

Humilitas Iesu Christi as Model of a Poor Church: Augustine's Idea of a Humble Church for the Poor

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In an audience for journalists shortly after his election in 2013 Pope Francis revealed not only the reason for his choice of name, but also his vision of the church: 'Francis of Assisi. For me he is the man of poverty, the man of peace, the man who loves and safeguards creation ... He is the man who gives us this spirit of peace, the poor man ... Oh, how I wish for a Church that is poor and for the poor!'¹ The Pontiff in his 2014 Lenten message re-emphasised the church's commitment to the poor. The responsibility of the church is 'to bear witness to all those who live in material, moral and spiritual destitution the Gospel message of the merciful love of God our Father, who is ready to embrace everyone in Christ. We can do this to the extent that we imitate Christ who became poor and enriched us by his poverty'.² Pope Francis' concern for the poor is again re-echoed in his latest encyclical, *Laudato Si*, in which he re-emphasises the church's commitment to the poor by calling Catholics especially to be stewards God's creation. A poor church for the poor, as Pope Francis envisages, has its foundation in the poverty of Jesus Christ: 'For you know the grace of our Lord

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 - 1. See <http://www.news.va/en/news/pope-francis-oh-how-i-wish-for-a-church-that-is--2>.
 - 2. *Lenten Message of Our Holy Father Francis 2014*: 'He Became Poor, so that by His Poverty You Might Become Rich' (cf. 2 Cor 8:9), no. 2; see http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/messages/lent/documents/papa_francesco_20131226_messaggio-quaresima2014_en.html.

Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich' (2 Cor 8:9).

While Pope Francis wishes for a church that is poor for the poor, the church's official teaching does not seem to favour a concept of a *humble* church.³ *Lumen Gentium* no. 5 considers the church as an organic body that faithfully guards (*servans*) Christ's precepts of charity, humility and self-sacrifice.⁴ It appears that humility is the property of Christ⁵ and that the church's existence and task is to guard and serve this christological ideal. Humility qualifies the moral conduct of the members of the church. Thus, the Second Vatican Council was somehow reluctant to designate the church itself as institutionally humble because humility is rather a task that faithful individuals ought to undertake.⁶ The above formulation from LG was perhaps an outcome of a compromise between the various theological and political factions at Vatican II.

As a keen reader of St Paul's letters, Augustine considered the humility of Christ as the foundation of a humble church, which ought to give preference to the poor.⁷ With regard to 2 Corinthians 8:9, the Bishop of Hippo cites it twenty times in his voluminous works.⁸ While this number of citations is relatively small in comparison to those for other biblical texts,⁹ it is not unimportant for the

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3. Pope Benedict XVI sees a close connection between serving and humility. However, he applies it more to individual Christians, who should serve others in humility, rather than to the church; see *Deus Caritas Est*, 35 (henceforth DCE): 'This proper way of serving others also leads to humility. The one who serves does not consider himself superior to the one served, however miserable his situation at the moment may be'. For patristic teaching, see Hugo Rahner, *Symbole der Kirche: Die Ekklesiologie der Väter* (Salzburg: Otto Müller, 1964); and Pierre-Thomas Camelot, 'Die Lehre von der Kirche', in *Handbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, ed. M. Schmaus and A. Grillmeier (Freiburg: Herder, 1970), fasc. 3b. For a general study of the church in the fourth and fifth centuries, see also Jean Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'empire romain (IVe-Ve siècles)* (Paris: Sirey, 1958). Gaudemet does not address the importance of humility, even though he discusses the church's practice of almsgiving. See also Pius Angstenberger, *Der reiche und der arme Christus: Die Rezeptionsgeschichte von 2 Kor 8,9 zwischen dem zweiten und dem sechsten Jahrhundert* (Bonn: Borengässer, 1997).
 4. LG, 5: 'Unde Ecclesia, donis sui Fundatoris instructa fideliterque eiusdem praecepta caritatis, humilitatis et abnegationis servans'. My emphasis.
 5. DCE, 35: 'Christ took the lowest place in the world—the Cross—and by this radical humility he redeemed us and constantly comes to our aid'.
 6. This reluctance is indeed a surprise, given the fact that the *periti* involved in drafting LG, such as de Lubac, Daniélou and Ratzinger, were also fine patristic scholars.
 7. Wolfgang Wischmeyer, 'Paulus und Augustin', in *Biographie und Persönlichkeit des Paulus*, ed. E.-N. Becker and P. Pilhofer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 323–43; Thomas Martin, 'Vox Pauli: Augustine and the Claims to Speak for Paul: An Exploration of Rhetoric at the Service of Exegesis', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 8, no. 2 (2000): 237–72; Johan van der Lof, 'Die Autorität des Paulus nach Augustin', *Augustiniana* 30 (1980): 10–18.
 8. *Ciuitate Dei* (City of God; henceforth *ciu.*) 17, 4; *Enarrationes in Psalmos* (Commentaries on the Psalms; henceforth *en. Ps.*) 39, 28; 40, 1; 68, 1, 4; 101, 1, 1; *Epistula* (Letter; henceforth *ep.*) 140, 59; 157, 23; *Sermo* (Sermon; henceforth *s.*) 2, 6; 14, 9; 36, 3, 5; 169, 2; 194, 3; 339, 4; *Sermo Denis* (Sermon Denis; henceforth *s. Denis*) 5, 1; 16, 4; *Sermo Dolbeau* (Sermon Dolbeau; henceforth *s. Dolbeau*) 26, 56.
 9. From Paul's letter to the Romans, Augustine mentioned e.g. Rom 7:25 (118 times); 8:3 (57); 8:15 (58); 10:3 (70); and 11:33 (60).

theological and ethical justification of the church's commitment to the poor. For Augustine, Christ's poverty is the root of the richness of the poor in the sense that Christ's death is the basis for the resurrection and for the justification of sinners.¹⁰ Clearly, Christ's reason to become poor must be situated within Augustine's doctrine of grace.¹¹ Christ's voluntary poverty has its foundation in his humble attitude, which in turn should also be the essence of his Body (Phil 2:5-8). Indeed, it was particularly Augustine who saw the theological and ethical connection between the humility of Christ and the humble church.¹² Interestingly, this association has been omitted in most of the studies on the ecclesiology of Augustine.¹³

My paper intends on the one hand to fill this lacuna;¹⁴ but on the other hand it will also argue that ecclesial commitment to the poor finds its kernel in the humility of Christ, who chose to be poor. For the Bishop of Hippo, spiritual humility is the foundation of the voluntary acceptance of material poverty that is reflected in his *Rule* for members of his religious community in Hippo. The intent upon God, whom Augustine also designates *deus humilis*, with one heart and mind ought to flow out into the voluntary negation of individual possessions for the sake of the common good.¹⁵ This means that a humble church should be in her very essence materially poor. She ought to point constantly to the spiritual richness of Christ—a gift that is not to be kept hidden, but must be shared among the needy. Augustine is perhaps theologically more consistent than the formulation of *Lumen Gentium*. But let us first look at the socio-economic context of Augustine's diocese of Hippo.

