The purpose of this thesis is to examine divine beauty as experienced through the senses, in particularly the senses associated with sight and sound. Since Western Christian Spirituality emerged out of Eastern Christian Spirituality, this thesis will examine both traditions. This, in turn, will include specific examples of Easter music and art as well as Western music and art.

It is important to point out that Divine Beauty, first and foremost, is found in all aspects of creation and nature. It’s difficult to imagine experiencing the beauty of nature without at least pondering it originating, in some way, from a divine being. That being said, this thesis closely focuses on the incarnational beauty as manifested by the creativity of human endeavors.

This thesis will also offer a working definition of theological aesthetics and the reemergence of the mystical
components that go along with theological aesthetics in the more recent decades.

The purpose of this endeavor is to encourage the reader of this thesis to delve deeper into a more sensual and spiritual experience of God. To put it another way, this endeavor is meant to encourage the reader to gain a deeper desire for “heart, body, and soul knowledge” of God. This kind of knowledge may be difficult to experience in any other way outside of one’s senses.

This deepening of “heart knowledge” of God can lead a person to experience, transcendence and/or transfiguration, which will also be outlined within this thesis. This change of being will, in turn, cause transformation.

It is also important to point out that this thesis meant to, hopefully, cause the reader to desire the transformation that springs out of experiencing divine beauty. This kind of transformation may result in a person being so enraptured by God that their attitude towards God, God’s beloved, and all of God’s creation, may be changed to desire that person to love more deeply. This in turn, will result in positive action that pours out from a deep love of God. In other words, a person’s moral being is altered through being transformed from experiencing divine beauty.
The concluding chapters of this thesis focus on sacrament, worship, and application, all of which are meant to show examples of how to mediate the experience of divine beauty. The two primary examples that are described are the Eucharist and Taizé style of worship. Both of these engage the senses in profound ways and when one is open to it, can cause one to experience transformation.

Finally, this thesis includes two appendixes of specific images examined within this theses as well as the text of Rachmaninoff’s *Vespers* in hopes that the reader will desire experiencing these beautiful pieces of art that are divinely inspiring. With these specific examples along with the rest of this thesis, it is also the hope that those who are engaged in ministry, in some way, will find ways of creating a sacred space that engages the senses. Again, this will, in turn create the space to move deeper into experiencing divine beauty.
Divine Beauty: Experiencing God through Sight and Sound

by

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Second Reader
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“Lovely and Compelling God, draw us to your beauty so that our lives will glow with reverence for you.”¹

Human beings are drawn to beauty. We seek it and try to hold on to it once we find it. Within humanity, we are also drawn or “bent” towards that which is divine—of God. “My heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee,” said St. Augustine. How does one experience Divine beauty? Much if not most of our experiences with the divine are mediated through our senses. Janet Erskine Stuart has captured the human desire towards seeking and experiencing divine beauty in a poem. Stuart writes:

Spirit seeking light and beauty.  
Heart that longest for thy rest,  
Soul that askest understanding,  
Only thus can ye be blest.

All the joy and all the fairness  
Fade away from earth's delight  
By the steadfast contemplation  
Of the glory out of sight.

Through the vastness of creation  
Though your restless thought may roam,

God is all that you can long for,
    God is all His creature's home.

Taste and see Him, feel and hear Him,
    Hope and clasp His unseen hand.
Though the darkness seem to hide Him
    Faith and love can understand.²

This poem of Stuart’s captures the essence of the theme of this thesis—experiencing divine beauty through one’s senses, specifically through works of human creativity. However, through the depiction of specific pieces of music and art, hearing and sight will be the senses most focused on, for both the visual and the performing arts have mediated experiences of divine beauty to many.

Theological aesthetics describes such sensory knowledge of divine beauty through the arts. So, before proceeding any further, it is important to have a working definition of theological aesthetics. The term “aesthetics” itself is derived from the Greek αἰσθητικός (or aisthetikos) which means “perception by the senses.”³ Richard Viladesau has suggested that theological aesthetics are “concerned with questions about God and issues in theology in the light of and perceived through sense

² Janet Erskine Stuart rscj, Highways and By-Ways in the Spiritual Life (London: Longmans, Green, and Co. Ltd., 1926), 179.

knowledge (sensation, feeling, imagination), through beauty, and the arts.”

Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar wrote, “We here attempt to develop a Christian theology in the light of the third transcendental, that is to say: to complement the vision of the true and the good with that of the beautiful . . . . If all beauty is objectively located at the intersection of two moments which Thomas calls form and splendor, then the encounter of these is characterized by the two moments of beholding and of being enraptured.”

Balthasar goes on to say, “The doctrine of the beholding and perceiving of the beautiful and the doctrine of the enrapturing power of the beautiful are complementarily structured, since no one can really behold who has not also already been enraptured, and no one can be enraptured who has not already perceived. This holds equally for the theological relationship between faith and grace, since in giving itself, faith apprehends the form of revelation,

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while grace has from the outset transported the believer up into God’s world.”\(^6\)

Even though the theology of aesthetics has deep roots and can be traced back as far as such early theologians as Justin Martyr in the second century, and even though Hans Urs von Balthasar gave us an extensive study of theological aesthetics within modernity, the subject of aesthetics appears to have really hit its stride within postmodernism. This surge or new life of aesthetics is thought to be due to the impact of mass media in the arts, in culture, and in the constant presence of music through technology. With this comes also the instant gratification mentality through exotic foods, travel, music, body-cult, as well as the desire for “experiencing” religion through the body and the senses.\(^7\)

For example, St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church in San Francisco, California is known for being a worship center that specifically caters to the senses through their music, Byzantine art, liturgical dance and movement, and so on. Their approach to worship is both ancient and postmodern. Alejandro Garcia-Rivera writes, “If beauty is divine, then its human experience has a spiritual basis not


\(^7\) Thiessen, *Theological Aesthetics: A Reader*, 1.
only in the human ability to experience God, but also in
the human ability to create works that are themselves
beautiful.”

Garcia-Rivera goes on to say that, “The
spiritual dimension in an aesthetics lies in the intrinsic
human ability to experience divine beauty as well as the
unmistakable human activity of making beautiful works.”

With this new-found appreciation for aesthetics, this
generation also appears to have found a new appreciation of
divine mystery through the experience of divine beauty. A
person’s experience is a person’s experience. Theological
aesthetics offers a way of experiencing God through
experiencing the senses. This in turn creates space for
the acceptance of divine mystery. This does not mean that
we as a society are not still grateful to be “enlightened”—
quite the contrary. One might argue that sensory knowledge
deepens our knowledge of the divine while at the same time
providing a sacred space for mystery. That is to say,
that the theology of aesthetics also provides another way
of “knowing” God.

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8 Alejandro Garcia-Rivera, “Aesthetics”, in Arthur Holder, ed. The
Blackwell Companion to Christian Spirituality (Chichester, West Sussex:

Even if it wasn’t his intent or aim, Plato’s *Symposium* brings out the concept “knowing” God through the mystery of love and experiencing beauty. Plato writes:

"These are the lesser mysteries of love, into which you may enter; to the greater and more hidden ones which are the crown of these, and to which, if you pursue them in a right spirit, they will lead....

He who has been instructed thus far in the things of love, and who has learned to see the beautiful in due order and succession, when he comes toward the end will suddenly perceive a nature of wondrous beauty—a nature which in the first place is everlasting, not growing and decaying, or waxing and waning; secondly, not fair in one point of view...but beauty absolute, separate, simple, and everlasting, which without diminution and without increase, or any change, is imparted to the ever-growing and perishing beauties of all other things."  

Plato continues:

"He who from these ascending under the influence of true love, begins to perceive that beauty, is not far from the end.... This is that life above all others which man should live, in the contemplation of beauty absolute; a beauty which if you once beheld, you would see not to be after the measure of gold, and garments.... But what if man had eyes to see the true beauty—the divine beauty, I mean, pure and dear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of mortality and all the colours and vanities of human life—thither looking, and holding converse with the true beauty simple and divine? Remember how in that communion only, beholding beauty with the eye of the mind, he will be enabled to bring forth, not images of beauty, but realities (for he has hold not of an image but of a reality), and bringing forth and nourishing true virtue to become the friend of God and be immortal, if mortal man may. Would that be an ignoble life?"

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11 Plato, *Symposium* 360 B.C.E.
Of course, this kind of Greek philosophy has highly influenced Christian Theology. This sampling from Plato on experiencing beauty shows the expression of beauty through sight which will influence the visual aspects of this thesis, and one of the main emphases of this thesis is how one can experience divine beauty through the gift of art. Plato is depicting beauty through true love and what greater love and beauty is there than that of the Divine, the author of love and beauty.

Again, the concept of divine beauty and aesthetics is not by any means a new development or something that was only sought out by the more current generations. For example, in the first half of the nineteenth century, within our own tradition of Anglicanism, the desire for beauty was specifically sought out by such people as John Henry Newman, John Keble, and Edward Pusey in leading the Oxford Movement in the 1830s. Anglicanism was not altogether satisfying for many in this period, in either England or America. Many Anglicans were missing ritual, tradition, and beauty within their worship. Fortunately the Oxford Movement came into play.

The Oxford Movement returned the Church of England to its apostolic roots and the teachings of the early church fathers. It also eventually found use in the beauty of the
arts. Eventually new-found enthusiasm for rituals and vestments made their way back into worship, as well as body movement such as bowing, kneeling, crossing oneself, and genuflecting. Beauty in art and music were stressed as well as using one’s senses in worship, including the smell of incense, etc. Those who appreciated this were considered Anglo-Catholics.\textsuperscript{12}

Today, there are still many Episcopalians who consider themselves Anglo-Catholic and are very grateful for the Oxford Movement. The Episcopal Church, as part of the Anglican Communion, remains a very diverse denomination composed of those who consider themselves high church Anglo-Catholics to those who are more middle of the road, to those who consider themselves low church. The mysticism found in the high church, rich in rituals, has also drawn an appeal to those of the younger generation, post-moderns or “Gen-X’ers” if you will, in many parts of the Episcopal Church in the United States. So the Oxford Movement, which helped to bring back aesthetics and beauty within worship and liturgy, has continued to influence worship of

\textsuperscript{12} This movement was highly influenced by the Tractarians, those who put out tract pamphlets containing more of a Catholic doctrine, including beauty in worship, but still not considered to be united with the Roman Catholic Church. The Tractarians tried explain the more Catholic doctrine besides the Calvinist theology found in the Thirty-Nine Articles. Even for those who did not consider themselves to be Anglo-Catholic, the Oxford Movement still filled a large need for Anglicans. (Notes from "Classics of Anglicanism" class with Dr. Ben King 2011)
Episcopalian/Anglicans to this day. More of the beauty found the sacraments and in worship will be found in the last two chapters of this thesis.

I will now further clarify the structure and purpose of this thesis. I intend to explore divine beauty through the arts, drawing from both the Eastern and Western traditions. I will argue how divine beauty can be mediated through both the visual and auditory arts. I will draw on specific pieces of art and music from both the East and from the West as examples. I will explore how our experience of these arts is transformative through the recognition of transcendence. I will also explore how this experience of divine beauty may occur whether or not the experience is explicitly understood as being an encounter with Christ.

First, I will focus on the Eastern perspective of divine beauty as mediated through both the visual and auditory arts. I will be drawing from a number of sources including John Anthony McCuckin and John Meyendorff. However, one of my primary sources will be that of Vladimir Lossky. Lossky is considered a leading Eastern Orthodox theologian whose works include: The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church, and The Meaning of Icons. Both of

Notes from "Classics of Anglicanism" class with Dr. Ben King 2011.
these works include experiencing divine beauty through the senses.

Within this Eastern prospective of aestheticism, I will focus on two pieces of art as examples of mediating divine beauty. The first will be a piece of visual art. This piece of art is a replicated Byzantine icon from the 15th century depicting the Resurrection of Christ. The second piece of Eastern art is a musical composition by Sergei Rachmaninoff known as the “Rachmaninoff Vespers”. In using these two examples of art as media of divine beauty, I will primarily be focusing on the experience of the seer or hearer of these pieces rather than the experience of the artist who produced the work.

I will then turn my focus to the Western perspective of divine beauty as mediated through the same two art forms. Once again I will be drawing from a number of sources including theologians such as C.S. Lewis, Sarah Coakley, William Temple, and Paul Tillich.

And, once again, I will focus on two pieces of art as media of divine beauty—this time using Western examples. The first is a piece of visual art. This piece is an oil painting of Jesus Washing Peter’s Feet, ca. 1850s, by Pre-Raphaelite artist Ford Madox Brown. The second piece of art is by a contemporary American composer by the name of
Eric Whitacre. This musical composition is entitled, “When David Heard.” The text is taken from the biblical narrative of David and the death of his son Absalom found in the Second Book of Samuel. As in the Eastern examples of art, I will primarily be focusing on the experience of the seer and hearer rather than the experience of the artist who created the piece.

