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Lutherans, Ecumenical Reflections, and Doctrine

Christine Helmer

When the word doctrine is uttered in trans-confessional conversation, it usually means difference.¹ Doctrines spell out assertions of belief, and in affirming one articulation, they deny and exclude other options. It was the impasse that doctrine presented to the ecumenical discussions after Vatican II that inspired Lutheran theologian George A. Lindbeck to reimagine the meaning and function of doctrine. Lindbeck diagnosed the situation in his book, The Nature of Doctrine.² Doctrinal articulation meant exposing a foundational difference (Grunddifferenz) that separated Lutherans from Roman Catholics. While one confession affirmed the doctrine of justification by which the church stands or falls, the other confession required a doctrine of the church as sacred mediator of justification. The impasse was, as Schleiermacher claimed two centuries earlier, the basic and non-negotiable difference between Protestants and Catholics on the self, Christ, church relation. Protestants see the relationship between self and Christ as primary, while Catholics have it the other way around; the church mediates Christ to the believer.³

With a new proposal for doctrine as a set of rules deployed by competent speakers of a distinctive language, Lindbeck invigorated the ecumenical conversation between Lutherans and Roman Catholics. Doctrine was no longer understood in terms of a binary exclusion between a true and a false proposition referring to reality. Lindbeck, rather, opened the way for contextualizing doctrines in relation to their regulative function for specific deployments of Christian discourse. The notion that religion was like a language was an insight Lindbeck appropriated from the cultural anthropologist Clifford Geertz.⁴ With this concept of religion in place, Lindbeck identified doctrine as the distinctive grammar for a “language game.” While
grammatical elements remain the same across the diversity of Christian confessions, confessional distinctiveness can be attributed to different configurations of "grammar". The doctrine of justification, for example, while characteristic of Christianity as such, is deployed in a Lutheran context with an all-important emphasis, while in a Catholic context, justification is one doctrine in a hierarchy of doctrines.

Lindbeck's proposal paved the way for the signing of the Joint Declaration between Lutherans and Roman Catholics on Oct. 31, 1999. Yet it became more than just an ecumenical device. Lindbeck's new understanding of doctrine provided a conceptually powerful resource for doing theology in contemporary North America. His vision recovered a sense of theology's primary commitment to the church. Theology's distinctive function as an academic discipline was to help the church better articulate its mission in the world. Furthermore, Lindbeck insisted on theology's recovery of the biblical canon, and its normative reading through the lens of the church's rule of faith (regula fidei), as distinctive source. The Bible, when read as a whole, is related to Christian doctrine. As such, it informs the constitutive doctrinal grammar of the church.

Lindbeck's model has brought theology, particularly ecumenical theology, very far. Yet at this point in the reception of his book, the term "doctrine" is being co-opted in ways that might differ significantly from Lindbeck's original intention. Doctrine, as I diagnose the situation in my recent book Theology and the End of Doctrine, has become a term restricted to rules that underlie a restricted normative view. The ancient regula fidei is invoked to enforce the trinitie confessions that were, and should remain, the one hermeneutic for the church's biblical reading. Trinitarian truth informs the Christian worldview that is set in opposition to secular culture. Conversion is required in order to leave falsity behind and become a "new creature" (cf 2 Cor 5:17) founded on doctrine's truth.

When looking at the ELCA website, it seems that the ELCA has allowed Lindbeck's proponents to appropriate the restrictive normative notion of doctrine. Where does the ELCA define and account for its doctrines? On the site, there are some comments on "ELCA Teaching" that pertain to a confession of faith in the triune God and the significance of fundamental texts, such as Bible and creeds, for faith. Theology is identified as a "conversation," and another page contains the "social statements," or positions for policy on a variety of issues, including sexuality and education. At no place does the word doctrine appear. Other Lutheran groups, however, relish the term. The Missouri Synod webpages, for example, identify doctrinal positions with theological precision on many topics from Scripture to justification. The website for the Society of the Holy Trinity, a group of rostered Lutheran clergy that has as its goal a deepening in the spiritual and intellectual formation of the Lutheran "ministerium," exhibits a rule for the society and a founding statement that details what is meant by Trinitarian faith, the sources of faith in confessions and creeds, and the church's ministry. These Lutherans are not shy to highlight doctrine as the primary genre in articulating belief, its meaning, and rationale. Could it be that the term doctrine is only a worthwhile endeavor for promoting a distinct sort of Lutheranism?

