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The Charism of Infallibility: Re-Receiving *Pastor Aeternus*' Teaching on Papal Infallibility in Light of *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*'s Teaching on Charismatic Gifts

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Abstract

More than 150 years since Vatican I, the definition of papal infallibility continues to be a major obstacle in the work for Christian unity. In response to ecumenical and historical objections, Roman Catholic scholars have tended to downplay claims of a priori certainty by stressing the epistemological role of ecclesial reception. The present essay argues that this approach can be greatly strengthened through re-examining the decision of *Pastor Aeternus* to describe infallibility as a charism, particularly in light of the understanding of charisms found in *Lumen Gentium* and, more recently, *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*.

Keywords

papacy – charism – charisms – infallibility – *Pastor Aeternus* – *Lumen Gentium* – *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* – ecumenism

In a 1967 speech to the Secretariat for the Promotion of Christian Unity, Pope Paul VI famously lamented: ‘The pope, as we all know, is undoubtedly the most serious obstacle in the path of ecumenism.’¹ While new church-dividing issues have arisen in the fifty-five years since then, the papal ministry, particularly as defined at the First Vatican Council in *Pastor Aeternus*, remains a significant barrier to unity. For many, this text is, as A. Edward Siecienski puts it, ‘the open

¹ *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. 59 (January 30, 1967), p. 498. All translations, unless otherwise stated, are my own.

wound, and the emotional center of the modern-day debate'.² While Roman Catholic theologians today tend to give relatively little attention to infallibility, viewing primacy as 'the far more important teaching' (as it impacts the day-to-day life of the church), this attitude is not always shared by Christians of other traditions.³ The 1976 Anglican – Roman Catholic joint document *Authority in the Church*, for example, noted that 'Anglicans find grave difficulty in the affirmation that the pope can be infallible in his teaching'.⁴ While papal infallibility has not been discussed by the Orthodox – Roman Catholic Joint Commission, Orthodox Churches could also be said to have 'grave difficulty' with the teaching. Nicolae V. Durr, for one, considers papal infallibility to be the most difficult teaching of *Pastor Aeternus*, describing it as 'the real *causa dirimens* of Christian unity'.⁵

The Question of a Priori Infallibility

Pastor Aeternus, in its concluding (dogmatic) paragraph, includes four 'theological conditions' of an infallible declaration: (a) The pope must be speaking as a public person (not privately) and specifically in his capacity as 'supreme pastor and teacher of all Christians'. (b) He must appeal to his supreme

- 2 A. Edward Siecienski. *The Papacy and the Orthodox* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017) p. 12.
- 3 Shaun Blanchard, 'The Twists and Turns that Led to the First Vatican Council' (2020) *Church Life Journal*: https://churchlifejournal.nd.edu/articles/the-twists-and-turns-that-led-to-the-first-vatican-council/#_ftnref26. Some even suggest that 'nobody expects that such declarations *ex cathedra* will occur again': Peter Neuner 'Towards a Re-Reading of the Dogmas of Vatican I', in Mark D. Chapman and Vladimir Latinovic (eds) *Changing the Church: Transformations of Christian Belief, Practice, and Life* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), pp. 289–296 at p. 293. This prioritizing of primacy is a constant feature in the literature published around the one-hundred-and-fifty-year anniversary of *Pastor Aeternus*. The most comprehensive of the recent publications is Julia Knop and Michael Seewald (eds), *Das Erste Vatikanische Konzil: Eine Zwischenbilanz 150 Jahre danach* (Darmstadt: wbg Academic, 2019). For journals, see *Horizons* 47.1, *Newman Studies* 17.1, and *Theological Studies* 83.1. Vatican I has featured surprising little in recent French, Italian, and German journals.
- 4 Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission, *Authority in the Church* (September 2, 1976), 25: <https://iarccum.org/doc/?d=4>. Something similar is found in the Catholic-Methodist dialogue, see *Encountering Christ the Saviour: Church and Sacraments* (2011), 182. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/meth-council-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_20110612_durban-document_en.html.
- 5 Nicolae V. Durr, 'The "Petrine Primacy": The role of the bishop of Rome according to the canonical legislation of the ecumenical councils of the first millennium, an ecclesiological-canonical evaluation', in Walter Kasper (ed.), *The Petrine Ministry: Catholics and Orthodox in Dialogue* (New York: Newman Press, 2006), pp. 159–187 at p. 170.

apostolic authority as the successor of Peter. (c) He must be teaching within the sphere of faith and morals. (d) He must be proposing the doctrine as something to be held by the whole church.⁶ These are strict conditions. Vatican I was certainly not claiming that all papal teaching is infallible.⁷ But at the same time, simply by listing conditions, the impression given is that these four conditions are within the pope's power to fulfil. They are all conditions stating what *he* must do. The implication is that when a pope wishes to make an infallible declaration, it is within the competence of his office to do so. As a result, Peter Chirico notes, expressing a common post-Vatican I view, whenever a pope declares 'that they have called upon the Spirit to guide them infallibly, their subsequent statements are a priori infallible and must be accepted by all the faithful as God's truth'.⁸ Francis Sullivan concurs, noting that some interpretations of Vatican I presumed 'that the conditions for an infallible definition are always easily verifiable, and that we can always have an a priori assurance that they are fulfilled'.⁹ Infallibility here is given a quasi-sacramental quality, interpreted as functioning in an almost *ex opere operato* manner.¹⁰ The a priori certitude, especially for the Orthodox with their emphasis on ecclesial reception, is central to the ecumenical objection. Metropolitan Kallistos Ware

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- 6 For the original text see Heinrich Denzinger, Peter Hünermann, Robert Fastiggi, Anne Englund Nash (ed.), *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, 43rd edition (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), 3074; hereinafter cited as DS. I adapted this list from Avery Dulles, *A Church to Believe In: Discipleship and the Dynamics of Freedom* (New York: Crossroads, 1982), pp. 137–138. Dulles notes that there are possibly five additional conditions not mentioned by the council document. The first, widely recognised by the Vatican I fathers, was that the pope must be performing a free human act (p. 136). For the others see pp. 138–140.
 - 7 *Ex cathedra* declarations are usually numbered between two and twelve. For an illuminating engagement with these positions see Francis A. Sullivan, *Creative Fidelity: Weighing and Interpreting Documents of the Magisterium* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2003), pp. 82–92.
 - 8 Peter Chirico, 'Infallibility: Rapprochement between Küng and the Official Church?', *Theological Studies* 42.4 (1981), pp. 529–560 at p. 530. This statement also applies to councils.
 - 9 Francis A. Sullivan, *Magisterium: Teaching Authority in the Catholic Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002), p. 107.
 - 10 This link was explicit in Juan de la Peña, who held that the unconditional promise of the Holy Spirit meant a pope could be infallible without preparation. 'Juan also saw an analogy between his model and sacramental theology: as long as the priest celebrating the Eucharist is properly attentive to both form and *materia* and acts according to the intention of the church, he will always consecrate infallibly, even if he sins by disregarding liturgical rubrics': Ulrich Horst, *The Dominicans and the Pope: Papal Teaching Authority in the Medieval and Early Modern Thomist Tradition* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), p. 51.