Within this thesis I do not wish to leave out the importance and edification of receiving the sacraments within a community of believers. For this I will primarily be drawing on the works of contemporary Anglican theologian David Brown, who has written extensively on theological aesthetics and sacramental theology.

Though this thesis will describe the differences of the Eastern and Western perspectives, there will be some overlapping themes and similarities between the two perspectives as well. This is apropos to the Western tradition of Anglicanism which has also been highly influenced by Eastern theology. For example, Anglican writer C. S. Lewis pulls from the Eastern tradition of experiencing beauty with our whole bodies when he writes, “We do not want merely to see beauty, though, God knows, even that is bounty enough. We want something else which can hardly be put into words—to be united with the beauty
we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it."\textsuperscript{14}

CHAPTER TWO

THE EASTERN PERSPECTIVE

Eastern Spirituality and Divine Beauty

“My heart is stirring with a noble song; let me recite what I have fashioned for the king.”¹⁵ (Psalm 45:1 BCP Psalter)

In the Eastern Orthodox tradition the beauty of God, or divine beauty, is experienced not merely in thought and spirit but within our bodies as well. This, of course, includes experiencing Divine Beauty within our senses. In other words, the transcending into God’s world through perception and enrapture that Balthasar speaks of, becomes more of a transfiguration rather than mere transcendence, because it includes our bodies. Vladimir Lossky writes, “To see the divine light with bodily sight, as the disciples saw it on Mount Tabor, we must participate in and be transformed by it, according to our capacity.”¹⁶ Lossky

¹⁵ The Book of Common Prayer 1979, 647.

continues to describe the union on body and soul by quoting St. Gregory Palamas:

“He who participates in the divine energy, himself becomes, to some extent, light; he is united to the light, and by that light he sees in full awareness all that remains hidden to those who have not this grace; thus, he transcends not only the bodily senses, but also all that can be known by the intellect . . . for the pure in heart see God . . . who, being Light, dwells in them and reveals Himself to those who love Him, to His beloved. . . . We do not apply the word man to body and soul separately, but to both together, for the whole man was created in the image of God.”

As Christians, we know that this participation into the Divine comes from the incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Christ. The heretical notion of Docetism denies a true bodily incarnation of Jesus. However, Eastern Orthodoxy teaches us that we not only share in Christ’s spirit but we also share in Christ’s physical bodily incarnation—we are transfigured with Christ. The flesh is not to be separated from the spirit. Now that is to say, one might conclude, that just as Christ was given a glorified body (which at first seemed unrecognizable in his resurrection appearances), we too will also be given a glorified body at the day of resurrection. Many understand this as sharing in Christ’s death and resurrection through

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17 Lossky, The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church, 224.
our baptism. “We thank you, Father, for the water of Baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it we share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit.”\textsuperscript{19} The theology behind this baptismal prayer comes from Romans chapter 6:

\textbf{NRSV Romans 6:3–5}

3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

In this section I will reflect upon the writings of the Eastern fathers and their thoughts on the spirituality of the incarnation (our sharing in Christ’s spirit and flesh), our union with God through that sharing, and experiencing Divine Beauty through our body and our senses, in particular through sight and sound.

First of all, in the West we learn that the Holy Spirit’s embodiment is in the soul. However, in the East it is our entire body that is the temple.\textsuperscript{20} Athanasius writes in \textit{The Life of Anthony}, “Working with Anthony was the Lord, who bore flesh for us, and gave to the body the

\textsuperscript{19} The Book of Common Prayer 1979, 306.

\textsuperscript{20} Discussion with Dr. Robert Hughes III on Eastern Christian Spirituality, 2012.
victory over the devil.”\textsuperscript{21} Athanasius was speaking out against the heresy of Docetism. For how can Christ fully identify himself with humanity without becoming fully human in the flesh? Athanasius goes on to write, “The Word of God was not changed, but remaining the same he assumed a human body for the salvation and benefit of mankind—so that sharing in the human birth he might enable mankind to share the divine and spiritual nature.”\textsuperscript{22} Also, in his writings on the psalms Athanasius keeps music in the body.

Like Athanasius, Basil the Great also produced writings against Docetism. Basil is speaking out against those who may choose to see the second person of the Trinity is a demigod rather than the Son being co-equal along with the Holy Spirit. Though the West emphasizes the oneness of the Trinity, the East emphasizes the threeness of the Trinity making the Father the font of all being. We see this emphasis on the threeness of the Trinity when Basil writes about baptism saying, “In three immersions, then, and with three invocations, the great mystery of baptism is performed, to the end that the type of death may


\textsuperscript{22} Athanasius, *The Life of Anthony and the Letter to Marcellinus,* 85.
be fully figured, and that by the tradition of the divine knowledge the baptized may have their souls enlightened.”

Another figure within Eastern spirituality who reflected on experiencing God through the senses was Gregory of Nyssa. Gregory was considered by many to be the father of mysticism. He also reluctantly became a church leader by becoming the bishop of Nyssa. However, since what he loved most was mystical theology, this section will focus on Gregory’s convictions of spirituality emphasizing illumination and contemplation.

Before embarking upon Gregory’s convictions of the spirituality within one’s response to God, it is helpful to have an understanding of Gregory’s convictions of God as God’s self and how humanity is connected to God.

First of all, Gregory was very much a Trinitarian who read a great deal of both Origen and Athanasius. Also, there was no risk of Gregory of Nyssa being either an Arian or a Docetist. Gregory held a strong conviction that Christ was both fully human and fully divine. If he did have a tilt toward one or the other, Gregory would have

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24 My exposition of Gregory’s theology in the following pages is largely indebted to a discussion with Dr. William Stafford on Gregory of Nyssa, 2011.
tilted toward Christ’s divinity. Also, the Bible is an endless source of wisdom through the power of the Holy Spirit, which means that it is not to be understood literally.

Gregory also believed that, due to the fall, sin has spread out over our divine likeness; however, human beings can still be converted into the image of God. Humans cannot become God but there can be a sharing of identity with God. Again, we are not God but can share in God. This sharing in God only becomes possible through Christ Jesus. Once our heart is pure one can mirror God. This is how one can love oneself by seeing the beauty of one’s soul which is reflecting God. This is turning inward to find one’s true self. We are to become more fully human, what God created us to be. One might say that by striving to become more fully human, the way we were created to be, we can participate in the divine. While looking for God, we will find God. A mirror full of God’s image is participating within God.

We are limited, however, by matter and our senses. We recognize God’s beauty through our senses. The trouble is we are fallen and our senses can become a trap keeping us from illumination. Instead we become addicted to our senses. This leads to a life without progress and without
contentment. Our obsessions cannot sustain us, only God can. Our response to this “stuckness” or “stiffness” is to once again become “pliable” once again through repentance so we can once again be reshaped by God.

Sin is what makes us no longer pliable. It leads to the hardening and death of the soul and needs to be broken. However, when love for God gets activated, necessary breaking happens and we once again become pliable. This “re-lying” becomes possible through the risen Christ. Through Christ the matter which has caused humanity to fall becomes absorbed in Christ. As we grow in Christ we are able to fight against our passions. Becoming “Christlike” is fed by the sacraments.

The sacraments are God in flesh and thus transform us. The sacraments also change the matter that keeps us attached to the world and, through this change, moves us into God. Our response to this grace which has been taken up into Christ requires us to work against our obsessions and make room for God. Love has been enslaved by passion. We are to do the will of God and know the truth of God. This requires us to turn away from idols and acknowledge God through baptism. Knowing God is not knowledge of God. Gregory states, “The knowledge of God is a mountain steep indeed and difficult to climb—the majority of people
scarcely reach its base.”

However, in striving for knowledge of God, which means working together with the Spirit, we can come to know good and evil.

Knowing and experiencing God can be manifested through material things and our senses. For example, one can look upon a work of beauty or hear beautiful music and can experience illumination and transcendence. One may also see the face of Christ through another human being. These “reflections of God” do bring one closer to God. However, Gregory tells us that there is further to go. There comes a time when reflections of God are not good enough and we want the reality— we want and long for God, not God’s reflection.

With this type of longing no longer for a reflection but for God comes a kind of abandonment. This is contemplation. In contemplative prayer our senses go to sleep and are no longer helpful. Even our intellect is no longer useful or needed for images of God. In the sleep of senses and the mind, the Spirit’s growth is able to contemplate the invisible, “seeing the face of God.”

Here we acknowledge that God is infinite and ungraspable—the

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26 Discussion with Dr. William Stafford on Gregory of Nyssa, 2011.
more we grasp, the more we see that God is ungraspable. Also, words can’t hold God. Once again, this is a relinquishing, a letting go of our trying to know God through our senses or minds.

Gregory acknowledges this progression of *gnosis* through his allegory of the story of Moses. For Moses, the vision of the real God is a knowing of God. The progression that Moses goes through, which is available for us, contains a progression of finding, rejoicing, and losing and this progression is never complete. One might define this as a progression of becoming within God, or *theosis*. In this process we grow internally.

In Gregory’s allegory of Moses, Moses starts in light but then finds himself in a cloud of thick darkness. However, this darkness is luminous and Moses is able to grow. In this same kind of endless progress that Moses goes through, we are continually being pulled into Christ’s incarnation, passion, and resurrection. Only through Christ’s incarnation is union with God possible. God’s love “pierces us with Christ.”

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27 Discussion with Dr. William Stafford on Gregory of Nyssa, 2011.
yearning for understanding it gains access to invisible and the incomprehensible, and there it sees God.”

Out of this penetrating love God has for us, comes our own longing for God. Also, our unknowing of God is not to be considered despair but union.

Gregory also tells us that we will not know God except in the dark. Gregory asks, “What does it mean that Moses entered the darkness and then saw God in it?” Gregory goes on to say, “The Divine was beheld in light but now he is seen in darkness…. Scripture teaches by this that religious knowledge comes at first to those who receive it as light. Therefore what is perceived to be contrary to religion is darkness, and the escape from darkness comes about when one participates in light.”

So, the knowledge of God that comes to us in light does not find depth or grow until we also seek to know God in the dark. Gregory states, “Moses grew in knowledge, he declared that he had seen God in the darkness, that is, that he had then come to know that what is divine is beyond all knowledge and

\[\text{28} \quad \text{Malherbe and Ferguson, eds., Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of Moses, 95.}\]

\[\text{29} \quad \text{Malherbe and Ferguson, eds., Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of Moses, 94.}\]

\[\text{30} \quad \text{Malherbe and Ferguson, eds., Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of Moses, 95.}\]
31 We long for divine beauty, however, divine beauty is beyond us—it is boundless and endless. The only way we can fully know and participate in this beauty is through Jesus Christ.

But, as we have seen through Gregory of Nyssa, Divine Beauty is also encountered through sight. In the writings of Psuedo-Dionysis we read, “In most holy contemplation we shall be ever filled with the sight of God shining gloriously around us as once it shone for the disciples at the divine transfiguration.”32 This is of course a reference to the Gospel accounts of the Transfiguration of Christ. For example, in Mark:

NRSV Mark 9:1-3 And he said to them, "Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power." 2 Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them.

Vladimir Lossky reminds us that, “The Bible is full of expression relating to light, to the divine illumination, to God who is called Light.”33 Lossky goes on to write, “In the mystical theology of the Eastern Church, these

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31 Malherbe and Ferguson, eds., Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of Moses, 95.
33 Lossky, The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church, 218.
expressions are not used as metaphors or as figures of speech, but as expressions for a real aspect of the Godhead. If God is called Light, it is because He cannot remain foreign to our experience.”

We see this expression of God as Light expressed in many ways for example in stained glass windows of churches and cathedrals as light shines through the multicolored windows. We also see this expression of God within our gaze and meditation of written icons and in the gold used to reflect light. Rowan Williams—an Anglican but an expert on Eastern theology and spirituality—writes, “In the icon, what you see is human beings and situations as they are in the light of God’s action . . . in their presence you become aware that you are present to God and that God is working on you by his grace, as he does in the lives and words of holy people, supremely in the words of Scripture and the person of Jesus.”

Williams goes on to say in his depiction of the Transfiguration, “We are given a glimpse of what God can do in this rare moment of direct vision when the ‘door of perception’ is opened by and in Jesus.”

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34 Lossky, The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church, 218.


36 Williams, The Dwelling of the Light, 18.
At the transfiguration of our Lord Jesus the disciples experience the divine not only through sight but also by sound. “Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" (Mark 9:7) Within the Tabor light, we see the world transfigured in glimpses. However, we are not seeing the light of divine glory but rather we see the world illumined by the glory of God. Ever so slowly we will see it directly on the last day.  

Again, Divine Beauty is often experienced through sight. Some may even experience this divine grace by receiving a vision from God. Symeon the New Theologian described his experience receiving visions from the Divine. It is written, “He saw nothing but light all around him and did not know whether he was standing on the ground . . . he was wholly in the presence of immaterial light and seemed to himself to have turned into light. . . . In a wonderful manner there appeared to him, standing close to that light, the saint of whom we have spoken, the old man equal to angels, who had given him the commandment and the book.”