In this paper I intend to convince readers that doctrine is an important endeavor for theologians to pursue. I argue that the meaning that has accrued to the term over the past several decades represents only one (restrictive) aspect of doctrine. If we can think about doctrine in other ways, then we can better appreciate the task of producing doctrine as significant for articulating claims about self, God, and world that convey meaning and truth in the church today. When doctrine is understood to relate to both experience and its divine referent, then its production can reflect a living Christianity. I make my case by the following two steps. 1) I take the early nineteenth-century German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) as my historical point of departure. I consider Schleiermacher's intriguing ecumenical notion of doctrine that he deploys in his theological work, The Christian Faith, in order to show that he conceived doctrinal production from the start with an ecumenical focus. Schleiermacher is to be considered in the spirit of his ecumenical dogmatics, representative of Lutheran as well as Reformed theology. 2) At the end of this paper I propose a way for Lutherans to "construct doctrine boldly" by contemplating doctrine's referent, how historical work is part of doctrinal production for the present-day church, and how experience plays a role. If doctrinal production is the measurement of vital signs for a living Christianity, then Lutherans should take on the challenge.

**Lutherans and Schleiermacher**

Friedrich Schleiermacher, known as the parent of modern theology, is also generally identified as a Reformed pastor and theologian. He began his career as a pastor in 1794 in Landsberg, moved to Berlin in 1796 and was hospital chaplain at the Charité hospital until 1802. Significant for his promotions after this point was a two-hundred page text he wrote in 1804 that would catch the king's attention: Two Provisional Reports Concerning the Condition of the Protestant Church in Relation to the Protestant State. In this work, Schleiermacher addressed the confessional divide between Lutherans and Reformed, and proposed to heal the rift with a common liturgy. His arguments caught
King Friedrich Wilhelm III's eye. The king, from the Reformed branch of the Hohenzollern dynasty, longed to take communion with his Lutheran wife, Queen Louise. Thus he intervened in Schleiermacher's career, first to appoint him in 1804 to a pastoral and teaching post in the Lutheran University of Halle, and then after the dissolution of the university because of Napoleon's victory over Prussia in 1806, appointed Schleiermacher as court preacher in Berlin, a territory that was predominantly Lutheran. In Berlin, Schleiermacher also occupied a Reformed clergy post alongside a Lutheran minister at the 12,000-member Trinity Church, founded as both Lutheran and Reformed by Friedrich Wilhelm III's grandfather, and was professor of theology in the university he helped to found, the University of Berlin.

Schleiermacher did, however, clash with the king on ecumenical issues. In 1814, Schleiermacher criticized the monarch for enroaching on ecclesiastical affairs. Friedrich Wilhelm had appointed a commission to oversee the unification of the Protestant confessions in Prussia, a goal that he mandated in October 1817. On October 31, Schleiermacher together with his Lutheran co-pastor of Trinity Church and Berlin colleague in systematic and practical theology, Philipp Matthei (1780-1846), celebrated the three-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation in the Nicolai Church in Berlin with a joint communion. Schleiermacher subsequently edited the hymnal for the unified church (Univerte Kirche), eventually clashing again with the king in 1821 when Friedrich Wilhelm wrote his own unified liturgy modeled on Luther's to impose on the Prussian churches.

