent with the concept of tradition received from Ante-Nicene Fathers.

10. Ibid., 42.

11. Ibid., 43.

12. Ibid., He especially remarks on the Cappadocians in this respect.

13. Congar, *The Meaning of Tradition*, 145.

14. Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, 43.

15. Ibid., 44.

16. Ibid., 45. Congar talks about the “mutual conditioning” of Scripture and the Church, and later will discuss the exegetical tradition as a way of understanding that Scripture does not stand alone. See also, Ibid., 283-295.

However, since there are no longer teachers who knew the apostles personally, there begin to be references to the “Fathers” as early as the late second century in writers such as Tertullian, Hippolytus, Clement, and Origen.¹⁷ This title is originally applied to bishops and abbots, but eventually comes to mean all teachers of the orthodox faith.¹⁸ Those who attended the Ecumenical Councils are also referred to as “Fathers” in that particular context, but they themselves, “constantly repeat[ed] that they were doing no more than sum up and formulate the teaching of the apostles, the content of Scripture, and what the Fathers had always taught, which is what the Fathers themselves said.”¹⁹

At the same time that appeals were being made to Scripture and public apostolic teaching, there began to be references to “unwritten traditions.” The contexts of these references imply that for the Fathers, “Scripture was seen as needing to be completed by tradition, not merely as a text needing to be supplemented by its interpretation, but as the principal *part* of a deposit needing to be completed by *another part*....”²⁰ That Scripture and Tradition work as one whole to preserve and hand on all of Revelation provides a context to understand unwritten apostolic traditions. These are often liturgical or customary actions which assist the Church in worshipping rightly or expressing outwardly what the Scripture teaches. Right worship forms Christians in the rule of faith and enables the interpretation of Scripture.

Lastly, Congar applies the term “tradition” to the “unfolding of the deposit” as errors occur in interpretation of Scripture and the tenets of faith. In the fourth and fifth century as debates arose about what the Church believes often, “the deposit [was] made explicit in texts and, when necessary, even in a new vocabulary.”²¹ None of these elements—the canon of Scripture and its explicit interpretation, the

17. Ibid., 45. Congar does not list the statements to which he is referring but refers the reader to several studies on both particular fathers (Origen) or on the argument from tradition. He even goes on to say that appeal to the fathers becomes “systematized” and “customary” in the fifth century.

18. Ibid., 46.

19. Ibid., 47.

20. Ibid., 47. Congar is careful to note that this does not deny that they are one whole of the faith of the Church. St. Basil’s text was mistranslated and the source of the division of the two at the time of the Reformation.

21. Ibid., 48-9. I would claim Congar is thinking specifically, if not exclusively, of the introduction of *homoousios* to theological discussion.

texts and actions of worship, or new explanations and expressions of the apostolic faith—have to come explicitly from the apostles in order to be “apostolic tradition” because:

Even in the period we are dealing with and more especially with the passing of time, the theological demonstration of the value of *this* tradition was sought in the fact that the same Spirit who spoke by the prophets and inspired the human authors of Scripture does not cease to animate the Church in which he lives or to guide the teachers, councils and pastors of the People of God. The unanimity of these, which has always been seen as the effect and special sign of the action of the Holy Spirit, came to be considered as a criterion of orthodox faith. That being so, attention rested not only on *what* was handed on, on its obvious objective identity with the word of the apostles, but on the authority of the organs of tradition, justified by the help of the Holy Spirit.”²²

Congar’s evaluation echoes Basil’s in arguing the apostolicity of unwritten traditions. In fact, Congar quotes Basil’s text on written and unwritten traditions because of its “important role in the history of theology.”²³ Basil’s argument that Gregory the Wonderworker is a source of apostolic faith because he, “walked by the same Spirit as they,”²⁴ is similar to Congar’s argument that the Fathers recognized, “that the same Spirit who spoke by the prophets and inspired the human authors of Scripture does not cease to animate the Church in which [they] live....”²⁵ Basil’s defense of the Holy Spirit’s divinity, particularly the arguments defending the doxology and explicating the role of the baptismal confession of faith, shows Basil to be a father in Congar’s sense. Basil contributed to the explicit formulation of the divinity of the Holy Spirit by examining liturgy and teachings as well as scriptural texts. Furthermore, like Congar’s explanation of the role of the Fathers, Basil appeals to those who precede him, like Gregory and Origen, to respond to contemporary circumstances, the Trinitarian controversy, using all types of education, including both *paideia* and Christian teaching. Congar’s historical evaluation of the fourth and fifth centuries will be used to show development from Basil’s “rule of faith” to Congar’s Tradition.

22. Ibid., 49. It is interesting that Congar does not note Basil’s claim to apostolicity (*De Spiritu Sancto* 29.71) in the note to this quote, though he gives many other patristic witnesses to the various parts of this claim.

23. Ibid., 47. Congar quotes from the French, *On the Holy Spirit*, 27.66: “Among the ‘doctrines’ and the ‘definitions’ preserved in the Church, we hold some on the basis of written teaching and others we have received, transmitted secretly, from apostolic tradition. All are of equal value for piety; no one will dispute this: no one, at least with the least experience of ecclesiastical customs; for, if we were to attempt to reject these unwritten customs as not carrying much weight, we should unwittingly be casting aspersions on the Gospel itself, in its essentials.”

24. *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.74.

25. Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, 49.

Congar's Theological Essay

After the historical essay, Congar's second essay in *Tradition and Traditions* seeks to synthesize the Church's teaching on Tradition in all its aspects. I will not explain or evaluate all of Congar's thought, but will pay particular attention to a few key elements: the role of liturgy (especially baptism), the "unwritten apostolic traditions," and Congar's term "monuments of tradition." In this chapter I will show that what Congar refers to as a "monument of tradition" can be applied to Basil's defense of unwritten sources in *On the Holy Spirit*.

The Definition of Tradition and Its Connection to the Liturgy

According to Congar, Tradition is the transmission of the Revelation of God, given to a few through direct revelation, the apostles and all who knew the risen Christ, who in turn share it with the whole Church through their teachings and the celebration of the mysteries.²⁶ Each member of the Church receives as his inheritance the entirety of this revelation in the form of the faith received at baptism. Baptism communicates faith because it is itself the incorporation of the individual into the body of Christ. This is why baptism plays a particular role in the transmission of Tradition. Congar points to the mystagogical tradition and refers again to the *traditio* and the *redditio symboli* in the early Church as an understanding of this reality.²⁷ Baptism indicates that faith is received, and the reception of the *symbolum*

26. What follows is a summary of Congar's discussion in *Tradition and Traditions*, 237-283.

27. Ibid., 243-249. This is an important point of contact between Basil and Congar's presentations of tradition. Just as Basil insists on the baptismal expression of faith as being normative ("So then knowing that this salvation is established through the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, should we cast away the 'standard of teaching (Rom 6.17) which we have received?'" *On the Holy Spirit*, 10.26) Congar notes that this reception is the source of a development that is almost incarnational in the lived reality of the Church through history. This will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

witnesses to this truth. Baptism both in its liturgical expression and its sacramental reality plays an important role in the transmission of Tradition over time.

Tradition is living because its subject is both the Church receiving and living in it and the Holy Spirit animating the Church. Congar locates the possibility for the development of doctrine in this living and dynamic reality of Tradition. As Tradition, lived in the Church, interacts with time and events, developments occur in the expression of the faith which itself is unchanging.²⁸ All time is sacred, because the action of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the Church in each particular era is an instrument for the Holy Spirit's expression of the fullness of Revelation in the Church.²⁹ The development of Tradition occurs as Revelation is transmitted through a dialogue between God and men; the relationship or communion between them is ultimately a source of greater understanding of what God has revealed.³⁰ Congar's understanding of Tradition as living and developing would be foreign to Basil, as seen in his insistence that he handed on only what he had received.³¹

Congar distinguishes between "traditions" and Tradition, and in this, he seems to be making distinctions that Basil would not.³² According to Congar, practices that are normative, not explicitly from Scripture, and have their root in some authority (Jesus, the apostles, the Church) are traditions.³³ Depending on their nature and the authority behind them, they may be permanent or temporary and are primarily disciplinary and/or liturgical. For instance, he gives lists of unwritten apostolic traditions attested to in the Fathers including Basil's list: the sign of the cross, turning to the East, the invocation of the epiclesis, anointing with oil, the triple immersion, the renunciation of Satan as part of the baptismal ritual.³⁴ Tradition, however, can be any of the three interconnected realities. First, it is the transmission of

28. *Ibid.*, 257-270.

29. *Ibid.*, 264-274.

30. *Ibid.*, esp. 252-259, 266.

31. See Congar's historical notes, *ibid.*, 43-45.

32. See the discussion, in chapter 2, of De Mendieta, Hanson, and Florovsky on the various ways of understanding Basil's traditions handed on "in mystery."

33. *Ibid.*, 287-288 with reference to the lists 50-64.

34. *Ibid.*, 53 quoting *On the Holy Spirit*, 27.66.

the *kerygma*, "...in any form: Scripture, the (spoken) word, confessions of faith, sacraments and acts of worship, customs and prescriptions—all these together with the reality which they convey or produce."³⁵ Second, it is the content transmitted; "the truth of the Christian mystery."³⁶ Third, it is the interpretation of and development in expression of that content, again in a variety of forms.³⁷

After distinguishing between Tradition and traditions, it is possible to recognize traditions as some of the monuments of Tradition. Monuments, whether they are what Congar calls traditions or some other concrete expression of Tradition like a piece of art, originate in, "a certain spirit or living understanding in the Christian community (*ecclesia*)."³⁸ This "living understanding" is the Tradition which one has access to by means of the monuments that manifest it. Tradition, then, is not the monuments themselves but, "that Catholic sense which the Church possesses as the supra-individual and living subject of a series of testimonies in which is expressed its interpretation of what it transmits and what it lives by."³⁹

Congar specifically addresses the idea of apostolic traditions, referring to the Fathers for the Church's earliest understanding.⁴⁰ Basing his arguments upon Irenaeus's argument about the dating of Easter, apostolic traditions do not have to be explicitly held by the apostles and transmitted in a specific form for them to be recognized as apostolic, just as "divine traditions" do not have to come directly from the Lord's mouth.⁴¹ Rather,

'Apostolic tradition' exists when the idea which is expressed in an institution is traceable to the apostles. The identity is less one of exterior form than of inspiration or general direction,

35. Ibid., 287.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., 288. "This interpretation or reading of Scripture was developed and expressed in a whole series of fixed testimonies, whether in writings or monuments: institutions, liturgy, art, customs, etc."

38. Ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid., 289-290. He argues this is necessary because at the time of the Reformation, polemic causes the Church to harden into a position which he believes is less historically defensible.

41. Ibid., 289.

maintained throughout later history by the Holy Spirit who guides the faithful so that they should preserve the deposit, and understand its meaning....”⁴²

It is important to note that this allows for diversity of traditions; the idea expressed is the same, but the expression itself differs.⁴³

The nature of Scripture as apostolic tradition is special, for three reasons: it is public, it is permanent, and its origin is verifiable.⁴⁴ Congar’s use of “verifiable” means that the witness is the witness of those who were eyewitnesses to the apostles and has been made permanent by being written down.⁴⁵ Because of these three aspects, Scripture is more easily used as a criterion for evaluating a statement regarding the faith than Tradition is.⁴⁶ The witness of the early Councils and Fathers attests to this; however, their use of Scripture occurs with recognition that it must be interpreted within the believing community. Congar recognizes the interaction between Scripture and Tradition, and in doing so, emphasizes that Scripture and Tradition are both expressions of one Revelation.