Money Talks: Fundraising and the Care of the Poor in Hippo

When Rome was invaded by the Visigoths in 410, not a few nobles among the Roman elite class chose Hippo Regius as a permanent and secure refuge, a place where they had previously sought relief from the summer heat that plagued the

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10. S. 101, 1: 'per illum et illae maiores diuitiae, fides, pietas, iustitia, caritas, castitas, mores boni: nemo enim et has habet, nisi per eum qui iustificat impium. ecce quam diues'.
 11. See Joseph Q. Cong Lam, *Die Menschheit Jesus Christi in den Werken des Augustinus* (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2007); also Donald Fairbairn, *Grace and Christology in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
 12. *En. Ps.* 24, 16.
 13. For instance, Joseph Ratzinger, whose studies of Augustine's ecclesiology are still an important contribution, ascribes humility only to *fides* (*humilitas fidei*) taught by the church. Joseph Ratzinger, *Volk und Haus Gottes in Augustins Lehre von der Kirche* (St. Ottilien: EOS, 1992), 23–35.
 14. Many works on Augustine's concept of humility seemed to have neglected the intrinsic connection between the humility of Christ and the humility of the church; see e.g. Notker Baumann, *Die Demut als Grundlage aller Tugenden bei Augustinus* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009); Claude Lepellety, 'Facing Wealth and Poverty: Defining Augustine's Social Doctrine', *Augustinian Studies* 38, no. 1 (2007): 1–17; Pasquale Borgomeo, *L'Église de ce temps dans la predication de saint Augustin* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1972).
 15. *Regula* (Rule; henceforth *reg.*) I, 3–4: 'unanimis habitetis in domo et sit vobis anima una et cor unum in Deum ... dicatis aliquid proprium, sed sint vobis omnia communia'.

imperial capital. For financial reasons, the presence of the financial aristocrats in North Africa was also welcomed by the Catholic diocese chiefly shepherded by Augustine, whose father Patricius was a modestly wealthy *tenuis municeps* from Thagaste.¹⁶ Among those aristocratic ‘refugees’ were the wealthy Albina, Publicola, Melania,¹⁷ and Pinianus, whose enormous wealth cannot have remained hidden from the eyes of local church’s leaders. Such ancient families as these, however, were philanthropists in the classical sense,¹⁸ and they devoted a great part of their assets to decorate churches or to construct new religious houses.¹⁹ It is not without reason that many early ecclesiastical authorities and spiritual leaders, such as Jerome, Rufinus or Pelagius, sought their company and financial support. Like his contemporaries, Augustine could not ignore the importance of these rich people.²⁰ As Peter Brown suggests, the ‘bishops took seriously the sensibilities of the rich’.²¹ Thus, fundraising among the rich was an important source of income to secure the church’s cash flow, in spite of Augustine’s recognition of the generous support of his entire flock towards the poor and needy.²²

Augustine noted in his Letter 157, chapter 35, that the rich had donated generously to the church’s appeal for the poor and needy. We don’t know how much money was raised at times, but we can guess that it must have been enough to run various social welfare programs organised by the episcopal see of Hippo.²³ These donations contributed to the modest wealth (*ecclesiae res*) of the diocese,²⁴ which had increased more than twenty-fold above Augustine’s own bequest to his diocese when he was appointed its chief pastor.²⁵ While the precise figure

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16. P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 151: ‘A *tenuis* was by no means a *pauper*’.
 17. As Brown has pointed out, Melania and Pinianus ‘enjoyed, around 405, an annual income of 120,000 gold *solidi* (some 1,660 pounds of gold).’ See Brown, *Eye of a Needle*, 17. This was a gigantic amount of money, given the fact that the annual income for small families or labourers in the country was between roughly 250 and 300 *denarii*; see Steven J. Friesen, ‘Injustice or God’s Will? Early Christian Explanations of Poverty’, in *Wealth and Poverty in Early Church and Society*, ed. Susan R. Holman (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 20.
 18. Palladius, *Historia lausiaca* (Lausiac History), 119, reported that it was said that they have bought freedom for 8,000 slaves.
 19. See Brown, *Eye of a Needle*, 323, where he quotes from Gerontius, *Life of Melania*, 21: ‘She [Melania] adorned the church of this holy man [Alypius] with revenue as well as with offerings of both gold and silver treasure and valuable silk veils, so that this church which formerly had been so very poor now stirred up the envy of Alypius on the part of the other bishop in that province’. For further information on this case, see Augustine’s *ep.* 125.
 20. When Augustine heard of their arrival in Thagaste, he, who was unable to travel due to the rigours of the winter, sent them a personal letter of welcome; see *ep.* 124, 1: ‘Though by the condition of my health ... I cannot endure cold ... This horrible winter ... I was unable to travel’.
 21. Augustine urged his congregation to be at least twice as generous as the Pharisees; see *s.* 359; *en. Ps.* 146, 17. Brown, 347.
 22. *En. Ps.* 80, 1.
 23. Claude Lepelley, ‘Wealth and Poverty: Defining Augustine’s Social Doctrine’, *Augustinian Studies* 38 (2007): 1–17.
 24. Brown, *Eye of a Needle*, 325, suggests that the diocese of Hippo raised annually around 1000 *solidi*. A city councillor earned approximately 50 *solidi* per annum.
 25. *Ep.* 127, 7f.