In experiencing these visions, Symeon also received what he describes as the gift of tears. This is yet another physical and bodily experience of the divine.

The gift of tears begins with sin—the lament of our own sins as well as our participating in God’s grief for the state of the world and the sin it is consumed in. As we know, however, tears can be cleansing. The water of tears can be represented as the water of baptism. Sacramentally, tears are a stronger sign of a gift of grace than that of the gift of speaking in tongues. It is written of Symeon, “Next to Isaac the Syrian, no other patristic writer stressed more than Symeon the necessity of receiving the gift of tears from the Holy Spirit.” Symeon writes, “Without tears our dried heart could never be softened, nor our soul acquire spiritual humility, and we would not have the force to become humble. For he who has not such dispositions cannot be united to the Holy Spirit and without such union with the Holy Spirit after purification one can no longer expect knowledge and contemplation of God nor merit to be instructed in hidden

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40 Symeon, Symeon the New Theologian: The Discourses, 30.
virtues of humility.” Unlike other gifts of the spirit that can cause us to focus more on the gift than on God, Symeon encourages us to pray to receive the gift of tears because in this gift we can become sanctified through the lament of our sins and choose to once again turn towards God.

I would like to conclude this section by reflecting on a quote from the writings of Nicodemos of the Holy Mountain. Nicodemos writes,

“Of all the physical and visible creations, light is the sweetest and the most desirable. ‘Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to behold the sun’ (Eccl 11:7). The beauty of bodies both living and nonliving attracts the heart more than any other organ to love it. ‘The eye desires grace and beauty’ (Sir 40:22). Thus, the vision of the divine light and the divine beauty, both the one granted to us from the outside and the one we acquire through our efforts, is more sweet and more desirable than all the other attributes and perfections of God. Similarly the heart of the lover is pierced and wounded by the arrows of strong desire for God, of almighty eros and divine love.”

The vision of the Tabor Light or Divine Light as revealed within the Transfiguration is God’s gift to us to share in Christ’s death and resurrection. It is beautiful. Because of this divine light being a gift of grace, a gift of love, even in the horror of the suffering of Christ on the cross,

41 Symeon, Symeon the New Theologian: The Discourses, 31.

the cross becomes transfigured into Beauty. Even in the sound that was heard and remembered in “Crucify Him!” the sound becomes transformed and redeemed to a sound of Beauty, through Divine Love. Through the incarnation, our flesh participates in Christ’s flesh, our tears become Christ’s tears, our sounds of joy and sorrow, become Christ’s joy and sorrow, and in our darkness, Christ becomes our Light. Thanks be to God for both our spirit and our bodies!

**Beauty through an Icon**

Religious icons are believed to be “windows to heaven”. Today, icons are used as a medium for prayer throughout Eastern and Western Christianity. However, for the Eastern Church, icons are essential. Leonid Ouspensky writes that icons “[n]ot only adorn the church and illustrate sacred writings, they also are a necessary condition for the fullness of worship.” During the eighth and ninth century AD, however, the iconoclastic movement argued that such images of art were cultic images and many icons were destroyed. The use of religious icons would eventually win this argument. Ouspensky writes,

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“The content of the icon and its significance for Orthodoxy make clear why the church felt obligated to defend the icon. . . . For Orthodoxy, the content of the icon offers authentic spiritual guidance on the pathway of Christian life, particularly in Prayer.”

Ouspensky goes on to write, “The icon witnesses to the unity of the earthly and the heavenly church.”

Byzantine icons within Eastern Art do not portray realism. To some, especially with those of a more Western bent, the art of religious icons may appear to be unusual and quite unrealistic. The Eastern Church uses this two dimensional art not to portray realism but to portray symbolism and to point toward the divine. Alejandro Garcia-Rivera writes, “A sacred image is more than a representation. It is more than a conceptualization. It is even more than a sacred presence. It is communion with a personal sacred presence. Though an icon only ‘circumscribes’ the human features of Christ, it is the presence of the whole Christ, human and divine, that ‘calls’ the faithful to experience communion with the risen

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44 Leonid Ouspensky, “Icon and Art”, 392.
45 Leonid Ouspensky, “Icon and Art”, 392.
Garcia-Rivera goes on to say that, “To see icons as mere images is to idealize or conceptualize the image. For images, especially sacred images, are more than conceptualizations or representations. They are inextricably sensual.”

When gazing upon and praying with an icon one might initially begin to look at the icon. However, icons are meant to be looked “through” rather than looked “at”. Looking through an icon can ultimately create the space to experience God and be transformed, or to put it in Eastern thought, be transfigured. Furthermore, experiencing this transfiguration through our sensing bodies, we are encountering Christ.

Now, one might ask if it is possible to be transfigured when experiencing the beauty of a well written icon, if one does not understand the experience as an encounter with Christ. Garcia-Rivera says that, “The wider meaning of the Christian icon is to show us that whether Christian or not, religious art is more than mere representation. It serves to make the sacred present in such a way that it invites us to touch and to be touched,

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to see and to be seen, by a divine beauty that, in turn, sees us as beautiful as well.”

I would now like give an example of experiencing divine beauty through a specific icon depicting the Resurrection of Christ. An image of this icon may be found near the end of this thesis (see image 1). This particular icon was written by the living Russian artist, Viktor Kravtsov; however, it follows the similar structure and symbolism of much earlier icons of the Resurrection dating back to the Sixth Century.

This portrayal of the Resurrection is more commonly titled The Decent Into Hell. Vladimir Lossky writes of how “the Decent into Hell is indissolubly connected with the Redemption.” This redemption is portrayed through the image of Christ’s victory over hell and reaching down to deliver Adam out of the very bonds of hell. This act of redemption through the risen Christ is compelling to gaze upon. This icon, Rowan Williams says, “shows the effect of God’s action on human history up to that point, and implicitly, the effect of God’s action on all history.”


50 Williams, The Dwelling of the Light, 24.
One might also see in this icon of the Resurrection Christ illuminating the darkness in both color and in the image of the broken gates of hell, or the “shadows of death”.

Williams writes that, “This is a picture of liberation....Jesus comes out of the depths of divine life, out of the glowing darkness behind his white-clad figure, bringing the immediate presence of divine activity into the furthest depths of human experience.”

Williams goes on to say, “It is when Christ’s hand touches us that something new becomes possible, and we are able to become human and to live fully in God’s company.”

We hear this clearly in Paul’s letter to the Romans:

**Romans 6:5-10**

5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. 7 For whoever has died is freed from sin. 8 But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. 10 The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. 11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

This claim is beautifully depicted within the icon.

Williams is correct in saying that this icon is that of

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51 Williams, *The Dwelling of the Light*, 27.
The invitation to be united in Christ’s Resurrection and to be transfigured through experiencing such divine beauty is presented in this icon.

**Music and Rachmaninoff’s Vespers**

Music has played an integral part of Christian Spirituality. For example the Psalms were chanted from memory early in the life of the Church within monasteries and “to this day, there are few ‘said services’ in Eastern Christianity, as almost all church worship is sung.”

John McGuckin writes about Romanos the Melodist and his contributions to the Eastern Church within the sixth century. McGuckin writes, “Romanos is perhaps the greatest of the Byzantine religious poets of antiquity . . . . He was the most famous musician and poet of the age of Justinian.” McGuckin writes on the singing of Gospel texts, and “stretching them to the undulating Byzantine music that so lent itself to the proclamation of the

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53 Williams, *The Dwelling of the Light*, 27.


leading cantors, a new and dynamic way was found to preach the gospel in sound and image."\textsuperscript{56}

Again, to this day, worship in the Eastern Orthodox Church is nearly totally sung and chanted liturgy.\textsuperscript{57} Richard Viladesau writes, “The verbal element is subsumed into a grand sacred performance integrating all the senses through architecture, icons, candles, light, incense, gesture, chant, and harmony. The unaccompanied and often repetitive vocal music serves as the force that brings all together in a profound sensation of the sacred.”\textsuperscript{58} This tradition contains the richness of unaccompanied Choral Music and will be explored further in reflecting on Sergei Rachmaninoff’s \textit{All-Night Vigil}, more commonly known as \textit{Vespers}.

Sergei Rachmaninoff was born in Semyonovo, Russia on April 1, 1873. He was known to be “one of the finest pianists of his day and, as a composer, the last great representative of Russian late Romanticism.”\textsuperscript{59} He was

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{56} McGuckin, “Christian Spirituality in Byzantium and the East (600–1700)”, 93.
\item \textsuperscript{57} Richard Viladesau, \textit{Theological Aesthetics God in Imagination, Beauty, and Art} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 32.
\item \textsuperscript{58} Viladesau, \textit{Theology and the Arts: Encountering God through Music, Art, and Rhetoric}, 32.
\end{itemize}
influenced by other Russian composers such as Rimsky-Korsakov and Tchaikovsky and studied at both the St. Petersburg Conservatory as well as the Moscow Conservatory. He died while in the United States in Beverly Hills, California on March 28, 1943, just over a month after playing his last solo recital in Knoxville, Tennessee in February. A Requiem mass was celebrated at the Los Angeles Russian Orthodox Church the night Rachmaninoff died.60

Rachmaninoff’s Vespers is believed to be “the greatest musical achievement of the Russian Orthodox Church.”61 It is comprised of fifteen movements of various lengths.62 Vespers in its entirety can be listened to online and is performed by St. Petersburg Chamber Choir under the direction of Nikolai Korniev.63 The text and translation to all fifteen movements may be found in the appendix of this thesis.

Max Harrison writes of Rachmaninoff’s Vespers, “Being written for unaccompanied mixed voices, the music has overtones of asceticism that chime curiously yet also most

63 See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIxQ_B3Wpzg (accessed on [add date]).
affectively with its dark richness and power . . . . It can be heard by non-believers as a choral symphony." 64 Rachmaninoff “incorporates new melodies in the style and spirit of old chant.” His chant-like melodies produce the feeling of constant movement forward towards the divine.

Listening to Rachmaninoff’s Vespers sung by a fine choir can indeed cause one to experience divine beauty. However, the translated text (in appendix) will definitely heighten the experience. One does not need to speak Russian to hear and experience this music as sacred. For example, I myself have experienced the Rachmaninoff Vespers both in singing it and in listening to it and each time I engaged with this music I have found myself encountering the risen Christ. The very first time I heard it was when I was a senior in high school. The older friend that took me did not realize what the choral program was going to be that night. Once there, she noticed that it was Rachmaninoff’s Vespers. She of course thought that, as a high school student, I was not going to enjoy sitting through two hours of sung Russian. However, even as an adolescent, that first introduction to this beautiful music transfixed me and mediated an experience of a beauty that I believe could only come from the divine.

64 Harrison, Rachmaninoff: Life, Works, Recordings, 196.
On a blog page a anonymous musician wrote of the beauty of Rachmaninoff’s Vespers: “Not only is it beautiful, but it's a good example of what Rachmaninoff does throughout this whole composition, and that's to draw from many different music traditions.” The diversity of Rachmaninoff’s Vespers enriches the beauty of this major work, as well as the beauty that is found in the silences. “Listening to the entire work, there were parts that reminded me of music as far back as Medieval chant and Renaissance madrigals . . . but then there were other spots that were very clearly 20th century, combinations of sounds that Palestrina never would have approved of. Specifically, toward the middle of this movement, there is a buildup that reminds me of something Eric Whitacre [highlighted in Chapter 3 of this thesis] might write. Then, after a moment of silence, Rachmaninoff launches into a progression…he pulls from all these different styles, and puts the sounds together in a way that works.” Though Rachmaninoff draws from many different styles of music in his Vespers, the core of it is still very Eastern following the composition style of other great Russian composers. The Vespers are

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also written in the same style and structure of a traditional Russian mass.

What interested me most about this essay is what the musician had to say about religious, or sacred, music. She writes, “Religious music is about celebrating something that’s greater than yourself. Isn't that what all music does? Whether a composer creates something because he's passionate about God, or just music itself, it still comes from a giving of oneself. And whatever experiences and emotions you draw from or whatever you may feel while listening to it, the end result is very similar.” Of course, one could argue that “the giving of oneself” could be interpreted in the giving of oneself over to God and letting God and God’s beauty have its way with you.

Sergei Rachmaninoff in his Vespers has created, within this stunning work of music, the sacred space for one to enter into with mind, body, and soul. True to Eastern Spirituality, Rachmaninoff enables one to experience music in a way that keeps the body and soul fully intertwined.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE WESTERN PERSPECTIVE

Western Spirituality & Divine Beauty

“O God, whom saints and angels delight to worship in heaven: Be ever present with your servants who seek through art and music to perfect the praises offered by your people on earth; and grant to them even now glimpses of your beauty, and make them worthy at length to behold it unveiled for evermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Through our bodies, with our eyes and ears, music and icons also provide the ability to connect us to the incarnation. St. Augustine, in his writing On Music, speaks of how listening to and making music effects a feeling and sensation within our whole body and soul. He writes,

“It must be carefully considered if there is really nothing called hearing unless something is produced in the soul by the body. But it is absurd to subordinate the soul like a matter to the body as an artisan. For the soul is never inferior to the body, and all matter is inferior to the artisan. The soul, then, is in no way a matter subordinated to the body.