The point I want to emphasize is that although it is commonly assumed that Schleiermacher represented a Reformed commitment, the case in his own self-understanding was quite different. His controversies with the king had to do with Schleiermacher's conviction that the state should not intrude in church matters. It was up to church leaders, not the king, who should create a liturgy unifying both Lutheran and Reformed confessions. In another controversy, this time with the Lutheran confessionalist Claus Harms (1778-1855) who protested the union by re-issuing Luther's Ninety-Five Theses and adding ninety-five of his own, Schleiermacher insisted that the work of the Reformation was not to found a Lutheran Church—against which, indeed, no one protested more warmly than Luther himself—nor was it to found a Reformed Church, but to bring forth in renewed glory the Evangelical Church, which is guided and governed by its founder, Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God. He is the quickening centre of the Church; from Him comes all, to Him all returns: He is Beginning and End; in Him we believe, and through Him alone we are blessed.... We ought not, therefore, to call ourselves Lutherans nor Reformed, but we ought to call ourselves Evangelical Christians, after His name and His holy evangel.
the historical-critical operations Schleiermacher performs on theological texts. Furthermore, doctrines that distinguished Lutherans from Reformed and that had caused division in the past are also taken, weighed, and critically reconstructed. The Lutheran doctrine of the communication of attributes, for example, fares rather badly in Schleiermacher's assessment of the hypostatic union (cf. §§ 97, 5 [411-13]), while he distinguishes his view of the "strengthening of the spiritual life" (cf. §§ 140, 1 [645]) in the Lord's Supper from "the over-intellectual bareness of the Zwinglian view and from the mysteriousness sensuousness of the Lutheran" (cf. §§ 140, 4 [650]). Thus constructive work occurs by critical assessment and then appropriation for the most accurate representations of the doctrines held to be normative by Protestant Christianity of early nineteenth-century Prussia.

The intriguing contribution that Schleiermacher made to the history of theology is to articulate a doctrinal system on the basis of a common Protestant consciousness. He published the first edition of the Christian Faith in 1820 on the heels of the ecumenical rapprochements instituted by the king. Schleiermacher's approach to doctrine consisted in the critical task of weighing historical confessional documents in relation to their capacity to articulate doctrinal truths in his contemporary context. The doctrinal task was one of production in relation to past historical formulations; the testing of these formulations in order to determine which aspects had lost their meaning or presented contradictory claims; and then the integration of these historical articulations into new formulations that were themselves tested according to their capacity to communicate the essential core of Christianity in relation to the critical and constructive work applied by the contemporary theologian to the formulations. Belonging to a creedal and confessional community means precisely to participate in ongoing engagement with the past in order to more clearly articulate the central commitments of the present church. This is the message of Schleiermacher's theological hermeneutics. In the words of Brian Gerrish, "Doctrines then become something quite other than permanently fixed pronouncements, authorized by scriptural proofs and to be affirmed by the believing theologian, come what may."24

Doctrinal articulations change. They are not free from error, or contradictions, or problematic articulation, even from senility. Active Christian community participates in the ongoing examination and testing and articulation. Doctrine exists in a state of production.

Lutherans and Doctrine
Can Lutherans begin to appreciate a new concept of doctrine? Lutheran legacy does not bode well for a new understanding. It is after all the sixteenth-century Lutherans who qualified doctrine with adjectives such as "sacred" and "pure." In fact Luther's Reformation, as the Augsburg Confession stipulates, has to do with digging out the "pure doctrine" that had been overlaid by the sediments of Rome's human traditions.19 Furthermore, Lindbeck's claim that doctrine is the "grammar of faith" is close to Luther's own formulation that the Holy Spirit teaches the new grammar of faith. Likewise Luther's discourse about the new language in Christ seems close to Bruce Marshall's assertion that Luther's idea of doctrine is the grammar of the new language of theology.20 Thus the Lutheran tradition's common understanding of doctrine is informed both by the high standard of "purity" and claims regarding doctrinal grammar of the new language in Christ.

The issue centers on what is meant by the word "doctrine." The term has a history that conveys different meanings in distinct historical contexts. While a contemporary understanding might limit it to a regulative function, Luther in the sixteenth century saw doctrine as the teaching (Lehre) about the Christian God. Doctrine, according to Luther, can be articulated in various liturgical contexts, whether in the confession of faith, hymn singing in church, or religious education at home. When individuals and communities participate in evocations that relate doctrine to its referent, they articulate doctrine. The oblique formulation of confession of faith ("We believe in...") is uttered in community gathered in divine presence. Hymns are sung in praise of God, while religious education in the form of question and answer reflects on the meaning of God in human lives. Luther introduces his explanation to the first article of the Creed in the Large Catechism (1529) with questions about meaning.

