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Is Baptism Complete or Part of a Larger Christian Initiation? A Dialogue with Lutheran Sacramental Theology

Susan K. Wood

Is baptism complete in itself? If not, what is missing or unfulfilled? If it is the beginning of an initiation, what are the other components of initiation and into what is the new Christian initiated?

The question whether baptism is complete initiation is ultimately paradoxical. On the one hand, we really and truly participate in Christ's death and resurrection in baptism and are incorporated into his mystical body, the Church. On the other hand, that which is contained in baptism is also received over time and in different modalities. Although baptism does indeed induct us into the life of grace and into the church, it does not stand alone. Catholics believe that baptism, confirmation, and eucharist comprise three sacraments within this process of initiation. Lutherans have traditionally held baptism to be complete in itself, even though in the revisions of their liturgical rites they incorporate elements of the ancient catechumenal process. For Lutherans, confirmation is not a sacrament, although for them, too, it is a ritual that bestows the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Eucharist is a sacrament, but the question then becomes whether it should be considered an aspect of initiation.

To understand the origin of possible differences between Lutherans and Catholics on this matter, it is helpful to understand Protestant rites of initiation against the rites of the medieval West.¹ At that time, infant initiation had become reduced to infant baptism, and infants were baptized as soon as possible in a privatized rite rather than in the context of the public prayer of the church. The patristic practice of a unified rite of initiation incorporating baptism, post-baptismal chrismation, and eucharist had evolved into a

sequence of four sacraments celebrated over a number of years: baptism in infancy with post-baptismal anointing with chrism given by a presbyter, first confession in preparation for first communion, first communion, and confirmation by a bishop at age seven or later.² Maxwell Johnson, a Lutheran liturgist, summarizes the situation thus:

On the Eve of the Reformation, then, baptism itself had become a rite administered almost exclusively to infants as a precautionary step, i.e., a rite for the dying, designed to rescue the candidate from the power of original sin and death; a rite filled with exorcisms designed to snatch the infant away from the grasp of Satan; a self-contained rite with no necessary relationship to the public liturgical life of the Church; a rite in which catechesis proper had been replaced by the exorcisms themselves; a rite leading to a process of catechetical formation which was limited to the memorization of a few texts; and a rite increasingly narrowed by scholastic theology to the categories of matter, form, intention, and dominical institution. Such is the rite and its interpretation inherited by both Protestants and Roman Catholics in the sixteenth century.³

These rites and interpretations of baptism remained rather constant in the Roman Catholic Church up into the twentieth century.

Luther and Baptism

The theology and rituals of Lutheran initiation lie between Catholic and Orthodox initiation on the one hand, and strictly Reformed patterns and theology, on the other, and so share some of the characteristics of both groups. Maxwell Johnson points out that the Lutheran Reformation was “a ‘conservative’ movement, both theologically and liturgically, valuing highly and retaining much of the Western Latin liturgical tradition in its own reforms of the sacramental rites of the Church.”⁴ Nevertheless, a significant difference is that Lutheran theology, in company with other Protestant traditions, has always insisted that baptism constituted full initiation.⁵ Lutherans do not consider post-baptismal chrismation, which became known as confirmation, to be a sacrament because there is no dominical command for it, and do not identify the eucharist as a sacrament of *initiation*. Nevertheless, Luther had little quarrel with baptism as practiced in the Roman Catholic Church, as evident in his comments in *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*:

Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to the riches of his mercy [Eph 1:3, 7] has preserved in his church this sacrament at least, untouched and untainted by the ordinances of men, and has made it free to all nations and classes of mankind, and has not permitted it to be oppressed by the filthy and godless monsters of greed and superstition.⁶

His Little Book of Baptism (Taufbüchlein) (1523), written in German, was a minor simplification of the *Latin Magdeburg Rite* of 1497, which retained the pre-baptismal ceremonies of exsufflation, the giving of salt, exorcisms with signings of the cross, the *effete* with the use of spittle, the three-fold renunciation of Satan profession of faith, and anointing. New elements added to the Latin rite include a prayer of Luther's own composition, the *Sindflutgebet* or Flood Prayer, and the directions to dip the child in the font.