68 The Book of Common Prayer 1979, 819.
as an artisan. But it would be, if the body worked its numbers in it. Therefore, when we hear, numbers are not made in the soul by those we know in sounds.”

Augustine continues by stating, “These are operations the soul applies to the passions of the body, delighting the soul when it agrees with them . . . when it turns from its servant to its God, it necessarily progresses and furnishes its servant a very easy life . . . peace.” In other words, our selves, our souls and bodies are turned toward the Divine through the beauty of the sound of music. One could say that Augustine keeps music in the soul and mind, however, music is heard and produced by the body.

Unlike Eastern spirituality, experiencing divine beauty through our body and being transfigured, Western spirituality focuses on experiencing divine beauty as transcendence or illumination, which focuses on mind and spirit. That is to say, our interior lives are transcended or illumined though our experiences of beauty. Some might describe the experience of divine beauty as a type of “out-of-body” experience. Others might describe the experience of divine beauty as being totally unaware of

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70 Saint Augustine, *Writings of Saint Augustine*, 337.

the world around them, outside the beauty that is being experienced. For example, a person can become so transfixed on a beautiful painting that they become totally unaware of their surroundings. Someone else might try to speak to them but they do not even hear the other person even though there is nothing wrong with their hearing. Another example is of someone hearing or singing beautiful music. The singer or listener is so connected to the beauty of sound that they don’t even see the audience in front (or around) them, even though there is nothing wrong with their eyesight.

Now, experiencing divine beauty within Western spirituality does not mean that our bodies and our senses are not involved. The difference is, where Eastern spirituality finds no separation between the body and the spirit, Western spirituality often does. To put it another way, the body acts as the initial reactor but it is the mind and spirit that are at the heart of the divine experience of beauty.

C.S. Lewis paints a beautiful picture of this “incarnational beauty” in the creation scene found in his children’s book, *The Magician’s Nephew*. In this scene Lewis describes first what the protagonists hear and then what they see. Lewis writes:
“In the darkness something was happening at last. A voice had begun to sing. It was very far away and Digory found it hard to decide from what direction it was coming . . . . Its lower notes were deep enough to be the voice of the earth herself. There were no words. There was hardly even a tune. But it was beyond comparison, the most beautiful noise he had ever heard. It was so beautiful he could hardly bear it...The Voice rose and rose, till all the air was shaking with it. And just as it swelled to the mightiest and most glorious sound it had yet produced, the sun arose...Polly was finding the song more and more interesting because she thought she was beginning to see the connection between the music and the things that were happening...When you listened to his song you heard the things he was making up: when you looked round you, you saw them.”72

Lewis continues the creation scene with what the protagonists see:

“...though Digory could no longer hear the Lion, he could see it. It was so big and so bright that he could not take his eyes off it...Then there came a swift flash like fire either from the sky or from the Lion itself, and every drop of blood tingled in the children’s bodies, and the deepest, wildest voice they had ever heard was saying: ‘Narnia, Narnia, Narnia, awake. Love. Think. Speak.’”73

The character Digory’s description of what he was experiencing was that of divine beauty. It was so magnificent that he couldn’t imagine hearing such a wonderful sound in his life, and the sight of Aslan (the Christ figure) was too much for Digory’s eyes to take in.


73 Lewis, The Magician’s Nephew, 124-126.
Once again, this experience depicts the Western spirituality of transcendence.

Just as in Eastern spirituality, to further understand Western spirituality it is imperative to look to the writings of mystics. The writings within Christian Mysticism focus primarily on seeking union with God. In the process of seeking union with God, one will encounter divine beauty. The experience of divine beauty is often both preceded and proceeded by love. Just as theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar equates the glory of the Lord with divine beauty, one can also argue that humanity’s love of God and God’s love for humanity (and all of creation) can also equate with experiencing divine beauty; because we were after all created in the image of God. To further clarify one can look to Bernard of Clairvaux, a mystic from the twelfth century who wrote on loving God.

It has been said, “In a century that was unique in Western history for the cultivation of love, Bernard towered above his contemporaries.”74 For Bernard theology is a resource of prayer—a way of knowing and loving God. This was unlike the movement of scholasticism where

theology was used to argue about God. Bernard opposed this use of theology.  

One can see clearly Bernard’s definition of theology in his writings of loving God. Bernard begins by pointing out that, “The cause of loving God is God himself. The way to love him is without measure.” Here Bernard is saying that there is no earthly cause of loving God. The cause comes only from the divine and our love for God is meant to be limitless. Everything comes from God and we love God in return once we know this. Bernard then poses the question, “... whether God is to be loved because he deserves it, or because it is for our good.” The answer to this is of course that it’s a “both/and” and Bernard shows us this further in his writing.

Bernard quotes from Gen.1:26, “Let us make man in our own image and likeness.” However, after the fall though we remain in God’s image we no longer remain in God’s likeness. We become bent to our own selfish wills. Our reason is also enslaved to our bent will and we won’t become truly happy or satisfied until the resurrection.

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75 Discussion with Dr. William Stafford on the writings of Bernard of Clairvaux, 2011.

76 Evans, Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works, 174.

77 Evans, Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works, 174.

78 Evans, Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works, 178.
Human dignity remains in a kingdom of unlikeness and the solution is Jesus Christ.  

Bernard speaks also of how God loves. “God then, loves, and loves with all his being, for the whole Trinity loves—if the word ‘whole’ can be used of the infinite, the incomprehensible, absolute Being.” Of course, one can’t even begin to fathom divine love because we are mere humans. This type of wholeness, though, is what we as human beings long for. Achieving this wholeness would be union with God. Our response is continuing to love God “without measure.” Bernard rightly states, “I cannot love you more than I am able. I shall be able to love you more only when you deign to give me more; and even then you can never find my love worthy.”

Through Bernard one is reminded that there is reward in loving God. Of course Bernard also says, “God is not loved without reward, even though he should be loved without thought of reward. True charity cannot be empty, but it does not seek profit.” Again, we should love God merely for the sake that we love God for God’s self and all

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79 Discussion with Dr. William Stafford on the writings of Bernard of Clairvaux, 2011.

80 Evans, Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works, 184.

81 Evans, Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works, 187.

82 Evans, Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works, 187.
that entails. What comes with true love for God is contentment.\textsuperscript{83} However, the only way that contentment can happen in this life is by pure grace. Only grace can bring us contentment through our loving God.

Finally, Bernard identifies various degrees of loving God. The first degree of love is based on fear. Human beings desire to be protected from the evils of this world and that protection comes from God. Bernard writes, “This is to seek the kingdom of God and to implore help against the tyranny of sin . . . . God therefore brings out your love for him . . . . He who made nature also protects it.”\textsuperscript{84} We need our Creator to be our Protector.

The second degree that Bernard identifies is carnal love of God—loving God for our own sake, not for God’s sake.\textsuperscript{85} We as human beings love God for what God gives us. We need God and all that God gives us. Our response to all that God gives us is thanksgiving that results in love. We respond through prayer, through liturgy, and through meditating on the scriptures—all of which changes us. We also agree with the punishment we deserve. This degree of love is still indirect, Christ is still hidden from us.

\textsuperscript{83} Evans, Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works, 187.

\textsuperscript{84} Evans, Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works, 193.

\textsuperscript{85} Evans, Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works, 193.
Though we may long for the direct, this degree is where most of us are most of the time.\textsuperscript{86}

The third degree is loving God for God’s sake. “The taste of his own sweetness leads us to love God in purity more than our need alone would prompt us to do.”\textsuperscript{87} This love is given freely and unconditionally. When this happens we can see and know God and we are surrounded by images of God. It’s like taking a leap into the dark and finding God there and God’s presence is fully known. This is direct contact with God, but once again this love is not by our efforts. It is a special gift of grace and it doesn’t last very long. It is more like a glimpse. However, all of us have this directness of God in the resurrection.\textsuperscript{88}

The fourth and final degree from Bernard is, “When man loves himself for the sake of God.”\textsuperscript{89} This is when loving God for God’s sake pours out onto all of God’s creation. We become one with God, however, we don’t become God. Only God is God. One might say that in this is the moment we are not only in God’s image but also back in God’s

\textsuperscript{86} Discussion with Dr. William Stafford on the writings of Bernard of Clairvaux, 2011.

\textsuperscript{87} Evans, Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works, 194.

\textsuperscript{88} Discussion with Dr. William Stafford on the writings of Bernard of Clairvaux, 2011.

\textsuperscript{89} Evans, Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works, 195.
likeness. We are the closest to being content.\textsuperscript{90} This kind of union with God through loving is, again, how we can experience divine love. This “true love” harkens back to what Plato writes in his \textit{Symposium} that was mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis.

Moreover, one might suggest that the experience of divine beauty can heighten one’s longing towards divine love. In his retelling of Lucius Apuleius’s Greek myth, \textit{Till We Have Faces}, C.S. Lewis writes, in the voice of the character Psyche, ”It was when I was happiest that I longed most....The sweetest thing in all my life has been the longing...to find the place where all the beauty came from.”\textsuperscript{91}

George Herbert, poet and Anglican priest, also marries divine beauty and divine love within his poetry. Herbert writes, “Immortall Love, author of this grate fame, Sprung from that beautie which can never fade.”\textsuperscript{92} One can find theological aesthetics throughout Herbert’s poetry and several of his poems in the collection entitled “The

\textsuperscript{90} Discussion with Dr. William Stafford on the writings of Bernard of Clairvaux, 2011.

\textsuperscript{91} C. S. Lewis, \textit{Till We Have Faces} (New York: Rhett Austell, 1956), 65-66.

\textsuperscript{92} Cited in Thiessen, ed., \textit{Theological Aesthetics: A Reader}, 160.
Temple” have been set to music, including well-known hymns that are still sung today. It is, however, Herbert’s poem Love III that invites a close relationship between divine love and divine beauty.

LOVE bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,
   Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
   From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning
   If I lack'd anything.

'A guest,' I answer'd, 'worthy to be here:'
   Love said, 'You shall be he.'
'I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,
   I cannot look on Thee.'
Love took my hand and smiling did reply,
   'Who made the eyes but I?'

'Truth, Lord; but I have marr'd them: let my shame
   Go where it doth deserve.'
'And know you not,' says Love, 'Who bore the blame?'
   'My dear, then I will serve.'
'You must sit down,' says Love, 'and taste my meat.'
   So I did sit and eat.

This particular poem has been set to music by such composers as Ralph Vaughn Williams, John Tavener, and David Hurd. This poem also speaks toward the difference between the spirit/soul and the body/flesh or “dust and sin,” as Herbert writes. Again, the difference or separation of body and spirit is woven throughout Western Spirituality. However, we also see Herbert recognize how the soul can be

transcended through bodily senses as he writes for example, “Who made the eyes but I . . . taste my meat.”

Protestant theologian Karl Barth also has provided classic examples of divine beauty as understood within Western spirituality through the influence of Anselm of Canterbury. Before diving into Barth, it may first be helpful to examine the section of Anselm that Barth draws on in regards to the “hiddenness of divine beauty.” That is to say that God’s beauty is so vast that our human selves cannot conceive of it. In our transcendence of experiencing divine beauty, much of what we experience is a mere glimpse, if anything at all. The glory or greatness of the Lord is beyond our human understanding. Anselm writes, “Therefore, Lord, not only are You that than which a greater cannot be thought, but You are also something greater than can be thought.”

Further still, it’s in a section entitled: “That harmony, fragrance, sweetness, softness, and beauty are in God according to His own ineffable manner” that Anselm develops his Theological Aesthetics of the hiddenness of divine beauty which Karl Barth draws on. Anselm writes:

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“Still You hide away, Lord, from my soul in Your light and blessedness, and so it still dwells in its darkness and misery. For it looks all about, and does not see Your beauty. It listens, and does not hear Your harmony. It smells, and does not sense Your fragrance. It tastes, and does not recognize Your savour. It feels, and does not sense Your softness. For You have in Yourself, Lord, in Your own ineffable manner, those [qualities] You have given to the things created by You according to their own sensible manner. But the senses of my soul, because of the ancient weakness of sin, have become hardened and dulled and obstructed.”

Here Anselm writes of how though our senses within our very soul, our very being experiences God, and yet God’s beauty is so great that our minds cannot ascertain the beauty of the divine and cause the beauty of the divine to be hidden.