So it now may be asked: "What kind of person is God? What does he do? How can we praise or portray or describe him in such a way so we may know him?... If you were to ask a young child, "My dear, what kind of God do you have? What do you know about him?"21

Personal and communal reflection on meaning makes explicit the relationship with God that is doctrine's referent. Teaching is embodied and enacted in lives confessing and reflecting on experience of the living God. Doctrine is deployed in liturgical and pedagogical genres, generating meaning as individuals live out their faith in life and community.

Do meaning, history, and experience render doctrine impure? This question is significant in view of the common notion of doctrine as deposit unchanged through successive generations in the church. If doctrine is the "faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints" (1 Tim 1:3; RSV), then where can it be found? The desire for doctrinal certainty leads to assump-
tions that there is such a literary deposit of pure doctrine. By this argument, the literary formulation for Irenaeus's rule of faith (regula fidei) is set down in the Apostles' Creed. Yet on closer examination, the Trinitarian term of consubstantiality between Son and Father is available only in the Nicene Creed, the filioque clause officially part of Western formulation by 1014; the eccumenical-liturgical language of "one in being" is -- since Benedict XVI's changes to the English mass in 2011 -- a reversion to the Latin translation of the Greek homoousias, or "consubstantial with the Father."  

If the Creed does not display a once for all literary formulation of pure doctrine, then does a specific conciliar document? Let us consider the minimal Trinitarian formula consistent across the middle ages: the Latin term, "tres res sunt una res," literally "three things are one thing." The place to look for conciliar decisions on normative formulations of (Catholic) doctrine is Heinrich Denzinger's compendium, The Sources of Catholic Dogma. Yet a cursory glance at the seven-hundred pages of the English translation of Denzinger exhibits an incredible variety of conciliar pronouncements contextualized in a variety of historical debates, meetings, and controversies. Even a series of propositions refuting the "Errors of Martin Luther" from Leo X's papal bull "Exsurge Domine" against Luther is documented! When looking for the literal phrase "tres res sunt una res," no single recitation of this medieval Trinitarian formula can be found. The closest possibility is the condemnation of Joachim of Fiore issued at the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 in which the Council affirms the position of Peter Lombard "that there exists a most excellent reality, incomprehensible indeed and ineffable, which truly is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the same time three Persons..." A once for all doctrinal formulation for the Trinity does not exist. What one finds, rather, in the medieval period is an inspiring diversity of ways in which the bare bones formula is explained, described, articulated, and analyzed. This activity introduces new conceptual distinctions and novel terminology into the production history of the doctrine of the Trinity.

The question regarding which literary formula captures doctrine or where a once for all deposit can be found must be answered in the following way. Doctrine is only available in literary-linguistic deployments that have their own liturgical, pedagogical, or theological function. Doctrine is articulated in particular genres and uttered in context-specific situations. Invoking doctrine in the life of the church involves expression of commitment to the referent of doctrine, the triune God. When the confession of faith is recited, a hymn of praise is sung, the people are catechized, doctrine is available in the words that are recalled and uttered. Doctrine is a matter of living faith.

To Construct Doctrine Boldly!

Where does the work of theology fit in to the church's expressions of doctrine? While theology can point out that doctrine cannot be exhausted by one formula, it is theology's distinct task to consider doctrine in a particular way. Like the task of other academic disciplines theology's task is to produce knowledge. Theology produces doctrine as knowledge claims about God in such a way as to be adequate to the ways in which God is invoked, experienced, and worshipped. This section's title tweaks Luther's imperative in the Galatians commentary: Construct doctrine boldly! How can Lutheran theologians participate in this task?

Theology's work is to articulate doctrine. Yet as I have underlined above, doctrine is not available in one proposition. Doctrine is alive in many formulations. Although foundational expressions of doctrine are historically available in creeds, confessions, and liturgies, doctrine is expressed in a variety of discourses and in different languages by particular historical communities of faith. Theology's task is to apply its best intellectual resources to diverse formulations in order to produce knowledge about its subject matter.