Luther produced a second *Little Book of Baptism* in 1526 which omitted what some considered to be "human ceremonies" such as the exsufflation, the giving of salt, the *effete*, the pre- and postbaptismal anointings, and the presentation of the lighted baptismal candle. He further reduced the number of exorcisms. Thus a comparison of Martin Luther's two baptismal rites, those of 1523 and 1526, shows a progressive simplification and elimination of elements from the medieval rite in use during his time. This also represents a growing departure from the rituals accompanying a more extended rite of initiation.

Contemporary Retrieval of a Common Catechumenal Heritage

In contemporary times, within the broader ecumenical movement when the search for a common doctrine of baptism reached a certain impasse, the ecumenical movement sought a wider context of commonality, appealing not to a common event or theology of baptism, but rather to a common process or pattern of initiation in which baptism is one moment.⁷ This wider context has been ecumenically and theologically fruitful, demonstrating that baptism incorporates rites and patterns of life as well as doctrine. For example, the consultation on the role of worship in the search for Christian unity held in Ditchingham, England, in 1994 emphasized the ecumenical significance of the pattern of eucharistic celebration and also suggested that baptism has an order and pattern that is meaningful, ancient, and increasingly recognized in the churches.⁸

The subsequent consultation on baptism in Fauverges, France, in 1997 took up the Ditchingham emphasis on order and pattern, develop-

ing its application to baptism.⁹ This emphasis on *ordo* is not a comparison of liturgical rites, although it certainly takes account of them, but rather a comparison of deeper structures of initiation including such elements as proclamation/evangelization, conversion, profession of faith, water bath, meal and Christian formation/life in community.¹⁰ In this *ordo* word leads to sacrament, and sacrament leads to Christian living. In short, it is the process of making Christians and the path of discipleship.

The Fauverges consultation points out that the *ordo* of baptism is discernable in Acts 2 where baptisms follow Peter's preaching and lead those who are baptized to life in community where "they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42) as well as to the distribution of goods to those in need (2:45).¹¹ Similarly, in 1 Peter, which may well represent a baptismal pattern, the proclamation of the resurrection and teaching about new life lead to purification and new birth, eating and drinking God's food (1 Pet 2:2-3), and participation in community as the royal priesthood, the new temple and the people of God (1 Pet 2:4-10).¹²

Similarly, baptism, a broader process of initiation, and baptismal life are related to each other as a threefold series of recapitulations involving the more restricted baptismal rite, the larger *ordo* of Christian initiation, and the general pattern of Christian living. The briefer form becomes a shorthand for the next expanded form, the sacramental rite indicating symbolically what is lived in day-to-day Christian living.

The baptismal rite itself recapitulates the larger pattern of initiation, which in turn recapitulates a larger pattern of Christian living. Thus the renunciations of evil and the recitation of the creed in the baptismal rite summarize the work of conversion in the catechumenate within an expanded rite of initiation, and the ongoing penitential life of Christian discipleship. Likewise, the first eucharist of the expanded rite of initiation anticipates the whole of the Christian life.¹³ Participation in the eucharist involves not only full participation in the liturgical assembly, it also signifies participation in the life of the community through suffering witness in the world in the pattern of Christ's suffering on behalf of many.¹⁴ The larger pattern of Christian initiation recapitulates the pattern of Christian living with its immersion in the word of God, its repeated reconciliations and the life-long process of growth in into life in Christ. The consultation summarizes this pattern thus: "By means of God's continuing grace and presence baptism is *process* and once-for-all eschatological event and *pattern* for all of life."¹⁵

This report notes, however, that the various elements of catechesis, water bath, admission to the eucharist, and community life have been separated one from the other. Baptism has been separated from the gift

of the Spirit, from the eucharist, and from perceived responsibility for an ethical life. Different traditions emphasize different aspects of this *ordo* to varying degrees, some emphasizing teaching and the making of disciples, others embodying a rich tradition of liturgical symbolism, and still others nurturing post-baptismal life in very intentional ways. The report of the consultation suggests to the churches that a renewed appreciation of this *ordo* of Christian initiation is a source for interpreting and renewing their own practices and for aiding in the recognition of the baptismal practices of other churches.