elaborates: 'We cannot say in advance that a given hierarchy, or other authority in the Church, will be the one which says the truth. That's where the Orthodox have reservations with the Vatican definition concerning the infallibility of the pope. You cannot know in advance who is going to speak with the voice of the Holy Spirit.'¹¹

Even stressing how rarely infallible declarations have taken place in the past does little to allay the fundamental ecumenical concerns. There often exists the unstated assumption that *the pope himself* decides when he wishes to speak infallibly, and thus, if popes have historically spoken infallibly very rarely, this is simply because *they* have decided not to speak infallibly more often.

Resistance to the a priori interpretation of infallibility is usually grounded on the historical objection that it has little-to-no basis in the theology and practice of the early church.¹² Even those who are sympathetic, both Roman Catholics and their ecumenical partners, struggle to find a historical foundation for such an understanding. In his study of the early church councils, for example, Hermann Sieben found that the Fathers did not argue in an a priori way for the authority of councils to make dogmatic decisions, but rather they only understood a decision to be divinely guided (and thus beyond question) when it had been received by the whole church as in harmony with scripture and tradition.¹³ Throughout church history there have been

11 Kallistos Ware, 'Primacy and Collegiality', Presented at The Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius (2017). Recent Orthodox assessments are rare, but others have spoken similarly. See Will Cohen 'Bulgakov and von Balthasar on Vatican I', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 58:4 (2014), pp. 401–415 at p. 403.

12 Ignaz von Döllinger objected vividly: 'Before I could ever inscribe this modern invention [of papal infallibility] on my mind, I would first have to plunge my fifty years of theology, history and patristic studies into the [river] Lethe and then draw them out like a blank sheet of paper.' Quoted in Thomas Albert Howard, *The Pope and the Professor: Pius IX, Ignaz von Dollinger, and the Quandary of the Modern Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 133. Similar contemporaneous critiques were made by the Orthodox Patriarchs, who unanimously rejected the invitation to attend the council: Maximos Vgenopoulos, *Primacy in the Church from Vatican I to Vatican II: An Orthodox Perspective* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), pp. 42–43.

13 Hermann J. Sieben, *Die Konzilsidee der Alten Kirche* (Paderborn: Schoeningh, 1979). Other important studies include, George Tavard, 'The Bull *Unam sanctam* of Boniface VIII', in Paul C. Empie and Austin Murphy (eds), *Papal Primacy and the Universal Church* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1974), pp. 105–119; Brian Tierney, *Origins of Papal Infallibility 1150–1350* (Leiden: Brill, 1972); Ulrich Horst, *Unfehlbarkeit und Geschichte: Studien zur Unfehlbarkeits-discussion von Melchior Cano bis zum 1. Vatikanischen Konzil* (Mainz: Grünewald, 1982); Klaus Schatz, *Kirchenbild und päpstliche Unfehlbarkeit bei den deutschsprachigen Minoritätsbischofen auf dem I. Vatikanum* (Rome: Gregoriana, 1975); Hermann J. Pottmeyer, *Towards a Papacy in Communion* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1998).

councils which appeared to fulfil the conditions for ecumenicity but were not received (the Second Council of Ephesus), while alternatively there are those which appeared not to be ecumenical but later were received as such (the First Council of Constantinople).¹⁴ Something similar can be seen with papal teaching. The Tome of Leo presented at the Council of Chalcedon – which was often offered as undeniable evidence of papal infallibility during the debates at Vatican I – was not accepted on the basis of a priori authority, but was only received by that council, as Olivier Clément reminds us, following a 'long and detailed examination'.¹⁵ Simply appearing to have fulfilled the required conditions to make a dogmatic decision cannot, it is argued, therefore be treated as (infallible) proof that the necessary conditions for infallibility have truly been met. It seems possible that (as with past councils) a pope could make a statement which, in an a priori way, appears to fulfil the *ex cathedra* conditions and yet the teaching not be infallible – with some pointing to the final paragraph of Boniface VIII's Bull *Unam Sanctam* as a realized example of this situation.¹⁶ The theoretical possibility of a pope publicly teaching heresy, acceptance

14 Reception particularly came into theological focus following essays published by Alois Grillmeier and Yves Congar. For an overview of these papers and the theological discussion they have prompted see Ormond Rush, *The Reception of Doctrine: An Appropriation of Hans Robert Jauss' Reception Aesthetics and Literary Hermeneutics* (Rome: Gregorian Biblical Bookshop, 1997), pp. 125–173.

15 Olivier Clément, *You Are Peter: An Orthodox Theologian's Reflection on the Exercise of Papal Primacy* (Hyde Park: New City Press, 2016), p. 43. Chalcedon is an important case study, not just because of the role given it historically by infallibilists, but because it warns against simplistic understandings of reception. This is demonstrated in a particularly thought-provoking manner when exploring Chalcedon from an Oriental Orthodox perspective. The classic text remains Vilakuvel Cherian Samuel, *The Council of Chalcedon Re-Examined* (Maidstone, Kent: Oriental Orthodox Library, 2005), particularly pp. 105–188.