Congar discusses the role of Scripture as a particular source of Revelation which must be interpreted in the Church, and therefore the need for Tradition. He especially notes the nature of liturgy as transmitting the faith in the lived experience of the Church. He emphasizes the communal expression of baptism and the development of a theology of baptism as an example of how Scripture is interpreted in light of Tradition. He says that the Fathers,

read the text from the standpoint of the Christian reality with which they were in communion. But this *via vitae* is Tradition itself, for us just as much as for the early Church. When we study, for example, the theology of baptism in the second-century Fathers, we find there few references to Pauline texts. What we do find is a doctrine which is developing fundamentally from the reality of baptism itself, as preserved and lived in the Church. We could as well call it (so defining, perhaps, the characteristic spirit of the Fathers and of the liturgy): a doctrine simply expressing the meaning of what is done in the Church.”⁴⁷

42. Ibid., 289.

43. An example of this would be the various liturgical rites or the number of legitimate Eucharistic anaphoras.

44. Ibid., 291-295.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid., 354.

For this reason, Congar continues, liturgy is, “a privileged custodian and dispenser of Tradition...It is, indeed the active celebration of the Christian mystery, and as it celebrates and contains the mystery in its fullness, it transmits all the essential elements of this mystery.”⁴⁸ But the liturgy is not didactic; “the liturgy simply goes ahead, calmly confident, with the affirmation of what it does and affirming the content of what it hands on in its celebration. This, too, is the way in which Tradition works, communicating the conditions for life just as it communicates that life itself.”⁴⁹

By recognizing the role of liturgy as a means of transmission for Tradition, Congar is also wary of overstating its dogmatic value; liturgy is not precise in the way a dogmatic formula is. Because the liturgy is the living witness and formator of the entirety of the mystery of faith, it contains everything, but it does not formalize everything. Congar states, “...[T]he Church has invested the whole of its faith in its prayer, and though fervor does not *create* truth, yet the liturgy contains, offers, and expresses in its own way all of the mysteries, only certain aspects of which have been formulated by our theological understanding and in dogmas.”⁵⁰ Furthermore, the way it works is through interior, sacramental, divine means, which defy human measurement and codification.⁵¹ The liturgy is also conservative by nature, like Tradition, in that it seeks to preserve what has been given.⁵² By drawing these ideas together, Congar shows that liturgy, and Tradition as a whole, functions only within a living communion. It seeks to bring about a communion of persons, a shared culture, so that the “living space” created in the liturgy can be also the place of handing on and receiving the faith so that it continues to live. Therefore, the liturgy cannot provide proof texts for arguments of a dogmatic nature, any more than Scripture, used

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid., 356.

50. Ibid., 355. It is the whole act of worship, not merely a text or a ritual action, that conserves and passes down the entirety of the faith, for Congar.

51. See Ibid., 358-9.

52. Ibid., 359.

appropriately, is a source of proof texts. The same concerns and exegetical techniques for reading Scripture must be applied to liturgical texts.⁵³

Application of Congar's Concept of Tradition and the Liturgy to Basil's Use

When we examine Basil's use of liturgical texts, it is important to recognize the same exegetical framework is used with liturgy as with Scripture. Just as Scripture must be read with the "rule of faith" determining how each passage can and cannot be interpreted, so too the texts of the liturgy are valid witnesses to the beliefs of the Church, but they must be read in the context of the praying and believing Church. Basil himself argues this, though less explicitly, whenever he argues about the meaning of the words themselves. For instance, when he is arguing for "with the Spirit" he says that, "it [with] has a meaning nearly equal to that of the Scriptures and is used instead of the conjunction 'and.' For to say 'Paul and Silvanus and Timothy' (1 Thess. 1.1.) is the same as 'Paul with Timothy and Silvanus,' for the combination of names is similarly preserved in each expression."⁵⁴ He is arguing with precision of language, but he is also arguing that the liturgical formula "with the Holy Spirit" be interpreted with the common understanding of words rather than appealing to a particular theological technique. There is an underlying assumption that this is the way believers receive the truth; they do not parse words as the philosophers do, for Christian wisdom is different from that of the world.⁵⁵ Basil argues both that it is unfair to expect Christian sources to use philosophical language, but also that the examination of small words can be of large consequence in teaching about divinity.⁵⁶ Basil argues that what is received by the

53. I am drawing my own conclusions with reference, though, to Ch. 5 which is largely a defense of the Catholic interpretation of Scripture. *Tradition and Traditions*, 376-424.

54. Basil of Caesarea, *On the Holy Spirit*, 25.59

55. See *On the Holy Spirit*, 2.4-3.5, where Basil examines the use that Aëtius and his disciples make of words. "Now they have closely observed the pagans who assign 'from whom' and 'through whom' to things of different natures, and the pagans led them to this deception."

56. See *Ibid.*, 4.6, "We admit that the Word of Truth has often made use of these terms, but we say that the freedom of the Spirit is in no way enslaved to the trivialities of the Pagans." And explaining the occasion for his writing Basil says, "Lately when I pray with the people, some of those present observed that I render the glory due to God in both ways....But for the sake of helping these people, or—if they are completely incorrigible—for the sake of

common person who prays is, in fact, what the liturgy conveys. This is seen even more directly in his appeal to baptism as witness to the Christian faith. For instance,

On account of what are we Christians? Everyone would say, “on account of faith.” How are we saved? Clearly we are regenerated through the grace of baptism. How else? So then knowing that this salvation is established through the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, should we cast away the “standard of teaching” (Rom 6.17) which we have received?...Such a one contradicts his own handwriting which he put down at the confession of the faith.⁵⁷

Basil looks to this “monument of tradition” in order to show that the believing Church expresses her faith in prayer and sacrament, and through it Christianity can be understood.

What is interesting in Basil’s argument is that he is defending a doxology which he has begun using, not one which was already commonly used in his region.⁵⁸ In his explanation of Basil’s conduct, Theodoret explains that Basil chose to use the doxology that concludes “with the Holy Spirit” alongside the one that concludes “through the Son in the Holy Spirit” because he was specifically countering the Arian interpretation that subordinates both the Son and the Spirit.⁵⁹ Basil claimed that his doxology has roots in the fathers, but he did not claim that it had been used in the context of worship. Basil appears to have chosen to use his doxology in worship because of its value for teaching, instead of having decided to teach the divinity of the Holy Spirit because of a doxology he found already in worship. Basil’s decision appears to be a creative liturgical response to the controversy resulting from the reception of Nicaea. This decision shows the importance of the liturgy for both Basil and his opponents.

It is perhaps important to note here that there is considerable difficulty knowing what texts were prayed in the first three centuries of the church, because they mostly were orally transmitted.⁶⁰ As the

strengthening anybody who encounters them, you think it an exceedingly good idea to articulate some clear teaching on the power contained in these words.” (Ibid., 1.3).

57. Ibid., 10.26.

58. Josef A. Jungmann, *The Place of Christ in Liturgical Prayer*. (New York: Alba House, 1965). Jungmann traces the historical account from Theodoret and gives an overview of Basil’s defense of his doxology in 176-182. That the doxology can be wrongly interpreted by Arians is Jungmann’s point, but as has been made clear earlier, it is also to address the *pneumatamachoi* that this doxology is being defended in *On the Holy Spirit*.

59. Ibid.

60. Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002). In chapter 10, Bradshaw traces the development of prayer from the first three centuries into the fourth. He notes difficulties in

fourth and fifth century copyists and collectors begin to write texts to reflect the liturgical rites, it is difficult to know what they interpolate of their current customs into the older texts.⁶¹ Furthermore, Paul Bradshaw argues that the composition of liturgical prayer in the fourth century is made up of smaller units that are combined and shared among regions as people travel more broadly.⁶² As threats to orthodoxy emerge, there is a pressure on liturgical prayer to be more “doctrinally orthodox” and so there “emerges...fixed and written forms,” instead of improvisation and greater, “conformity between different regional traditions.”⁶³

Chapter 29 of *On the Holy Spirit* may be an example of just the sort of combining of texts that Bradshaw argues is the source of the more-fixed liturgical texts that emerge in the later part of the fourth century. Basil is using a doxology that comes from other literary genres such as letters, hymns, and expositions of Scripture in the public liturgy of the church, and defending his ability to do so. Basil therefore will use the texts of the Fathers as a monument or witness to tradition, but he will also create a new monument in doing so, the liturgical text that he has now written down and defended. Basil’s creativity produces a monument to preserve the faith of the Church at a time when the Church’s liturgy is beginning to be formulated in a more stable way in order to combat heretical interpretations of scriptural and liturgical texts.⁶⁴

distinguishing between what was “public” prayer and what was “private” prayer, what was regional and what was more universal (if anything), and what is actually of this period.

61. Ibid., 4-6. See also: Paul Bradshaw, “God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit in Early Christian Praying,” in *The Place of Christ in Liturgical Prayer: Trinity, Christology, and Liturgical Theology*, Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press (2008), 51-64.

62. On the idea of composition of prayers and the development in public liturgy, see Paul F. Bradshaw, “Introduction: The Evolution of Early Anaphoras” in *Essays on Early Eastern Eucharistic Prayers*, Ed. Paul F. Bradshaw, (New York: Pueblo Books, 2017). While Bradshaw is talking primarily about Eucharistic anaphora, the idea of textual composition and the sharing among regions due to pilgrims, etc., can be validly made for other prayers related to the celebration of the Eucharist.

63. Ibid., quotes adjusted slightly for tense.

64. See Bradshaw, *The Search*, 222-230.

The Monuments of Tradition

For Congar, the “monuments of tradition” are “expressions in which Tradition is, at least partially, fixed and contained, and in which as a result it can be grasped and analysed.”⁶⁵ He abstracts Tradition itself—as the inspired life of the Church expressed in her whole being—from the documents which distill “portions” of this Tradition so that it can be declared. Included within these monuments are: magisterial teachings, liturgy and customs, teachings of the Fathers and doctors, the sacred canons and facts of the Church’s life, and “theologians (and the use of reason).”⁶⁶ This chapter will compare Basil’s use of two of these monuments in *On the Holy Spirit*: liturgy and customs and the teachings of the Fathers and doctors.

In addition to what has already been stated about the liturgy, Congar expresses why liturgy is the primary monument of Tradition: it is “sacred action.”⁶⁷ Because liturgy is ritualized, it is conservative by nature; it preserves that which is believed and professed, but without becoming mere formalism or outward show because it is part of the life of the Church.⁶⁸ For instance, we learn many things about God and about the faith by living them in the liturgy. “Thus the liturgy is the privileged *locus* of tradition, not only from the point of view of conservation and preservation, but also from that of progress and development.”⁶⁹ What develops is the Church’s understanding of herself as she lives the reality of her identity in the liturgy. By receiving revelation in mystery, the Church at a particular time comes to recognize the value of Revelation for this particular moment. That is how living Tradition contributes to the development of doctrine.

While Basil would not recognize the use of “living” in relation to Tradition, he does appeal to both the conservative and progressive elements of the liturgy when he explains that the different

65. Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, 425.

66. *Ibid.*, 426.

67. *Ibid.*, 428. “This action or activity is synthetic, incorporating and expressing a conviction, and at the same time developing it and conveying it to others...it procures entry into the Christian truths by way of prayer and actions, by familiar signs expressing men’s faithfulness and love. The entry into these truths is not by way of discussion or argument, but through the intimacy of living experience.”

68. *Ibid.*

69. *Ibid.*

doxologies emphasize different aspects of doctrine.⁷⁰ Both doxologies preserve what, for Basil, was an authentic understanding of the Holy Spirit as it emerged from reception and interpretation of Nicaea. At the same time, the difference between the two doxologies allows for different emphases according to need (to silence his opponents, in this case).

Congar explains that the liturgy “gives” the same Revelation that Scripture gives—the life of Christ—but this gift is “narrative and historical” in Scripture, while it is “active sharing” in the liturgy.⁷¹ What it shares is Christian experience as man encounters the salvific mystery in the present time; as such other elements of the Church’s life like the Scriptures and communion with Christ are entered into through the liturgy.⁷² Congar explains how that which is distinctive about the Church constitutes the liturgy. It is scriptural in that it is made up of scriptural texts and preaching. It is Christological in that it gives Christ, Himself, in mystery. It is Catholic in that it incorporates the believer into Christ by this sharing.⁷³ Because the liturgy communicates the whole of Revelation, Congar sums up its importance for Tradition: “The liturgy acts according to the general manner of Tradition, and since it is endowed with the genius of Tradition, it fulfills Tradition’s role in a superlative way.”⁷⁴

Congar then discusses the Fathers as “privileged witnesses of Tradition.”⁷⁵ Congar states that the Church is incarnational and came into being in a particular historical period; the Fathers are men who have particular sympathy with or access to this period of the Church’s origin.⁷⁶ Therefore, the Fathers are privileged witnesses in part because they lived and taught in the, “civilization of the ancient world as an

70. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 25.59 “We have used both expressions because we have found that the faithful use both. We believe that glory is similarly rendered to the Spirit by each expression, but that those who falsify the truth are better silenced by the aforementioned expression [‘with the Spirit’] which is not easily attacked by our opponents.....”

71. Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, 430.

72. *Ibid.*, 430, “The liturgy is a celebration, the active recalling or efficacious representation, at the present moment of human and cosmic history, of the mysteries of salvation which were revealed in human history at an earlier time.”