Retrieval of Catechumenal Elements of Initiation by Lutherans

In addition to the restoration of the catechumenate model in Roman Catholicism in the *Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults* adopted in response to Vatican II's mandate to reform the rites, many Lutheran churches have recently retrieved elements of the ancient catechumenal process. In 1982 the basic structure of Christian initiation was delineated in the Notes on the first order in *Occasional Services: A Companion to Lutheran Book of Worship, "Enrollment of Candidates for Baptism."*¹⁶ The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada developed an adult catechumenate process in its *Living Witnesses* series in 1992, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America also did so with its *Welcome to Christ* resources in 1997.¹⁷

As society becomes less Christian, churches are finding that more adults are seeking Christian initiation. This creates a need for churches to develop catechumenal processes for adults. As patterns of the catechumenate become more common among Christian churches, the theologies of baptism may converge more closely as doctrine develops to reflect baptismal practice.

*Baptism and Post-baptismal Anointing*¹⁸

A thorny problem that cannot be addressed in detail in the present study is the relationship between baptism and the post-baptismal anointing that came to be known as confirmation. When a catechumenate which culminated in the reception of all three sacraments of initiation fell out of use due to the baptism of infants becoming the dominant practice, it eventually followed that the order of baptism followed first by confirmation and then by first reception of the eucharist no longer represented pastoral practice. The sacraments of initiation were first received over a period of time separated by years and then received in an entirely different sequence.¹⁹ In the United States within Roman Catholicism, the order in which a child receives the sacraments is presently most often: baptism shortly after birth, followed by

first penance before first eucharist at about age seven. Confirmation occurs sometime during adolescence when the bishop visits the local parish. As Aidan Kavanagh has observed:

Confirmation in adolescence or early adulthood as the sacrament peculiar to one's mature assumption of public responsibilities in Church and society had the effect of reinforcing the presumption that baptism was the sacrament peculiar to birth and infancy. In that position, baptism was the wholly necessary exorcism of original sin and the occasion of the infants being lent sufficient faith by the Church, through the good office of godparents and parents, to see it through to the critical stage when, as an individual on the verge of 'maturity,' that faith could be appropriated by the former infant in his or her own right – namely in confirmation.²⁰

The separation of confirmation from baptism reinforced the idea that the baptism of infants was primarily for the removal of original sin rather than a participation in the paschal mystery of Christ according to the theology of Romans 6 or preparation for ministry and Christian life according to the theology of Christ's baptism and anointing by the Spirit in the Jordan. It also had the unfortunate effect of shifting the emphasis in confirmation to a human act, namely a personal affirmation of baptism, rather than keeping the emphasis on God's activity on our behalf in the sacraments.²¹

In this light, then, the imposition of hands and the prayer accompanying the post-baptismal anointing in the ELCA's rites, both in the 1979 *Lutheran Book of Worship* and the 2006 *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* are significant. The rites incorporate a prayer for the sevenfold gift of the Spirit, a laying on of hands, and an anointing with oil with a prayer for the seal of the Holy Spirit. The minister, laying both hands on the head of each of the newly baptized, prays: "Sustain (name) with the gift of your Holy spirit; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever." The presiding minister then marks the sign of the cross on the forehead of each of the baptized with oil saying, "(Name), child of God, you have been sealed by the holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever." The prayer for the Spirit is based on the sixth-century Gelasian sacramentary, itself derived from the early third-century *Apostolic Tradition*, traditionally attributed to Hippolytus. Maxwell Johnson comments that the prayer for the gifts of the Spirit can be interpreted as an explicit conferral of the Holy Spirit although it is not absolutely clear whether baptism or the hand-laying prayer constitutes the "seal" of the Spirit.²²

This anointing, the imposition of hands, the announcement of the seal of the Spirit, and the prayer for the gifts of the Spirit represent what Roman Catholics understand to be a confirmation rite in everything but name. It does not carry the same meaning as the post-baptismal anointing in Catholicism, which is Christological in meaning rather than pneumatological: “He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation, so that, united with his people, you may remain forever a member of Christ who is Priest, Prophet, and King.”

