Saint Anselm and the Augustinian Doctrine of the Human Person
as Imago Dei

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It was from St. Augustine that Anselm learned that the only-begotten Son is the true image of God, and that the human person is an image by virtue of the human mind. But it was St. Hilary of Poitiers, the only author whom he expressly cites in his De Trinitate, who pointed Augustine to the insight that if the Son is the image of the Father, the incarnate Son, Christ, is the image of God; and that human persons, man and woman, most fully image the image who is Christ by their participation in the Eucharist.

There certainly are places in his theology where Anselm is intent on doing more than simply restate the positions of his master, Augustine. Consider, for example, in his approach to original sin, how he shifts attention away from concupiscence and focuses instead on Adam’s act of will, his decisive rejection and dishonoring of God. It was his sin, Anselm writes, that stripped human nature of the virtue in which it had been created. Adam reshaped our nature; but more, he realigned our nature. He stamped upon it his sin and the fault, the culpa, of his sin. The result is that every person who is conceived and born by the proper operation of this nature is born having his will associated both with the nature he has received and with the first will that turned human nature away from God. This abandonment of the idea that original guilt is somehow transmitted through concupiscence marks a quiet departure from the thought of Augustine. Not so Anselm’s treatment of the imago Dei.

Perhaps the first reference to the imago comes in one of Anselm’s early prayers, the Prayer to St. John the Baptist, which may be dated to 1070.1 “Alas,” Anselm laments, in thoroughly Augustinian phrasing, “what have I made of myself?” And then begins the narrative of a life swinging from sin to grace to sin again. “In sin I was conceived and born, but you washed me and sanctified me; and I have defiled myself still more. Then I was born in sin of necessity, but now I wallow in it of my own free will. In sin I was conceived in ignorance, but these sins I commit willingly, readily, and openly. From them in mercy I was led forth by you; to these miseries I have led myself. . . . You healed, good God, a soul wounded in its first parents; I, wicked man, have killed what was healed. You set aside, merciful Lord, the old rags of original sin, and clothed me in the garments of innocence, promising me incorruptibility in the future; and casting off what you had given me, I busied myself with sordid sins . . . . You refashioned your gracious image in me, and I superimposed upon it the image that is hateful. Alas, alas, how could I? How could I, miserable and crazy little man that I am, how could I superimpose that image upon the image of God?”2

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2 Ibid., 128-29.
Six years later in the *Monologion*, Anselm states what the image of God is. It is the mind. The mind is an image, meaning that it is a mirror of God (c. 67). The complex reality that we are ever seeking to understand is depicted by Anselm as a hierarchy of essences; and at the summit of these essences is God himself, the highest essence, who transcends our knowledge and every description. But to aid the creature there lies at hand the creature’s own mind, a mirror in which he may see obliquely the one whom, as St. Paul said, he cannot see face to face (1Cor. 13:12). The mind is the only thing in creation that is aware of itself and can understand itself and love itself; and for this reason it is a true image of the divine essence, who in being aware of and understanding and loving himself is constituted an “ineffable Trinity.” Above all, our minds are a true image when they are aware of and thinking about and loving God. Observing this, however, only brings Anselm back to his prayer to John the Baptist. For as he cries in the opening lines of the *Proslogion*, children of Adam and Eve that we are, exiles from the homeland (*patria*) in which our first parents were set, we have by our sins so ruined the image that is our mind, so abraded the mirror and clouded it over, that it has become useless. There is no thinking about God, no understanding him or desiring him, unless he renews the image.

If the mind is the image of God, Anselm nonetheless speaks of an image within God. It is the Son. That is, in fact, the first way that he speaks of a divine *imago* in the *Monologion*. We know, he writes, from common experience that when a mind thinks about itself and tries to understand itself, this very self-thinking has mind forming an imprint of its thinking, an image of itself as thinking; and this image can be called its word. “Who would deny,” he concludes, “that in this way, when supreme wisdom says itself and so understands itself, it begets its own likeness, i.e. its Word?” which can “be called the image, figure and character, as well as the likeness, of supreme wisdom” (c. 33).3 In *On the Incarnation of the Word*, written between 1092 and 1094, Anselm uses the description of the Son as the true likeness (*similitudo*) of the Father to explain why it was most appropriate for him to have become man. The first sin, Anselm writes, consisted in man’s effort to elevate himself to the level of God and assert the autonomy of his will, laying claim to a false likeness to God that therefore was an affront to the one genuine likeness, who is the Son. Now no one either more justly punishes, or more justly pardons, a criminal than the person who was most directly injured by the crime. Since the Incarnation was for our sake, for the sake of our healing and of intercession before God on our behalf, it stands to reason that the divine person who would gain the forgiveness, the remission, of our sin would be the Son, “the splendor of eternal light and the true image of the Father” (c. 10).4