Barth picks up on what Anselm has written and further explains however:

“The assertion of the hiddenness of God is not to be understood as one of despairing resignation, but actually as the starting point of our real knowledge of God . . . of our cognisance of God. It affirms that our cognisance of God does not begin in ourselves, since it has already begun in God . . . . Only in the secondary and derived sense is it also a confession of our own incapacity . . . . And because God views and conceives Himself in His Word we know that He is not viewable and conceivable in any other way, and that therefore we are incapable of viewing and conceiving Him of ourselves . . . . If we apprehend, view and conceive God in His hiddenness, we stand already in the real knowledge of God.”

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96 Anselm, Anselm of Canterbury The Major Works, 97.

Now, one could argue that Barth has taken the “hiddenness of God” a bit too far. In other words, where is the incarnational God that we experience, through our senses, within the sacraments? David Brown has written extensively on theological aesthetics and how we can see, taste, touch, hear . . . God. Further discussions of David Brown will be found in Chapter four of this thesis. Even within our own kenosis, or self-emptying, one may still receive a sensory experience of divine beauty without conceptualizing it consciously. For example, Julian of Norwich’s Showings or visions came not when she was intentionally conceptualizing God, her visions of Christ came when she was near death within her resting in God.

In Sarah Coakley’s examination of Dionysius the Areopagite, she suggests through Dionysius’s influence, that the divine is veiled which is a bit softer than the word hidden. After all, a veil can have some sheerness or transparency to it. She even suggests that we can indeed get glimpses of Divine Beauty as it is drawing us into union with the divine. Coakley writes:

“[Dionysius’s] conviction of the mystery of God, a mystery communicated in the Incarnation and made palpable in the Divine Mysteries—the Eucharistic Liturgy—but nonetheless a mystery that remains unfathomable, not only to human minds but even to the angelic mind, so that angels are at once sureties that we are in communion with God and also witnesses to the
utter unknowability of God, because the divine is veiled even from them; his sense of community, which turns the manifold variety of the created order from a ‘realm of unlikeness’, in which we are cut off from one another and from God, into an infinitely sensitive manifestation of God so that all creatures, however divided or even depraved, can catch some glimpse of the Divine Beauty calling out to them and drawing them back into union with the divine . . .”

Notice how, unlike Barth, Coakely brings in the Divine Mysteries which as she states are “palpable”. On the other hand, Coakely recognizes our human limitations and God’s great glory which does cause the divine to be veiled.

Along with Coakely, another more palpable Western source who writes on Theological Aesthetics and experiencing divine beauty through our senses is Paul Tillich in his Dynamics of Faith. Tillich speaks of giving voice to our experiences of God as expressed through symbols since “symbolic language alone is able to express the ultimate...they point beyond themselves to something else.” Tillich goes on to suggest six characteristics of symbols and it’s the third and fourth characteristic that focus most particularly on theological aesthetics within the arts.

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98 Coakley, Sarah and Charles M. Stang, eds. Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2009), 51. [If a separate author and chapter title, add that as well at the front of the note]

With the third characteristic Tillich focuses on the visual or fine arts. Tillich writes:

“The third characteristic of a symbol is that it opens up levels of reality which otherwise are closed for us. All arts create symbols for a level of reality which cannot be reached in any other way. A picture and poem reveal elements of reality which cannot be appreciated scientifically. In the creative work of art we encounter reality in a dimension which is closed for us without such works.”

Here Tillich names a reality that goes beyond our conscious thoughts and which cannot be attained through any other expression except through the beauty of the arts. One may go on to describe this as transcendence and it’s within our transcendence that we can find a deeper resting place in God’s divine beauty.

In Tillich’s fourth characteristic he focuses on the performing arts. He writes:

“The symbol’s fourth characteristic not only opens up dimensions and elements of reality which otherwise would remain unapproachable but also unlocks dimensions and elements of our soul which correspond to the dimensions and elements of reality. A great play gives us not only a new vision of the human scene, but it opens up hidden depths of our own being. Thus we are able to receive what the play reveals to us in reality. There are within us dimensions of which we cannot become aware except through symbols, as melodies and rhythms in music. Symbols cannot be produced intentionally. They grow out of the individual or collective unconscious and cannot function without being accepted by the unconscious dimension of our being.”

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100 Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, 48.

101 Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, 49.
Here Tillich begins by describing a play as “a new vision of the human scene.” Of course, when experiencing a play both the eyes and the ears are keyed into the experience. The new vision that Tillich speaks of goes beyond what is seen with the eye. The same could be said for listening to music. The listening goes beyond what our ears hear. For example, some people see colors or images when they close their eyes while listening to music. In the same respect, some people may hear a beautiful melody when gazing upon a certain piece of art. I believe it was St. Augustine that said that “singing is praying twice”. Within Tillich’s further dimension of reality found within the arts, Tillich may be understood to be in agreement with Augustine’s definition of singing.

**Beauty within Renaissance and Pre-Raphaelite Art**

In this section, I would like to draw attention to the beauty found in the Western tradition of Pre-Raphaelite Art.

The term Pre-Raphaelite, which refers to both art and literature, is confusing because there were essentially two different and almost opposed movements, the second of which grew out of the first. The term itself originated in relation to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, an influential group of mid-nineteenth-century avant garde painters associated with Ruskin who had great effect upon British, American, and European art. . . . The Pre-Raphaelite
Brotherhood (PRB) was founded in 1849 by William Holman Hunt (1827-1910), D.G. Rossetti, John Everett Millais (1829-1896), William Michael Rossetti, James Collinson, Thomas Woolner, and F. G. Stephens to revitalize the arts.\textsuperscript{102}

Pre-Raphaelite Art is often lumped into the category of Victorian art. However, I myself, also see hints of Renaissance style of painting with the use of contrast of light and dark and more clearly defined lines. However, it is depicted it is definitely apropos to Western style of art.

Above my fireplace hangs the painting that I would like to focus on (image 2). The painting is a depiction of Christ washing the disciple Peter’s feet. It was painted in the mid-1800s by a Pre-Raphaelite English painter by the name of Ford Madox Brown. The original is currently on loan to the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. and is part of the Tate collection in London. It has been said that, “We are indebted to Ford Maddox Brown for one of the most realistic of all pictures of that scene which occurred in the upper room in Jerusalem on the night of the betrayal and arrest of Jesus.”\textsuperscript{103} My reproduction copy has found a


home deep within my own spirituality for it reminds me to stop and allow Jesus to “wash my feet”.

In his depiction of “Christ Washing Peter’s Feet,” Brown used friends and family members as the models of his paintings. So he knew the model that he used to paint Jesus. This may harken, maybe unintentionally by the artist, to a deeper level of Jesus’s incarnation into the human family. And why shouldn’t the face of Jesus be a familiar face?

In the center of the painting are the two key players (see image 2). Peter is sitting up in a chair with Jesus on the floor kneeling down in front of him as he is washing Peter’s feet. First, I would like to draw attention to the other nine disciples included in the painting and who are gathered around the table behind Jesus and Peter. The varying expressions of the other nine disciples include interest, confusion, and embarrassment.¹⁰⁴ In her interpretation of this painting Cynthia Maus tells us that John is the one portrayed at the extreme right corner. John is watching “with absorbed interest” of the service that His Master is performing with such great humility.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Maus, Christ and the Fine Arts, 295.
¹⁰⁵ Maus, Christ and the Fine Arts, 295.
Maus further reflects that in the center of the table is one of the disciples who looks to be absorbed with regret and that maybe he is regretting not performing this humble task first himself. Further on to the left is another of the disciples holding his head in his hands as if to indicate that it is “utterly impossible to understand this strange act” by his teacher and friend.

To the very left it is understood that this is the disciple, Judas. Judas is “in the act of replacing his sandals on his feet that have already been bathed by the Master they all profess to love and serve.” He will leave this company soon for in the Gospel we hear Jesus say, “Not all of you are clean.”

The central figure in this painting, aside from Jesus, is the disciple Peter. Brown has Peter’s head and his eyes downcast as low as they can get. In this one can see Peter’s pride suddenly collapse. As scripture tells us, even after Jesus’ explanation, Peter still does not fully understand the meaning of this act of lowly service (Matt. 26/Luke 22/John 13). But he knows that it is his master’s will and so with tightly clasped hands and his head sunk

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106 Maus, Christ and the Fine Arts, 295.
107 Maus, Christ and the Fine Arts, 295.
deep into his chest, he accepts the act. The fires of humiliation most likely continued to burn inside of him.\textsuperscript{109}

Then there is Jesus kneeling down in front of Peter and a basin of water. Like Peter, Jesus’s head is buried deep into his chest, however, not out of shame but out of humble servitude. With the cloth that is wrapped around his waist, Jesus lovingly wipes the water from Peter’s feet. Jesus knows exactly what he is doing and why he is doing it. For this is the fulfillment of the scripture of the perfect and suffering servant.

Of course this sample of art is quite different from that of an icon. Nonetheless, this beautiful work has the capability to be a “window into heaven” and cause the seer to gaze upon it in such a way that can enable transformation or transcendence to occur. Within this “realness style” or better yet, Renaissance style of art, using contrast of light and dark, some emotion if not extreme emotion can quite capably occur.

Even in the absence of a Christian faith, this portrayal of Christ (being aware that he is believed to be God incarnate within Christianity) as the suffering servant is quite moving and can cause even the agnostic to pause at the beauty of this “God figure” becoming one who serves.

\textsuperscript{109} Maus, \textit{Christ and the Fine Arts}, 295.
In other words, this may be a time when a person can experience divine beauty even if they don’t recognize it as an encounter with Christ.

Then there is the encounter that a believer has with this beautiful painting which may cause that seer to encounter Christ as one who is present in our own suffering. Such a profound realization can, once again, cause a person to be transcended.

*Music and Eric Whitacre’s “When David Heard”*

Within the last decade and a half, Eric Whitacre has become one of the most popular and performed composers of our time. A native of Reno, Nevada, Whitacre has become best known for his contemporary classical choral music. On a few occasions, I myself have had the distinct pleasure of singing “Eric’s” beautiful, close harmony compositions under his own directorship. When singing under Eric, one gets the sense that he is deeply “in tune” with the Holy Spirit when making music.

One of Whitacre’s most beloved pieces in the choral world is *When David Heard* and can be experienced in its entirety through this web address: http://ericwhitacre.com/music-catalog/satb-choral/when-david-heard (Recommended is the full video version which
is found a quarter of the way down on the website.) This piece is considered to be contemporary classical music. Contemporary classical music often uses very close harmonies and dissonance which has become unique to the western tradition of music. Whitacre’s *When David Heard* is full of close harmonization and dissonances. This creates sounds unfamiliar to most ears.

The text of this piece is taken from II Samuel 18:33 (KJV) and is merely one heart-wrenching sentence:

“When David heard that Absalom was slain he went up into his chamber over the gate and wept, my son, my son, O Absalom my son, would God I had died for thee!”

With this one sentence of sacred text, Whitacre has produced a profoundly haunting and yet stunning sixteen minute piece. It is best experienced (if not by a fine live choir) by finding somewhere quiet to sit and listen to the piece in its entirety without interruption, and with the volume turned up high.

Here is what Whitacre has to say about his experience writing *When David Heard*, taken directly from his website:

“As I set out to write *When David Heard* I decided that my first and most principal musical motive would be silence. Setting this text was such a lonely experience, and even now just writing these words I am moved to tears. I wrote maybe 200 pages of sketches, trying to find the perfect balance between sound and
silence, always simplifying, and by the time I finished a year later I was profoundly changed. Older, I think, and quieted a little. I still have a hard time listening to the recording.\textsuperscript{110}

Even in Whitacre’s description of the process of writing the piece, one may get the sense that he himself encountered divine beauty and was transformed in the process. Also, speaking as someone who has experienced Eric Whitacre as a conductor, this musician appears to enter into a deeper transcendence as he continues to engage himself so deeply into music.

Before delving further into my own experiences of divine beauty through listening to \textit{When David Heard}, a blogger by the name of Shay MacKay has written of her experience with this piece. In her writing, though there are no references of the divine, MacKay’s emotional response seems to speak of spiritual transformation because of Whitacre’s beautiful music. MacKay shares:

\begin{quote}
\textit{[When David Heard] is one of the most emotionally charged pieces of music I have ever heard. Full of a desperate, desolate beauty, found as much in the silence between the notes as in what the voices are singing, the piece is about grief, regret and love. First of all, because it’s over 15 minutes long it requires me to stop what I’m doing and be still for a bit, which is always a good thing. Secondly, it focuses my attention. Eric’s weaving of silence and sound, his repetition of the text and his masterful use of dynamics (loud and soft) create an experience}
\end{quote}

that never releases its hold. My attention is not allowed to wander, but is instead intensely focused on what is happening. And thirdly, because of that intense focus, because I am so compellingly urged to not turn away from the difficult feelings within the song, I am brought into alignment with my own sadness, grief, loneliness, regret. And I sit in the stillness with my pain, not denying it, but holding it. And I am safe, cradled by the gorgeous swells of music, as I release the pain’s hold on me as David does.”

Within vulnerability and sharing of emotions, this writer, has keyed it to the human suffering of the piece. Nevertheless, MacKay still keeps the beauty of the piece at the forefront of her sharing.