In 1971 Paul VI decreed in his Apostolic Constitution on the Sacrament of Confirmation: “The Sacrament of Confirmation is conferred through the anointing with chrism on the forehead, which is done by the laying on of the hand, and through the words: ‘Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”²³ Immediately before this, however, the bishop and priests who administer the sacrament with him lay hands upon all the candidates (by extending their hands over them) and say a prayer which closely corresponds with the hand-laying and prayer in the ELCA rite:

All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by water and the Holy Spirit
you freed your sons and daughters from sin
and gave them new life.
Send your Holy Spirit upon them
to be their helper and Guide.
Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of right judgment and courage,
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.
Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Paul VI’s comments that “the laying of hands on the elect, carried out with the prescribed prayer before the anointing, is still to be regarded as very important, even if it is not of the essence of the sacramental rite: it contributes to the complete perfection of the rite and to a more thorough understanding of the sacrament.”

The resemblance between the current Lutheran rite and the Roman Catholic rite of confirmation is even more remarkable when this prayer for the gifts of the Spirit is compared with Luther’s rite of 1523 where we see a significant difference: “The almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath regenerated thee through water and the Holy Ghost and bath, forgiven thee all thy sin, anoint thee with the salutary oil to eternal life.” This prayer makes no mention of the Holy Spirit, and the anointing with oil was omitted in the 1526 rite.

Thus the ELCA action and prayer represent what Catholics understand as confirmation, although this was not the intention of the LBW drafters.²⁴ They wanted to provide a fuller ritualization of the gift of the Spirit in order to affirm that baptism is the fullness of initiation²⁵ and that the Holy Spirit is the gift of baptism rather than the effect of some subsequent event.²⁶ Nevertheless, whatever the intention, this rite restores the proper order of the post-baptismal anointing associated with the gift of the Spirit by placing it right after baptism and before the reception of the eucharist whenever that occurs.

In ritualizing the gift of the Spirit with specifically pneumatological allusions, in having the post-baptismal anointing occur immediately after baptism, and in returning to a sacramental practice faithful to a period of the tradition prior to the disintegration of the rites of initiation, rites such as the current Lutheran rite are compatible with Roman Catholic theology even though Lutherans do not consider this post-baptismal anointing to be confirmation. Here, though, it must be noted that what constitutes "confirmation" is very ambiguous when one is comparing different traditions. Confirmation involves hand-laying, anointing, and prayer for the Spirit, although it has carried multiple meanings across various traditions and even within one tradition. The Lutheran practice is much closer to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, since in the RCIA the anointing after baptism is omitted and the rite proceeds immediately to the celebration of confirmation after the explanatory rites of baptism, the clothing with a baptismal garment, and the presentation of a lighted candle. The RCIA in effect identifies Roman Catholic confirmation with post-baptismal chrismation.²⁷ If one considers the law of praying as indicative of the law of believing (*lex orandi, lex credendi*), one can affirm a strong convergence between the Lutheran and Catholic traditions in these present rites. Nevertheless, obstacles preventing the full effect of this convergence include the Lutheran conviction that baptism in the Trinitarian name constitutes full initiation in water and the Holy Spirit regardless of any additional rites and gestures and the Roman Catholic practice of separating confirmation from baptism.

Confusion generally reigns in the relation between baptism and initiation more broadly considered, including, therefore, confirmation, a confusion traceable to the disintegration of the ancient unified rite of initiation inclusive of baptism, post-baptismal chrismation, and eucharist. In the ancient church one would not have argued that this unified rite did not constitute full initiation and it would not have made sense to attempt to ask the question of the individual parts. Catholics certainly agree with Lutherans that baptism in the Trinitarian name confers the Spirit, and Lutherans, without rendering prayer inefficacious, must affirm that the Spirit is given when invoked in the act of chrismation. Arguably there is a need for a rite