16 Klaus Schatz, 'Welche bisherigen päpstlichen Lehrentscheidungen sind "ex cathedra"? Historische und theologische Überlegungen', in W. Lösser, K. Lehmann, M. Lutz-Bachmann (eds), *Dogmengeschichte und katholische Theologie* (Würzburg: Echter, 1985), pp. 404–422 at p. 407 and pp. 419–420; Sullivan, *Creative Fidelity*, pp. 87–89. Pius XII, while not directly mentioning *Unam Sanctam*, explicitly objected to the position it expressed, considering Boniface's understanding to be a deviation from the authentic tradition of the church. Pius XII, 'The Church and History: Address to the Tenth International Congress of Historical Studies, Rome, September 7, 1955', *Catholic Mind* 53.1116 (December 1955), pp. 742–750 particularly at pp. 744–746. Pius makes allowances for Boniface, suggesting he was drawing logical conclusions from the evidence available to him: 'This medieval conception was conditioned by the times. Those who know its sources will probably admit that it would undoubtably [sic] have been ever more astonishing had it not appeared' (p. 747). But regardless of any mitigating circumstances, the implication here is that Pius does not consider *Unam Sanctum* to have expressed dogmatic truth despite its invocation of papal authority to define (DS875).

of which was at a low point during Vatican I, is now widely accepted, being expressed today even by figures such as the traditionalist-leaning Cardinal Raymond Burke.¹⁷

But how can the rejection of a priori infallibility, and fresh turn to ecclesial reception, be reconciled with *Pastor Aeternus*, especially its claim that *ex cathedra* definitions are ‘irreformable of themselves, not because of the consent of the church’.¹⁸ The solution, so a growing number of Catholic theologians argue, is by properly identifying the precise role of reception. Ecclesial reception, they suggest, would be the only certain way of knowing that a definition by a pope had truly fulfilled the conditions and is thus universally and irreformably binding.¹⁹ This is not, however, a return to Gallicanism, as Klaus Schatz explains: ‘Reception by the Church is never the ratification of a valid *ex cathedra* decision. Such a thing is expressly excluded by the definition of the First Vatican Council. But it would be a testimony as to whether, in fact, it was an *ex cathedra* decision at all.’²⁰

The solution is to treat reception as the means of (infallibly) *revealing* that which is *already* infallible. The role of reception is, therefore, epistemological. Christopher O'Donnell elucidates: ‘To make reception the cause or source of

17 Catholic News Agency, ‘What Cardinal Burke really said about “resisting” Pope Francis’ (February 9, 2015) <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/31478/what-cardinal-burke-really-said-about-resisting-pope-francis>. This has become quite common among previously Ultramontane figures in response to the papacy of Francis. The reverse has also happened, with a rise in what has been called ‘Liberal Ultramontaniam’.

18 DS3074. Hans Küng’s famous book *Infallible? An Enquiry* (London: Collins, 1971) attacked a priori infallibility as Vatican I’s dogmatic position, pp. 123–128. Pottmeyer argues that multiple studies were required to disprove this precisely because ‘Catholic apologetics had over a long period presented and interpreted the dogma of 1870 in a way which seemed to confirm Küng’s thesis’: Hermann J. Pottmeyer, ‘Recent Discussions on Primacy in Relation to Vatican I’, in Kasper (ed.), *The Petrine Ministry*, pp. 210–230 at p. 216. These studies concluded that Küng’s thesis on a priori infallibility was largely wrong. It is now better known, for example, that the *ex sese* clause (that *ex cathedra* definitions are ‘irreformable of themselves, not because of the consent of the church’) referred quite specifically to subsequent legal ratification by bishops.

19 Conversely, persistent non-reception would raise questions about whether a teaching had the Spirit’s assistance. To clarify, reception here is referring primarily to the recognition and acceptance by the church of a teaching as authentically expressing its faith (what has been called ‘approbative reception’), rather than the slightly different (although not contradictory) idea of reception as ‘efficacy’ in Yves Congar, or the constitutive idea of reception in Ormond Rush. Yves Congar, ‘Reception as an Ecclesiological Reality’, *Concilium* Founders’ Issue (2022), pp. 31–53; Ormond Rush, ‘Reception Hermeneutics and the “Development” of Doctrine: An Alternative Model’, *Pacifica* 6.2, pp. 125–140.

20 Klaus Schatz, ‘Überlegungen’, p. 418. The church receives teaching because she recognizes her own faith in it, as with the canon of Scripture and the early Creeds.

infallibility would be Gallican, and directly against Vatican I. It is quite another thing to say that reception may be the only conclusive evidence that infallible teaching has actually been pronounced.²¹ This position has received wide support, including from Avery Dulles, Walter Kasper, Peter Chirico, Francis Sullivan, John J. Hughes, Christopher Butler, Hermann J. Pottmeyer, Joseph Ratzinger and, in an anticipatory way, John Henry Newman.²² Notably, as far as showing its broad acceptance, it was also included in a joint document produced by the official Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission:

although it is not through reception by the people of God that a definition first acquires authority, the assent of the faithful is the ultimate indication that the Church's authoritative decision in a matter of faith has been truly preserved from error by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit who maintains the Church in the truth will bring its members to receive the definition as true and to assimilate it if what has been declared genuinely expounds the revelation.²³

21 Christopher O'Donnell, *Ecclesia: A Theological Encyclopedia of the Church* (Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), p. 216.

22 Dulles, *Church to Believe In*, p. 139; Walter Kasper, 'Zur Diskussion um das Problem der Unfehlbarkeit', in Hans Küng (ed.), *Fehlbar? Eine Bilanz* (Köln: Benziger, 1973), p. 84; Peter Chirico, *Infallibility: The Crossroads of Doctrine* (Kansas: Sheed Andrews and McMeel, 1977), pp. 239–42 and 263–267; 'Infallibility', p. 533; Sullivan, *Magisterium*, pp. 111–112; John J. Hughes, 'Hans Küng and the Magisterium', *Theological Studies* 41.2 (1980), pp. 368–389 at pp. 386; Christopher Butler, 'Authority in the Church', *The Tablet* 231 (May 21, 1977), pp. 477–480; Pottmeyer, *Communion*, pp. 102–103; Joseph Ratzinger, *Das neue Volk Gottes: Entwürfe zur Ekklesiologie* (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verlag, 1969), p. 144. See the discussion of Newman's letter to Mrs Helbert in Ian Ker, *John Henry Newman: A Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), p. 634. Butler argues that Newman lived this, considering 'it right to await the Church's reaction to the 1870 definition of papal infallibility before giving it his assent of faith'. Butler, 'Authority', p. 479. Schatz, however, thinks Vatican I rules out this approach: Schatz, 'Überlegungen', p. 419.

23 [First] Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission, *Authority in the Church II* (1981): http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/angl-comm-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_1981_authority-church-ii_en.html. The follow-up document explains: 'By "reception" we mean the fact that the people of God acknowledge such a decision or statement because they recognize in it the apostolic faith ... Reception does not create truth nor legitimize the decision: it is the final indication that such a decision has fulfilled the necessary conditions for it to be a true expression of the faith': *Elucidations on Authority in the Church* (September, 1981): <https://iarccum.org/doc/?d=8>.