73. *Ibid.*, 431-432.

74. *Ibid.*, 435.

75. *Ibid.*, 436.

76. *Ibid.*, “[I]t was the vocation and historic role of the Fathers to give Christianity its shape and expression within the Graeco-Latin world of the Roman Empire.”

intellectual framework and context of intellectual growth.”⁷⁷ Furthermore, they have received tradition from the apostles, and interpret the faith from within this received culture.⁷⁸ In the next chapter, when turning to the method of Basil’s argumentation, and his use of Greek *paideia*, we will particularly look at this element to show that Basil does, in fact, act from this cultural worldview.

Congar, in explaining the various usages of the term “fathers” from the earliest years of the Church, concludes that taken together, the Fathers are, “*those who have contributed a decisive element to the Church’s life, either in its faith, its discipline, or its general attitude.*”⁷⁹ They are the ones who hand on the faith to us, and who “have ‘fathered’ us.”⁸⁰ This insight is particularly helpful in understanding Basil’s appeal to Gregory the Wonderworker. Again, Basil’s appeal elevates Gregory to the level of a father of faith like the apostles because he fathered the church of Neocaesarea, and Basil, and because he himself lived a holy life.⁸¹ His life gives witness to the working of the Spirit, and for this reason he is fruitful and to be regarded as a father, and therefore worthy of imitation. Similarly, when Basil appeals to the other fathers, such as Origen and Athenogenes, he is pointing not just to the words they used, but their role mediating tradition to the church of the late fourth century. This role is referenced when he argues, “Now if someone knows the hymn of Athenogenes, which he left to those who were with him as a kind of departing gift as he hastened toward perfection through fire, then he knows also the opinion that the martyrs held on the Spirit.”⁸² For Basil, it is not just the words used, but the clear understanding that giving glory to the Spirit is and has always been the faith of the Church that is bestowed by the martyr’s witness of his very life.

77. Ibid., 436. Also, cf. 440-442.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid., 438.

80. Ibid.

81. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit* 29.74. He regards what he received from Gregory as a “paternal inheritance” because he himself was baptized by Gregory, 29.71.

82. Ibid., 29.73.

Congar goes further in his explanation of the privileged place the Fathers have in the Church. He says that the patristic period,

...represents, to be precise, the moment when the deposit of apostolic faith was given an exact form with a view to excluding certain interpretations rejected as heretical. It is the moment when the faith assumed for the first time a particular human form and expression. The apostles and the simple preaching (kerygma) did not have to do that, but when belief was implanted in a cultured society such an undertaking could not be avoided any longer. This was the historical role of the Fathers, and that of the great dogmatic councils, too.⁸³

This is reflected in Basil's (and the other Cappadocians') unique role in contributing the formulation of "one *ousia* three *hypostaseis*," but also in Basil's use of tradition which develops into Congar's Tradition.

In the patristic period, the liturgy begins to be shaped in particular regional forms which will later become the recognized and fixed rites celebrated in the Church. Any understanding of Tradition that appeals to liturgy must take into account this period of liturgical development and recognize that the controversies that were shaping doctrinal formulations were also shaping liturgical prayer.⁸⁴ In this way, the Fathers play a role in the development of the liturgy through their teaching. Congar says, "in the three areas of faith, worship and discipline, the Fathers affected the Church's forms at the decisive moment when its peculiar style or genius was evolving."⁸⁵ Furthermore, their exegetical style and what he refers to as "spirituality" is also influential for the life of the Church through history.⁸⁶ They are unique because they are the first to both receive tradition, from the apostolic era, and to hand it on.⁸⁷ Because of this, Congar compares the time of the Fathers to the Church's youth; the Fathers defined the character of the Church by interpreting what was received from, "the apostles, their disciples and martyrs."⁸⁸ Their role is, in part, to show all succeeding generations how to be faithful to the past while responding to the legitimate crises of the time.⁸⁹ Congar concludes his meditation on this monument of tradition by pointing

83. Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, 444.

84. For more on the development of the various rites and the difficulty in determining the form of celebration prior to the fourth century, see Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Search*.

85. *Tradition and Traditions*, 445. Congar acknowledges that the term "spirituality" is an anachronism.

86. *Ibid.*

87. *Ibid.*, 446. Congar calls them "sons and fathers of the church."

88. *Ibid.*

89. See *Ibid.*, 446-447. Also see Bradshaw, *The Search*, 211-230.

out three distinctive elements of the Fathers: they were first and foremost pastors, so they were aiding the faithful to live fully the Christian life; they were “committed to the proclamation, exposition and defence of the Christian mystery, which was for them...a reality in which and by which they lived and which they celebrated, prayed, share in and assimilated;” and they, like the liturgy, express the totality of the mystery of the faith, in their expressions of theological meditation.⁹⁰

The final consideration regarding the monuments is to acknowledge that they both express, and yet are not, Tradition itself. Congar says that the monuments are “objective historical realities” while Tradition is “a theological reality which supposes an action of the Holy Spirit in a living subject, and this subject is the Church, the People of God and the Body of Christ...This divine action [inspiration] is constitutive of Tradition.”⁹¹ He acknowledges that in the early Church the distinction between tradition (as the act of passing on) and tradition as preserved in what Congar calls monuments, was not explicit, but that it became so in the modern period as the historical-critical method began to be applied to, especially, scriptural texts.⁹² Lastly, Tradition is expressed by these monuments, but the sum of the monuments preserved by the magisterium cannot be said to “contain Tradition.”⁹³

Reflections on Basil’s Ch. 27-29 as a Monument of Tradition

In order to fully examine Basil’s role in developing the argument from tradition, the role of *paideia* will be examined in the next chapter. This chapter examined points of reference between some of Basil’s theological insights that reflect Congar’s teaching on Tradition and tradition, and a few additional connections will be drawn before concluding this chapter.

90. Ibid., 449.

91. Ibid., 452.

92. See Ibid., 452-454. His argument is essentially that as we can distinguish between inspiration and the texts of the canon, while recognizing the way that they are interlocking, so the monuments of tradition and Tradition itself are also interlocking. The monuments give testimony to the action of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

93. Ibid., 454: “...the Church and the magisterium have no autonomy whatever in regard to the *depositum fidei*. But this deposit must not be identified with the documents or monuments.”

In the historical essay, especially, Congar draws attention to the role the fathers play in shaping the expression of the Christian faith in the first five centuries. He discusses this period of creativity and the interplay between culture and the lived reality of the Church as fertile for new expressions of the faith received from the apostles. This reverence for the apostolic period is made clear in Basil's argument that, "Standing fast in non-scriptural traditions is, I think, apostolic."⁹⁴ Yet because of those who now deny the divinity of the Holy Spirit, Basil must appeal explicitly to what was implicit in the apostolic faith. Basil finds a defense of the Holy Spirit's equal glory with the Father in the lived experience of the Church.⁹⁵ He uses his doxology in worship and argues it has greater force for defending his position.⁹⁶

Basil, like Congar, sees liturgy as an expression of the Church's faith, including understanding and preserving that faith. "For if we attempt to reject non-scriptural customs as insignificant, we would, unaware, lose the very vital parts of the Gospel, and even more, we would establish the proclamation merely in a name."⁹⁷ Furthermore, he recognizes the baptismal profession as an expression of "right worship" (*eusebeia*) which must be defended; he says, "Now let them teach us not to baptize as we have received, or not to believe as we have been baptized, or not to give glory as we have believed."⁹⁸ Basil appeals, not just to baptism, but to other unwritten traditions handed down in "mystery." These unwritten traditions are largely connected with liturgical customs and are profitable, when reflected upon, for teaching different aspects of the faith.⁹⁹ Congar and Basil both believe that liturgy is conservative of the faith, and both recognize that dogmatic formulae cannot be found by scouring the text for an explicit statement of the Church's belief. Furthermore, Basil's argument that various truths are better conveyed by one doxology or the other, is an example of using liturgy as a monument of tradition.¹⁰⁰

94. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.71.

95. Ibid., 25.58: "We have used both expressions ['in' and 'with' the Holy Spirit] because we have found that the faithful use both."

96. Ibid., 25.59: "...those who falsify the truth are better silenced by the aforementioned expression ['with the Holy Spirit']."

97. Ibid., 27.66.

98. Ibid., 27.67.

99. Ibid., 27.66.

100. Ibid., 27.68.

Basil's use of liturgy seems to acknowledge it as equal to Scripture. This enables Basil to use wording that is extra-scriptural to defend the divinity of the Spirit, but it also adds to the Church's understanding of herself in his argumentation. In the next chapter, this thesis will examine more closely the type of argumentation in which Basil engages to show the intersection of preservation of the Church's tradition and creative engagement with both it and the culture as he contributes to the development of the Church's teaching.

Conclusions

This chapter has traced key elements of Congar's theology of Tradition and shown points of contact between Basil's appeals to liturgy and the fathers and Congar's exploration of the development, preservation, and transmission of Tradition. A short summary of some of the ways in which Congar reflects Basil's contributions will follow.

First, Basil is a Father according to Congar's definition. Basil contributed to the development of theology in what Congar refers to as the "classical period" of Christianity, the fourth and fifth centuries. Congar explains that because of their more public role in the empire, these figures bring together, in their ways of teaching and living, both the social and political values received from the life of the empire and the Christian texts, beliefs, and values inherited from the apostolic period. This, Congar argues, makes possible the theological speculation regarding controversies over the nature of Christ and of the Trinity. Basil's biography reflects Congar's argument especially in his contribution to the definition of the Trinity as "one *ousia*, three *hypostaseis*" and the divinity of the Holy Spirit as argued in *On the Holy Spirit*.

Second, Basil's argument for the equality of unwritten apostolic traditions and scriptural witness is an important text for Congar's work. Congar's explanation of Revelation received as one source in two modes, Scripture and Tradition, echoes Basil's defense of the rule of faith professed in baptism as a key to right interpretation of Scripture. Congar wants to show that the Church has always valued the apostolic and patristic inheritance, and Basil provides him with an early witness to this value. Additionally, Basil's

list of examples of unwritten traditions accepted in the Christian community provides additional proof that Basil's defense of tradition is reasonable in the patristic period.

Third, Basil's insistence on the value of the teaching of his predecessors is an important argument for Congar's defense of the authority of Fathers in general. Basil argues that the inheritance given by men who have "walked by the Spirit" is an important patrimony that should be preserved and handed on. Therefore, he is an early witness to the development of the argument from the fathers. Congar expands upon Basil's defense, arguing that the work of the Holy Spirit is in these interactions making all time sacred. People, individuals and communities, living in relationship with God allow God to touch the events of the historical present and therefore doctrine develops in light of particular needs of the Church at that time.

Fourth, Congar's explanation of the transmission of Tradition as proof it is living can be compared to Basil's use and creativity with tradition in his arguments in chapters 27-29 of *On the Holy Spirit*. The notion of "monuments of Tradition" especially helps to understand Basil's appeals to both fathers and the liturgy as an appeal to the apostolic faith, Congar's Tradition. Basil uses texts, customs, and actions which express the rule of faith as a key to interpreting written and unwritten witness in the light of Christian life. Congar would acknowledge these as "monuments of tradition."

Lastly, baptism provides a special key to understanding the interaction between the transmission of the faith and the liturgy for both Basil and Congar. In the next chapter I will highlight these connections between Basil and Congar and their understanding of the liturgy.

IV. LITURGICAL WITNESS IN BASIL'S *ON THE HOLY SPIRIT*

This chapter will evaluate two uses of liturgy in *On the Holy Spirit*: the baptismal rite as described by Basil and the giving of equal praise to the Spirit in Basil's doxology. Basil engages the baptismal confession of faith to express the Church's belief regarding the Holy Spirit's power to sanctify, and he uses both baptism and the giving of glory to the Holy Spirit to express that in worship the Church already confesses the divinity of the Holy Spirit. These will be examined both to show their place in Basil's larger argumentation and to show that Basil implicitly regards liturgy as what Congar calls a "monument of tradition."