remains a shadowy guess, the poor and needy²⁶ were proportionally more visible within the congregation of Augustine, even though the poverty experienced within the walls of Hippo was less pressing than it was in the associated rural area, where labourers struggled daily for their sustenance.²⁷ In a sermon preached in 411 in Carthage on the feast of the Martyrs, the bishop mentioned the poor who envied the rich because of their wealth, which matters only in this life: 'When the poor catch sight of them [the rich], they murmur, they groan, they praise and they envy, wanting to be their equals, grieving that they cannot make it'.²⁸ The church of North Africa was also filled with the poor. *En. Ps.* 70, 1, 17 speaks of a notable presence of the poor peasantry who were unable to pay taxes.²⁹ The invasion of Rome by the Visigoths had also turned Hippo into a city with many destitute refugees.³⁰ Moreover, Hippo Regius, with its important port, served as a marketplace for the trading of slaves.³¹ Thus, the needy pushed the church's aid program to its limit. Augustine himself admitted that he had to send many poor away empty-handed.³² Augustine's personal secretary, Possidius, perhaps with a slight exaggeration, described the situation in Hippo bluntly with these words: 'Captives and a great many in need'.³³

In Augustine's view, the poor are those who simply lack financial resources and are unable to fulfil their daily needs, even though the notion of poverty is ambivalent.³⁴ The poor rely on the generosity of the wealthy (*miser cordia*), from whom the *pauperes* beg 'without shame' (*non erubescant*). In order to alleviate

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26. While Augustine used various words for the needy, such as *egestas*, *indigentia*, *inopia*, *infirmitas*, *neccissitas*, he employed the substantive *pauper* approximately 1800 times. Generally speaking, Augustine defined a poor person as a person who owns a modest piece of farmland, but a poor person is also a destitute person; see *ciu.* 5, 18; *s.* 14, 1: 'sunt pauperes non habentes pecuniam, uictum quotidianum uix inuenientes, alienis opibus misericordia sic indigentes, ut etiam mendicare non erubescant'. For Augustinian use of vocabulary, see also José F. González, 'La pobreza en San Agustín: Vocabulario y contenidos lógicos', *Revista Agustiniiana de espiritualidad* 18 (1977): 135–54.
27. Geoffrey D. Dunn, 'Poverty as a Social Issue in Augustine's Homilies', *Studia Patristica* 49 (2010): 175–9; also Pauline Allen and Edward Morgan, 'Augustine on Poverty', in *Preaching Poverty in Late Antiquity*, ed. Pauline Allen, Bronwen Neil and Wendy Mayer (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2009): 119–65.
28. *S.* 345, 1; also *s.* *Dolbeau* 5, 9: 'Look here, brothers and sisters; in this congregation ... how many rich people are there? ... If only there could be a few ... as there are rich people in the human race'.
29. See also *s.* 9, 19: 'egestates innumerabili mendicorum'; *s.* 85, 2; *en. Ps.* 51, 14; see further Claude Lepelley, *Les Cités de l'Afrique romaine au bas-empire*, vol. 1 (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1979), 328; also Serge Lancel, *St. Augustine* (London: SCM, 2002), 150: '... the growth of a real agricultural proletariat, hiring out their labour according to seasons and requirements. The social instability of these agricultural workers, with their precarious living conditions, could not fail to have local consequences in the history of that period'.
30. *Ep.* 122, 2; *s.* 91, 9.
31. *Ep.* 10, 6 (Divjak).
32. *S.* 355, 5.
33. Possidius, *Vita Augustini* (Life of Augustine), 24, 15f.
34. Marcus Prell, *Sozialökonomische Untersuchungen zur Armut im antiken Rom: Von den Gracchen bis Kaiser Diokletian* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1997), 72; see also Allen, Neil and Mayer, eds, *Preaching Poverty*, 22.

poverty, Augustine frequently petitions for the solidarity of the rich towards the poor by theologizing Christ's generous treatment of the destitute Lazarus.

However, Augustine's reliance on wealthy Christian aristocrats occasionally provoked ill-feelings against him. Once, he attempted to ordain the wealthy Pinianus with the support of his congregation, who underlined this plan with their loud shouting. Such an incardination of Pinianus into the diocese of Hippo would result in a substantial bequest to the diocese. In his letter to his friend Alypius, Augustine reported the sadness that this defamation had caused him, namely that he and his congregation were more interested in financial gain than in the sacramental value of priesthood: 'I am deeply grieved, and it is not possible for me to make light of the fact ... when we are suspected of wanting to keep the servants of God here, through the attraction of their wealth rather than through love of their goodness'.³⁵

This episode made one thing clear: In order to care for the poor and the needy, a good sum of money was needed. That money must be raised from wealthy aristocrats, in spite of the generosity of Augustine's flock towards the poor and the needy.

'The Poor, that is, the Humble ...'

There is no doubt about Augustine's sincere commitment to the poor and needy; and fundraising was a good way to secure funds for their care. Augustine's biographer, Possidius, tells us that Augustine always had the poor in mind and that he provided for them 'from the revenues from the Church's property and the offerings of the Faithful'.³⁶ The bishop of Hippo urged his audience³⁷ not infrequently to contribute to the relief of the destitute, even at the risk that the beggar might be a fraud.³⁸ At times wealthy members of his congregation collected money in order to help slaves to regain their freedom.

There are some ongoing debates, however, about the depth of Augustine's personal commitment to the poor and its effect on them. Pauline Allen and Edward Morgen have argued in their chapter 'Augustine on Poverty' that Augustine was not the one who endeavoured to radically change socio-economic poverty in his own diocese, although he had alerted his congregation to this social sickness by rhetorical means.³⁹ The same authors, rejecting Brown's argument⁴⁰ that Augustine asserted the solidarity of his congregation towards the poor and needy on christological grounds, also argue that there is nothing in Augustine's

35. *Ep.* 125, 1.

36. Possidius, *Vita Augustini*, 24, 17.

37. Among them were many 'middle class' people who used to take their seat next to the *apsis* from which Augustine was preaching. Poor people would not have found the time to attend the liturgy, in which Augustine might have preached for up to several hours; see Brown, *Eye of a Needle*, 343: '*plebs media*—the rich plebeians of the city'.

38. *S.* 41, 7.