My experience of listening to this beautiful piece as it has washed over me is very incarnational. Not only do we hear of the human suffering of David and Absalom, one may further ponder Christ sharing in our suffering through his death on the cross.

However, my first reaction of this piece continues to burn inside of me every time I hear this piece. For several minutes we hear “My son, my son... O Absalom my son... would God I had died for thee!” On that first hearing, which continues to this day, the reaction or the thought that comes to my mind is that of David’s lament sounding like God’s lament for us.

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Moreover, When David Heard is so gripping that one can’t help to be pulled into the drama and be changed in some way. Also, the close harmonies throughout the piece as well as the pregnant silences challenges and draws the listener in, in such a way that its as though the pull is coming from the divine beauty that is found within it.

One needs only to go to the section of comments on this piece within the composer’s website (http://ericwhitacre.com/music-catalog/satb-choral/when-david-heard) to see what an effect that this has had on so many—testimony after testimony after testimony. Even those comments alone can be transformative.

Once again, Eric Whitacre’s use of close knit harmonies is distinct to contemporary classical Western music. The outcome draws one into a sense of transcendence or, an “out-of-body” experience thus separating the body from the soul. This, in turn, is consistent with that of Western Spirituality.
CHAPTER FOUR

EXPERIENCING BEAUTY IN SACRAMENT AND WORSHIP

"Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; let the whole earth tremble before him."112 (Psalm 96:9 BCP Psalter)

This follow section of this chapter engages the writings of David Brown and will focus on the Eucharist. This section was included because there is a great deal of divine beauty found within the Eucharist. This is especially true when pondering the incarnational beauty of those coming up to receive Holy Communion.

David Brown, an Anglican theologian, has written extensively on theological aesthetics, as well as on many aspects of experiencing the sacraments. So, Brown will be the primary source in this chapter. As a specific example of how beauty can be experienced through sacrament and worship, I will focus on Brown’s thoughts on the Eucharist and will follow closely to how he breaks down elements of the Eucharist: food, drink, and hospitality; gratitude/thanksgiving; real presence; sharing in Christ/sharing within the Body of Christ/the Church.

112 The Book of Common Prayer 1979, 726
First, Brown reminds us that there is much symbolism and ritual that have to do with food. Brown writes, “In my view it is no accident that the basic symbols of Christian worship did not arise de novo but built upon already existing widespread human experience of the divine as this was mediated through such basic activities.”\textsuperscript{113} The basic activities that Brown is speaking of include that of the ritual of sharing a meal. Brown describes food rituals of many cultures and religions around the world. Brown also describes hospitality in the ancient world including such encounters of hospitality in the Bible. Hospitality was considered a “sacred duty” and included, but was not limited to, feeding a visiting stranger.\textsuperscript{114} Brown also reminds us that the most basic of all foods in the ancient world was bread.\textsuperscript{115} It is no wonder that bread became the symbol of the body of Christ in the Eucharist in the early church. That was a common food that everyone all knew. We see Jesus in his compassion and hospitality feeding the multitude with fish and loaves of bread.

\textit{NRSV Matthew 15:32-38}\textsuperscript{32} Then Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion for the crowd,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{113} David Brown, \textit{God and Grace of Body: Sacrament in Ordinary} (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 121.
\item \textsuperscript{114} Brown, \textit{God and Grace of Body}, 130-40.
\item \textsuperscript{115} Brown, \textit{God and Grace of Body}, 129.
\end{itemize}
because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way." 33 The disciples said to him, "Where are we to get enough bread in the desert to feed so great a crowd?" 34 Jesus asked them, "How many loaves have you?" They said, "Seven, and a few small fish." 35 Then ordering the crowd to sit down on the ground, 36 he took the seven loaves and the fish; and after giving thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. 37 And all of them ate and were filled; and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. 38 Those who had eaten were four thousand men, besides women and children. 116

Brown goes on to explore the symbolism and significance of wine within ancient society. Brown states, "Wine was also regularly offered to God at the altars that stood in front of the Temple. Indeed, so indispensable was wine thought to be to the ritual of celebration that the Hebrew word for ‘feast’ or ‘banquet’ (mishteh) actually comes from the same root as the word for ‘drink.’" 117 Brown goes on to state the significance of the Eucharistic institution narrative and the significance of the unity of wine and blood due to the celebration of Passover, including the memory of the blood on the doorposts at the original Passover. 118

NRSV Mark 14:23-25 23 Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them

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117 Brown, God and Grace of Body, 164-65.
118 Brown, God and Grace of Body, 165.
drank from it.  He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."  

Brown continues by stating, "What is clear is the way in which it blends into a new unity already associated with this time of year, at Passover: the escape from oppression symbolized in the doorposts marked with lamb’s blood, and the joy expressed in the wine drunk in honour of that deliverance. The blood of Christ’s impending sacrifice, it is suggested, will give Christians a similar, and indeed greater, joy." Brown also doesn’t ignore the symbolism of the miracle of Jesus turning water into wine and acknowledges this as “some anticipation of what is to come.”

NRSV John 2:1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.  
3 When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."  
4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."  
6 Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He

120 Brown, God and Grace of Body, 165.  
121 Brown, God and Grace of Body, 165.
said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it.  

When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now."

In this anticipation that Brown speaks of, one might note the significance of the wine that Jesus offered is the best and only wine, himself. Also, like bread, it is no surprise that wine is found in the institution narrative and recognized as a symbol in the early church since it also was such a common and known entity.

Gratitude and thanksgiving found in the Eucharist is also not to be ignored. We know that the word “Eucharist” itself means thanksgiving. Brown speaks of the ritual of festival harvests given to offer thanksgiving and show gratitude for the gift of a successful harvest. In this joyous and thankful attitude, Brown states, “As with ancient Israel, ways were sought of involving the divine in their more general eating and drinking.” In other words, how right it is to invite the One who gave the land in the first place from which the food and drink were harvested.

Brown then says of the ancient world, “Gratitude to God for

122 Brown, God and Grace of Body, 123.
his provision was integral to the ancient celebration of agricultural festivals . . . . If I am right about this and it was the experience of gratitude in harvest and hospitality that helped revolutionize the perceived extent of divine concern, then such experiences of thankfulness to God cannot be viewed as essentially conservative encounters. Nor was this the case in respect of a still more basic form of gratitude, in thankfulness for one’s own everyday personal consumption.”¹²³ In other words, thanksgiving and gratitude to God were an automatic response, a way of life that was more of an impulse. Then such a response did not take the effort it does today and it was more organic. Of course, this gratitude and thanksgiving is built right into and throughout our liturgy when we celebrate the Eucharist.

Being an Anglican, it is no surprise that Brown speaks of real presence of Christ within the bread and wine within the Eucharist. Brown states, “the altar generates a new sense of space, with Christ’s resurrected body now seen as occupying in the Eucharist place of position but no definite space (the claim being that the whole of Christ is present in every part of the Eucharistic host, however

¹²³ Brown, God and Grace of Body 132-134.
small).”124 What Brown is describing in this real presence of Christ is that Christ and the offering of his body and blood become fully present at the celebration of the Eucharist. This also means that in receiving Holy Communion, believers can become united to Christ and with each other, including those who have died. This is known as the Body of Christ, the Church, and the communion of saints.

This theology does not need to explain or define the exact moment of how and when Christ’s presence manifests itself in the Eucharist. This theology of the Eucharist also does not imply that the bread and wine ceases being bread and wine once they are consecrated. In other words, this theology leaves room for those who also accept the theologies of transubstantiation and consubstantiation. However, once again unlike transubstantiation and consubstantiation, the theology of the real presence appreciates the mystery of how and when Christ graces us with his presence during the Eucharist. We do have faith, though, that in our corporate prayer of the Eucharist, that Christ is fully and really present to us.

Justin Martyr was one of the first theologians to develop the theology of the real presence which takes us all the way back to the second century. He explained that it was in the whole meal that Christ was present—so the whole meal is sacred. It is also important to note that the consecration of the elements results from the sacrifice that already happened on Calvary—it is not a re-sacrifice. In other words, we are not reenacting Calvary, although we are re-presenting it. Thus, the sacrifice is made present to us. The real presence of Christ found in the Eucharist is considered to be the primary theology of the Eucharist that is accepted and understood by most Anglicans.

In this notion of the real presence of Christ found in the Eucharist, there is one word that cannot be ignored and that is mystery. When describing the sacraments Brown speaks of the human experience when receiving the sacraments as well as the great mystery that is involved.\(^{125}\)

When speaking of language serving as part of the formula for the sacraments, Brown writes about the Eucharist. He says,

“Take first the Eucharist. As a result of the twelfth- and thirteenth-century search for more precise answers the focus moved very much toward the words of institution. Partly in reaction came the

\(^{125}\) David Brown, *God and Mystery In Words: Experience through Metaphor and Drama* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 38.
common English expression ‘hocus-pocus’, used to caricature any piece of pseudo-magic that claims to bring about real change in the world. It is a corruption of the Latin words of institution, *hoc est enim corpus meum* (‘for this is my body’)."126

How this change occurs (even if once thought of as pseudo-magic by some) is a mystery and the human experience of mystery often ends up trying to be explained. Brown goes on to say that Eastern Orthodoxy is much kinder when it comes to mystery and does not require the same kind of explanations found within a formula of some sort.127

Now, one cannot speak of the Eucharist without speaking of sharing in the body of Christ. Brown writes on the Eucharistic Body. He writes, “It is only really in the modern world that understanding of Christ’s presence has moved primarily towards conceiving of it in terms of a presence within the gathered community or else as some sort of rarefied personal presence, essentially no different from the ubiquity of divinity.”128 Brown is speaking of experiencing Christ’s presence and this includes sharing in Christ’s body. Brown goes on to say, “...the ethereal Eucharistic body must also be seen in essentially bodily or ‘material’ terms: salvation concerns the health of the body

no less than that of the soul.”¹²⁹ One might see this as Brown’s way of describing how we share in Jesus’ humanity and in Jesus’ divinity.

This comes out more fully as Brown writes about healing and presence. Brown begins here through using Ignatius. He states, “One of the earliest descriptions of the Eucharist is of it as ‘the medicine of immortality.’”¹³⁰ Brown explains, “What is meant is that through Christ can come life eternal for humanity in general.”¹³¹ We see this in the Gospel of John.

**NRSV John 4:13-20** ¹³ Jesus said to her, ‘Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,¹⁴ but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.’”¹³²

Brown goes on to say, “the term used is ‘immortality’, because of the connection with the material elements in the Eucharist then clearly the thought must have been not simply of immortality of the soul but also, as with Christ himself, of resurrection of the body, or in other words the survival of the whole person . . . . Not only is it

supposed that the Eucharist can bring healing to body no less than soul, such language also reflects the intimate relation and interdependence which the ancient world saw as existing between body and soul.”

Here Brown is depicting the edifying and healing power of the Eucharist. As he states, this notion goes back centuries. Again, one may be led to think that Brown is describing how we are able to share in both Christ’s humanity (our physical body being healed in some way through the Eucharist) and in Christ’s divinity (or our soul being healed in some way through the Eucharist).

This health of our bodies pours out to the health of the corporate body of Christ. When one is “sick” the rest are infected or hurting as well. Brown writes, in Scripture we occasional see an “entire family punished for the sin of one of its members, and even unborn generations are held accountable for what happened in the past.”

This sounds like original sin. Brown then goes on to write,

“Many today are deeply suspicious of such imagery. Certainly, as a means of assigning praise or blame it is woefully inadequate. What it does acknowledge, however, is that even in our own highly individualistic age we are much more than mere

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independent self-creations. Hidden or only partially acknowledged influences from the surrounding society, family, and friends play as large a part in making me the sort of person I am as any consciously made decisions of mine.”

In other words we are designed to be the person God created us to be but at the same time, “No man (or woman) is an island.” What we do within the Body of Christ affects more than just ourselves.

In Brown’s development of health and salvation, he skates fairly close to the notion of theosis when he says, “Christ’s humanity is envisaged as coming close in order to create Christ-like beings in their own distinctive context, one where body and soul point in the same direction in this life and become a fully integrated whole in the next.”