The wider ecumenical reaction has been positive to this perspective, with many non-Catholics seeing it as successfully lessening the problem.²⁴

Despite the success of this approach, the task remains somewhat incomplete. Those who endorse this model do not (with any consensus) provide theological reasons for why reception is epistemologically necessary.²⁵ They point out that there *is* an apparent dynamism to the infallibility of pope and council, but tend not to explain *why* this is. They are descriptive rather than explanatory. Historical rather than theological. But *Pastor Aeternus* gives no impression that any additional epistemological tool is necessary. Indeed, many at Vatican I promoted infallibility precisely because they understood it as removing epistemic doubt. Therefore, in order to reach a deeper level of reconciliation between history and *Pastor Aeternus* (and thereby further lessen the ecumenical objection), a theological reason explaining the epistemological role of reception needs to be identified. That is, a theological explanation as to why the ‘assistance’, rather than manifesting an *a priori*, quasi-sacramental quality, appears to possess an (at least somewhat) unpredictable dynamism (at least related to the *a priori* fulfilment of conditions). But simultaneously this cannot, from a Catholic perspective, be achieved through wholly disregarding the authoritative conciliar teaching. Instead, it must be done by finding a better way to express that teaching. As the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s 1973 document *Mysterium Ecclesiae* notes, ‘it sometimes happens that some dogmatic truth is first expressed incompletely (but not falsely), and at a later date, when considered in a broader context of faith or human knowledge, it receives a fuller and more perfect expression’.²⁶ Newman had opposed the infallibility definition for precisely this reason. That is, not because he considered there

24 Yeago notes that, ‘despite its inflammatory sound, papal infallibility has turned out to be something of a red herring’: David S. Yeago, ‘The Papal Office and the Burdens of History: A Lutheran View’, in Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (eds), *Church Unity & the Papal Office* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2001), pp. 98–123 at p. 113. Also, George A. Lindbeck, *Infallibility* (Marquette University Press, 1972). Ware, while not commenting on this view among Roman Catholics, agrees: ‘Conciliar decisions are not true because they are accepted by the Church; they are accepted by the Church because they are true’: Kallistos Ware, ‘L’exercice de l’autorité dans l’Église orthodoxe’, *Irénikon* 54 (1981), pp. 451–471 at p. 469.

25 Peter Chirico, as an exception, does briefly explore the implications of infallibility being a charism, and does so in a way that anticipates the argument of this essay, but does so based upon scriptural exegesis, rather than the intra-textual logic of magisterial-weighted documents as done here: Chirico, ‘Infallibility,’ p. 533.

26 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Mysterium Ecclesiae* (June 24, 1973): http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19730705_mysterium-ecclesiae_en.html.

to be no truth to it, but because the doctrine had not had the time to develop sufficiently and so he feared it would be defined in an unbalanced and incomplete way.²⁷ *Pastor Aeternus*, then, rather than being abandoned, needs to be re-received. This means, as Aidan Nichols writes, 'giving defined doctrine a new context, and a better equilibrium, through situating it more squarely within the overall witness of revelation – in the hope that even greater benefits and fruitfulness may come, not less for those who have difficulty with an earlier formulation'.²⁸ This outcome can be achieved, so the remainder of the present essay will argue, by emphasising the largely overlooked charismatic nature of infallibility. First, by exploring one particular line of development in the Catholic understanding of the charisms, before then using the developed teaching as a means to engage the topic from a new perspective.

Charismatic and Hierarchical Gifts

There has often been tension in Catholic theology regarding how to conceptualize the charisms, particularly regarding whether the term can be applied to ministerial ordination and the resulting graces.²⁹ Thus, in the scholastic period, while Thomas Aquinas explicitly distinguished between charisms (*gratia gratis data*) and the graces that are related to stable sacramental ministry, Francisco

27 His other reasons were that it would worsen relationships with Anglicans and be a barrier for converts. John R. Page, *What Will Dr. Newman Do?: John Henry Newman and Papal Infallibility, 1865–1875* (Liturgical Press, 1994), pp. 29, 83, 91, 109.

28 Aidan Nichols, *Yves Congar* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1989), p. 111. The term re-reception comes from Yves Congar. Yves Congar, *Diversity and Communion* (London: SCM Press, 1984), pp. 171–174. John Paul II seemed to recognize the need for re-reception of *Pastor Aeternus* when, in his encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*, he expressed his desire to work with the other churches to help re-examine the role of the papacy. John Paul II. *Ut Unum Sint* (May 25, 1995): http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25051995_ut-unum-sint.html 95. For some examples of such inter-denominational discussions on the papacy see John Chryssavgis, *Primacy in the Church: The Office of Primate and the Authority of Councils* (New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2016); Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (eds), *Church Unity and the Papal Office* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2001); Walter Kasper (ed.), *The Petrine Ministry: Catholics and Orthodox in Dialogue* (New York: Newman Press, 2005).

29 This can be tracked back to flexible usage in the New Testament. Some argue that charism never has a technical meaning by itself, but that it gains different meanings depending on its context: Norbert Baumert, 'Charisma und Amt bei Paulus', in A. Vanhoye (ed.), *L'Apôtre Paul: Personnalité, style et conception du ministère*, BETL 73 (Leuven, 1986), pp. 203–228.

Suárez expanded the Thomas' list so that gifts related to ordination were included.³⁰ The latter view was the one that tended to be followed. But, while there are commonalities between gifts given through sacramental ordination and those given freely by the Spirit, there are also functional differences which, when both are assumed under the same category, are not sufficiently mapped out. As a result, theologians began distinguishing between two categories, or sub-types, of charisms. Prior to the Second Vatican Council, Karl Rahner, Yves Congar and Hans Küng, despite other differences, each considered the grace of ordination (and the gifts it enables) to be best understood within a charismatic framework while, at the same time, all three sought suitable language to better distinguish between hierarchical charisms and the charisms of the faithful. Küng, for example, wrote of 'free charisms' and 'charisms of office'.³¹

At the council itself, these conceptual/linguistic questions came up during the debate on the second draft of *De Ecclesia* (later called *Lumen Gentium*). This draft, unlike the original, explicitly stated that stable ordained ministry was included among the charisms.³² This element, however, was criticized by Cardinal Ernesto Ruffini: 'there is no distinction – yet this is most important – between charisms as grace for the benefit of others (*gratia gratis data*), that the apostle Paul clearly deals with, and the hierarchical grades, to which

Should the use of χάρισμα in 1 Timothy 4:14 and 2 Timothy 1:6–7 (which could be seen as proto-ordination) be considered in continuity with the treatments in 1 Corinthians 12:8–11 and Romans 12? The inclusion of Apostle in the lists of 1 Corinthians 12:28–30 and Ephesians 4:11 adds a further layer of complexity.