39. Pauline Allen and Edward Morgen, 'Augustine on Poverty', in *Preaching Poverty*, ed. Allen, Neil and Mayer, 153.

40. Even though he did not elaborate it further in his book, it is a valid point.

overall theological framework to justify commitment to the poor. In their view, Augustine's theology of predestination and his teleological approach⁴¹ to poverty supported rather the process of depersonalising the poor since the practice of almsgiving was considered more as a means to the personal salvation of the giver than as a radical commitment to the poor (redemptive almsgiving): 'While this is indeed a powerful theological construct, it can legitimately be asked whether it runs the risk of submitting the poor into [*sic*] Christ and thus depersonalised [*sic*] them'.⁴² Augustine's concept of predestination ('dark stance'), Allen and Morgen argue,⁴³ rendered even the practice of almsgiving useless and therefore prevented a radical change of the situation of the poor and needy.⁴³

It is true that Augustine did not champion large-scale social change in favour of the poor, but who did at that time? Nevertheless, it is not true that Augustine saw almsgiving simply through a predestination lens. Augustine's theology of humility is deeply concerned with the poor because humility leads us to conceive of the church as humble in union with the poor. Allen and Morgan neglect the fact that poverty is not only caused by economic context, which can be relieved by material goods, but that it also has an interior cause, which lies in a flawed human heart,⁴⁴ and even more so in the 'poor' spiritual attitude of a social institution.⁴⁵ A wrong ideology can also cause material poverty because a faulty moralism might lead to egoistic self-interest, which is less willing to share the limited goods available in this earthly life. Manicheans and Donatists for instance refused to give alms to 'outsiders' because they were sinners. The reason for this exclusion resided in their faulty theology of holiness, an ideology that denied the house dogs the scraps falling from the table of the house lord.⁴⁶

Augustine found the same false ideology in Roman institutions; indeed, it contributed to the demise of the Roman empire. This City of Man was consumed by pride, a disordered desire, that left very little for the poor because its religious worship promoted avarice, ambition, and lust for glory, power and property. The logic of this pride, as David J. Bobb has brilliantly expressed it, can lead only to this consequence: 'The more one's fellow citizens have of something (glory, property, or power), the less there is available for others'.⁴⁷ Clearly, pride reinforced by institutionalised cult is the cause of moral distress and material poverty. Without the justice of the humble Christ, Augustine declared, a state can

41. The use of material things (*uti*) ought to be ordered according to its final purpose, which is happiness in God (*frui*).

42. Allen, Neil and Mayer, eds, *Preaching Poverty*, 134.

43. *Ibid.*, 136.

44. *Ep.* 188, 5; see also Matt 5:3.

45. Liberation theology often reminds us of the institutional sins that cause and sustain poverty.

46. Matt 15:26f.

47. David J. Bobb, 'The Humility of True Religion: Augustine's Critique of Roman Civil Religion', in *Civil Religion in Political Thought: Its Perennial Questions and Enduring Relevance in North America*, ed. R. Weed and J. v. Heyking (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2010), 69.

only become a state of thieves.⁴⁸ Hence, Augustine's entire purpose in his work *City of God* is to convince the proud Romans of the 'excellence of humility' that only God can bestow and that would give stability to its institutions.⁴⁹

The cure of poverty requires actions (almsgiving) performed without self-interest, but also a christological foundation, which can transform an institution into a humble caretaker of the poor.⁵⁰ While Brown finds in Christ's incarnation a firm foundation for Christian commitment to the poor and the needy, he pays little attention to the fact that in Augustine's view this act of condescension has its very basis in the humility of God (*deus humilis*).⁵¹ Thus, Christ's self-emptying poverty ('uerum pauperem ... qui propter nos factus est') is preceded by his humble attitude that, as Paul recommends, the church should adhere to. It is through the *humilitas Christi* that the poor become his *compauperes*.⁵² Hence, members of Christ's body are called 'members of the true Poor'.⁵³ Elsewhere Augustine exhorts his congregation to be humble and to regard themselves as 'brothers of the Poor'.⁵⁴ In this sense, humility and poverty are interchangeable and include a corporate character.⁵⁵

According to Augustine, humility is an outcome of Christ's baptism through which 'induistis Christum forma sacramenti'.⁵⁶ As baptism stands for the *caritas unitatis*, poverty, that is, having everything in common and nothing to call one's own, is the outcome of a corporate attitude (*forma*). In this sense, Wilhelm Geerlings reasons that *form* is the metaphysical qualification of an action (poverty).⁵⁷ Thus, poverty as virtue originates from the corporate *forma*:

48. *Ciu.* 4, 4: 'Remota itaque iustitia quid sunt regna nisi magna latrocinia? Quia et latrocinia quid sunt nisi parua regna?'

49. *Ciu.* 1, preface: 'an excellence which makes it soar above all the summits of this world, which sway in their temporal instability, overtopping them all with an eminence not arrogated by human pride, but granted by divine grace'.

50. Augustine compared frequently the founder of Rome with Christ. Rome was established on the egoistic pride of Romulus, who killed his own brother Remus, who equally was thirsting for power. Christ, however, built his church on the foundation of his humble love, in which the 'shared goodness does not diminish despite the addition of more sharers'. See Bobb, 'Humility of True Religion', 70.

51. See my book, Joseph Lam C. Quy, *Die Menschheit Jesu Christi in den Werken des Augustinus, Bischof von Hippo*, Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum 102 (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2007).

52. *S.* 14, 2.

53. *S.* 14, 9: 'pauperem uerum, membrum pauperis qui propter nos pauper factus est'.

54. *S.* 36, 5.

55. *Ep.* 140, 60: 'the poor, that is, the humble'.

56. *S.* 269, 3.

57. See Wilhelm Geerlings, *Christus exemplum: Studien zur Christologie und Christusverkündigung Augustins* (Mainz: Grünewald, 1978), 176: 'In dieser Redeweise zeigt sich die Verknüpfung von metaphysischer and ethischer Redeweise sehr deutlich. Denn aus der *forma vel regula*, die jede Einheit des Seins erst ermöglichen, erwächst notwendigerweise eine *forma oder regula vivendi*'. (This way of speaking manifests a close connection between metaphysics and ethics. Thus, from the *form* or the *norm*, which enables the unity of being, emerges necessarily the form or the norm of life.)