Each of these points concerning the human person as an image of God may be found in the work of Augustine, who examined the idea of God’s *imago* in a good deal more detail than would St. Anselm. Sometime between 410 and 412 Augustine delivered a sermon on the text of Matthew 3:16-17, which is the scene of Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan River. His purpose was to address a problem: If there is only one God, and one divine action undertaken by the one God, how can it be that Matthew describes an event that involves three divine persons doing

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4 Cf. *Cur Deus Homo* 2.9.
apparently three completely distinct things? First there is Jesus coming down to the waters of the river. Then there is the Holy Spirit, descending in the form of a dove. And finally there is the voice of the Father sounding from above, declaring that Jesus is his beloved Son. It may be that the Catholic faith proclaims that there are three persons in one God, but three inseparable persons who inseparably do the work of the one God, not parcelled out between a human being, a bird and a heavenly voice. It is true, Augustine replies, that Matthew records the action of the divine persons in three separate ways, but still the work they do is done inseparably. All three produced the humanity of Jesus, even if it was exclusively the humanity of the Son, and all three produced the appearance of the dove that belonged only to the Spirit and the voice heard on high that belonged only to the Father. The three may be represented uniquely for they are three distinct persons; but they operate indivisibly (Sermon 52:21).

Now if one wishes to have an example from creation of three that are distinguishable but which act as one, why look any further than the creature who we are told was made, not just in the likeness, but in the image of God? “Search in yourself,” Augustine says, “perhaps the image of the Trinity may hold some trace of the Trinity” (Sermon 52.17).\(^5\) Admittedly it is a remote image, a very remote image, he cautions, the former Manichaean no doubt anxious that he not be charged with saying that the soul is divine (Sermon 52:19). The Son is the one actual image of the Father, just as one’s own son is one’s actual image. A man’s son is his image because they are the same in substance even if they are different in person. You look in the mirror and you see a likeness of yourself; you look at your son and you see yourself—that is, you see your son who is identical to you in nature. Nevertheless, even if unlike God in substance, the human person does have a certain likeness to and is in a certain sense the image of God; sufficient, in any case, to justify turning to oneself for an illustration of something divine. And in so turning, Augustine states, one will observe this: that a single human person can exercise three distinct intellectual activities, namely remembering, understanding and desiring, even though these three operate only as a unity. For no one can understand anything that he is not remembering in the sense of keeping in mind; and no one is going to be mindful of something he is examining without simultaneously wanting to remember and understand it. It is the same illustration that Augustine had already offered in Book 9 of De Trinitate.\(^6\)

Hilary of Poitiers is the only author whom Augustine mentions by name in this great study, citing a line from the work that Hilary had also called De Trinitate.\(^7\) But here in Book 9, he begins his analogy by speaking of how mind, in the process of knowing itself, begets a knowledge of itself that is identical with itself, a comparison that closely parallels the one his fellow North African, Tertullian, had made in his treatise Against Praxeas two hundred years

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\(^6\) Following here the position taken by E. Hendrikx, “La date de composition du ‘De Trinitate’ de saint Augustin,” L’Année théologique augustinienne, 12 (1952), 305-16, that Augustine had completed a rough draft of Books 8-15 of De Trinitate by 405.