30 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Vol. 45: *Prophecy and Other Charisms* (2a2ae.171–8) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 3; Emero Stiegman, 'Charism and Institution in Aquinas', *The Thomist* 38.4 (1974), pp. 723–733. Necessitated by the general disappearance of charism from the western theological lexicon, Aquinas (starting with *De veritate*) used *gratia gratis data* as a technical term referring to the gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:8–10; Bernard Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), pp. 231, 387. Suarez, while working within Aquinas' broader charismatic framework, considered the priestly grace to celebrate the sacraments and the judicial authority of a bishop in his diocese to both be charisms (*gratia gratis data*). See *De Divina Gratia: Pars Prima* (Mogvntiae: Sumptibus Hermanni Mylij Birckmanni, 1620), p. 106a. For a discussion of Suárez' view and how it differs from Aquinas', see Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace: Commentary on the Summa theologiae of St Thomas, la IIae, q.109–14* (London: B. Herder Book, 1952), p. 154.

31 Hans Küng, *Structures of the Church* (London: Burns & Oates, 1965), p. 198. Karl Rahner, *The Dynamic Element in the Church* (London: Burns & Oates, 1964), pp. 42–57; Yves Congar, *Lay People in The Church: A Study for a Theology of Laity* (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1965), pp. 277, 295, 341. Garrigou-Lagrange, who sides with Aquinas against those who expand the number of charisms, is an exception.

32 *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II*, Vol. II, Pars I (Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1971), p. 266 n.14.

the direction and government of the church have belonged from the earliest days.³³ Similar criticisms came from Bishop Hervás y Benet and Cardinal Augustin Bea.³⁴ The Doctrinal Commission accepted Ruffini's objection and as a result we find a linguistic distinction in *Lumen Gentium* 4 between 'hierarchical and charismatic gifts'.³⁵ In addition to this, Francesco Vermigli notes how this phrasing of the just quoted passage was also influenced by an objection raised by Archbishop Ermenegildo Florit that the early text mixed Latin and Greek terms. In the final version, rather than charisms being the overarching category (containing two sub-categories), here 'gifts becomes the common category under which there are references to the hierarchy and charisms, overcoming that *dona/charismata* combination that had attracted the attention of the Archbishop of Florence.'³⁶

This change is obviously not a radical revision of the approach generally taken in pre-conciliar Catholic theology. The conceptual framework seems to have basically remained the same. Each part, however, has now been renamed. The exegetical point, though, is that in these passages the term 'charism' refers particularly to what might elsewhere be called 'free charisms'.³⁷ Something similar is found in *Lumen Gentium* 12: 'It is not only through the sacraments

33 AS 11/1, p. 393. Translation from Jos Moons, *The Holy Spirit, the Church, and Pneumatological Renewal: Mystici Corporis, Lumen Gentium and Beyond* (Leiden: Brill, 2021) pp. 233–234.

34 AS 11/2, pp. 174–175 and AS 11/2, p. 24 respectively.

35 For the positive response of the Doctrinal Commission see AS 111/1, p. 173.

36 Francesco Vermigli, 'I carismi al Concilio Vaticano II: La formazione delle pericopi sui charismi in *Lumen Gentium* 4.7.12', *Vivens Homo* 27.1 (2016), pp. 93–114 at p. 100.

37 Some, despite the redaction history, argue that to distinguish hierarchical and charismatic gifts would be to misread the council. On this point, Küng is usually presented: 'one should speak of a charismatic structure of the church which embraces and goes beyond the structure of its government': Hans Küng, *The Church* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967), p. 188. Küng himself, however, recognized the distinction in the council's teaching, writing of *Lumen Gentium*: 'Charisms are explicitly distinguished from sacraments (which include ordination)' (ibid, p. 185). This point has been overlooked, and Küng's personal position has thus been read into the council. Others, while accepting the meaning of charism in LG4 and 12, tend to minimise this distinction when presenting the understanding of *Lumen Gentium* as a whole. This they do on the basis of *Lumen Gentium* 25, which mentions the grace of infallibility as being a charism. See, for example, Giuseppe Rambaldi, 'Uso e significato di 'Carisma' nel Vaticano II: Analisi e confronto di due passi conciliari sui carismi', *Gregorianum* 56.1 (1975), pp. 141–162 at p. 158. Aside from the odd hermeneutical approach of assigning interpretative priority to an unexplained use of the term charism (AS 111/1, p. 252) over the passages which received detailed explanations, this view is based on an assumption that the grace of infallibility is a hierarchical gift (something Vatican II never says). Whether or not this is correct will be discussed later in the present essay.

and the ministries of the Church that the Holy Spirit sanctifies and leads the people of God and enriches it with virtues, but, “allotting his gifts to everyone according as He wills, He distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank ...” (LG12)³⁸ Francis Sullivan, who ghost-wrote the emendation the above passage was based upon, unpacks this statement: “The Council distinguishes between the way the Holy Spirit works “through the sacraments and Church ministries,” and the way he works in distributing his charismatic gifts. The latter is an immediate intervention of the Spirit, in which he exercises his sovereign freedom to allot his gifts as he wills and to whomever he wills, in a way that cannot be foreseen or controlled by man.”³⁹ Here too, then, charisms are equated with ‘free charisms’.

There are some benefits to this choice of vocabulary. Primarily, it helps to provide terminological precision and clarity when dealing with respective gifts, especially in their interrelation. But despite this, many Catholic theologians tend to favour conceptualizing the gifts that come from sacramental ordination within an explicitly charismatic framework. As a result, while most conciliar commentators agreed that hierarchical gifts, sacraments, and ministries are distinguished from charisms in the text of *Lumen Gentium*, the historical fact was that most Catholic theologians did not personally incorporate the document’s language within their own writings.⁴⁰ Even subsequent official Catholic teaching maintained the particular language only sporadically. While, in itself, this is not a problem, the result was that the differences were rarely explored or expounded.⁴¹ Things would change, however, with the 2016 publication of *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*.⁴² This CDF document, produced by the Congregation for

38 The Doctrinal Commission further explained that ‘special graces’ was used to more greatly stress the freedom of the Holy Spirit in the charisms bestowal: AS 111/1, p. 119.