Addressing the Macedonians: *Homotimia* as a Defense of *Homoousios*

Basil defends the Holy Spirit as *homoousios* with the Father and the Son by appealing to the Church's practice of *homotimia*. He does this, Hildebrand argues convincingly, because he does not want to alienate the Macedonians by his choice of words before even approaching the doctrine Basil is defending.¹ The Macedonians are already convinced that the *homoousians* are Sabellian, and therefore will not accept any language based around *ousia* and its Greek philosophical concepts. This problem of language is the source of contention after Nicaea. While the word *homoousios* was adopted for the Nicene Creed, there was not necessarily a corresponding expectation that this did or could clarify what was believed about God. Rather, the term was accepted primarily because it rejected Arian interpretations of the person of Christ, and the Council sought to condemn Arius's teachings.² Basil's use of *homoousios* shows his interpretation of Nicene orthodoxy: there is a way of speaking of God that implies his unity and a way of speaking of God that implies his trinity. Ayres points to the improvement that Basil's solution

1. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 95.

2. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 85-92. A particularly nice summary: "Nicaea's terminology is thus a window onto the confusion and complexity of the early fourth-century theological debates, not a revelation that a definitive turning-point had been reached." (92)

provides, saying, “The genius of Basil’s solution [to Christological controversy and *homoousios*] is...[to] articulate a distinction between natures and individuated realities that enables him to assert that the Father and Son are, indeed, the same in essence, but distinct at another level thus preserving a certain order among the persons.”³ Basil, in many parts of *On the Holy Spirit*, defines terms scripturally or with reference to the common meaning, and not technical philosophical definitions.⁴ For example, when refuting his opponents who subordinate the Spirit, he mocks the use of a philosophically-defined term saying, “It is not easy to conceive of what they call sub-numeration and what they mean when they use this term. While it is well known to everyone, in fact, that the term was introduced to us from the wisdom of the world, let us, nonetheless look into whether it has some suitable meaning in the matter before us.”⁵ Basil will use, in this case for his purpose of refutation, the words and meanings given by the Greeks, but he will do so only to establish what he considers an orthodox meaning, and remove all philosophical meanings that do not fit.⁶ For instance, when he argues against those who “sub-numerate” the Spirit, Basil argues that number is a sign that is useful to “indicate quantity of substances,” but that it does not indicate the nature of the substance it describes. Therefore, applying this term to accuse Basil of having three gods because he counts Father, Son, and Spirit is an incorrect application of a philosophical concept.⁷

Basil is not creating a philosophical system; rather he is arguing using both doctrine and the culture to make explicit the “rule of faith” which implicitly forms Christians in belief of the Spirit’s

3. Ibid., 195. In this section, Ayres is referring to *Contra Eunomium*, but it will be applied to the Spirit’s unity with Father and Son as well. Ayres’ point is to emphasize Basil’s epistemology—that there is an apophatic aspect to our understanding God (in his essence)—my point is only that Basil is playing with language in a way that illustrates his creativity at the service of defining orthodoxy.

4. Ayres points out that, “any attempt to define fourth-century theological terminologies by reference solely to their philosophical origins or to a history of non-Christian philosophical development runs the constant danger of resulting in an artificial clarity that is not reflected in actual theological usage.”(92) This is why Anatolios chooses to avoid classifying theologians based on *ousia* language at all, and instead uses the type of unity (of will or of being) the theology expresses of the Trinity to delineate theological “trajectories.” Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea*, 15-30.

5. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 17.41.

6. As he continues in this argument, he explains why God has real existence, but one that cannot be divided as most substances spoken of in philosophy can.

7. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 17.43-18.45.

divinity.⁸ Basil's purpose is primarily pastoral and polemical and not speculative.⁹ In *On the Holy Spirit* chapters 9-25, Basil explains both what is known positively about the Holy Spirit from Scripture or the practice of the Church, as in the case of baptism, and negatively what cannot be said because it contradicts Nicene orthodoxy. In this section, the role of the baptismal liturgy to inform belief in the Holy Spirit's divinity is examined. Basil demonstrates that the Spirit is not merely an instrument of God, but God himself, by explaining the role the Spirit plays in sanctifying and illuminating and by reference to Christians' "rendering of glory" to the Spirit.

Three sections especially relate to the liturgy and tradition: chapters 10, 12, and 14-15, and will be examined after consideration of *homotimia*'s place in Basil's argument. Basil shows that the giving of equal glory flows from the baptismal confession of faith. In using *homotimia* to argue the Spirit's divinity, Basil presents liturgical choices as a reflection of what Christians already believe and confess. He argues that confessing the Holy Spirit as divine cannot be an innovation if it already happens in right worship.

Basil directly expresses the fittingness of giving the Spirit equal glory to the Father and the Son in order to imply that the Holy Spirit is divine, without explicitly naming the Spirit "God" or *homoousios*. In chapter 19 Basil cites scriptural evidence for the Holy Spirit as God. For instance, he cites names of the Spirit: "God is Spirit" (Jn 4.24) or "Paraclete."¹⁰ Basil addresses also the Spirit's works, and shows that the Spirit must be in communion with the Father and the Son to be able to work miracles, resurrect the dead, and participate in creation by perfecting it.¹¹ The Spirit intercedes on behalf of humanity and therefore must be in communion with God in order to intercede.¹² In chapter 20, Basil argues from the

8. See Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 46-51, his comments reflect the work of Hübner, Rousseau, and others.

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*, 19.48. "'Paraclete,' like the Only-begotten, who himself said, 'I will ask my Father, and he will give to you another Paraclete' (Jn 14.16)."

11. *Ibid.*, 19.49, 16.38, citing 1 Cor. 6.11 for "working miracles and the gifts of the healing," including driving out demons; and Ps 103.30: "you will send down your Spirit and they will be created, and you will renew the face of the earth" for resurrection of the dead.

12. *Ibid.*, 19.50.

Holy Spirit's freedom. Since the Spirit has greater dignity than creation, he is not a slave, and therefore must be master, and therefore God. Basil also looks at the scriptural naming of the Spirit as "Lord," and he argues that the Spirit is meant in 2 Thess 3.5: "may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into Christ's endurance."¹³ Some of these arguments will be returned to below, to illustrate Basil's proof of the Spirit's divinity.

Basil defends the Spirit's nature as divine because he is "beyond comprehension" like the Father.¹⁴ However, he avoids using the term "divine" or "God" directly, not unlike the Fathers before him.¹⁵ Rather Basil again seeks to demonstrate likeness to show that the Holy Spirit is truly divine. If the Spirit is like the Father and the Son, then he is one with them. This communion is perfect because it is communion at the ontological level; they are of the same nature. This is important for refuting the Macedonians, because their concern is that by emphasizing the equality of the Spirit with the Father and the Son, they will undermine the unity of God, and become polytheists.¹⁶ After Basil proves the communion of the three by comparing the Spirit's incomprehensibility to the Father's and the Son's, he reassures his readers that nonetheless the Spirit is also immanent because, "You know him, because he remains with you" (Jn 14.17).¹⁷ Basil argues that all of the scriptural references to the Spirit and his works give him glory. Basil's definition of "giving glory" here is the naming or praising of the works and perfections of the Spirit. But when arguing about the proper prepositions to use with the Trinity, Basil connects "giving glory" with the use of the doxology in liturgy and with worshipping in the Spirit and giving worship to the Spirit.¹⁸ In all cases, the glory Basil argues is given to the Spirit is the glory proper

13. Ibid., 20.51.

14. Ibid., 22.53. "The excellence of [the Spirit's] nature is known not only from the fact that he has the same titles as the Father and the Son and that he shares in their work but also from the fact that like them he is beyond comprehension."

15. For instance, Basil reflects much of Athanasius' scriptural defense of the divinity of the Holy Spirit and his use of the baptismal rite as a 'hermeneutical key' to understanding the Christian faith. (Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea*, 24-26, 138-148.)

16. Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea*, 24-26; Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 96-7 as he discusses the term *monarchia*.

17. Ibid., 22.53.

18. For instance, 27.68, "But they do not stop babbling up and down that to give glory with the Holy Spirit is unattested and non-scriptural, and the like." In this case, he is talking about the use of his doxology. 27.64: "So,

to God. Basil refutes his opponents' claim that the Spirit's glory is below that of the Father's and the Son's by saying, "And why should we defraud him of his communion in glory, who is everywhere associated with the Godhead in the confession of the faith, in the baptism of redemption, in the working of miracles, in the indwelling of the holy, in the gifts given to obedience?"¹⁹ Throughout this section Basil has used scriptural texts and a general understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in salvation to refute the Macedonians' contempt for giving equal glory to the Spirit in the doxology. Basil's language has relied on both Scripture and "unwritten tradition" to do this without pressing philosophical concepts that his opponents might not accept.

Essential to Basil's developing Trinitarian theology is the Spirit's work in Baptism. Anatolios provides insight into the role Baptism plays for Basil's theology. He refers to Basil's baptismal theology as a "sacramental epistemology" in that, "The baptismal formula...provided a sacramentally authorized logic, sanctioned by dominical command, of the connection of all three names."²⁰ But as this idea is defended and developed, the distinction among the words used to express unity and plurality in the divinity must be made.²¹ Anatolios connects the developing understanding of the baptismal liturgy as a lived Christian reality with Basil's developing explanations of the nature of divinity and the Trinity. Basil's definitions of four words that are not scriptural enable him to express and defend appropriate meanings for the nature of divinity.²² *Homoousios* is given by the Nicene Creed; however, as shown earlier in this thesis, the use of the word is not enough to ensure orthodoxy, since there are multiple interpretations of the word *ousia*. Basil will use *homoousios* in a non-material sense (avoiding the

then, just as we speak of worship in the Son as worship in the Image of God the Father, so also we speak of worship in the Spirit as worship in him who manifests the divinity of the Lord. Therefore, in worship the Holy Spirit is inseparable from the Father and the Son..."

19. *Ibid.*, 24.55

20. Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea*, 208.

21. On the naming and defining as necessary for the development of Basil's Trinitarian definition, see Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 198-202; Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 91-94. Anatolios, helpfully, foregrounds the scriptural nature, the "dominical command," of the baptismal formula for Basil to express the importance of this scripture for Basil's definition. In this, he draws together his own arguments that lived experience forms Christian thought in the patristic period.

22. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 82-101.

criticisms of the Eunomians), to speak about unity in God.²³ In this treatise, Basil, “refrains from directly calling the Spirit ‘God’ or *homoousios*, choosing to make the point in the more experiential language of worship: the Spirit possesses ‘equal honor’ (*isotimia*) with the Father and the Son.”²⁴ The words *hypostasis* and *prosopōn* are used to designate plurality in God. Basil has to contend with a pitfall in the use of these terms. If *hypostasis* is equated with *ousia*, which for many who followed Athanasius it was, then *prosopōn* takes on a tainted association of being a mere “appearance” of difference rather than true distinction of the person. This is the reason for the charge of Sabellianism towards those groups that use *prosopōn* to distinguish the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.²⁵ However, if *hypostasis* is not equated with *ousia*, but rather signifies what is distinct in Father, Son, and Spirit, then *prosopōn* can be used (almost) synonymously with *hypostasis*. By implying a definition of the word without directly defining it, Basil can essentially use *prosopōn* to mean whatever is distinct in God.²⁶ As Hildebrand evaluates Basil’s evolving language, he notes that in order to give meaning to both *prosopōn* and *hypostasis*, Basil relies on an earlier use of *idiōma* in *Against Eunomius*.²⁷ By using both *idiōma* to denote the properties that give distinction and *ousia* to denote what really exists, Basil expresses that there is true distinction, without becoming three separate *ousiai*.²⁸

With the Macedonians (*pneumatomachians*), Basil does not use *homoousios* to convince them of the divinity of the Holy Spirit; rather he employs *monarchia* and *homotimos* in order to convince them that there is truly one God, but three persons who enjoy equal glory.²⁹ These words are not technical, so Basil uses them to express ideas which the Macedonians might accept or agree to. For instance, Basil is insistent that he is not implying that three gods are the source of being when he refers to the role of the

23. Beyond the scope of this essay is the working out of this term with the two Gregories and the engagement of terms like “energy” and “activity” to show this unity.

24. Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea*, 25; see also *On the Holy Spirit*, 6.13.

25. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 91.

26. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 210-11, and 215-217. Here Ayres is connecting the use of ‘person’ with ‘energy’ in Basil’s and Gregory’s thought).

27. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 57 and 91-92.

28. *Ibid.*, 91-93.

29. *Ibid.*, 92-98, in this paragraph, which relies on Hildebrand’s interpretation that Basil avoids *ousia* language for apologetic reasons.