\(^7\) De Trinitate 6.11, quoting Hilary’s line in De Trinitate 2.1 that referring to God as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit encapsulates the perfection of the divine nature: “infinity in the eternal, form in the image, use in the gift (infinitas in aeterno, species in imagine, usus in munere).”
before. There Tertullian employed the Greek Stoic distinction between an inner word or concept and an outer, spoken word (the logos endiathetos and logos prophorikos). Do not you, Tertullian asks the reader, made in the image and likeness of God, when conversing within yourself, produce by your reason an inner word that is in a way a second person within you? Well God, too, who is reason, brought forth his word “as he silently planned and arranged within himself everything which he was afterwards about to utter though his word” (Against Praxeas 5). The plan that God first devised then put into effect Tertullian, with Irenaeus and others, calls his oikonomia; and in language that will become standard in the West, he writes that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, three persons having one substance, comprise a divine unitas that, in virtue of the oikonomia, was distributed into a Trinitas, a Trinity—which is Tertullian’s neologism (Against Praxeas 2). Augustine adds that the mind’s quest for self-knowledge is motivated by a desire to know; and with the birth of this knowledge, the desire becomes a love of the offspring, of the mind as known. “And so,” Augustine ends Book 9, “you have a certain image of the trinity [sic], the mind itself and its knowledge, which is its offspring and its word about itself, and love as the third element, and these three are one and are one substance” (De Trinitate 9.18).  

In the fifteenth and final book of De Trinitate, Augustine reviews the long path he followed in search of an adequate representation of the divine. At first we thought of God simply as one, he recalls, when we were considering him as the most perfect being. But then, having been instructed by scripture, we thought of God as love (1 John 4:8), and a triad appeared: God as lover, as loved and as love (15.5). Yet we were driven back by the very intensity of this view, by the light of so sublime a nature; and we were forced instead to try to attain some understanding of the invisible God by means of his visible work of creation—a clear allusion by Augustine to Romans 1:20. And so despite his express refusal in the concluding lines of Sermon 52 to identify the relation between memory and understanding and will in the human mind with the relation between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in the Godhead, Augustine does precisely that here in Book 15. God, he states, is wisdom, and wisdom as knowing himself and wisdom as loving himself; just as one finds in the human person mind, and the knowledge by which mind knows itself, and the love with which mind loves itself (15.10, 40-41). Granted, the image is far different from its original. These three operations are in man without being man, for man is not simply a mind. Further, a human being is one person but the one God is three persons (14.11). And more, these three persons cohere and their action is one and undivided, unlike our activity of memory, understanding and willing (15.43). But perhaps the most revealing proviso is that the person most fully images God when the mind’s wisdom shares in the wisdom of God, for it demonstrates just how multifaceted is Augustine’s understanding of the human imago.

As early as Book 13 of his Confessions, which may be dated to 398, we find Augustine appealing to the human mind in defense of the claim that there is only one divine essence but

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three divine persons.\textsuperscript{10} I am, I know and I will, he writes; and I both know that I am and that I will, and I will to be and to know. Anyone can see the same thing for himself, in himself: three distinct activities in one single life. This is the human mind serving as an \textit{imago} by exemplifying the Trinity. But in Augustine’s first treatment of the human \textit{imago}, years before in his commentary \textit{On Genesis against the Manichees} (from 388), it is the words of scripture that frame the discussion, and the talk is of \textit{imago} as living effect. The Genesis author who in 5:3 says that Seth was born according to the image of his father Adam makes the astonishing claim in 1:26 that humanity as male and female was made to the image of God. Immediately, however, Augustine tries to phrase things in what for him are more familiar terms, namely \textit{imago} as representation. Since God does not have a body, he reasons, the author must have meant that we are like God because of our intellect; though even the erect carriage of our body, which turns us toward things above, makes the point that it is as rational that we image God.\textsuperscript{11} Notice how quickly, having acknowledged the assertion in Genesis 1:26 that we are in God’s image, Augustine allows himself to be pulled away from the concrete, organic connection that the term denotes in Genesis. It is not some operation of Seth that is called the image of Adam; it is Seth himself as the son of Adam. When a short time later he considers the same passage in \textit{On Eighty-Three Different Questions} he takes a somewhat different tack. The Son of God is the image and likeness of God, he writes. Human beings were made \textit{to} the image of God. The problem is, it is hard to find any evidence in the text for the claim that the author of Genesis 1:26 was thinking of God’s Son when writing of God’s image. Furthermore, if Augustine is thinking of the Son as a distinct person, it is within the inseparable unity of the one God, despite the fact that separateness of the thing imaging from the thing imaged is part of the very meaning of \textit{imago} (or the Hebrew \textit{tselem}). Nevertheless, Augustine shows that he is conscious of the intrinsic connection between the image and the imaged in Genesis 1:26 or 5:3 or 9:6 when he explains that it is in view of our capacity to be united with God that we are said to have been made to the image of God.\textsuperscript{12} The same point is developed in his commentary \textit{On Genesis to the Letter} (begun in 401). Human beings were created to the image of God, he writes, because as intellectual they were made “participating in the eternal and immutable Wisdom of God (\textit{particeps aeternae atque incommutabilis sapientiae Dei}).”\textsuperscript{13} Their creation would be perfected, however, only by their turning to the Word, to Wisdom, in a recognition (\textit{agnitio}) of him that would be a joining with him. In fact, St. Paul’s comment (according to Augustine’s Latin) that the believer “is being renewed in the recognition (\textit{agnitio}) of God according to the image of him who created him” (Col. 3:10) shows that salvation consists in being renewed in our minds (“the image of him”) and returning to the knowledge of God that we had when we were first made, lost because of sin.