39 Francis A. Sullivan, ‘The Ecclesial Context of the Charismatic Renewal’, in Kilian McDonnell (ed.), *The Holy Spirit and Power: The Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), pp. 119–138. For a discussion of Sullivan’s reading see John Stayne, ‘The Contribution of Francis A. Sullivan SJ to a Deeper Understanding of Charisms in the Church’, *Theological Studies* 81.4 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040563920985248> pp. 810–827.

40 See John Stayne ‘Post-Conciliar Developments in the Catholic Doctrine of Charisms: *Lumen Gentium* and *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* Compared’, *Irish Theological Quarterly* 87.3 (2022) <https://doi.org/10.1177/00211400221098013>, pp. 192–211 at p. 201 n.32.

41 For theologians and popes who do not maintain the linguistic distinction, see Stayne, ‘Francis Sullivan’, p. 819 n.39. While the language was not always retained, there was never a denial of the conceptual distinction.

42 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* (2016) https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20160516_iuvenescit-ecclesia_en.html.

the Doctrine of the Faith, takes *Lumen Gentium's* conceptualisation as its point of departure, focusing on (as the sub-heading reads) 'the relationship between hierarchical and charismatic gifts in the life and the mission of the church'. The document stresses that charismatic and hierarchical gifts, while having 'the same origin and the same purpose' (1E8), also possess important differences, and proceeds to explore these. The first relates to how they are given. As 'powerful dynamic realities' (1E2) with a potentially 'unforeseeable nature' (1E17), charisms are 'bestowed freely by the Spirit, "who blows where He wills" (Jn 3:8) and distributes his gifts "as He wishes" (1 Cor 12:11)' (1E12). Alternatively,

The conferral of hierarchical gifts ... can be traced back, above all, to the fullness of the sacrament of Orders, given at Episcopal consecration ... the hierarchical gifts proper to the sacrament of Orders, in its diverse grades, are given so that the Church as communion may never fail to make to each member of the faithful an objective offer of grace in the sacraments, and so she may offer both normative proclamation of the Gospel and pastoral care.

1E14

The second defining feature of hierarchical gifts is their permanence. While charisms can be more or less transient, *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* states that hierarchical gifts are 'of their nature stable, permanent, and irrevocable' (1E13). This point reflects the teaching of the Council of Trent whereby sacramental ordination affects an ontological change within the recipient, imprinting an indelible character upon the soul (which can neither be effaced nor taken away), and thereby opposing the Reformation idea that 'priests of the New Testament have only a temporary power'.⁴³ Charisms, consequently, are understood as dynamically given and possibly transient, while hierarchical gifts relate to sacramental ordination and are permanent. This expanded conceptual clarification – the culmination of *Lumen Gentium's* approach – gives a useful framework for theological analysis of infallibility. This is because, despite having often been widely overlooked, *Pastor Aeternus* directly describes the grace of infallibility as a charism: 'Now this charism [*charisma*] of truth and of never-failing faith was conferred upon Peter and his successors in this chair in order that they might perform their supreme office for the salvation of all ...'⁴⁴ Now, because

43 DS1767 and 1774.

44 DS3071. It is surprising how little this use of charism comes up in discussions around Vatican I, especially as the charismatic language was retained in *Lumen Gentium* 25. For example, charism fails to appear in John W. O'Malley, *Vatican I: The Council and the Making of the Ultramontane Church* (London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press,

at the time of the First Vatican Council *charisma* was a term which could refer to either of the ‘charismatic’ sub-categories, a question naturally arises post-*Iuvenescit Ecclesia*: should the grace of infallibility be understood as a hierarchical or a charismatic gift?

Pastor Aeternus and ‘Personal Infallibility’

The language of charism was applied to infallibility quite early at Vatican I, having been proposed by Archbishop Henry Edward Manning.⁴⁵ His initiative did not, however, result in a detailed or systematic exploration of the word, its meaning, or implications.⁴⁶ As with many of the key terms used at this council,

2018). One theologian even states that ‘traditional Catholic theologians emphasize that a pope is infallible not in virtue of any “inspiration” or charism, but in virtue of his office’: Aloysius P. Martinich, ‘Infallibility’, *Religious Studies* 16.1 (1980), pp. 15–27 at p. 17. On this, he cites Adolphe Tanquerey, *A Manual of Dogmatic Theology*, trans. John J. Byrnes (New York: Desclee Company, 1959), p. 114. But Tanquerey makes no mention of charisms on the page cited (positively or negatively) and the only other mention of that term (two pages later) is explicitly and positively related to infallibility. Martinich can only have misunderstood the claim that infallibility is not a charism of inspiration (often repeated at Vatican I), as meaning infallibility is both not an inspiration and not a charism.

45 Giovanni Domenico Mansi (ed.), *Sacrorum Conciliorum, nova et amplissima collection*, Volumes 49–53 (Arnheim-Leipzig, 1923–1927), vol. 51, p. 699, hereinafter cited as M. While the term *charisma* does appear previously in the council *Acta*, these instances are not related to infallibility. Three key figures of the dominant Roman School, Francisco Suárez, Robert Bellarmine and Giovanni Perrone (the last a contemporary who was present at Vatican I), all considered infallibility to be a grace for the good of the church, which helps to explain why the charismatic vocabulary was adopted without objection. For an introduction to the Roman School see C. Michael Shea, ‘*Ressourcement* in the Age of Migne: The Jesuit Theologians of the *Collegio Romano* and the Shape of Modern Catholic Thought’, *Nova et vetera* 15.2 (2017), pp. 579–613.

46 The term charism goes on to appear in the *Acta* more than twenty times, particularly in suggested changes to *De Ecclesia Christi* (the ill-fated schema on the church). The term appeared in suggested changes to chapter one: by Bishop Eugenio Roberto Galletti, M51, p. 756 and Cardinal Sisto Riario Sforza, M51, pp. 757–758 at p. 758; chapter three: by Archbishop Florian Desprez, M51, p. 770 and Bishop Frédéric-Gabriel-Marie-François de Marguerie, M51, pp. 772–773 at p. 773; chapter four: Cardinal Filippo Maria Guidi pp. 782–783 at p. 783; chapter six: by Bishop Giuseppe Rosati, M51 pp. 795–796 at p. 796; and the canons: by Bishop Lorenzo Gastaldi, M51, p. 821. Except for the final reference, none of these mentions are related to the grace of infallibility – and even the final reference uses charism in a negative sense, that the grace of infallibility is not a charism of inspiration. Some significant mentions appear in the broader schematic proposals, of which Gastaldi’s is most notable (particularly in chapters four and nine, M51, pp. 887–893, at p. 889 and