Das *formam accipere* ist eine *imitatio*, durch die man der *forma* (sc. Christus) anverwandelt wird. Das Ertragen von Lasten stellt eine *imitatio* der Tatsache dar, daß Christus in der Inkarnation ‘non attendit sua sed nostra’,⁵⁸ der Inkarnierte ist die “sapientia commendanda ... et imitanda cuius imitatione formamur”⁵⁹ (The *formam accipere* [assumption of form] is *imitatio* [imitation], by which one is transformed into the *forma* of Christ. To carry a burden is concrete imitation because Christ in the incarnation *non attendit sua sed nostra* [does not carry it for himself, but for us]; the Incarnate One is therefore *sapientia commendanda ... et imitanda cuius imitatione formamur*. [the recommendable and imitable wisdom by which we are formed].)

The *nostra*, which is formed through imitation (*formamur*), points to a social reality; it is a corporate *we* that is established through Christ, who by his incarnation incorporated in himself our *forma servi*.⁶⁰ The incarnation of Christ, which Augustine describes as an act of divine humility,⁶¹ is the condition and the effect through which the baptised are incorporated into his Body.⁶² Individual efforts at moral perfection therefore cannot increase the sanctity or the glory of the church because she is always humble, for she flows from the pierced side of the crucified Christ. Hence, her glory is the risen Christ, who sanctified himself for his church. As his Body, the church receives from Christ her *forma*, which is the *forma servi*. Therefore, the church participates in the poverty of Christ, who humbled himself for the sake of sinners. The church not only serves or guards Christ’s precept of humility, but she is essentially humble too. In contrast to the schismatics and heretics, Augustine wrote, it is only the *ecclesia catholica* that shares and lives from the humility of Christ: ‘respice in me, et miserere mei, quoniam unicus et pauper sum ego (Ps 24:16). quoniam unicus populus, unice ecclesiae tuae seruans humilitatem, quam nulla schismata uel haereses tenent’.⁶³ The humility of Christ is therefore the very condition of the church’s commitment to the poor.

In addition to this theological foundation, the bishop of Hippo also offers philosophical reasons for the humble form of the church. According to Platonic

58. *Diversis quaestionibus* (Diverse questions; henceforth *diu. qu.*) 71, 3.

59. Volker Henning Drecoll, ‘Imitatio’, in *Augustinus-Lexikon*, ed. C. P. Mayer, vol. 3 (Basel: Schwabe), 521–2.

60. See Joseph Q. Cong Lam, ‘Incarnatio’, in *Augustinus-Lexikon*, ed. Mayer, 3:566: ‘Die tiefste Bedeutung der Inkarnation in Jesus liegt für Augustin in gnadenhaft-freiwilligen *humilitatio* Gottes im Dienste der Erlösung. Durch die Menschwerdung Christi wurden die Menschen zu *filius dei*’.

61. *Diu. qu.* 69, 9; *Iohannis euangelium tractatus* (Tractates on the Gospel of John; henceforth *Io. eu. tr.*) 40, 9; see also Lam, ‘Incarnatio’, 564–8.

62. *S.* 304, 3.

63. *En. Ps.* 25, 16: ‘Look upon me, and have mercy upon me; for I am single and poor (Ps 24:16). For I am a single people, keeping the lowliness of your single church, which no schisms or heresies possess’ (my translation); Allen, Neil and Mayer, eds, *Preaching Poverty*, 454.

hierarchical cosmology, the lower world emanates from above, the higher reality.⁶⁴ Thus, the superior exercises power over the inferior. In transforming this concept to suit Christian reality, Augustine maintains that the church therefore participates in the humility of Christ, who is divine as well as human. In order to close the socio-economic gap that divides the rich from the poor, Augustine therefore points to the humility of the whole church, which is made humble by the self-emptying act of Christ's *diuitiae*. Consequently, she should share all her wealth with the poor while she herself is nourished by Christ's boundless riches. In doing so, she truly imitates the humble Christ who, as the *very* Poor, joins the poor to himself in order to make them rich.⁶⁵ Christ's humility therefore is crucial for the humble church, which is committed to the poor. Only in the recognition of her radical dependence on Christ can the church fully and radically commit to the poor.

Referring to Christ's humility, Augustine can now make a comparison between the church's grandeur (City of God) and the Roman institution (City of Man), which is thirsty for glory that is full of pride: 'In the lives of those Romans we saw the collapse not of material but of moral deficiencies, not of material but of spiritual grandeur. The lust that burned in their hearts was more deadly than the flame which consumed their dwellings'.⁶⁶ The church in her humility does not run after vainglory by wasting money on games by which the Roman elites had hoped to gain glory; but she spends her riches, which originate from Christ's self-emptying, to welcome the hungry, thirsty, etc. This care for the poor is not a means to glorify the church, but is done from the perspective that in Christ all are equal because the poor are *Christi pauperes*.⁶⁷ In the one church of Christ, the rich and the poor are pilgrim companions carrying each other's burdens.⁶⁸

Having dealt with institutional humility and poverty, Augustine moves to the discussion of the attitude of individuals. He recommends that the rich and poor should have this attitude of the *uerus pauper*, that is the *Christus humilis*.⁶⁹ One can be poor without being humble. Conversely, one can be rich and yet still humble. Whether practising almsgiving or receiving alms, the rich and the poor alike are called to practise humility: (a) the rich, because they are given the means to be generous; and (b) the poor, because they should be grateful for the care they receive. Augustine knew that the poor were also at risk because they perceived their poverty as a privilege since Christ would prefer them over the rich. In this proud thinking, the poor therefore forgo their riches that the humble Christ provides. Augustine not only calls his flock to humility; but he himself

64. Matthias Smalbrugge, 'La notion de la participation chez Augustin: Quelques observations sur le rapport christianisme-platonisme', *Augustiniana* 40 (1990): 333–47.

65. *En. Ps.* 101, 1, 2: 'Addat ergo paupertatem paupertati, et transfiguret in se corpus humilitatis nostrae'.

66. *Ciu.* 2, 2.

67. *S.* 41, 7.

68. *S.* 164, 9.

69. *S.* 14, 3; s. 24, 9 (Lambot).

practises it: he does not consider his episcopal authority a privilege or an honour, but rather a danger that risks self-deception, leading to *superbia* and selfishness.⁷⁰ Thus, Augustine considers the care of the poor and needy an institutional task of the church because it is rooted in her very nature. The duty of care is not merely a matter of the discretion of individuals (redemptive almsgiving), but a necessity and urgency of the entire Body of Christ because she herself is needy.

Not Wealth Is a Problem, but the Attitude to It ...