All of this is taken even further in Book 14 of \textit{De Trinitate}. If man is God’s image, he states, then the image ought to conduct itself as image by worshipping its Creator; for, echoing the comments in \textit{On Eighty-Three Different Questions} and \textit{On Genesis to the Letter}, God’s

\textsuperscript{10} \textit{Confessions} 13.11.12; for dating see Hendrikx, op. cit., 306.
\textsuperscript{11} \textit{De Genesi contra Manichaeos} 1.17.28.
\textsuperscript{12} \textit{De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus} 51.2-4.
\textsuperscript{13} \textit{De Genesi ad litteram} 3.20.30-32.
image was made by God as capable of God, fit for God, and made to have a share in God. True, our mind remains an image of God even when, divorced from grace, it is not actually participating in him. A mind that is remembering and understanding and desiring only itself still images God as acting from itself and within itself. But as this and nothing more it is a deficient image, and continues to be so as long as it is not remembering and understanding and desiring its maker (14.11).

Note that Augustine is not speaking just of memory but specifically of remembering God. In these passages the subject is not the created mind simply as intellectual substance; it is the mind as belonging to a particular existential situation, and that is the situation of a sinner. Reflect upon yourself, Augustine chides the mind. What do you see? One who is sorrowing, yearning to be happy. Made by the good Lord, it could have lost its happiness only by sin; and abiding in sin it can regain the justice that will restore it to happiness only as a gift. Granted, the mind knows this only in the Spirit, after having returned to the Spirit. But even in the absence of the interior instruction that is given the believer, and the inspired documents that teach a believer about man’s paradisal birth, the mind is always under the influence of God. God exists without limit in time or in place; and in God the mind lives and moves and has its being. The light of God fills every mind. In virtue of it even the sinner can know the eternal truth and the objective good. And if he or she is not only touched by this light but is reminded by this light, any sinner can be brought back to the Lord (14.21).

This is remembering as moral conversion; and Augustine speaks of it under the direction of St. Paul. “Those,” he writes, “who do, on being reminded, turn to the Lord from the deformity which had conformed them by worldly lusts to this world are reformed by him; they listen to the apostle saying, Do not conform to this world, but be reformed in the newness of your minds (Rom.12:2). And thus the image begins to be reformed by him who formed it in the first place. . . . So then the man who is being renewed in the recognition of God and in justice and holiness of truth by making progress day by day, is transferring his love from temporal things to eternal, from visible to intelligible, from carnal to spiritual things; he is industriously applying himself to checking and lessening his greed for the one sort and binding himself with charity to the other.”

This is also how Augustine here understands the divine declaration in Genesis 1:26: “Let us make man to our image and likeness.” The only-begotten Son is the unique image, he writes, repeating what he had said in On Eighty-Three Different Questions, born not made; equal to the Father as he is equal to the Spirit. Man, however, was created “to” the image, meaning created so that he might develop in growing likeness to God; having started at a distance, he is called to approach God in similarity. “To this kind of approximation,” Augustine writes, “we are exhorted when it says, Be refashioned in the newness of your mind (Rom. 12:2), and elsewhere he says, Be therefore imitators of God as most dear sons (Eph. 5:1), for it is with reference to the new man that it says, Who is being renewed for the recognition of God according to the image of him who created him (Col. 3:10).”