no definition was given.⁴⁷ There is certainly no explicit answer to be found in *Pastor Aeternus* regarding possible charismatic sub-types. Vatican II did nothing to change this, although there are commentators who seem to assume that infallibility (while being called a charism) is a hierarchical gift.⁴⁸ However, a conclusive answer to this question does emerge by engaging with the First Vatican Council's debates and with the redaction history of *Pastor Aeternus*, particularly as each relates to the topic of 'personal infallibility' and the speech given on 18 June 1870 by the Dominican Cardinal Filippo Maria Guidi.⁴⁹ Guidi was part of a small number of Dominican bishops at the council who, while not opposing the infallibility definition, were concerned about how it would be defined.⁵⁰ Attempting to express a view of infallibility that would both satisfy the majority, and at the same time clarify the schema against misunderstandings, Guidi presented a speech urging that the pope personally should not be referred to as infallible. This aimed at refuting the idea that infallibility permanently resided within the pope as a disposition he could make use of at

p. 892). However, despite the clear episcopal familiarity with the language of charism and the suggestions above, the term was not mentioned (positively) in the revisions planned for *De Ecclesia Christi*. See Joseph Kleutgen, *Schema Const. dogm. De Ecclesia Christi secundum RR. PP. animadversions reformatum*, M53, pp. 317ff.

47 John Ford notes that *Pastor Aeternus* describes how infallibility is exercised rather than explaining what it is as a theological reality. John Ford, 'Infallibility – Terminology, Textual Analysis, and Theological Interpretation: A Response to Mark Powell', *Theological Studies* 74.1 (2013), pp. 119–128 at p. 122. Perhaps Mgr. Vespasiani's request during the council to avoid focusing on the mode of infallibility explains this. See Gustave Thils, *Primauté et infaillibilité du pontife romain à Vatican I: et autres études d'ecclésiologie* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, Peeters, 1989), p. 167. This vagueness, however, was part of the reason why Newman had few difficulties in initially accepting the teaching, as it allowed a spectrum of interpretations: Sheridan Gilley, *Newman and His Age* (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 1990), p. 369.

48 See Stayne, 'Developments,' pp. 201–202.

49 O'Malley describes Guidi's speech (and the aftermath) as 'the best known and most discussed incident of the entire council. O'Malley, *Vatican I*, p. 210. The speech was written by Giuseppe Giacinto Pellegrinetti, Guidi's council theologian, on behalf of the Dominicans opposing maximal infallibility. Guidi did impact the text through discussions with Pellegrinetti over the two days it was being written, and by making editorial changes before presenting. See Ulrich Horst, *Päpstliche Unfehlbarkeit wider konziliare Superiorität?* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2016), p. 383–4. For a wider analysis of the speech pp. 361–424.

50 This position makes them difficult to categorise. Categorization is already challenging because categories of majority/minority (which work when discussing Vatican II) are problematic. See Pottmeyer, *Communion*, pp. 81–82.

will – an idea that was essential to the most extreme Ultramontane positions.⁵¹ Infallibility, Guidi argued,

is evidently nothing other than a certain kind of help [*auxilium*], or special action of Divine Providence, whereby the person of the Roman pontiff is preserved from the danger of error; if you prefer, it is a certain light by which the intellect of the Roman pontiff is illumined to recognize a truth, and his will strengthened to propose and sanction it. I speak of an actual help and a passing light [*Auxilium dixi actuale et lux transiens*], which is received in the person of the pope, as something given to a person, yet not such that the person is changed, or acquires a special new quality from which he could be appropriately named, but only that he may act and duly discharge his office. The act is therefore infallible; the effect proceeding from the act is infallible; but not the person, since he is not named from the act, but from a habit or quality. Thus, a drunkard is not one who once or twice – or several times – has become drunk, nor is the almsgiver one who sometimes distributes alms...⁵²

As the assistance is actual grace, Guidi explained, it is passing, temporary, transient. It is not a permanent *habitus*.⁵³ Because the grace does not inhere in the pope's person, he contended, we should not refer to him as being infallible. It is the act, not the person, that possesses infallibility. Therefore, the chapter

⁵¹ The intent had been to deny Gallicanism, while also proving false the idea 'that papal infallibility was an arbitrary, independent and absolute power, as if the Pope could use it at will' (Horst, *Päpstliche Unfehlbarkeit*, p. 398). The most famous example of this is William George Ward's statement 'I should like a new papal Bull every morning with my *Times* at breakfast.' Quoted in Wilfrid Ward, *William George Ward and the Catholic Revival* (Gregg International Publishers, 1893), p. 14. For the fears around personal infallibility, see Margaret O'Gara, *Triumph in Defeat: Infallibility, Vatican I, and the French Minority Bishops* (Washington DC: Catholic University America, 1988), pp. 68–85.

⁵² M52, pp. 740–747 at p. 741, trans. Peter Hannah OP. The term *auxilium* refers to actual grace. In the decision to categorize infallibility in this way, Guidi and Pellegrinetti were following the example of (among others) the early seventeenth century Salamanca Dominican Pedro de Ledesma (in *Tractatus de divinae gratiae auxiliis*) and the Carmelite Thomist, Johannes Ab Annuntiatione (in *Cursus Theologicus Summam Theologicam Angelici Doctoris Thomae complectens*), the latter stressing that the nature of the pope is not changed. Horst, *Dominicans*, pp. 55–56. During Vatican I, Bishop Martinez, for similar reasons, likewise proposed an understanding of infallibility as an actual grace: M52, pp. 1020–1026 at p. 1024.

⁵³ The grace is 'not able to exist except as a temporary help [*auxilium transiens*]' (M52, p. 745). To be clear, Guidi was not arguing that all papal prerogatives are transient, only particularly the grace of infallibility.

title should not refer to the infallibility of the pope, which suggests 'a sort of personal or habitual quality or prerogative', instead the chapter 'would be better named: *Concerning the infallibility of the dogmatic definitions of the Roman pontiff*'.⁵⁴

Guidi's speech, while extremely popular with the minority bishops, failed in its attempt to convince key members of the majority.⁵⁵ Perhaps more importantly, it failed to convince Pope Pius IX who, that very afternoon, summoned Guidi to a private audience, attacked his speech and accused him of being in league with the enemies of the church.⁵⁶ A more public response came two days later when Bartolomeo D'Avanzo, a member of the Deputation on Faith and speaking in their name, delivered an opposing speech, one generally considered among the most maximal expressions of Ultramontanism to be found at the Council.⁵⁷ While D'Avanzo does not mention Guidi (instead referring to the 'most distinguished orator'), its response was direct:

But with all deference to such a great man, I would say that the assistance of the Holy Spirit, which we are dealing with here, is a charism freely given [*charisma gratis datum*] for the salvation of others, like the others of which the Apostle speaks (1 Cor. 12:8ff.) ... From which he draws the conclusion: *And he appointed some to be apostles, others prophets, others teachers, for the building up of the body of Christ.* And so just as the one

54 M52, p. 746.

55 That evening, Guidi was greeted with a huge number of visitors, 'the carriages not only blocked the whole Piazza della Minerva, but also the neighbouring squares': Klaus Schatz, *Vaticanum I 1869–1870, Band III: Unfehlarediskussion und Rezeption* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1994), p. 103. But there were cries of protest even when Guidi was delivering the speech.