Augustine distinguishes between humility as a form and as a virtue. While the second can be applied to individuals, the first is an attribute of the church, which is formed by individuals. It is precisely this humility that preserves her from the pride caused by sin because humility is the foundation of her unity in Christ, who keeps his body immaculate. Because schismatics and heretics lack this humility, they depart from Christ.⁷¹ Individuals have the potential to be humbled; but the church, Augustine argued in particular against the Donatists, is always humble because Christ himself impresses his *forma humilitatis* on her.⁷²

There are a number of texts in Augustine's writings that repeat this line of thought. Most of them are sermons. Of particular interest are Augustine's Commentaries on the Psalms (*Enarrationes in Psalmos*), which took three decades to complete (391–421). According to Michael Fiedrowicz, the majority of Augustine's commentaries have their origin in the Bishop's sermons, frequently preached in Carthage.⁷³ While many scholars affirm a strong ecclesiology in Augustine's commentaries on the Psalms, none of them appear to allude to the image of a humble church.⁷⁴ Yet humility is a central topic of Augustinian ethics, which is at the same time an important issue in Augustine's sermons for he considers humility to be a fundamental condition of the *imitatio Christi*.⁷⁵

70. See Hubertus Drobner, *Augustinus von Hippo, Predigten zu Kirch und Bischofsweihe* (Sermones 336–340/A): Einleitung, revidierter Mauriner-Text, Übersetzung und Anmerkungen (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003).

71. *En. Ps.* 24, 16.

72. *Epistulam contra Parmeniani* (Against Parmenianus; henceforth *ep. c. Par.*) 3, 5: 'et quoniam dominus noster Iesus Christus ad docendam humilitatis uiam usque ad mortem cruces humiliari dignatus est et tamquam medicus aegrotantes ita cum dilectione pertulit peccantes de quibus dixerat: non est opus sanis medicus, sed aegrotantibus (Mt 9,12), statim principale proposuit exemplum dicens: etenim pascha nostrum immolates est Christus (1 Cor 5,7), ut tantae humilitatis exemplo discerent expurgare uetus fermentum, id est quidquid in eis superbiae de uetere homine remansisset'.

73. Michael Fiedrowicz, *Psalmus vox totius Christi: Studien zu Augustins Enarrationes in Psalmos* (Freiburg: Herder, 1997), 24.

74. See Amy Germaine Oden, 'Dominant Images for the Church in Augustine's *Enarrationes in Psalmos*: A Study of Augustine's Ecclesiology' (diss., Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX, 1990).

75. Otto Schaffner, *Christliche Demut: Des hl. Augustinus Lehre von der Humilitas* (Würzburg: Augustinus, 1959).

The overall purpose of Augustine's sermons on the Psalms is *aedificatio ecclesiae*,⁷⁶ which not seldom has an anti-Donatist undertone. Augustine severely criticizes the Donatist focus on the cult of personal holiness not only because it disregards the institutional concord and peace as represented by and found in the *ecclesia catholica*, but because the Donatists also separated themselves from sinners. For Augustine, however, the unity of the church is assured by Christ himself, who, in his humanity, incorporates all human beings. Therefore holiness is first and foremost a corporate virtue. Hence, Christ's grace shines forth on saints and sinners. In his figurative-allegorical exegesis, Augustine can also naturally see in the cry of Christ the incorporated *vox ecclesiae*.⁷⁷ His commentary on Psalm 56⁷⁸ for instance gives us a good example of this hermeneutic of incorporation. Commenting on Psalm 56:3-4: 'O God, have mercy on my, for my soul trusts in you', Augustine says that Christ in his humanity also incorporates his church in his prayer:

Christ is praying in his passion, *Have mercy on me, O God*. God is saying to God, *Have mercy on me*. He who, together with the Father, has mercy on you is crying out in you, *Have mercy on me*. Something in him that belongs to you is crying out, *Have mercy on me*, something that he took from you; for he clothed himself in flesh to set you free. Now this same flesh is pleading, *Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy*; the whole man is pleading, the man who is soul and flesh, for the Word assumed our entire humanity, the word became complete man.⁷⁹

This view is affirmed in the commentary on the same psalm, six verses later, where Augustine explains the reason for this christological incorporation. It is Christ's *magna humilitas* from which the church emerges.⁸⁰ We need to comment on this by placing it within the global context of the psalm. What is the overall aim of the commentary on Psalm 56? As this sermon was probably preached during the Easter season, Augustine's aim was to illustrate the theological-ethical significance of Christ's humility, which includes incarnation and death. But the bishop acknowledges from the beginning a wide gap between the commandment

76. *En. Ps.* 95, 2: 'Aedificatur ergo domus Domini Dei nostri, aedificatur; hoc fit, hoc agitur, hoc voces istae agunt, hoc lectiones, hoc praedicatio evangelii toto orbe terrarum'; see Fiedrowicz, *Psalmus vox totius Christi*, 32.

77. *En. Ps.* 24, 1: 'Christ is speaking here, but in the person of the Church'; 56, 1: 'Since, then, the whole Christ consists of the head and his body, we must be alert to the accents of the head in all the psalms in such a way that we catch the voices of the body too ... only because we speak in him do we speak the truth'.

78. The determination of the precise date of the individual psalm is always difficult. Perhaps, this sermon was preached during the Easter season of 395, most probably in Hippo; see also Fiedrowicz, *Psalmus vox totius Christi*, 24: 'viele Datierungsversuche vorerst noch hypothetischen Charakters'.

79. *En. Ps.* 56, 5.