Son and the Spirit in creation; he says, “And let no one think that I am saying that there are three persons as sources or that I am asserting the energy of the Son to be imperfect. For the source of being is one, which makes through the Son and which perfects in the Spirit.”³⁰ Furthermore he uses *monarchia* to show that he confesses the oneness of God in the following:

By worshipping God from God, we confess the particularizing property of the persons and we stay within the monarchy. We do not scatter the divinity among a separated multitude because one form, as it were, has been imparted in the unchangeability of the Godhead and is contemplated in God the Father and God the Son....And so, with regard to the particularity of the persons, they are one and one, but with regard to the common nature, both are one thing.³¹

Basil’s argument shows that he uses the language of person without intending to divide substances. Basil is not counting each person as a separate substance like his opponents, rather he is choosing to use person to differentiate what can be differentiated in one *ousia*. In so doing, Basil stays away in this passage from any *ousia* language that could have presuppositions attached to it, and instead insists that he “stays within the monarchy” in order to convince his opponents without using controversial language. Furthermore, he explains this unity in such a way that he is able to unite not only the Father and the Son in their communion of being, but that it is shown through the sharing of both “power” and “glory” and “authority.”³² His doxology, then, reflects this unity of the first two persons. Basil then addresses the union with the Spirit saying,

“[The Holy Spirit] is joined through the one Son to the one Father, and through himself he completes the famed and blessed Trinity. That he is not ranked in the multitude of creation but rather, uniquely named makes clear enough his kinship with the Father and the Son. For he is not one among many; rather he is one...Therefore, the Holy Spirit is as far from created nature as—it

30. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 16.38. He continues by addressing the perfection of the action of each of the persons without the actions being necessitated by some lack in the other: the Father is not “imperfect in energy,” or the Son, “defective in creative power.” He is addressing the pneumatomachian concern that all three may be seen as less than divine if all share power.

31. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 18.45. He continues, “They have unity in the fact that the latter is whatever the former is and the former is whatever the latter is. And so, with regard to the particularity of the persons, they are one and one, but with regard to the common nature, both are one thing. How then, if they are one and one, are there not two gods? Because it is said that there is a king and the image of the king, but not two kings, for the power is not divided and the glory is not portioned out. As the power that rules over us and the authority is one, so also one, not many, is the doxology from us.”

32. *Ibid.*

is reasonable to say—a monad is from the composites that have plurality. He is made one with the Father and the Son in the way that a monad has kinship with a monad.”³³

The unity of the Holy Spirit is expressed here as ontological, because he must either be of a created nature that can be divided (a “composite that ha[s] plurality”), which makes no sense when speaking his nature as unique (“not one among many”), or he must be like the Father and the Son, and one in the way that they are one, implying communion with each other (Father and Son). This will be the basis for giving the Spirit, too, equal glory.

First Basil uses scriptural attestation to say that the Holy Spirit is, in fact glorified. He uses the names of the Spirit and his attributes (such as “Good” and “Righteous”) to show that the Scriptures acknowledge the Spirit in phrases similar to the ones used of the Father or the Son. He concludes by saying, “Such, then, are his extraordinary and great names, and they do not imply an excessive glory.”³⁴ These names match the greatness of the Spirit’s works.³⁵ He proceeds to explain the Holy Spirit’s role in creation, in deliverance from evil spirits, and most importantly for Basil, that “kinship with God comes through the Spirit, for ‘God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying Abba Father.’ (Gal 4.6).”³⁶ This kinship is related both to knowing God and being restored to life in him, as Basil explains. Basil then refutes the claim that because the Holy Spirit does this through intercession, he must be less than God (but more than man—interceding as intermediary). Basil answers, “Have you not yet heard about the Only-begotten, that he ‘is at the right hand of God and intercedes for us’ (Rom 8.34)? Surely it is not the case, then, that because he teaches and guides us who have been blinded to choose what profits us, you should diminish the pious and lawful glory owed to him?”³⁷ He continues this refutation, showing that the Spirit must be either slave or master.³⁸ Basil then proves that he does participate in the kingship, because

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., 19.48.

35. Ibid., 19.49, “What are his works? They are unspeakable because of their greatness and uncountable because of their great number, for how will we know what is beyond the ages?”

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., 20.50

38. Ibid., 20.51, “So if he is created, he is clearly a slave along with everything else...but if he is above creation, he participates in the kingship.”

the Scriptures call him lord. For instance, using the verse, “[M]ay the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into Christ’s endurance’ of afflictions (2 Thess 3.5),” arguing that the “Lord” in this verse would not be referring to “God” or “Christ” but a third person who directs mankind to the other two, though he doesn’t use “person” here.³⁹ In this argument, Basil is reflecting on the concept of *homotimos* and its fittingness in light of the Scriptures to show that the Holy Spirit is divine. Basil, “[leaves the reader] to make the obvious conclusion that if there is no rank between creator and creature, and if the Holy Spirit cannot be ranked with the creatures, then he must be ranked with God—he must be *homotimos* with the Father and the Son.”⁴⁰ Basil is hoping that the Macedonians’ acceptance of the equality of Father and Son may be extended to accept giving equal glory to the Spirit, if one can see that the Scriptures accord him equality of power and rank with Father and Son.

Basil is defending his liturgical choice against opponents who realize that if the doxology is unchallenged, it signals acceptance of the Spirit as equal to the Father and the Son. Basil knows that his doxology is not explicitly found in Scripture, and so he bases his defense on unwritten tradition and exegesis of the Scripture to defend the ideas expressed by the doxology which will in turn justify the words. As Hildebrand argues, Basil,

has borrowed what struck him as true from his Greek philosophical heritage and used the subtlety and sophistication of his own language to prove the depth of Christian mysteries that Greek thought could not have imagined. This synthesis has two salient features: a lasting theological vision and a flexible yet precise set of nonbiblical terms that guard biblical truth.⁴¹

Basil’s genius is to argue not solely from the scriptural language available to him, though he does use it plentifully, but to rely on argumentation learned and practiced in the Greek schools.⁴² As Hildebrand argues, Basil relies on techniques of *antirrhêsis*, *anaskeuê*, and *thesis*. Briefly, these techniques help to structure an argument by exposing the weaknesses of an opponent’s arguments’, and structuring one’s

39. The inference here is that “God” signifies the Father, not the communion of persons in this passage.

40. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 96.

41. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 99.

42. Hildebrand argues that the way Basil argues is similar to “authoritative allusion” in the Second Sophistic tradition. I am convinced of his argument, and assume it as part of Basil’s construction of authority from Scripture and Tradition. c.f. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 150-154.

own *thesis* in such a way that the strongest arguments are most prominent.⁴³ Additionally, Basil uses Scripture in such a way that it expresses his thought, and gives his thoughts scriptural authority. Hildebrand explains that Basil used biblical phrases to express the ideas he defended and so, "...these thoughts became more authoritative, creating in the mind of the reader a consonance between Basil's thoughts and the truth of Scripture."⁴⁴ Basil recognizes that Scripture expresses the truth of Christian revelation, and so must be a constant reference to any argument or expression of the apostolic faith. In the same way that students in the schools would be formed by the literature of the Greeks, the Christian would be formed in the "mind of Scripture," and so expressions of the rule of faith would come from and be connected to the reading of Scripture.⁴⁵ It would also, however, be coherent and expressive of the entire apostolic faith.⁴⁶

However, it is not only Scripture that Basil relies upon for his theses, but traditional sources as well. The rule of faith is the standard to interpret both Scripture and unwritten traditions, and so both must be coherent with each other since both are expressions of the apostolic faith. Basil uses other doxological expressions, regardless of genre of origin, and the baptismal liturgy as sources which he can draw upon to argue that the Holy Spirit's work is divine in His action of illuminating. Basil refutes the charge of innovating when he argues that in drawing on these sources, he is simply expressing the apostolic faith.⁴⁷

43. I recognize this is extremely simplified, for more depth, see Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 150-160.

44. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 154, relying on Frances Young's *Biblical Exegesis*, and: "The practice of expressing one's thoughts in the words of a more famous author or a classic text involves more than a display of erudition decorating the expressed thoughts: dressing one's thought in authoritative expressions makes the thoughts themselves carry more weight." (Ibid., 152.)

45. See Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1997), 35-36. "...[T]o discern the mind of scripture did involve two things: 1) the assembly of texts pointing to the same conclusion, and 2) respect for the normal or 'earthly' meaning of words..." (35).

46. Ibid., 43.

47. The Holy Spirit's action as illuminator will be in the section below, but the argument that Basil is not innovating would fit into the structure of refutation, described by Hildebrand, and referenced above. Analyzing each argument structurally is beyond the scope of this paper; my goal is simply to show that it is being done, and that Basil is not merely mimicking what he has been explicitly taught, but is using received tradition creatively to express Nicene orthodoxy.

Basil's rhetorical technique helps him to prove that equality in one area, glory, is necessarily contingent with equality in another area, nature. In the argument using baptism, Basil defends his doxology by expressing its similarity to the baptismal confession; both also express the equality of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit in their shared work in the economy of salvation. Because Basil uses scriptural attestation and argumentation to defend his doxology, he demonstrates that what is spoken in worship must reflect the rule of faith. To defend himself against the charge of innovation, Basil explained the doxology's prepositions as expressive of Nicene orthodoxy, but he also argued it was received and used in imitation of earlier sources.⁴⁸ Basil defends the value of these earlier sources in chapters 27-29, after defending the meaning of the doxology in chapters 19-24.

Basil's defense of the doxology supports liturgy as a "monument of tradition," not only by recognizing liturgy as a witness to be drawn from, but also because his argument is for his liturgical use of this particular doxology. Before Basil had to defend his doxology, he reports that it was accepted in certain places and was used by certain fathers, and therefore he argues it was accepted as an unopposed custom. Basil's use of the doxology in a liturgical context and his defense of so doing creates new precedent not only for the use of the doxology in worship but for the meaning it carries. The doxology now has explicit support in the form of argumentation engaging reason, Scripture, and reception from the Fathers. Applying Congar's "types" of monuments, there are four within this one argument for Basil's doxology: liturgy, the fathers, Scripture, and theological reasoning about the object. For Congar, "monuments" are sources which preserve the apostolic faith which is the "sacred deposit" so that it may be handed on.⁴⁹ They form concrete expressions of the Roman Catholic faith that can be studied as moments in which the faith is manifest in a new situation. Basil's use of *homotimia* to imply *homoousios*

48. *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.

49. The "sacred deposit" is God's Revelation handed down in the apostolic faith, a synonym would be the spiritual patrimony of the Church. See also Congar, *The Meaning of Tradition*, 152: "But the deposit itself, exactly like the Revelation... is not reduced to *statements* or formal expressions, as the Scholastics would say; it also comprises *realities*, which form part of the Church's historical life: the reality of the sacraments, of the Lord's presence in the Eucharist and by his Spirit, of the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity in the soul, of the communion of saints and the assistance of their prayers, etc."

in his defense of his doxology “with the Holy Spirit” adds to this sacred deposit in the sense that its composition is a documentary “monument” and that from this early monument Roman Catholic theologians like Congar can study the development of the Church’s understanding of Tradition.

Appeal to the Baptismal Confession of Faith: Liturgical Witness to the Spirit’s Divinity

The second use of liturgy that this chapter will consider is Basil’s invocation of the baptismal formula given in the Gospel of Matthew to defend his doxology. It will become clear that Basil defends this choice not only because it is explicitly scriptural, but also because the meaning he gives to it emerges from exegesis on the Gospel of John as well.⁵⁰ Having made clear why the Holy Spirit is invoked in baptism, Basil is then free to use the weight of the liturgical tradition as a monument not only to defend his doxology, but also to insist upon the implicit meaning supporting Nicene orthodoxy: that the Holy Spirit is fully divine and shares in the same nature as the Father and the Son.

Basil’s Arguments from the Holy Spirit’s Role in Baptism

The Macedonians disagree with ranking the Holy Spirit as equal with the Father and the Son. In arguing against them, Basil appeals to Mt. 28:19: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”⁵¹ Basil argues with this scriptural witness especially noting that these words are from the Lord himself. He asks if men are unwilling to rank the Spirit with the Father and the Son, how is it possible that they do not, “manifestly stand against the command of God?”⁵² Hildebrand points out that, “[t]he baptismal formula tells us *that* the Holy Spirit is

50. This follows the insights of Hildebrand, which will be outlined with Basil’s argument, below.

51. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 10.24

52. *Ibid.*

so united [to the Father and the Son], but not *why* he is so united.”⁵³ So Basil must go beyond the baptismal formula to prove that the Holy Spirit is one with the Father and the Son, and not simply listed with them.