that explicitly identifies this gift of the Spirit, whether that be some version of Luther's post-baptismal prayer of his 1526 service or the current prayer asking for the sevenfold gift of the Spirit. The issue is not whether the Spirit is given in baptism or whether a person is fully a Christian in baptism but whether the sacramental ritualization of initiation must necessarily be both Christological and pneumatological and culminate in the communal breaking of bread that identifies the Christian baptismal life. Ritual minimalism would argue to the sufficiency of water baptism in the Trinitarian name. Nevertheless a broader pattern is evident in the experience of Pentecost, which includes baptism, reception of the gift of the Spirit, attention to apostolic teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2:38-42). The issue is not that a minimal ritual is inefficacious or deprives the baptized of the Spirit or membership in the church but that a more expansive ritual is more revelatory of the richness and complexity of what is accomplished in Christian initiation. This more expansive ritual has biblical warrant beyond the bare bones of the dominical command of Matt 28:19. This more expansive ritual is not empty ritualism but is truly efficacious – and therefore sacramental in the Roman Catholic understanding of sacrament – because we do not lay hands and pray for the Spirit without the Spirit being present, or break bread in obedience to Jesus' request to do so without the risen Christ being present.

Baptism and Initiation

If the patristic catechumenal heritage and its contemporary retrieval witness to the fact that Christian initiation is a process or journey extended over time, that process can comprise several rites or sacraments. That does not detract from the fundamental, foundational, and essential necessity of baptism. Baptism unites us through the Holy Spirit to Christ. In baptism the sacramental sign is immersion into the death and resurrection of Christ in the waters of baptism. In the Eucharist the sign is the body and blood of Christ crucified and risen. Baptism is the once-for-all, never repeatable sacrament of the immersion of Christians into the paschal event. The eucharist is the repeatable sacrament by which we are associated with the paschal mystery. Both sacraments incorporate Christians into the body of Christ, for in baptism we become members of the church, and the eucharist builds up the church as one body by virtue of our communing in the one bread of Christ (1 Cor 10:16-17). Jean Daniélou said that there is only one mystery, and that is Jesus Christ, dead and risen.²⁸ But there are different modalities of incorporation into that one mystery, namely baptism and eucharist.

Baptism makes Christians into a priestly community deputed for the worship of the Church in the Eucharist. As early as the *Didache* (ca. 160), baptism was a prerequisite for reception of the eucharist: "But let no one eat or drink of your eucharist but such as have been baptized in the name of the Lord."²⁹ The baptized have the right and the responsibility of participating in the eucharistic liturgy. This is why catechumens participating in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults are dismissed after the Liturgy of the Word in Catholic churches. They have not yet received this deputation. In this sense we are baptized into the eucharist. This relationship is most evident in a unified rite of initiation as practiced in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults and by the Orthodox.

Just as the Rite of Christian Initiation makes adult baptism at the Easter Vigil the norm for understanding baptism, the Eucharist at the Easter Vigil is where the Eucharist is most itself in public and the "standard that defines the meaning of everything else – cross and sacrifice, memorial and presence, ministry and priesthood, intercession and prayer, participation and communion."³⁰ The Eucharist is the culmination of initiation because it is there that the communion of believers with one another and with Christ is sacramentally visible in the sacrament of God's presence with us. Aidan Kavanagh eloquently describes the relationship between baptism and the Eucharist when he articulates the principle on which the Rite's norm of baptism rests:

That baptism is inadequately perceptible apart from the eucharist; that the eucharist is not wholly knowable without reference to conversion in faith; that conversion is abortive if it does not issue in sacramental illumination by incorporation into the Church; that the Church is only an inept corporation without steady access to Sunday, Lent, and the Easter Vigil; that evangelization is mere noise and catechesis only a syllabus apart from conversion and initiation into a robust ecclesial environment of faith shared. In baptism the eucharist begins, and in the eucharist baptism is sustained. From this premier sacramental union flows all the Church's life.³¹

Thus even though baptism is at the heart of Christian initiation and is complete in the sense that it conveys Christ and all that he is to the baptized, it does not stand alone but is intrinsically oriented to the eucharist. It would be strange, indeed, for someone to say that he or she has no need of the eucharist because he or she has received everything needed for salvation in baptism or to say that there is no need for a ritual conveying the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit is already imparted in baptism.