The unique subject matter of Christian doctrine is the triune God and God's way of being "with us." Take for example the heart of the Christian religion, the central mystery and paradox of the Word that "became flesh and lived among us" (John 1:14; NRSV). Christian theology has been occupied from its earliest days with negotiating this claim of God's historicity with the intellectual tools from Greek philosophy that stressed God's incapacity for change or suffering. Testing terms, such as homoousias and homoousias, for their adequacy to represent the inner-Trinitarian relations, was an exercise that required negotiating between diverse formulations and figuring out the meanings of terms deployed to make claims about the subject matter. The central reality of Christianity, the person of Jesus Christ, has elicited many acclamations, stories, and claims about his identity and work. The theological task is to select from the diverse comments, and construct claims and their explanations that do justice to God's eternal being that, united with temporal human nature, "was crucified under Pontius Pilate." Time and death are brought together with divine nature in Christology.

While the referent stays the same, doctrinal claims are unstable as they produce and reproduce meaning. Words acquire different valences, equivocations arise, and debates take place over interpretative difficulties. Terms inevitably have different values in new semantic fields. Contradictions, logical difficulties, or mere lack of clarity present the theologian with the task of defining terms, determining meaning, and stabilizing referentiality. Theology is thus characterized by an ongoing critical assessment of inherited
terms and the testing of terminology and logical tools to represent doctrine. The aim is clear meaning and adequate referential capacity.

Doctrinal production is the theologian’s ongoing task. Doctrine cannot just be the recitation of old formulas that are deployed without understanding. A church’s vital sign consists in determining doctrine for its representation as both expression of and guidance for the worship of the living God in the present. Schleiermacher proposed this historical definition of “dogmatic theology” as the theological task in producing doxologies representative of the church of his day. He introduces an entire section on dogmatic theology in his compendium of theology: “Here we have to do with dogmatic theology ... as the knowledge of doctrine that now has currency in the evangelical church.” Dogmatic theology comes at the end of the historical study of Christianity, beginning with the Bible and moving through church history. The study of the past helps situate knowledge of the present-day church; the present church is the culmination of the past, yet in a novel way. Doctrines represent a church’s dominant ideas in a specific historical context. Schleiermacher sees doctrine as the task that has a critical component regarding the past and a constructive aspect regarding the evaluation of which ideas are valid in the present church. The theologian’s task is to call and discern from the past, to examine the past critically in view of the present in such a way as to produce dominant doctrines in their relations for formulations and explanations that have determinative function for the contemporary church. The ongoing interpretation of the history of doctrine is indispensable for the goal of proposing fitting doctrines characterizing and governing the life of the church. There is, of course, the danger that something is lost in translation. The historical-critical nature of the enterprise, as Schleiermacher’s own example reveals, risks dropping key parts of Trinitarian doctrine and even the Old Testament from Christian canonical status. Yet the historical constructive task of producing doctrine is a necessary sign of ideas that are alive to the experience of the living God.

Luther valued subjective participation in the articulation of doctrine. “Only experience makes the theologian,” he writes in his Table Talk. Experience is the way that ideas become embodied in the reality of human existence. Theories make sense when they are experienced in empirical particularity. When Luther asks questions about God in his Large Catechism, he probes the person answering to add experiential meaning to the catechetical formulas. If God is “that to which we are to look for all good and in which we are to find refuge in all need,” as Luther defines the term in his explication of the first commandment in the Large Catechism, God is experienced individually and communally in different ways. The experience of God presupposes relationship. Doctrines acquire meanings as individuals experience the ups and downs, the faithfulness and surprises of a relationship with God. Experiential and intellectual considerations mix when doctrine is seen as more than a linguistic circumscription of faith’s object. Doctrines capture the peculiar way in which the language about the Christian God brings the reality of God into memorable presence. Doctrine is at once definition and reality, and in Luther’s particular case, definition and reality in relationship “to me.”

Subjective meaning-making in relationship and objective referent are the two aspects crucial for doctrinal production in a living community of faith. Doctrines are about something. They refer to something that transcends the linguistic formulation, that can be experienced and that enters into communal memory through accrual of meanings in history. Luther’s breakthrough experience—whether real or part of the hagiography—is constitutive of Lutheran memory that adds meaning to the doctrine of justification. The experience of justification is one of the markers of Lutheran identity that orients doctrinal production in new ways. Christology and sin, redemption and eschatology have as particular doctrines in Lutheran Christianity accrued the meaning of justification considered central by Luther and appropriated as central in the Lutheran tradition. The task is to reconnect doctrine to a semantics that opens it to new experience and thinking, honoring the Spirit who breathes life into individuals and the church, sometimes in quite unexpected ways.