Basil wants to show communion in the Godhead in order to argue that the Holy Spirit is divine; his opponents argue that “in the Spirit” does not denote communion because the “in” means “by means of” like being baptized “in water” or “in Moses.”⁵⁴ For Basil the scriptural triple invocation of the Trinity is mirrored in the baptismal rite’s triple invocation and that both witness to communion within the Trinity.⁵⁵ He recognizes the source of the baptismal triple invocation in the words of Jesus in Matthew’s Gospel, and so this invocation is scriptural.⁵⁶ Furthermore, those who try to use other scriptural references to argue against this claim, “throw down the foundation of faith in Christ by dashing apostolic tradition to the ground and...obliterate it...they cry out for proofs from the Scriptures and dismiss the non-scriptural witness of the fathers as worthless.”⁵⁷ Not only are they rejecting the witness of the fathers, but the very tradition of Christ: “For if the Lord has handed on as necessary and saving dogma that the Holy Spirit is ranked with the Father...then how is it not true that they make their own blasphemy more authoritative than the law of the Master?”⁵⁸ That the unity of the three persons is expressed by words found in Scripture is not, as Basil recognizes, all that is needed to establish that the Holy Spirit is actually a third divine person, but it does establish that Basil’s ideas are supported by formulas found in Scripture, and in the words given by Christ before He ascends.

How is this “law of the Master” handed on? As a “dogma” which is “handed on.”⁵⁹ Basil explicitly ties the command of the Lord to the liturgical words and actions of baptism. His argument is

53. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 187.

54. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, chapters 14-15. 10.24, “For if, as they say, this being ranked together is not indicative of some communion or union, let them say what the proper way to think about this is and what other, more appropriate union they posit.”

55. *Ibid.* 10.26, 12.28, and see discussion, below.

56. *Ibid.*, 10.24. He says, “then let them not blame us if we follow the Scriptures.”

57. *Ibid.*, 10.25.

58. *Ibid.*

59. *Ibid.*

that we are Christians “on account of faith.”⁶⁰ But we are saved by being, “regenerated through the grace of baptism.”⁶¹ This baptism then means that, “salvation is established through the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,” so, “should we cast away the ‘standard of teaching’ (Rom 6.17) which we have received?”⁶² Basil argues that what is spoken in the baptismal formula is a necessary teaching for Christians to be united with the church. As seen above, a *dogma* is a teaching that may be privately proclaimed but is handed down to the faithful in order that they might hold to the apostolic faith. Basil connects this to the passing on of the practice of baptizing in Trinitarian form from the words of Christ recorded in Scripture. This *dogma* then is not secret, nor is it unwritten, so Basil must mean something else by applying this term to the Matthean text. It seems his intention is more to emphasize the necessity of adhering to this belief for the Christian to remain within the Church. If he were to emphasize it as a kerygmatic statement, it would be a teaching-statement that must be intellectually assented to in the process of coming to faith. For Basil to emphasize it as dogmatic is to place it in the realm of the inheritance received by means of the mysteries that must be preserved. Basil emphasizes that this dogma could be lost, even by those who are fully initiated into the Church, if the rest of their beliefs do not conform to the underlying mystery of this formula: the triune God. This would be a rejection of the inheritance of Christians, as he points out when he says, “...if we now reject what we then accepted [then] the loss is the same, whether someone should die bereft of baptism or receive it lacking something from the tradition.”⁶³ The man who loses this will fail in receiving the “‘promises’ of God.”⁶⁴

Basil then also refers to some of the liturgical actions of baptism when he states that a man who loses the faith given to him in baptism, by rejecting the Trinity in which he was baptized, “contradicts his own handwriting which he put down at the confession of the faith.”⁶⁵ He goes on to complete his argument: “For if baptism is the beginning of life for me, and that day of regeneration is the first of my

60. Ibid. 10.26.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid., referencing Eph. 2.12.

65. Ibid., 10.26.

days, it is clear that the words uttered in the grace of adopted sonship are the most honorable of all.”⁶⁶ He ties the baptismal confession of faith with *homotimia* when he exhorts, “I pray that I depart to the Lord with this confession, and I urge them to keep the faith free from violence until the day of Christ and to guard the spirit undivided from the Father and the Son. Thus they will closely observe the teaching received at baptism both in their confession of faith and in rendering glory.”⁶⁷ Basil links the worship given to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit with being baptized into the same to show that the Christian inheritance is preserved by confession of the Holy Spirit as divine. His doxology is acceptable, he implies, because it reflects an interior connection between knowledge of the divinity and the inherited rule of faith (tradition) given in baptism.

Basil moves from the unity of the three persons as an established truth given in the baptismal formula to an understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit as enabling the believer to know and confess God at all. The communion of all three persons of the Trinity is established by 1 Corinthians 12:3: “No one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except in the Holy Spirit.” Hildebrand explains that for Basil, salvation is knowledge of God which comes from the illumination of the Holy Spirit at the time of baptism.⁶⁸ Briefly, Hildebrand’s argument is as follows. For Basil, baptism is becoming like Christ, but no one can become like Christ without the mediation of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the light by which we can see the image (the Son) of the archetype (the Father).⁶⁹ Therefore, to become like Christ, the baptized receives knowledge of the Son, (“No one can say Jesus is Lord...”) and therefore of the Father, through the Holy Spirit (“...except in the Holy Spirit”). Because the Holy Spirit is the mediator—because he can mediate—he must be sanctifier and illuminator. If he can do these things, then he must be God. As Hildebrand points out, “Basil’s pneumatology cannot be understood...apart from his thoughts on salvation and

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.

68. Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 174-177.

69. Hildebrand’s point, less central to my argument, is that this reflects Platonic ideas of knowledge and salvation that have formed Basil’s thought. See *Trinitarian Theology*, 97-98, 173-176, 185-186. For more on using Greek thought to inform Christian belief, see Arthur P. Urbano, *The Philosophical Life: Biography and the Crafting of Intellectual Identity in Late Antiquity*, (Washington D.C.: CUA Press, 2013), 32-79.

baptism...The movement in Basil's thought, then, is from the economic to the immanent Trinity, from the Spirit's activity in salvation and baptism to the nature of his being and his relationship with the Father and the Son."⁷⁰

Because this doctrine is central to the understanding of the salvation offered in the Church, Basil argues that protecting it is necessary to the reception of salvation. "He who does not guard at every moment the confession which we set down at our first initiation—when we were delivered 'from idols' and came to 'the living God' (1 Thess 1.9)—and who does not hold it as an unfailing protection for his whole life, establishes himself as a 'stranger' from the 'promises' (Eph 2.12) of God."⁷¹ Basil does not want to "surrender the tradition that leads me to the light...Rather, I pray that I depart to the Lord with this confession, and I urge them to keep the faith free from violence...and to guard the Spirit undivided from the Father and the Son. Thus they will closely observe the teaching received at baptism both in their confession of faith and in rendering glory."⁷² Not only does baptism support the giving of glory to the Spirit with the Father and the Son, but fidelity to this teaching is important for the baptized. This tradition cannot be abandoned without dire consequences for the faith of the one abandoning it, as Basil says,

...[I]f the separation of the Spirit from the Father and the Son in baptism is dangerous for the baptizer and useless for the baptized, how is it safe for us to separate the Spirit from the Father and the Son? Now faith and baptism are two ways of salvation that are naturally united with each other and indivisible. While faith is perfected by baptism, baptism is established by faith, and each is carried out by the same names. For as we believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, so also we are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.⁷³

This idea, that the confession of faith at baptism expresses what must be believed is echoed later in chapter 27, as discussed above.

70. Ibid., 173-174.

71. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 10.26.

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid., 12.28.

Basil's Theological Exposition of Baptism

For Basil, it is fundamental that the liturgy conveys truth which must be adhered to. Salvation comes from believing rightly, and believing rightly is contingent upon living and confessing the apostolic faith expressed in the liturgy. Therefore, to understand Basil's theology of baptism, it is important to recognize certain aspects of fourth century liturgy. In the early part of the fourth century, liturgical prayer would have been highly regionalized, and orally passed down in small units (and sometimes improvised).⁷⁴ As the fourth century progressed, there was a shift to longer written forms (composed of the smaller units) and greater consistency in the liturgy, both within a region and among regions, to combat unorthodox interpretations of the faith.⁷⁵ Prior to the fourth century, Origen is the only witness to prayer "in the Holy Spirit," and he would be a source of tradition for Basil, given his influence on the region of Cappadocia.⁷⁶ In examining the fourth century Syrian baptismal liturgy, Gabriele Winkler discovers that a theological shift takes place away from the anointing ritual prior to baptism as an imitation of Jesus's anointing at the banks of the Jordan to the tomb of Christ, and towards a greater emphasis on Romans 6 and dying with Christ.⁷⁷ While Basil is not in Syria, it seems his theology also emphasizes Romans 6, because he emphasizes the role of the Spirit in baptism to conform us to Christ in death and resurrection. Furthermore, Basil is appealing not only to what he knows through the invocation of the Trinity in baptism, but to the power of ritual action, such as immersion, to form believers in the image of Christ.

Basil's baptismal theology as developed from the liturgical practice is seen especially when he addresses the question of whether being baptized "in water" is the same as being baptized "in the

74. Paul F. Bradshaw, "Introduction: The Evolution of Early Anaphoras," in *Essays on Early Christian Prayers*, (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2017), digitally retrieved: no page number.

75. Paul Bradshaw, "God Christ, and the Holy Spirit in Early Christian Praying." For more on the role of doctrinal development and its impact on liturgical practice as well as the reverse, see Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Search*, ch.10, especially 226-230.

76. Bradshaw, "God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit in Early Christian Praying," 62. Gregory Thaumaturgus was taught by Origen, and multiple works attest to the role of Origen in Cappadocian theology.

77. Gabriele Winkler, "The Original Meaning of the Prebaptismal Anointing and Its Implications" *Worship* 52(1): 1978, 24-45.

Spirit.”⁷⁸ Basil first argues that the purpose of baptism is to make believers imitators of Christ so that the Christian is an image of Christ in both “perfection of life” and “in that of his very death.”⁷⁹ This death is to be “buried with him in baptism” and then to be “begotten again” so to begin a “second life.”⁸⁰ Basil then describes the ritual’s movement down into the water as descending into a death like Christ’s, “imitat[ing] the burial of Christ through baptism.”⁸¹ Basil calls baptism a “type” of the resurrection promised by Christ.⁸² Importantly, “[t]he water fulfills the image of death, while the Spirit furnishes the pledge of life.”⁸³ Basil connects the liturgical action, descent into water, with the understanding of the Christian proclamation that believers are imitators of Christ. In doing this he connects the meaning of baptism to the act of baptism itself. It is not only an image or teaching about the Spirit’s role of illuminating Christ, but its meaning is contained within the act itself which is passed on. Furthermore, Basil’s connection between knowledge about baptism and the witness of baptism shows one way that tradition is “handed on.” It is not only through teaching, but through the liturgical actions as he describes them. Basil next examines the act of triple immersion, and says, “In three immersions and in the same number of invocations, the great mystery of baptism is accomplished, in order that the type of death may be fully formed and the baptized enlightened in their souls by the handing on of the knowledge of God.”⁸⁴ This statement, aside from drawing attention to the reflection of the Trinitarian form by the three invocations and three immersions as an image of each other, also shows that liturgy manifests the tradition, in this case visually and aurally. Reception of baptism is concurrent with reception of the apostolic faith, and so liturgy and tradition are intimately connected in reflecting the one reality that is life in Christ. That the “knowledge of God” is “handed on” through the sacrament itself, shows that the

78. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 15.

79. *Ibid.*, 15.35. “The imitation of Christ is necessary for the perfection of life, not only in his living example of humility, patience, and freedom from anger, but also in that of his very death.”

80. *Ibid.*

81. *Ibid.*

82. *Ibid.*, “And so, we ritually cleanse ourselves...[with] one cleansing, saving baptism since there is one death for the sake of the world and one resurrection from the dead, of which baptism is the type.”

83. *Ibid.* Furthermore, martyrdom is an actual death that conforms to Christ, and this is why they don’t need to be baptized in water, as Basil expresses in 15.36.

84. *Ibid.* Significantly, “handing on” is παράδοσις in this statement.