Once again, Brown is speaking toward unity with Christ in body and soul which is seen in the Eucharist. However, in Brown’s inclusion of our bodies in experiencing Christ (also known as asceticism), he does say that we should not let our bodies get too much in the way. Brown states, “Not that we should go to the other extreme and suppose that a physically healthy body is really the aim; rather, it is that, if there is pain or disease in body or soul, these can be reoriented towards the good . . . . The temptation

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is to see such conceptions as having nothing particularly
to do with salvation since the focus is on body and not
mind or soul.”¹³⁷ When Brown is describing the body,
usually he means both the body and the soul and how they
are tightly connected to each other. Our physical selves,
however, are not to be ignored. Brown goes on to nicely
state, “the beautiful body can sometimes truly offer a
genuine reflection of divine grace, especially where that
beauty is experienced as sheer gift….[I]t is when such
beauty is presented in the form of openness and even
vulnerability that is the most likely to succeed in drawing
us closer to the divine, and so also, through grace, help
towards our transformation.”¹³⁸ This transformation of
ourselves can happen each time we partake in the Eucharist.
We are asking God to transform our whole selves. This can
be seen in the liturgy of Rite I in the Book of Common
Prayer when we pray: “And here we offer and present unto
thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls, and bodies, to be a
reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee…”¹³⁹

Following David Brown’s writing on aesthetics as found
in worship through the sacraments, to focus further on the

¹³⁸  Brown, God and Grace of Body, 420.
divine beauty found within sight and sound in worship it is worth mentioning the Taizé style of worship. As one who has both formed and performed within a Taizé style of liturgy and worship, I can attest that a distinct quality that Taizé brings is a focus on both visual beauty and beauty found in song.

The Taizé community was founded in 1949, in Burgundy, France and though “originally a Protestant initiative, it is ecumenical in character and keeps close informal contacts with the Roman Catholic Church.” Brian Wren states: “With a spirituality that combines personal discipleship and social awareness, it has become an international center.”

First I would like to focus on the visual aspects of Taizé. Taizé worship is initially approached by enhancing the sacred space visually. A Taizé service is often held in the evening and is illumined with many candles. The candles are intentionally set up non-symmetrically so as to create a sense of mystery of the Divine within worship. Often one may wish to keep a few candles set apart which can then be lit within the liturgy itself.

141 Wren, Praying Twice, 197.
Icons, whether using one or many, are also often used as focal points within Taizé style of worship. (Once again, here we see the Western church borrowing from the Eastern tradition of icons.) Fabric and a set of extra devotional prayer candles may also be used to create this visually sacred space. Again, the main tradition here is to create the space open to the mystery found in beauty.

Second, there is also the distinctive musical aspect of Taizé. Though divine readings and prayers are present within Taizé liturgy, the majority of the service itself contains short repetitive “Taizé songs” and space to hold silence as well. Taizé music consists of short meditative songs repeated over and over. Most of the music comes from the Taizé community itself and is used throughout the world. For example:

*Bless the Lord*

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's holy name.

Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.
This piece “Bless the Lord, My Soul” is a beloved Taizé song and can even be found in several church hymnals. Again, the song is repeated and designed to have words that will be sung by memory while in meditative prayer during communal worship.

As is traditional for most Taizé music, it is designed to contain many different layers that are provided by varying instrumental accompaniments after each repeat is taken. The other beauty of Taizé music within worship is that there are many different ways to participate within the music. One can chose to sing, which may include singing in a different language than others around them, or a person may choose to worship through the music through listening instead, having the music wash over them.

In other words, Taizé worship is a wonderful example of how one can experience Divine Beauty through sight and sound. When in this deep worship a person can experience a confidence in divine presence that may not be always fully conscious. One could go on to say that the Church, herself, gathered together in any form of worship, is a sacrament.
CHAPTER FIVE

APPLICATION AND CONCLUSION

"O God, who on the holy mount revealed to chosen witnesses your well-beloved Son, wonderfully transfigured, in raiment white and glistening: Mercifully grant that we, being delivered from the disquietude of this world, may by faith behold the King in his beauty; who with you, O Father, and you, O Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen." 142

This concluding chapter will focus primarily on giving examples of the application of our response to God’s divine beauty. Prayer can be a natural response to experiencing divine beauty. Those who live in religious communities can teach us much about responding to divine beauty through prayer. This may be especially due to the surroundings in which many of them live, both in beauty of space and in song or chant. In the Rule of St. John the Evangelist it is written: “God may touch us through icons, images, and symbols, impregnating our hearts with grace and furthering our transformation from one degree of glory to another. Sometimes God’s word is waiting to be heard in our own current experience....The solitude of the cell gives us the

142 The Book of Common Prayer 1979, 243.
freedom to be spontaneous in expressing prayer through gestures, movements, tears, and singing."

In further reflection of what has already been suggested in the fourth chapter regarding worship, creating an illuminated space within the place of worship can heighten the senses, as well as heighten the awareness of divine beauty. This in turn can move one into a deeper form of prayer. As was stated earlier, those who live in community are prone to have a deeper sense of divine beauty, due to their aesthetical environment, that moves them often into prayer. Those of us who do not have as easy access may need to find more creative ways to create that same kind of spiritually inviting atmosphere. This is not, by any means, meant to dismiss all of the sensory beauty that is found within nature, within creation itself. That God-given beauty requires much attention. However, given that this thesis has focused on the arts and human creativity, the focus here will once again be on the God-given beauty that has been meditated to us through the arts.

As an example, I would like to share how this concept of the illumination of sacred space has been

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offered to the parish I am currently serving. This was offered as an Advent program entitled, “Waiting with Mary.”

In this series the nave and sanctuary of our church was transformed to highlight the beauty of the arts. The primary focal point was a giant, sheer, fabric screen hung from the ceiling to the floor and back up to the ceiling. (See images 3-5)

This screen was then used to project large, multidimensional images of the Blessed Virgin Mary which included images of Mary from around the world and throughout time. The use of the sheer fabric screen rather than a regular projector screen resulted in a more artistic, visually stimulating, and sacred atmosphere. (See images 6-10)

Along with the “Mary screen” the lights were dimmed, several candles were lit, and recordings of sacred choral music including various arrangements of the Magnificat and Ave Maria were played through our sound system. Participants were invited to enter in silence and meditate with the images before the program began.

Each week for three weeks, a different art form was offered as the main program. One week highlighted music which included instrument and vocal solos, a small vocal ensemble, as well as congregational singing. One week
included poetry readings and one week included dramatic readings.

At the conclusion of the main program, participants were once again invited to meditate on the images of Mary from the slide projector. Again, classical sacred choral music played in the background. The participants were invited to walk around the screen to experience the different viewpoints. In their own time, participants were invited to leave in silence.

This Waiting with Mary series was highly regarded by those who attended. They “had never experienced anything quite like this at the Church of the Holy Spirit before” and some were “able to enter into deep prayer during the meditation time.” Of course one doesn’t have to be an artist or a musician to experience such divine beauty. One just has to be open to the possibility and see what happens.

Beauty is all around. All one has to do find it is to keep alert and find ways to tap into it. Whether we experience divine beauty through transfiguration or through transcendence, what is waiting for us is the great mystery of Love Divine.
“Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love.”

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144 The Book of Common Prayer 1979, 836.
FIGURE 1. Eastern Orthodox Icon of **The Resurrection**—also known as **Anastasis**—originally known as **The Decent Into Hell** circa is the 6th century. This reproduction of the Resurrection in Byzantine style is by Viktor Kravtsov (1964-).
FIGURE 2. Ford Madox Brown (1821-1893) — Jesus Washing Peter’s Feet c. 1852-1856 oil on canvas
The original is currently on loan to the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. from the Tate Gallery, London.
FIGURE 3.

FIGURE 4.
Transliteration and Translation

(Found through public domain)

I. CALL TO WORSHIP

Amin’.
Priiditye, poklonimsya Tsarevi nashemu Bogu.
Priiditye, poklonimsya i pripadyom
Khristu Tsarevi nashemu Bogu.
Priiditye, poklonimsya i pripadyom
samomu Khristu Tsarevi i Bogu nashemu.
Priiditye, poklonimsya i pripadyom Yemu.

Amen.
O come, let us worship before the Lord our Maker.
O come, let us worship and fall down
before the Lord Christ, our God and Maker.
O come, let us worship and fall down
and kneel before the Very Christ,
our God and Maker.
O come, let us worship and fall down before Him.

II. BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL

Amin’.
Blagoslovi, dushe moya, Gospoda.
Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi.
Gospodi Bozhe moy, vozvelichilsya yesi zelo.
Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi.
Vo ispovedaniye i v velelepotu obleklsya yesi.
Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi.
Na gorakh stanut vody.
Divna dela Tvoya, Gospodi.
Posrede gor proydut vodi.
Divna dela Tvoya, Gospodi.
Vsya premudrostiyu sotvoril yesi.
Slava ti, Gospodi, sotvorivshemu vsya.

Amen.
Bless thou the Lord, O my soul.
Blessed art thou, O Lord my God.
O Lord my God, thou art become exceedingly glorious.
Blessed art thou, O Lord my God. Thou
art clothed with majesty and honor.
Blessed art thou, O Lord my God.
The waters stood above the mountains.
Marvelous are thy works, O Lord.
Among the hills flow the waters.
Marvelous are thy works, O Lord.
In wisdom hast thou made them all.
Glory to thee O Lord, who has made them all.
III. BLESSED IS THE MAN

Blazhen muzh, izhe ne ide
na sovet nechestivykh. Alliluyia. Yako
vest’ Gospod’ put’ pravednykh,
i put’ nechestivykh pogibnet. Alliluyia.
Rabotayte Gospodevi so strakhom,
i raduytesya Yemu stremenom. Alliluyia.
Blazheni vse nadeyushchisya nan’.
Alliluyia.

Voskresni Gospodi, spasi mya, Bozhe moy. Alliluyia.
Gospodne vnest spaseniy, i na lyudekh Tvoikh blagosloveniye Tvoye.
Alliluyia.
Slava Otsu, i Synu, i Svyatomu Dukhu,
i nyne i prisco i vo veki vekov, amin’.
Alliluyia.
Slava Tebe, Bozhe. Alliluyia.

Blessed is the man that hath not walked
in the counsel of the ungodly. Alleluia!
For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous,
but the way of the ungodly shall perish. Alleluia!
Serve the Lord with fear,
and rejoice unto him with reverence. Alleluia!
Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.
Alleluia!

Arise, O Lord; save me, O Lord my God. Alleluia!
Salvation belongeth unto the Lord,
and thy blessing is upon thy people. Alleluia!

Glory be to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
both now and ever and to ages and ages, amen.
Alleluia!
Glory be to thee O God. Alleluia!

IV. O GLADsome LIGHT

Svete tikhi
Svyatyya slavy, bessmertnago,
Otsa nebesnago,
svyatogo blazhennago,
Iisu Khriste!
Prishedshe
na zapad sotnya,
videvshi svet vechnyi.

O gladsome light
Of the Father Immortal
And of the celestial
Sacred and blessed
Jesus, our Saviour!
Now to the sunset
Again hast thou brought us;
And, seeing the evening twilight,
[We bless thee, praise thee, adore thee!]
We hymn the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God.
For meet it is that at all times
thou shouldst be praised by voices undefiled, O
Son of God, who givest life:
All the world doth praise thee.

Poyem otsa, Syna, i svyatogo Dukha, Boga,
Dostoin yesi vo vsya vremena
pet byti glasy prepodobnymi,
Syne Bozhi, zhivot dayay:
Temezhe mir Tya slavit.

O gladsome light
Of the Father Immortal
And of the celestial
Sacred and blessed
Jesus, our Saviour!
Now to the sunset
Again hast thou brought us;
And, seeing the evening twilight,
[We bless thee, praise thee, adore thee!]
We hymn the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God.
For meet it is that at all times
thou shouldst be praised by voices undefiled, O
Son of God, who givest life:
All the world doth praise thee.
V. NUNC DIMITIS

Simeon’s song sung – in a Kiev melody

Nyne optushchayeshi raba Tvoyego Vladyko,
po glagolu Tvoyemu s mirom;
Yako videsta ochi moi spaseniye Tvoye,
yezhe yesi ugotoval
pred litsem vsekh lyudey, Svet
vo otkroveniye yazykov,
I slavu lyudey Tvoikh Izraelya.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,
according to thy word;
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which
thou hast prepared
before the face of all people;
   To be a light to lighten the Gentiles,
   and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

VI. AVE MARIA

Bogoroditse Devo,
raduysya, blagodatnaya Mariye,
Gospod’s toboyu:
Blagoslovenna Ty v zhenakh,
i blagosloven plod chreva Tvoyego,
Yako Spasa rodila yesi dush nashikh.

Virgin mother of God,
hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is
with thee:
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, For thou hast
brought forth the Saviour
who redeemed our souls.

VII. THE SHORT GLORIA

Slava v vyshnikh Bogu, i na zemli mir, v
chelovetsekh blagovolieniye. (Slava!)
Gospodi, ustne moi otverzeshi,
i usta moya vozvestyat khvalu Tvoyu.

Glory be to God on high and on earth peace,
goodwill towards men.
(Glory!)
Open thou my lips, O Lord,
and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.
VIII. INTRODUCTION TO “THE SIX PSALMS”

Khvalite imya, Gospodne. Alliluyia.  
Laud ye the name of the Lord. Alleluia!
Khvalite, rabi, Gospoda. Alliluyia.  
O praise it, ye servants of the Lord. Alleluia!
Blagosloven Gospod’ ot Siona,  
Praised be the Lord out of Sion,
zhivy vo Ierusalime. Alliluyia.  
who dwelleth at Jerusalem. Alleluia!
Ispovedaytesya Gospodevi jako blag;  
O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious, and his
yako v vek milost’ Yego. Alliluyia.  
mercy endureth forever. Alleluia!