80. *En. Ps.* 56, 11.

of the risen Christ and the uncertainty plaguing Christ's flock: 'Perhaps we might have been doubtful and perplexed as to how much we should love one other, and what the perfect charity might be that pleases God, for perfect charity is that charity which cannot be surpassed'.⁸¹

Here Augustine raises two questions. First, he poses the question of the quantity of mutual love. Secondly, he inquires about the quality of this love. Is it possible for a sinful person to love as Christ did, for he is also divine? But if he is God, then no human being can imitate him: 'If Christ alone had achieved it, perhaps no one among us would aspire to imitate him, for though human, he was human in such a way that he was also God'.⁸² In order to answer these questions, Augustine presents his concept of *totus Christus*, who, as human and divine, incorporates the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of charity: 'The whole Christ consists of head and body ... The head is our saviour himself who ... is seated at the Father's right hand. His body is the Church'.⁸³ As human he teaches his church that charity is not beyond human capacity because she is bound to Christ, whose divine grace, however, renders her humble. Hence, the church includes every single person of the Old Testament,⁸⁴ for example, King David, who had shown love and mercy towards King Saul, his persecutor. For this reason, Christ deigned to be from the lineage of David, born of the Virgin Mary and crucified on the cross. The question of the quality of love is herewith answered by Augustine. It is the *magna humilitas* of Christ that is exemplary and constitutive for all members of his Body:

But human he was, and so servants have imitated their Master, and disciples have imitated their Teacher, and our predecessors in his family have done it, people who though they were our ancestors are yet our fellow-servants. Moreover, God would not have commanded us to do likewise if he had judged it impossible for human beings to love like that.⁸⁵

Humility is the foundational form through which one is introduced into and remains faithfully in the church. In this form, humility is salvific for it includes a sacramental attitude.⁸⁶ The validity of the sacraments does not depend on human sanctity; rather it rests on Christ, whose death sanctifies the sacraments. Hence, it is a step beyond moral virtue as it now qualifies the essence of the

81. *En. Ps.* 51, 1.

82. *Ibid.*

83. *En. Ps.* 56, 1; see also Franz Egon, *Totus Christus: Studien über Christus und die Kirche bei Augustin* (diss., Evangelisch-Theologische Fakultät, Friedrich-Wilhelm-Universität, Bonn, 1956).

84. Yves Congar, 'Ecclesia ab Abel', in *Abhandlungen über Theologie und Kirche: Festschrift für Karl Adam*, ed. M. Reding (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1952), 79–108.

85. *En. Ps.* 56, 1. Augustine later will use the same argument against Julian of Eclanum.

86. Kimberly F. Baker, 'Transfiguravit in se: The Sacramentality of Augustine's Doctrine of the Totus Christus', *Studia Patristica* 70 (2013): 559–67.

church. As the church emerges from Christ's great humility, namely his death on the cross, so members should transcend themselves by allowing themselves to be incorporated into the Body of Christ. In this sense, humility is the very attitude by which the church imitates Christ's poverty.

In order to illustrate Augustine's point, we need to cite his commentary on Psalm 56 at length. Commenting on the words 'Though disturbed, I lay down to sleep',⁸⁷ Augustine explains:

This is Christ's way of indicating his death ... This *disturbed* man was so placid that he slept when he wanted to. No one who is genuinely disturbed can sleep ... Yet, this man was *disturbed*, and fell asleep. Great was the humility of this *disturbed* man, and great the power of the sleeper.

Augustine then compares Adam, from whose own rib God created a wife for him, and the bond between Christ and his church:

In this respect Adam was a type of Christ ... If God had power to remove a rib from a sleeping man without causing pain, he could have done equally well when the man was awake. So why did he want to do it while Adam slept? Because in Christ's case, a bride was made for him as he slept on the cross, and made from his side.⁸⁸

Like Eve and beyond Adam's case, the church emerges from Christ's death on the cross. This makes the church in particular humble. Heretics, especially the Donatists, lacked this humility and therefore they lived outside this close unity between Christ and the church, which is fastened through Christ's humility, the radical sign of divine love. Hence, Augustine recommended his audience to look at the example of Christ, who incorporates in himself his church: 'Look upon me and have mercy, for I am alone (*unicus*) and poor. I am one single (*unicus*) people, maintaining the humility of your one (*unicae*) Church. No heresy, no schism preserves this'.⁸⁹ The Donatists, Augustine argued, rejected a humble church because they saw how Christ was 'humiliated, buffeted, scourged, punched, slapped, spat on, crowned with thorns and hung on the tree'.⁹⁰ Their *superbia* was the root of their condemnation because they refused to be members of the church that preaches the crucified Christ, as Paul argued against those who

87. Here Augustine alludes to the story of the sea storm during which Jesus fell asleep; see Matt 8:24: 'And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being covered with the waves; but Jesus Himself was asleep'.

88. *En. Ps.* 24, 16; also 56, 11: 'Consider what madness afflicts the heretics who have severed themselves from the bonded unity of Christ's Church. Clinging to a part and thereby losing the whole, they refuse to be in communion with the entire world, where Christ's glory is diffused'.

89. *En. Ps.* 56, 15.

90. *Ibid.*

disturbed the peace and harmony of the community in Corinth.⁹¹ In Augustine's exposition of the Psalms, Joseph Ratzinger observes therein a transformation of Augustine's concept of humility:

Finally, the notion of *humilitas* gains a new dimension. While Augustine's early perception of the humility of faith has a more individualistic colour in the sense that it is surrendering to his own weakness, it now grows above the weakness of the 'I' by submitting himself to the Church whose image is blurred by the existence of sinners who, nevertheless, are members of the Church. The demand of redemptive humility is to tolerate them without departing from the Body of Christ.⁹²

Giving to Christ the Poor Who Is Rich

What now are the practical consequences for the church with regard to her humility? The very first conclusion concerns the attitude of the church as such. A humble church should be aware of her constant lowliness. She should be a supplicant church. As such, she should be aware of living in a need that can be filled only by Christ. In this context, Augustine can say that the church is truly poor: 'And the Church is poor, since it hungers and thirsts on pilgrimage for what will satisfy it when it reaches home ... This is why the Church says, All day long, suggesting the long stretch of time until the world ends'.⁹³ Because the church is poor, she needs to work hard (*laborabimus*) till the Lord fills her with the fullness of his richness. Practising almsgiving is therefore a constant duty of the church.

In a sermon on the words of Matthew 15:21-28 Augustine emphasises the exemplary humility (*maxima humilitas*) of the Canaanite woman, whom he considers also a *figura ecclesiae*. Like her, the church should knock loudly:

Notice how forcefully humility is being urged upon us. The Lord had called her a dog; she didn't say, *I am not*; she said, *I am*. And at once, because she admitted she was a dog, the Lord said, *O woman, great is your faith!* ... You've asked, you've sought, you've knocked; receive, find and let it be opened to you ... So notice, brothers and sisters, how it is above all humility that is being recommended to us in this woman

91. See 1 Cor 1:23.

92. Ratzinger, *Volk und Haus Gottes*, 151–2: 'Und schließlich gewinnt auch der *humilitas*-Begriff eine neue Dimension. Die *humilitas* des Glaubens ist ihrem letzten Sinngehalt nach doch individualistisch gemeint als das Sich-Beugen unter der eigene Schwäche. Jetzt wächst sie über diese Not des Ich hinaus und ist das Sich-Fügen in die Schwachheitsgestalt einer Kirche, deren Bild durch die Scharen der Sünder verdunkelt wird, die ihr zugehören. Die Forderung der heilschaffenden Demut ist es, diese Sünder zu ertragen und sich in die Kirche zu fügen'.