“enlightening” of believers, already associated with Basil’s argument that the Holy Spirit “illuminates” Christ, happens in the working of the Holy Spirit. Baptism enlightens believers by the action of the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit’s divinity is revealed by this role uniting believers to Christ. The liturgical action and formula of baptism witness to what the believer is receiving, and what the believer is receiving is tradition. The Holy Spirit’s role in the handing on of tradition witnesses to his divinity because tradition is the handing on and reception of the apostolic faith, which is revelation. The interaction of the various elements of this thesis: liturgy, tradition, and the divinity of the Holy Spirit, is best exemplified in this passage. In Basil’s theology of baptism, the connection between these three elements is implicit; in Congar’s exposition of “monuments” the interconnection of the three is explicit.

Basil would recognize baptism itself as a “monument of tradition,” not only explicitly in its wording (a scriptural monument), but in the exegetical conclusions made when taken in conjunction with both the assertion that “no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except in the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:3) and the image of salvation through the Spirit’s illumination of the Son as Image of the Father/Archetype. Liturgical practice, including the actions of the rite, expresses the “rule of faith,” and, in turn, Basil is arguing for a particular response, a reflection of the divinity of the Spirit in the doxology used, on the part of the baptized to protect and defend that practice. In this regard, Basil is an additional Father arguing for a version of *lex orandi, lex credendi*. While he is neither novel nor the first to argue that what has been done has some bearing on what is believed, his explicit and implicit conclusions develop the relationship between the action of the Holy Spirit and tradition in the Church.

Implications of These Arguments

The arguments using the baptismal confession and explicating its theological meaning are central to Basil’s methodology in *On the Holy Spirit*. Basil is applying techniques gained from both literary and philosophical training and scriptural exegesis to show evidence that the Church has always held that the

Holy Spirit is divine. It is widely acknowledged that Basil appeals to both Stoic and Aristotelian concepts of substance and differentiation, using the Greek term *homoousios* in a way that is consistent with Nicaea's boundaries—avoiding both Sabellianism and Arianism.⁸⁵ He does this, not because he wants to replace scriptural language with philosophical language, but because he wants to interpret the words of the Council fathers in a way that preserves their intention in light of new (and continuing) controversies. He cannot appeal to an explicit text within the Scriptures calling the Holy Spirit “God,” and therefore, Basil must show that the confluence of texts, read in the light of the rule of faith, points to this understanding. As explained above, Basil uses the texts that he references, not merely to appeal to their explicit meaning, but with creativity in both understanding and deploying them to lend authority to his conclusions. He does not rely solely on Scripture; Basil holds that liturgy and Scripture both witness to the one apostolic faith. His appeals to baptism and the baptismal confession of faith, and more importantly what belief does in the life of believers, are therefore weighty arguments for his opponents to fight when denying the Holy Spirit.

At this point, it is important to outline Basil's assumptions and explicit arguments for his doxology, so that in the next chapter an evaluation of his innovation can be made. First and most obviously, Basil believes that the Holy Spirit is fully God, and not either a highly placed creature or some sort of partial-God (against the Macedonians). He believes that God is one (like the Macedonians), but he does not believe that God “appears” in different modes or forms when He is Father, Son, and Spirit (like the Sabellians). So Basil is trying to explain how God is both one and three. Basil's opponents, the Macedonians, take issue with his doxology because it is not the one to which they are accustomed, and therefore they argue it is not part of the apostolic tradition. He and the Macedonians alike recognize that this doxology acknowledges unity in the Godhead; the Macedonians think that it is Sabellian in nature

85. For more on his use of Stoic and Aristotelian thought, see Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 199-202; Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology of Basil of Caesarea*, 46-47. Both appear to be following the work of Sesboue in evaluating the ways in which Basil uses the more materialist Stoic understanding of substance and the Aristotelian realist sense, which is not necessarily materialist.

while Basil promotes the Nicene orthodoxy of a triune God that is truly one God and yet distinct in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. To defend his doxology against the Macedonian claims, Basil begins *On the Holy Spirit* (chapters 1-8), by outlining his opponents' arguments about prepositions to be used with the Son. For the purposes of this paper, this section shows a shared assumption that there is not subordination of the Son to the Father, and that the Son is recognized as truly God.

Basil then proceeds to explain the Holy Spirit's role in salvation, offer explicit scriptural references to the Holy Spirit, and refute Macedonian claims about how the Spirit is to be spoken of and addressed.⁸⁶ In the section 9.22-24.57, Basil uses the baptismal liturgy to defend his own doxological choice. His central claim is linked to the concept of *homotimia*. If Basil can successfully show, using the authorities of Scripture and Tradition, that the Holy Spirit is rightly given equal praise as the Father and the Son, then he can show that equal praise implies equality of nature, especially when the praise is given for actions that the Godhead "does" as a unity. This unity of action, implied in the Holy Spirit's role in baptism and made explicit in Basil's analysis, shows the Holy Spirit to function in a divine rather than creaturely manner. To make these arguments, Basil takes for granted that his opponents will accept the authority of both Scripture—he references it regularly—and tradition—because he refers to baptism itself and the baptismal confession of faith as something to be protected and adhered to throughout Christian life. In this section, Basil does not really defend his doxology with explicit rhetoric, so much as state that he insists on protecting the belief of the Triune God that is already lived "in mystery" in the liturgical life of the Church. This section is a defense of the positive statements of belief about the Holy Spirit, and a refutation of errors.

Basil's final section (25.58-29.75) returns to his opponents' arguments about his doxology, and here he explicitly defends and explains the use of all the prepositions and conjunctions for the doxology ("and," "with," and "in"). He wants to defend his doxology because it, too, expresses belief in the Holy

86. All found above, this chapter.

Spirit. He defends his doxology not only by showing that its meaning expresses Nicene orthodoxy (which was supported in the previous section's defense of the Holy Spirit's divinity), but also because it has the support of tradition. Basil transcends Nicene argumentation when he chooses terms and arguments that are not scriptural, and he argues in such a way that he is applying the "rule of faith" to the Scripture and developing his ideas from it in order to guard orthodoxy. He does this, knowing that Nicaea has defined narrowly the divinity of Christ, seeking to cut off certain statements which are not fruitful for the discussion of Christ's role in salvation. Basil takes for granted that his opponents will acknowledge certain expressions of the "rule of faith," since his opponents concede a Nicene understanding of the Son, moving beyond conciliar statements to include other traditional witnesses. Basil accepts statements of the fathers (both of the council and of other bishops, founders, and teachers), the actions and words of the liturgy, and customary/disciplinary actions within the Church as witnesses to the "rule of faith" that are therefore able to be used in defense of Nicene orthodoxy. For example, he uses arguments from the Fathers' use of the doxology in their writings, the existence and use of his doxology by the faithful, and Gregory the Wonderworker's church and example. He uses the defense of "unwritten traditions handed down in mystery" and imitation of his spiritual father, Gregory, who has handed on this tradition.⁸⁷ Furthermore, in this section Basil, though seeming to take for granted that these sources of received faith will be acceptable to his opponents, makes a strong defense of the reception of the apostolic faith by means of both Scripture and tradition. His assumption is that Scripture is always understood within the apostolic faith.

This outline of Basil's arguments and assumptions lays the foundation for examining how Basil uses tradition. Basil's use of tradition as a means to defend his own doctrinal teaching and argumentation provides an answer to some of the difficulties that arose from the Nicene profession of faith. Because Nicaea did not address (did not need to address) the Holy Spirit in the Trinity, there was no statement to which Basil could appeal. Basil is able to develop theological argumentation to answer some of the

87. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 29.74.

questions opened by the reception of the Council over the next thirty years by using some of the same principles given by Athanasius and others at the time of the Council. Basil's argument in *On the Holy Spirit* becomes an important text at the time of Constantinople as the Creed is developed to express the divinity of the Holy Spirit explicitly.⁸⁸

This is an early point in the use and interpretation of tradition, and so also an innovation in the development of the theology of the Church. Basil's treatment of traditional witness can be traced forward into Congar's teaching on Tradition and traditions, which appeals to the monuments of tradition in order to understand the ways in which Revelation is given to the Church. In the next section, Basil's use of tradition will be shown to be similar to this explicit treatment of Tradition by Congar in his essays in *Tradition and Traditions*. Basil's contribution as a Father to the deposit of faith will be shown in both his defense of tradition and in the way in which he engages with tradition. Basil is not citing tradition as proof-texts, any more than he does with Scripture. Rather, as Basil engages with tradition as the received apostolic faith, he teaches the Church how to interpret Tradition, and furthers an understanding of its role in light of Divine Revelation. This is his great genius.

88. See Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 244-260, Basil's contributions along with the other two Cappadocians' Trinitarian theology.

V. CONCLUSIONS

In his work, *On the Holy Spirit*, Basil is writing a response to a debated contemporary theological question. While Nicaea had attempted to quell the Christological controversy, the solution of declaring Father and Son *homoousios* encouraged questions about the divine nature. In the attempts to define what could be said about divinity following Nicaea, such as the twin councils of Ariminum and Seleucia which produced the “Dated Creed,” it became clear that appealing only to scriptural language and the term *homoousios* would not bring either clarity or consistency to the language used of the Trinity.¹ Basil defends the divinity of the Holy Spirit against the Macedonian claims that the Holy Spirit is a creature. In his arguments, Basil innovates by using texts and actions from the baptismal liturgy and arguments from the fathers in the same way he used scriptural texts, and he uses the literary, rhetorical, and philosophical tools of a Christian *paideia* to interpret this received tradition. Basil’s creative engagement with non-scriptural witness to defend a doxology, that in turn can be used to defend the divinity as Basil defines it, is innovative in its structure and appeals.

Basil’s ostensible goal is to convince the recipient of his treatise, Amphilochius, that there are reasonable arguments against those who deny the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Basil’s innovation is a response that interprets scriptural witness to answer questions that arise from scriptural interpretations different from Basil’s. His defenses do not function singly, but rather are layered in such a way that Basil is able to use this combination to define the divinity of the Holy Spirit in a way that cannot be contested without undermining the “rule of faith.” Basil is training Amphilochius how to argue, both against the Macedonian opinion and for an interpretation of divinity that proceeds from the Nicene language, in a way that expands Nicaea to accommodate new questions. However, it is clear that Basil’s work was not

1. Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea*, 21-23. The “Dated Creed” replaces “like in all respects” with “like.” The later council at Alexandria in 362 also worked with terminology, this time with *hypostasis*, and seemed to have consensus about the idea but not the terminology, since one *hypostasis* and three *hypostaseis* were both allowed as long as they were explained in a way that was neither Arian or Sabellian.

intended only for Amphilochius, given the language that he uses and its subsequent role in Nicene orthodoxy; this is no private letter.²

Basil's arguments throughout *On the Holy Spirit* repeatedly show him defending Nicene orthodoxy by interpreting the baptismal confession of faith and the fathers in light of both Nicaea's language (*ousia*) and the current controversy over the Holy Spirit. He proposes that he does nothing innovative when he uses a different doxology from the ones the Macedonians are accustomed to hearing, and that his teaching is merely a repetition of that which he was taught by his fathers in faith. This thesis has attempted to show that this rhetorical flourish is not strictly true. Basil's defense has instead shown him to be creative with what he has received, engaging and using the "rule of faith" in a way that would inform future theological practices. This is not a unique instance of Basil's creative engagement with his predecessors, as was shown in the section outlining Mark DelCogliano's analysis of Basil's use of Origen and applying his insights to *On the Holy Spirit*. In this final section, the role of Basil's innovation in argumentation, particularly with respect to non-scriptural witness, will be evaluated with regard to its lasting effects in theology. Basil's influence and understanding of tradition, as well as the sources of tradition, will become what Congar calls "Tradition" and the "monuments of Tradition."