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14 De Trinitate 14.15: “cuius ab eo capax est facta, et cuius particeps esse potest.”
16 Ibid., 7.12, p. 231.
What Augustine does not notice, however, is that the Son whom St. Paul calls the image is Jesus Christ. “The god of this age has blinded the thoughts of unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the εἰκών of God” (2 Cor. 4:4). When in Romans 8:29 Paul writes that those whom God “foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the εἰκών of his Son in order that he might be the first-born among many brothers,” it is clear that he is speaking of the Son whom God did not spare but gave up for us all (v. 32), namely, “Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us” (v. 34). In Colossians 1:15, where the author states that the Son “is the εἰκών of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation,” he goes on to further identify him as “the head of the body, the Church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead” (v. 18). In the one instance where Paul deviates from this pattern and states that the human male (ἀνήρ) is the εἰκών of God (1 Cor. 11:7), the effect is to stress even more emphatically the connotation of otherness that is carried as much by this term as by imago. Unfortunately, the damage done by this move far outweighs any benefit, for it places Paul’s use of “image” at odds with what presumably is a primary source, namely Genesis.

Paul’s pronouncement that it is the male who, in contrast to the female, is the image of God comes in the course of his argument that a woman ought not to pray in public with her head unveiled while a man ought not to pray with his head covered. Now Conzelmann is no doubt right that in his effort to prescribe a particular practice, Paul falls back on a Hellenistic Jewish paradigm that envisions the cosmos as a descending series of images which reflect, to an ever-diminishing degree, the glory and the sovereignty of God, starting with the Logos and moving down through creation. In Paul’s formulation, God is said to have authority over Christ, as Christ has authority over the man; and since the man has authority over woman, the man in this respect is an image—meaning is like—God. But although the model may allow Paul to make a case for the subordination of woman to man—for the ultimate purpose, perhaps, of establishing the objective significance of gender difference—it does so at the expense of the teaching in Genesis that humanity as male and female was created in the image of God. And Paul still has to concede a scant four verses later that in the Lord, meaning in Christ, neither the man lives of himself, for himself, nor does the woman live of herself and for herself (v. 11); but rather, as he writes in Galatians, both man and woman, baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, and thereby have been made one, in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:27-28).

This is the true unfolding of Paul’s great insight that Christ is the image of God: to say that man and woman, each man and each woman, is an image of God—in Christ. Whatever else the Genesis author meant in attributing the stature of divine image to human beings, it is clear that they are set apart from all the rest of visible creation because only to them does God speak. Only they can hear what he has to say; only they can be enjoined by what he has to say. And what God first speaks to them is a command: be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:28). He is the God of life, the source of life (1 Cor. 1:30). St. Paul knows that in the unity of the divine life the

Father subsists in the Son whom he has brought forth from himself, in an act of going entirely beyond himself; in an unreserved gift of himself, rooting himself in one who is truly other than himself. This is the Son the Father sent to be born of “sinful flesh,” to be united not only with human creation infinitely other than the Creator, but creation made hostile to the Creator by the infection of sin. The Son was sent in order that those who are conformed to him might have one life with him, become themselves sons and daughters with him (Rom. 8:3, 29). As St. Paul says, “it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me” (Gal. 2:20).

This is the Son, Jesus Christ, in whom one has eternal life (Rom. 6:23), who as separate from God can fully image God, and as united to God can image God as the God of life, effecting one’s entry into the life of God. He does so as the head united to his body, the body of believers, male and female; and comprising his body, collaborating in life, they thereby share in his identity as the image of God. For joined to their head, believers receive and pass on a participation in his life; just as the believers, man and woman, who in freedom and precisely in their otherness become one flesh, pass on the physical life that is meant to be joined to the life of Christ. Nonetheless, if it is believers, individually or as couples, authoring life—or having the potential to author life—physically, emotionally, psychologically, spiritually, who most completely express what it means for a human person to be the image of God, every person, male and female, from the earliest stage of development, having by nature the same potential and a primordial—indeed ontological—relation to Christ in whom all things were made (Col. 1:16) bears God’s image. Tertullian himself understood this when, in Against Praxeas (c. 12), he wrote that Genesis speaks of God making man to the image of God because God made man as an image of the divine Son who was also to be a man: the Son Incarnate. He is the true man, of which the first human being, fashioned from clay, was but a resemblance, a “similitudo,” an “imago.”