Martin Luther preached that one should return to one's baptism daily. In a light vein, the liturgist Kathleen Hughes has referred to the eucharist as "our daily dip in the font." This lighthearted image represents the recognition that both sacraments make present the mystery of Christ's dying and rising. The point is that we do not receive baptism once and then go on with our lives. That which is experienced and received sacramentally, under the modality of sacramental sign, must be enfleshed in Christian living, in our own dying and rising. Initiation is not complete until sacramental ritual is embodied in our existential living. Otherwise, sacraments become magic. Tertullian said that Christians are made, not born.³² The making does not occur simply in a sacramental instant, but in the duration required for growth and development. The author of the Epistle to the Ephesians spoke of the gifts of ministry as building up the body of Christ "until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ" (Eph 4:11-13). He spoke of "growing up into him who is the head, into Christ" (Eph 4:15). If initiation is indeed this process of growth, then it is lifelong and does not end either with baptism or eucharist insofar as participation in the eucharist and the other aids to Christian living is lifelong.

Here the image of communion rather than church membership is helpful. Church membership is static and occurs in a moment. One can say that one's membership in the church is complete with baptism. Catholics would say that a catechumen is a member of the church and thus deserving of a Christian funeral (LG 14). Communion, however, allows for an ever-deeper assimilation into the mystery of Christ and the church. Initiation in this context is not exclusively related to church membership, but induction into communion that allows for further growth and development.

In the light of the present project of examining the relationship between baptism and growth in ecclesial communion, obviously baptism establishes a real communion among all Christians who mutually recognize one another's baptism. However, just as from the Catholic point of view initiation is not complete with baptism because the ritual does not incorporate the rich pneumatological theology of confirmation or the modality of incorporation into the body of Christ effected by the eucharist (1 Cor 10:16-17), that which is truly contained within the theology of baptism is not brought to full visibility. Can we say that the reality is there, but that the sign is lacking in the sense that aspects of what baptism effects can be brought to greater visibility and that even the reality is subject to growth, not least through regular participation in the eucharist? If Lutherans and Catholics are to grow together in ecclesial communion, perhaps we also need to acknowledge and share a larger process of initiation into that communion. The question

before us, not answered in this paper, is how much communion is necessary before we can share in the eucharist, which deepens that communion. If the eucharist is indeed a sacrament of initiation, it itself is not the final point at the end of a journey for those Christians who have already been initiated and completed their novitiate, so to speak, but an element of initiation and an essential aspect of participating in that journey to full communion. The ongoing nature of initiation mirrors the repeatable character of the eucharist. Perhaps such a view will enable both Lutherans and Catholics to situate both baptism and eucharist within the larger category of initiation in its efforts to relate baptism to growth in ecclesial communion.

Notes

- 1 See Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation: Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2007), chapter 6.
- 2 See J.D.C. Fisher, *Christian Initiation: Baptism in the Medieval West* (London: SPCK, 1965) for an account of the disintegration of the primitive rite of initiation.
- 3 Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation: Their Evolution and Interpretation*, 233. This summary does not occur in the 2007 revised and expanded edition.
- 4 Ibid., 236.
- 5 The document, "Christian Initiation in the Anglican Communion: The Toronto Statement 'Walk in Newness of Life,'" makes the unequivocal claim that "baptism is complete sacramental initiation and leads to participation in the eucharist." It affirms the rite of confirmation as having a continuing pastoral role as means of "renewal of faith" among the baptized, or a reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant (cf. 3.19-20), but it is not to be seen in any way as a "completion of baptism." David R. Holeton, ed., *Christian Initiation in the Anglican Communion. The Toronto Statement "Walk in Newness of Life:" The Findings of the Fourth International Anglican Consultation, Toronto 1991* (Grove Worship Series 118; Bramcote, UK: Grove Books, 1991).
- 6 LW 26:37.
- 7 Paul Fiddes makes the helpful point that we are looking for a process of initiation, of which baptism is one moment, rather than a process of baptism. Then confirmation and eucharist are not seen as completions of baptism as if baptism were incomplete in itself, but as completions of initiation. "Baptism and the Process of Initiation," *The Ecumenical Review* 54 (2002) 60.
- 8 The report is in Thomas F. Best and Dagmar Heller, eds., *So We Believe, So We Pray: Towards Koinonia in Worship* (Faith and Order Paper 171; Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1995) 4-26.
- 9 "Report of the Consultation," in *Becoming Christian: The Ecumenical Implications of Our Common Baptism* (Faith and Order Paper No. 184; ed. Thomas F. Best and Dagmar Heller; Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1999) §10.
- 10 Ibid., §4, §19-20.
- 11 Ibid., §20.
- 12 Ibid.