IX. THE STORY OF THE RESURRECTION

(Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi,  
(Blessed be thy name, O Lord;
auchi mya opravdaniyem Tvoim.)  
teach me the way of thy statutes.)

Angel’ ski sobor udivisya,  
All the angel host were amazed
zrya Tebe v mertvykh vmenivshasya;  
when they beheld thee among the dead;
smertnuyu zhe, Spase, krepost’ razorivsha, i  
yet destroying all the might of death, O Saviour,
s Soboyu Adama vozdvigsha,  
with thyself thou didst deliver Adam,
i ot ada vsya svobozhdsha.  
and from Hades didst redeem us.
(Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi,  
(Blessed be thy name, O Lord; teach
nauchi mya opravdaniyem Tvoim.)  
me the way of thy statutes.)

“Pochto mira s milostivnymi slezami,  
“Wherefore mingle ye the sweet smelling ointment,
o uchenitsy, rastvoryayete?”  
O ye disciples, with your pitying tears?”
blistayasya vo grobe Angel  
shining from the tomb spake the Angel
mironositsam veshchashe:  
to the women bearing spices:
“Vidite vy grob, i urazumeyte,  
“Behold ye the tomb, and be of good cheer,
“Spas bo voskrese ot groba.”  
for he is not here, but is risen.”
(Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi,  
(Blessed be thy name, O Lord; teach
nauchi mya opravdaniyem Tvoim.)  
teach me the way of thy statutes.)

Zelo rano mironositsy techakhu  
Very early came the myrrh-bearing women,
kogrobu Tvoemu rydayushchhya,  
lamenting sorely, to the sepulcher:
no predsta k nim Angel i reche:
“Rydanija vremya presta,
“ne plachite,
voskreseniye zhe Apostolom rtsyte.”

(Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi,
aucha mya opravdaniyem Tvoim.)

Mironositsy zheny, s miry prishedshiy
ko grobu Tvoemu, Spase, rydakhu,
Angel zhe k nim reche, glagolya:
“Shto s mertvymi zhivago pomshlyayete?
“Yako Bog bo voskrese’ ot groba.”

Slava Otsu i Synu i Svayatomu Dukhu,
Poklonimsya Otsu, i Yego Synove,
i Svayatomy Dukhu,
Syatey Troitse vo yedinom sushchestve, s
serafimi zovushche:
Svat, syvat, syvat, yesi Gospodi. I
ynye, i priso, i vo veki vekov, Amin’.

Zhiznodavtsa rozhdshi, greka, Devo,
Adama, izbavila yesi,
Radost’ zhe Yeve v pechali mesto podala yesi:
Padshiya zhe ot zhizni, k sei napravi, iz
Tebe voplotivisyta Bog i chelovek.
Alliluya! Slava Tebe, Bozhe.

but before them stood an Angel and said:
“The time of your mourning is past;
lament no more,
but go and tell the apostles that he is risen.”

(Blessed be thy name, O Lord;
teach me the way of thy statutes.)

When the myrrh-bearing women
drew nigh thy sepulchre, O Saviour, they mourned:
but an angel spake unto them, saying:
“Why seek ye the living among the
dead? As God he has risen from the
grave.”

Glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
Let us worship the Father with the Son
and the Holy Spirit,
The Holy Trinity, three in one and one in three;
let us cry with the angels
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth,
as it is and shall be ever, world without end.
Amen.

Thou, O Holy Virgin, bringing forth the Lord,
ransomedst Adam
and gavest joy for sorrow unto Eve:
they whom from life had fallen are restored
by the Saviour incarnate of thee, both God and man.
Alleluia! Glory be to thee, O God.

X. HYMN OF THE RESURRECTION

Voskreseniye Khristovo videvshe,
Poklonimsya Svayatomu Gospodu Iisusu,
Yedinomu bezgreshnomu.
Krestu Tvoemu poklanyayemsya Khriste,
i svyatoye voskreseniye Tvoye
poyem i slavim.

We have seen thy resurrection, O Christ,
and adore thee, O Holy Lord Jesus, for
thou only art sinless.
We venerate thy Cross, O Lord Christ,
and we praise and glorify
thy holy resurrection.

For thou art our God;
we know none other beside thee;
therefore we call upon thy Name.

Ty bo yesi Bog nash,
razve Tebe inogo ne znayem
Imya Tvoye imenuyem,
Priidite, vsi vernii, 
poklonimsya Svятому Христову воскресения: Se bo priide Krestom
radost' vsemu miru.
Vsegda blagoslovashche Gospoda, 
Poyem voskreseniye Yego: raspyatie
bo preterpev, 
smertiyu smert' razrushi.

Velichit dusha moja Gospoda, 
i vozradosyusya dukh moy o Boze Spase moyem. 
(Chestneyshuyu kheruvim
i slavneyshu bez spravneniya serafim, bez
istleniya Boga Slova rozhdshuyu, 
sushchuyu Bogoroditsu Tya velichayem.) Yako
prizre na smireniye raby Svoeyai,
se bo ot nyne ublazhat moy vsi rodi.

Nizlozhi sil'nya so prestol, i 
vosnese smirenyya; 
Alchushchiya ispolni blag, 
i bogatyashchiyasya otpusti tshchi. 
(Chestneyshuyu kheruvim... 
...Ty a velichayem.)
Vospriyat Izraliya otroka svojego, 
pomyanuti milosti,
Yakov glagola ko otsem nashim, Avraamu
i semeni yego, dazhe do veka. 
(Chestneyshuyu kheruvim... 
...Ty a velichayem.)

O come hither, all ye faithful, 
let us magnify Christ's holy resurrection: 
For behold, through the Tree
joy hath come to all the world;
wherefore we bless the Lord evermore
and we sing his resurrection with joy
who suffered the shame of the cross,
conquering death by his death.

XI. MAGNIFICAT

My soul doth magnify the Lord
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
(O higher than the Cherubim,
more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim;
thou who undefiled barest God the Word, Mother
of God in very truth, we magnify thee.)
For he hath regarded the low estate of his
handmaiden:
for behold, from henceforth all generations
shall call me blessed.
(O higher than the Cherubim...
...we magnify thee.)
He hath put down the mighty from their seat,
and hath exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things
and the rich he hath sent empty away. (O higher than the Cherubim...
...we magnify thee.)
He hath holpen his servant Israel,
remembering his promises;
As he promised to our forefather Abraham
and his seed forever.
(O higher than the Cherubim...
...we magnify thee.)
XII. THE GREATER GLORIA

Slava v vyshnikh Bogu,
i na zemli mir, v chelovetsekh blagovoleniye.
Khvalim Tya, blagoslovim Tya,
klanyayemtisya, slavoslovim Tya, blagodarim
Tya velikiya radi slavy Tvoey a. Gospodi Tsaryu
nebesny,
Bozhe Otche, Vsenderzhitelyu,
Gospodi Syne Yedinorodny, Isuse Khriste, i
Svyaty Dushe.
Gospodi Bozhe, Agnche Bozhi, Syne Otech’,
vzemlyai grekh mira,
pomiluy nas;
vzemlyai grekhi mira,
priimi molivu nashu.
Sedyai odesnuyu Otsa,
pomiluy nas.

Yako Ty yesi, yedin syvat,
Ty yesi yedin Gospod’, Isus Khristos v
slavu Boga Otsa. Amin’.

[Sopranos and Altos:]
Na vsyak den’ blagoslovlyu Tya, i
voskhvalyu imya Tya,
vo vek i v vek veka.

[Tenors (while Sopranos and Altos repeat
previous words):]
Spodobi, Gospodi, v den’ sey
bez grekha sokhranitisy a nam.

[Basses (while upper voices repeat
preceding two lines):]
Blagoslovenyesi, Gospodi,
Bozhe, Otets nashikh,
i khval’no i proslavleno imya Tvoeye vo
veki, amin’.

Glory be to God on high,
and on earth be peace, good will towards men.
We praise thee, we bless thee,
we worship thee, we glorify thee,
we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O
Lord God, heavenly king,
God the Father Almighty.
O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ;
Also the Holy Spirit.
O Lord God, Lamb of God, son of the Father,
that takest away the sins of the world, have
mercy upon us;
that takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
Thou that sittest at the right hand of
the Father,
have mercy upon us.
For thou only art holy;
Thou only art the Lord; thou only, Jesus Christ, in
the glory of god the Father.

[Sopranos and Altos:]
Every day will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord,
and praise they Name
for ever and ever.

[Tenors (while Sopranos and Altos repeat
previous words):]
Vouchsafe, O Lord this day
to keep us without sin.

[Basses (while upper voices repeat
preceding two lines):]
Blessed art thou, O Lord,
God of our Fathers,
praise and glorified be thy holy Name for
ever, amen.
[Full Choir:]
Budi, Gospodi, milost' Tvoya na nas,
Yakoze upovakhom na Tya.

Pomiluy mya.
Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi,
auchi mya opravdaniyem Tvoim.
Istseli dushu moyu.
Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi,
auchi mya opravdaniyem Tvoim.
K Tebe pribegokh.
Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi,
auchi mya opravdaniyem Tvoim.

[Full Choir:]
Gospodi, pribezhishche byl yesi nam
v rod i v rod.
Az rek: Gospodi, pomiluy mya,
istseli dushu moyu, jako sogreshikh Tebe,
auchi mya tvoriti volyu Tvoyu,
yako Ty yesi Bog moy,
yako u Tebe istochnik zhivota, vo
svete 'Tvoyem uzrim svet:
Probavi milost' Tvoyu vedushchim Tya.

Svyaty Bozhe, svyaty krepki,
svyaty bessmertny, pomiluy nas. Slava
Otsu i Synu i Svyatomu Dukhu,
i nyne i prisno, i vo veki vekov, amin'.

Svyaty bessmertny, pomiluy nas;
Svyaty Bozhe, svyaty krepki,
svyaty bessmertny pomiluy nas.

[Full Choir:]
Let thy merciful kindness, O Lord, be upon us,
even as our trust is in thee.

Have mercy upon me.
Blessed art thou, O Lord;
teach me thy statutes.
Heal my soul.
Blessed art thou, O Lord;
teach me thy statutes.
I flee unto thee.
Blessed art thou, O Lord;
teach me thy statutes.

[Full Choir:]
Lord, thou hast been our refuge
from generation to generation.
I said, Lord, be merciful unto me
and heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.
Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth thee,
for thou art my God,
for with thee is the well of life, and
in thy light shall we see light.
Continue thy loving kindness unto those that know thee.
Holy God, holy, mighty,
holy, immortal, have mercy upon us.
Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
as it was, is now, and shall be,
world without end, amen.
Holy, immortal, have mercy upon us.
Holy God, holy, mighty,
holy, immortal, have mercy upon us.
XIII. TODAY HATH SALVATION COME

The Vigil ends with three hymns. The first and shortest is a hymn to the Resurrection

Dnes’ spaseniye miru byst’,
pojem voskresshemu iz groba, i
nachal’nik zhezni nasheya;
razrushiv bo smertiu smert’, pobedu
dade nam i veliyu milost’.

Today hath salvation come to earth;
let us praise our Saviour, risen from the tomb;
for he is the Author of our life;
for destroying death by death,
he hath given us the victory and great favor.

XIV. WHEN THOU HADST ARISEN

Voskres iz groba,
i uzy rasterzal yesi ada:
razrushil yesi osuzhdeniy smerti,
Gospodi, vsya ot setey vraga izbavivy.
Yaviv zhe sebe apostolom Tvoim,
poslal yesi na propoved’,
i temi mir Tvoi podal yesi vselenney,
Yedine mnogo milostive.

When thou hadst arisen from the tomb,
and burst the bonds of hell,
thou destroyedst the condemnation of death
O Lord, breaking the bonds of the enemy.
Revealing thyself to thine Apostles,
thou didst send them forth to preach thy Word,
granting thy peace through them to all the world,
O thou only all-merciful one.

XV. HYMN TO THE MOTHER OF GOD

The final hymn is a hymn to the Virgin, finishing the Vigil service with a suggestion of the continuing adoration of the Church. The melody is a Greek chant.

Vzbrannooy voyevoe pobeditel’naya, yako
izbaval’shesya ot zlykh, blagodarstvennaya
vospisuyem Ti rabi Tvoi,
bogoroditse!

No yako imushchaya derzhavu nepobedimuyu,
ot vsyakh nas bed svobodi,
da zovym Ti:
raduysya nevesto nenevestnaya!

Heaven-elected chieftain of triumphant hosts,
since thou hast saved us from evil,
hymns of glad thanksgiving do thy servants
off unto thee,
thou who bearest God!
Do thou, to whom God hath given might
invincible, deliver us from every ill;
then shall we cry:
hail to thee, O Bride and ever Maide
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