93. *En. Ps.* 87, 14: 'et inops est ecclesia, cum esurit et sitit peregrina, unde satiatur in patria ... ideo dixit: tota die (Ps 87,18), continuationem significans temporis, donec finiatur hoc saeculum'.

who was a Canaanite, that is, who came from the gentiles and was a type, which means a representation, of the Church.⁹⁴

As the church is poor, she should not be concerned with the wealth of this world, but rather with the poor, whom she should care for with the richness provided by Christ. This means, however, that the church as Christian community should seek only things that suffice for its daily needs,⁹⁵ because anything more than this is only a burden that may lead her astray from Christ's humility, which is the opposite of avarice, which, in turn, Augustine describes as the root of all evil.⁹⁶ It is this avarice that lets a person go astray from faith. Therefore, Augustine advises that it is exactly faith and love for Christ that lifts up hearts so that they won't be entangled in many pains: 'So if any of you really want to lift up your hearts, then it's up there, up there that you must deposit what you love ... live with Christ in your hearts; and just as the Church has been preceded into heaven by its head, so let Christians be preceded by their hearts ... Let us transfer our assets where we are intending to settle'.⁹⁷ In this context Augustine speaks of a wonderful exchange of gifts because one receives a greater gift through giving to the poor who is a member of Christ's body:

Give to Christ; he freely serves you with a summons, to be paid back, you being quite astonished all the while that he ever got something from you ... And what did I receive? What do I pay back? *I was hungry*, he says, *and you gave me to eat*, and so on. I received earth, I will give heaven. I received temporal things, I will return eternal things; I received bread, I will give life.⁹⁸

Only by humility that stems from the awareness of being given freely by Christ are Christians ready to give to the poor: 'So give to the poor, my dear people. *If we have food and clothing, let us be content with that* (1 Tim 6:8). The rich man gets nothing more with his riches than what the poor man is pleading for from him, food and clothing. What more do you get from all the things you have? You've got your food, you've got your necessary clothing, necessary, I say, not vain, not superfluous'. As theological reasoning for this voluntary poverty of the Christian community, Augustine continues in the same sermon: 'He (the poor) looks to you, you look to God. He looks to a hand that was made as he was, you look to a hand that made you. But it didn't only make you, it also made the poor man with you'.⁹⁹

94. S. 77, 11.

95. *Reg.* 3, 5: 'melius enim minus egere, quam plus habere'.

96. S. 85, 7: 'Avarice means wanting to be rich, not already being rich. That's avarice ... Aren't you frightened by avarice, the root of all evil?'

97. S. 86, 1.

98. S. 86, 4-5.

99. S. 61, 12.

Clearly, Augustine is not condemning wealth; but he rather advises his flock, indeed all Christians, to be generous, as Christ was generous with his gifts.¹⁰⁰ The generosity of Christ is a concrete practice deriving from his humility. Thus, all Christians should be humble too by concretely practising almsgiving, not forcibly, but voluntarily. Augustine not only calls the rich and the poor alike to practise this humble activity, but he insists that it is the obligation of the entire church for she herself is poor and needy. If, as Kessler argues, *misericordia* is the decisive criterion of a qualitative concern for the poor, for it is inseparable from the divine mercy,¹⁰¹ then this divine mercy reaches its climax in Christ's humility. Accordingly, not only individual Christians should be humbly generous, but the church as an institution should all the more be humble. Each act of external giving must therefore be preceded by an act of reconciliation with one's soul, which is always in need of mercy. This need of mercy is offered by Christ. In this sense, Christ gives alms to the soul: 'Vor jeglichem äußeren Geben muß man sich daher zunächst mit seiner eigenen, erbarmungswürdigen Seele versöhnen, ihr *ein Almosen geben*'.¹⁰² (Prior to each external act of giving, one ought first to reconcile oneself with one's own soul, which thirsts for mercy, that is, one ought to give alms to one's own soul.) Interpreting this from Augustine's ecclesiological perspective, the soul of a faithful Christian is the church, which is nourished by Christ, who humbles himself for her.

Conclusion

When describing the nature and tasks of the church, Vatican II chose various images and symbols for her. One important aspect of Vatican II ecclesiology is to be a servant church in the service of humanity, as Gerald O'Collins has put it: 'the council understood ... the church ... to be a servant church of repentant sinners who embrace a ministry of justice and peace for the whole of humanity'.¹⁰³ Humility is a condition by which individual Christians are poor in the service of the poor. Augustine, however, went beyond individual attitudes by ascribing humility to the church, since she is the very body of Christ, who humbled himself in accepting the human form of a servant. It is the humble nature of Christ that embraces the poor. Hence, the practice of almsgiving is not primarily an act by which one gains personal redemption. Rather, it is the natural expression of the church's imitation of Christ's poverty. The church is the recipient of Christ's poverty and the distributor of Christ's wealth. It is evident that Augustine did not depersonalise the poor, as Allen and Morgan have argued. Humility is precisely the opposite, as it puts the poor first. Through humility,

100. See Boniface Ramsey, 'Wealth', in *Augustine through the Ages*, ed. A. D. Fitzgerald (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 876–81.

101. A. Kessler and J.-U. Krause, 'Eleemosyna', in *Augustinus-Lexikon*, ed. Mayer, 2:762.

102. *Ibid.*

103. Gerald O'Collins, *Living Vatican II: The 21st Council for the 21st Century* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 2006), 148.

those who have wealth displace themselves in favour of the poor. In this way, they become *compauperes*. Thus, humility is the ideological frame that radicalises a commitment to the poor. From this perspective, actions alone are insufficient to cause social change. In order for this to happen, actions must be accompanied by an institutional ideology that radically prioritises the poor. Augustine is perhaps one of the few theologians in the early church who saw this intrinsic and radical connection between institutional humility and poverty.