Conclusion
In order to appreciate the theological task of constructing doctrine, we need to admit that any linguistic proposition is radically informed by historical context and the particularity of language. Doctrine is not on the eternal side of the time/eternity divide. Rather, doctrine is the task of a theology that is inevitably rooted in history’s contingencies. The question, thus, is not one of a doctrinal monopoly by theologians who claim trans-historical truth, but the one of who can adequately articulate a representative notion of the referent of doctrine in terms that convey meaning to the contemporary church.

While doctrine as grammar of faith has proved productive for past ecumenical discussion, I have argued that this model does not do justice to the historical nature of doctrine. Rather, I have described Schleiermacher’s example as a theological system that represents doctrines of an ecumenically united early nineteenth-century Evangelical (Lutheran and Reformed) church. Schleiermacher should be considered a Lutheran theologian! While political interests in his day precipitated the ecumenical agenda, it was Schleiermacher’s understanding of doctrine that achieved the theological
rapprochement. Schleiermacher models theology's task to articulate ideas (and their interconnections) that have "currency" in the present-day church. This constructive task presupposes historical-critical discerning of doctrinal formulations from the past. Terms are examined for their inconsistencies and obsolete polemics; terms are tested as to whether they have suppressed significant meanings and how new terms might better convey meaning about divine presence in life and worship. Theology's task is to discern the direction that God takes in historically situated Christian communities and to propose doctrines that adequately refer to the living God who is experienced in individual and communal ways. Doctrinal production is a vital sign of a Christian community.

Notes

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2 George A. Lindbeck, The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1984) 16-17: "For a propositionalist, if a doctrine is at once true, it is always true, and if it is once false, it is always false... Thus, on this view, doctrinal reconciliation without capitulation is impossible because there is no significant sense in which the meaning of a doctrine can change while remaining the same." (= 25th Anniversary Edition, foreword by Bruce D. Marshall and a new afterword by the author [Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2009]). Citations from The Nature of Doctrine are taken from the original 1984 edition.

3 Friedrich Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith [1830/31] (ed. H.R. MacInnis and J.S. Stewart; trans. D.M. Baillie et al.; Edinburgh: Blackwell, 1999) § 24; proposition (p. 103): "In so far as the Reformation was not simply a purification and reaction from abuses which had crept in, but was the origination of a distinctive form of the Christian communion, the antithesis between Protestantism and Catholicism may provisionally be conceived thus: the former makes the individual's relation to the Church dependent on his relation to Christ, while the latter contrafactly makes the individual's relation to Christ dependent on his relation to the Church." For a critical reading of Schleiermacher's view of Catholicism, see Julia A. Lamm, "Schleiermacher on 'The Roman Church': Anti-Catholic Polemics, Ideology, and the Future of Historical-Empirical Dogmatism," in Schleiermacher, the Study of Religion, and the Future of Theology: A Transatlantic Dialogue (ed. Brent W. Sockness and Wilhelm Gräb; TBT 148; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 243-56.

4 For a detailed look at Lindbeck's appropriation of Geerds, see my "Luther, Hiltrop, and the Concept of Religion," in Lutherenaussetzungen: Past and Present (ed. Christine Helmer and Bo Kristian Holm; FKD G 106; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2105) 174-89.

5 For the text, see Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, English-language edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000).
Unity is in the Hands of God
(John 17:20-23)
Luther Colloquy Sermon,
October 29, 2014

Eero Huovinen

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I greet you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And I also bring with me all wishes to you from Helsinki, where your professor and my dear friend Kari Sjösten studied in the 1980’s. We both are yet students of theology, which is an odd vocation.

We all know that the proper way is to preach on the Gospel text for a particular Sunday. Today, however, I took the freedom to choose another Bible passage for us. This week is the classical Reformation week. We Lutherans today are called to meditate on how we, from our side, could do our best for the unity of the church, which we lost 500 years ago. And so I have chosen the famous reading from the Gospel of John:

Jesus said: “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me” (John 17:20-23).