- 13 Ibid., §22.
- 14 See Gordon Lathrop, "Water that Speaks: The *Ordo* of Baptism and its Ecumenical Implications," in *Becoming Christian: The Ecumenical Implications of Our Common Baptism*, 17.
- 15 Report of the Consultation," §22.
- 16 *Occasional Services: A Companion to Lutheran Book of Worship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg; Philadelphia: Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, 1982), cited in Frank Senn, *Christian Liturgy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997) 663.
- 17 The bibliographical information for these resources is given in Senn, 663, note 86.
- 18 Much of this section is taken from Susan K. Wood, *One Baptism: Ecumenical Dimensions of the Doctrine of Baptism* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2009) 134-139.
- 19 See Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation*, 381-391, for the history of this shift. He cites numerous ecclesiastical documents that legislated the proper order of the sacraments despite continuing pastoral practice to the contrary: the preparatory document for the first Vatican council (1870), *De Administratione sacramentorum*; the 1917 Code of Canon Law; and a 1932 statement of the Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments.
- 20 Aidan Kavanagh, *The Shape of Baptism: The Rite of Christian Initiation* (New York: Pueblo, 1978) 86.
- 21 This essay does not explore the meaning of the rite of affirmation of baptism, adopted in the most recent ELCA liturgical book, and its relationship to confirmation. Since Lutherans do not consider confirmation to be a sacrament, at one level this ritual does not raise the issue of whether it is God's act or a human act, but since the prayer (for the gifts of the Spirit) and the ritual action (laying on of hands) are what constitutes the Roman Catholic sacrament of confirmation, the ritual of affirmation of baptism raises ecumenical questions about the relationship of the two and the theological meaning of each. The theology of confirmation is vexed and often misunderstood. For the purposes here, the greatest point of agreement needed is the recognition that it constitutes an important step in the process of initiation.
- 22 Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation*, 427.
- 23 Paul VI, Apostolic Constitution *Divinae consortium naturae* (15 August 1971).
- 24 Jeffrey A. Truscott, in *The Reform of Baptism and Confirmation in American Lutheranism* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2003) 68-69, believes that the Roman Catholic confirmation formula of 1971/1973 was not the textual source for the LBW baptismal rite. He argues for the influence of the rite of the Consultation on Church Union, *An Order for the Celebration of Holy Baptism with Commentary*. My argument is not about the source of the liturgical texts but about their similarity and the consequences for a convergence of sacramental belief that result from praying such similar texts.
- 25 This is also the position of Anglicans: Holeyton, ed., "Walk in Newness of Life," *Christian Initiation in the Anglican Communion*; and idem, *Growing in Newness of Life: Christian Initiation in Anglicanism Today: Papers from the Fourth International Anglican Liturgical Consultation, Toronto 1991* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1993) 227-56.
- 26 Truscott, *The Reform of Baptism and Confirmation in American Lutheranism*, 109. Earlier Truscott cites Boehringer, the drafter: "We had 'confirmation' immediately after the baptism because we wanted to show that baptism and confirmation were the same thing, or that confirmation is merely a continuation of baptism. The problem is that you could say that, but no one in the Lutheran tradition knew that.... The purpose of this formula, 'You have been sealed by the Holy Spirit,' etc., was to combine anointing