What was a momentary lapse for Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:7 was certain to have its effect on his devoted student, Augustine. Denied a scriptural counterweight to his view that each individual in isolation is an image of God by virtue of the human mind, and his consideration of Christ as a dehistoricized image, the Son begotten of the Father within the inner life of God, Augustine loses any sense of the intrinsic meaningfulness of the masculinity and femininity of believers. Obviously we were not made to the image of God in terms of our bodies, he had written in On Genesis against the Manichees. And he makes the same point in Book 12 of De Trinitate. God does not have a body. Furthermore, he continues, the apostle himself enjoins us to “be renewed in the spirit of your mind” (Eph. 4:23). And after we have put “off the old man with his actions,” we are told that we must “put on the new,” citing what had become a favorite passage of Augustine, Colossians 3:9-10. To put on the new man, says Augustine, means to put on Christ in faith. Then, with the mind renewed by faith, we will be able to recognize the one who created us, God, making use of God’s image in us, our reason. Finally, the line in Galatians 3:28 that all believers, men and women, are one in Christ, should be taken to mean, once again, that we are elevated in our reason, the faculty of our nature to which sexual distinction is irrelevant, for it is according to this faculty that we image God. To be more exact, the entire point of Paul’s injunction in 1 Corinthians 11:7 that women are to pray with their heads covered
rests upon taking women as a symbol for temporal affairs. Hence, the covering of their heads signifies a bracketing off of the practical part of reason when calling it an image of God. For it is with respect to the part of the human mind that “adheres to the eternal ideas to contemplate or consult them” that we, male and female, image God (12.12).

Augustine’s interpretations show that as close a reader as he was of St. Paul, at times he was not close enough. For St. Paul, the focus is always on him who is the Son of the Father, yes, but also the Son of Mary: Christ, in whom we were made, by whom we are saved, and through union with whom we—transmitters of life, mortal and immortal—image the God of life. In contrast, even after having acknowledged the human person in the concrete historicity of sin and grace, death and life, Augustine still ends in pure intellectualism. He concludes that the image of God in the person will achieve its full likeness when the person comes to a complete vision of him, seeing God as he is (1 John 3:2; Augustine also quotes 1 Cor. 13:12). Of course, we hope for the perfection of our body as well. But the body is not how we image God, only how we image the Son in as much as he took on a body and raised it up and carried it into the presence of the Father (De Trinitate 14.23-25). Similarly, the act which is the perfect exercise of the person as image, worship, remains for Augustine in these passages a matter of private, interior prayer. Having detached the worshipper from the historical life of Christ, Augustine abstracts the worshipper as image from participation in the one complete and sufficient act of worship, and therefore also abstracts the worshipper’s life as image from participation in the historical continuation of that perfect act—the Eucharist.

Interestingly enough, Hilary of Poitiers in his De Trinitate, the one book Augustine quotes in his discussion, found a way to connect talk of the imago with the Eucharist. Like Augustine, Hilary identified the eternally-begotten Son as the image of God. But he also took note that in John 6:27, Jesus tells his disciples that upon him, the Son of Man, God the Father has set his seal. What this means, Hilary said, is that the Father impressed on the Son the fullness of the divine nature, and so impressed on Jesus the fullness of this nature because Jesus is the Son. Conferring the divine nature means also conferring the power of the nature, and this is why Jesus claims to have received the Father’s seal: it is by dint of the power that he has with the Father that he, the Son of Man, promises to give his disciples “food that endures for everlasting life.” This food is his flesh and blood. It is not only food that endures, it is food that unites, making those who eat it one with each other because they are one with God; and they are one with God because they are one with Christ, the Son of God. And they are one with Christ because it truly is his body that they eat in the sacrament of his flesh. Thus, made one with the Son of Man whose body was raised to glory, St. Paul’s words are finally fulfilled that God will be all in all (1 Cor. 15:28). These were not the sort of reflections that shaped the thought of Augustine, the first of the western writers to speak of the human person as an imago Dei. But

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18 See, too, his explanation of the human imago in The City of God 12.23.
19 Hilary of Poitiers, De Trinitate 8.50.
20 Ibid., 8:42.
21 Ibid., 8.11, 13, 15-16.
22 Ibid., 11.49.
that is not to overlook that the resources were already at hand in the work of that brilliant theologian of the Eucharist. It was, after all, Augustine who urged the newly baptized in the basilica of Hippo on Easter Sunday to take the bread and wine in such a way as to be the body that they were receiving.²³ Receive the image of God, he might have said, in order that you might be image of God, having one Eucharistic life in Christ.