Basil's Defense of Sacred Tradition

Basil engages with Tradition, in Congar's definition, in a way that is both innovative and traditional.³ As seen in both chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis, Basil argues using scriptural evidence like his predecessors and contemporaries. Scripture was used by all contenders in the theological controversies of the fourth century because it was the recognized witness to God's revelation. Because Scripture reveals God to man,

2. See Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 1.1-3.

3. Congar's "Tradition" will be used for the whole of revelatory material that comes through the action of the Holy Spirit in the Church for the rest of this thesis. "Monuments of tradition" for Congar refer to those traditional elements that help to witness to or convey Tradition itself. This would not be Basil's language, but it tracks with his thought.

arguments about what could and could not be said about the divinity and faith as a whole must have reference to Scripture. However, already in this period it was recognized that Scripture could be interpreted wrongly.⁴ Any exegetical practice that did not begin by adhering to the received “rule of faith” was in error from its first principles. Both Lienhard and Congar demonstrate that this was already part of the exegetical practices of the fathers before Basil, so in this regard he is not novel in insisting that the baptismal confession of faith is a principle of faith that must be defended.⁵ Basil goes farther in that if the baptismal confession must be defended and adhered to as a witness to apostolic faith, then understanding what it teaches is also necessary for correctly speaking about God. Because it is explicitly given by the Lord and attested to in Scripture, Basil’s opponents cannot reject the Trinitarian formula for baptism. Basil then can begin with the baptismal formula for the argument that to reject the use of his doxology as a legitimate liturgical choice is to deny or undermine the baptismal formula, and therefore, to deny or undermine the faith inherited by all Christians. Furthermore, because Basil’s doxology expresses equality between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, this knowledge received through the baptismal confession can enlighten the Scriptures that seem to subordinate the Son and the Holy Spirit to the Father.⁶ The Scriptures must be read *in the context of* the baptismal confession, or “the rule of faith.”

Basil also makes a direct appeal to Tradition as important to the “rule of faith” that not only helps to rightly interpret Scripture, but to have authentic Christian knowledge.⁷ Basil’s defense of unwritten traditions expresses the Church’s reliance on apostolic tradition both in action and in teaching up through the late fourth century, and Basil appeals to the action of handing on the faith to defend his doxology as given by Gregory the Wonderworker.⁸ More importantly, if “in mystery” is understood as the handing on by means of the action of the Holy Spirit in the experience of worship, as argued above, then what is

4. For instance, Basil argues that the interpretation of “from whom” from the Scriptures leads to a material understanding of begetting is incorrect. (*On the Holy Spirit*, 4.6.)

5. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 10.24, 26, 27.67, and see chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis.

6. For example, Basil strikes against Aetius’s “logic chopping” in *On the Holy Spirit*, 2.4. He takes on ranking and subnumerating in: 16.37, 17.43, and the role of the Spirit as merely intercessor, rather than granter of gifts in 19.50.

7. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 27.66.

8. *Ibid.*, 29.74.

revealed in worship is revelatory because it is given by God. Basil defends his arguments on the importance of non-scriptural witness by relying on the scriptural; he cites Paul's admonition to "Keep to the traditions that you have received (2 Thess. 2.15)" and the existence of many liturgical and devotional customs, such as praying standing or facing east, to show that unwritten traditions are part of the apostolic faith.⁹ Here Basil is both expanding and supplementing, to use DelCogliano's categories, what already has been implicitly accepted by the Church. He gives explicit meaning through theological reflection on and employment of the orthopraxy of the Church. Though liturgical and customary practices have always informed what the Church believes, he is explicitly arguing that this is so, and then using these traditional practices to further his argument.

In both his arguments for the baptismal rite as definitive of the tenets of faith and his arguments for liturgical and customary usage as unwritten tradition from the fathers, Basil has innovatively argued for what the Church now calls Tradition. Insofar as the Church has relied upon *On the Holy Spirit*, from the fourth century onward, to defend the divinity of the Holy Spirit and promote the development of pro-Nicene theology, Basil has contributed to the deposit of faith. His influence at the Council of Constantinople can be seen especially in the development of the creed at this council. There was no explicit creed formulated, instead, Nicaea's was expanded upon based on the new arguments to definitively state that Son and Spirit are to be worshipped as equal to ("with") the Father.¹⁰

Basil's Liturgical and Patristic Sources

Given that the Church as a whole accepted scriptural attestation for theological debate, and that Basil has defended what is now Tradition as an witness to the apostolic faith equal to scriptural witness, it is now

9. Ibid., 27.66, 29.71.

10. Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, 255-258, following J.N.D. Kelly's account of the creed; this creed was not even promulgated because it was seen as restating the Nicene faith. In this, an echo of Basil's insistence that he is not innovating can be seen.

important to outline who or what is tradition for Basil. Basil points to qualifications that would enable one to claim a particular non-scriptural source as an expression of the “rule of faith.” These can be teased out from his arguments as a whole.

First, anything that is apostolic tradition must express the rule of faith as confessed at baptism or held within Scriptures. Basil’s invocations of the baptismal formula and what it teaches, as well as his invocation of apostolic tradition make clear that there is an implicit recognition of a rule of orthodoxy, though this is an anachronism.¹¹ Basil holds as axiomatic that through knowledge we commune with God, and therefore the rule of faith *is* implicitly knowledge of God.¹² Any legitimate teaching will express the “rule of faith,” and anything which contradicts it is heterodox.

Second, customs which have been in use without controversy have weight, unless they can be shown to contradict the “rule of faith.” Basil says that he uses both doxologies because, “the faithful use both,”¹³ and that the doxology is in use in Gregory the Wonderworker’s church, who is also a “father” for Basil and for the church at Cappadocia.¹⁴ That the doxology is sound for teaching or promoting the “rule of faith” is necessary, and that it is passed down from Gregory shows that it has the force of both tradition from the fathers and custom that has been accepted without controversy. If a liturgical choice produces authentic Christian life and teaching, for this reason, Basil recognizes that it also accords with the rule of faith. Basil does not make this argument explicit, but it appears in his references to liturgical action, especially. He furthers this idea with the use of devotional, non-liturgical customs as examples of his doxology.¹⁵

11. See Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 27.67, 29.71, and my explanations, chapter 2.

12. *Ibid.*, 1.2. Also discussed by Hildebrand, *Trinitarian Theology*, 173-179, and by Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy*, as “contemplation,” 218-221. Ayres sees in Basil an emphasis on Christians experiencing God in order to be able to talk about God which implies the lived reality of the faith forming Christians that Congar takes up in his *Tradition and Traditions*.

13. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 25.58, 27.67.

14. *Ibid.*, 29.74.

15. For example, *Ibid.*, 29.73.

Third, liturgical customs which have been passed down are of “apostolic” origin, and therefore are also part of the apostolic tradition. Basil refers to these as the *dogmata* and “unwritten” customs.¹⁶ These have weight both because of their origin—that they are of long use (antiquity) and have fathers behind them—and because they are productive of understanding the faith more deeply. Again, we see in Basil’s argument for these traditions in the appeal to the “rule of faith” and that which is handed down. The very act of passing something down from the fathers makes what is given of greater value than if it were merely a helpful custom, newly found. Basil is appealing to the weight of preservation and not only to the apostle or father who handed it on.¹⁷

Fourth, Basil considers as tradition those things which have been used in any way (teaching, writing, devotional customs) by men of “antiquity” who are renowned for holiness of life and right teaching.¹⁸ Basil is acknowledged as one of the first to appeal to the fathers directly as a source of theological principles.¹⁹ His references include bishops, teachers, and other men of holy life. His arguments from the fathers acknowledge that some form of orthodoxy is already developing in the arguments themselves and displays, by Basil’s use of the argument, a reverence for the use of reason in understanding and explaining the *kerygma*.

Fifth, the liturgy is rooted in apostolic tradition. Basil argues that baptism, which includes the confession of faith, gives grace and communion with God, and so must be defended.²⁰ Baptism has a special place in Basil’s argument for the value of liturgical witness, but it is furthered by his use of other liturgical practices which are “apostolic” and from “unwritten tradition.”²¹ Furthermore, he explicitly argues for the role of liturgy in forming belief when he says, “Now, let them teach us not to baptize as we have received, or not to believe as we have been baptized, or not to give glory as we have believed.”²²

16. Ibid., 27.66, and my chapter 2, above.

17. Ibid., 29.71.

18. Ibid., 29.71-74.

19. Drobner, *The Fathers of the Church*, 273.

20. Ibid., 10.26, 27.68.

21. Ibid. 27.66, such as turning to the East for prayer, making the sign of the cross, etc.

22. Ibid., 27.68.

This logical argument appealing to liturgy as a source of theological understanding becomes a precedent for further argumentation dependent on the liturgy by men like Yves Congar.

Congar's "Monuments" and Basil's Use of Tradition

As argued in chapter 3, Congar locates the source of Tradition in the Holy Spirit, acting in the believing Church, to bring her to fulfillment. Congar's careful analysis of the Church's understanding of Tradition from her beginnings to the modern period illustrates the development of an explicit understanding of Tradition and its authority. The historical essay within *Tradition and Traditions* clearly shows, through various texts, that Basil was an important, but not the only, teacher who appealed to apostolic or unwritten traditions during the patristic period. This thesis has not claimed either that Basil explicitly understood the fullness of Congar's "monuments of tradition" or that Congar was depending exclusively on Basil as he developed his teaching regarding the monuments. Rather, this thesis has attempted to show that Congar's monuments are an explication of a teaching that can be seen in inchoate form in Basil's own defense of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Congar avoids listing everything that constitutes Tradition, but he gives a schematic of major elements of Tradition that is helpful for comparing with Basil's thought.²³

The rule of faith is the fundamental "content" of Tradition.²⁴ The whole Christian life is itself a monument of Tradition, and, though objective, the Christian life is too vast to use as a concrete object for theological reflection. Basil's baptismal theology, and especially his argument that each Christian must living according to his baptismal confession of faith, is similar. Congar and Basil both recognize the life of the Christian as necessarily expressive of Christian beliefs. Basil understands the living of the baptismal faith as being from the Holy Spirit when he acknowledges the role of the Spirit as "illuminating" and "perfecting."

23. Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, 425-426.

24. *Ibid.*, 425.

Next, Congar lists what has been passed down and forms part of the Christian inheritance, which includes both Scripture and unwritten traditions. Congar acknowledges that though these constitute “Tradition,” in the sense that they put the Christian in contact with the Holy Spirit, they are actually found as distinct objects which can be named and referenced. This same idea is reflected in the way Basil discusses the action of the Holy Spirit in the baptismal ritual and the way in which Scripture conveys knowledge of God and brings the Christian to Him. Holding onto tradition is itself a part of apostolic tradition. Basil, like Congar, is claiming that a heritage has been received which is preserved within the Church.

Congar lists other monuments, alongside Scripture, that manifest the teaching of the Church, including: liturgy, the fathers, facts of the Church’s life and sacred customs, theologians (and the use of reason).²⁵ These monuments, as Congar explains, are testaments (often themselves written or testified to in written form) to the faith that the Church holds which is itself Tradition. The monuments are not Tradition itself, but rather they are the expression of Tradition in concrete form at a specific time; they are incarnational witnesses to the Church’s spiritual patrimony. They express the Christian faith. Basil’s *On the Holy Spirit* relies on what Congar calls “monuments” to defend the apostolic tradition. Following are a few examples of how Basil expresses some of Congar’s monuments within his work. Basil engages in scriptural exegesis to show the “pious and holy meaning” of his doxology.²⁶ He refers to the fathers by expressing his reliance on the received liturgical practice from his bishop and father of the church at Cappadocia.²⁷ He uses his own doxology as a liturgical witness, but also uses the liturgical witness of the baptismal confession.²⁸ He refers to the authority of other fathers who preceded him, referencing both their antiquity and their teaching.²⁹ He uses devotional customs in the church as well as liturgical customs in some areas as witnesses to the acceptance of his doxology.³⁰ Furthermore, as DelCogliano argues, he

25. This list is exact from Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, 426, but formatted differently.

26. Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, 25-26, 29.75.

27. *Ibid.*, 29.71.

28. *Ibid.*, 10.26, 27.68, his defense of its meaning 25.59.

29. *Ibid.*, 29.71-74.

30. *Ibid.*, 29.73, 29.74.

engages with these traditions in a “creative” manner that expresses his respect for reason; he both engages with the tradition using his own grounding in Greek philosophical, literary, and rhetorical ideas and methods. In his development of a Christian *paideia*, Basil expresses both reverence for the Christian texts, ideas, and teachers that inform his thought, and the Greek ideas and methods that are useful for understanding and explaining Christianity.

Basil’s innovation is not novelty regarding the Holy Spirit; as he argues, he is holding to the Church’s rule of faith. His innovation is his creative engagement with Tradition by amassing “witnesses” to his teaching from all the various monuments of Tradition, and in so doing, he innovates in argumentation in a way that becomes part of the Church’s understanding of herself, and therefore, itself becomes a monument of tradition. Basil does not argue, as his opponents do, using only strict scriptural evidence, because he knows that the fullness of the faith is found in the believing Church’s reading of Scripture. In this he expresses what all the fathers testify to: the role of the Holy Spirit in enlightening the believers and guiding the Church through the controversies of the patristic period.

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