56 It was in this meeting where Pius IX, in response to Guidi's appeal to tradition, is said to have replied 'I am Tradition!': Schatz, *Vaticanum I*, pp. 312–322.

57 The text was composed by Johann Baptist Franzelin. See Domenico Massimino, 'L'apporto del Franzelin alla stesura della *Pastor aeternus* e al dibattito sull'infalibilit ', *Ho theologos* 9.2 (1991), pp. 157–194 at pp. 186–174. Franzelin was part of the special deputation working with Cardinal Bilio and was one of the most influential theologians behind the scenes at the Council (particularly influencing *Pastor Aeternus*'s fourth chapter). See also Bernhard Knorn, 'Johann Baptist Franzelin (1816–86): A Jesuit Cardinal Shaping the Official Teaching of the Church at the Time of the First Vatican Council', *Journal of Jesuit Studies* (2020), 7.4. pp. 592–615. It is important to note that Franzelin believed that there was only one infallibility. The infallibility of the pope was not a different infallibility to that of the church, but rather expressed it. Therefore, the pope cannot define something that is not already the faith of the church (although he might use a new formula). This approach was taken up, in a rather awkwardly phrased formulation, in *Lumen Gentium* when it speaks of the pope defining dogma as being someone 'in whom the charism of infallibility of the Church itself is individually present' (LG25).

who has the charism of the apostolate is called an apostle, and the one who has the charism of knowledge and wisdom is called a teacher, and the one who has the grace of working miracles is called a miracle worker, etc.; so the one who through the Holy Spirit has the charism of infallible knowledge, in other words of infallibility, is called an infallible doctor through the assistance of the Spirit.⁵⁸

How can Guidi, d'Avanzo poses, argue that the pope should not be referred to as infallible when we find charismatic personal identification within scripture? The change to the chapter title is, therefore, not needed.⁵⁹ His response, however, did seem to accept a key part of Guidi's presentation. Gustave Thils notes that, regarding Guidi, no one ever actually challenged the 'essence of his intervention', namely, that it is the act of defining which is infallible.⁶⁰ Indeed, as Thils points out, we actually find a positive appraisal of this view in Vincent Gasser's famous, and semi-official, *relatio* delivered almost one month later on 11 July 1870.⁶¹

Gasser, while considering it possible to ascribe infallibility to the person of the pope, was clear that this notion (taken alone) could be misleading, precisely because infallibility is not permanent. Thus, showing his willingness to take a mediating position, he clarified:

the sentence 'The Roman Pontiff is infallible' should not be treated as false, since Christ promised that infallibility to the person of Peter and his successors, but it is incomplete since the Pope is only infallible when, by solemn judgement, he defines a matter of faith and morals for the Church universal ... For the pope is only [*solummodo*] infallible when, exercising his function as teacher of all Christians and therefore representing the whole Church, he judges and defines what must be believed or rejected by all.⁶²

58 M52, pp. 760–767 at p. 762, trans. Keith Balthrop and Matthew Gaetano.

59 He further argues that this would make no grammatical sense, and would leave the pope unable to apply or interpret what he had decreed: *ibid.*, p. 762.

60 Thils, *Primauté et infallibilité*, p. 173

61 M52, pp. 1204–1232. Vincent Ferrer Gasser, *The Gift of Infallibility: The Official Relatio on Infallibility of Bishop Vincent Ferrer Gasser at Vatican Council I*, trans. James T. O'Conner (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008) will be cited. *Lumen Gentium* references the *relatio* twice as often as it does *Pastor Aeternus*.

62 Gasser, *Infallibility*, pp. 46–47. The change in tone is interesting because Gasser's *relatio* comes (in large part) from Franzelin. Massimino notes that much is taken 'almost verbatim' from what Franzelin had prepared, particularly when dealing with the subject and object of infallibility: Massimino, 'Franzelin,' pp. 182–188. But, at the same time, research examining Gasser's papers revealed Gasser's explicit intention to incorporate key aspects of Guidi's speech: Horst, *Unfehlbarkeit und Geschichte*, p. 205 n.112.

On this explanation, Kilian McDonnell comments: 'No difference is found between Gasser and Guidi on the transient nature of the divine assistance in virtue of which the pope is infallible.'⁶³ The language Gasser adopts in his intervention (particularly the use of *solummodo*), continues McDonnell, 'makes it clear that, for Gasser too, the divine assistance in virtue of which he is infallible is not a permanent habit, but a passing grace, what in the terminology of an earlier theological tradition would be called an actual grace'.⁶⁴

In addition, despite the initially stated opposition, the chapter title was adapted in line with Guidi's recommendation so as to speak not of the pope's own infallibility but of the infallibility of his teaching.⁶⁵ Jean-Pierre Torrell offers a broad summary:

the positive data that we can collect in the Acts of [Vatican I] is as follows: distinction of infallibility from revelation and inspiration ... 'actuality' of the granting of the gift, limited to the moment of the definition; frequent use of the word *charisma* to qualify this privilege; the Holy Spirit as the effective cause of infallibility; all this directs our reflection towards what Guidi suggested, and invites us to speak with him, not of a habitus, but of an '*auxilium actuale*', a '*lux transiens*'.⁶⁶

The pro-Guidi 'actual' understanding, Thils and McDonnell each suggest, was also 'intentionally maintained at Vatican II', as seen in the use of *quando* in *Lumen Gentium* 25.⁶⁷

However, there is some tension within this presentation. Vatican I commentators seem to have overlooked that the grace of infallibility cannot be an actual grace (at least in the technical sense) and, at the same time, be a charism. For Thomists, actual grace is a species (or sub-species) of *gratia gratum faciens* (grace that makes pleasing) and the distinction between these and charisms (*gratia gratis data*) is both central and consistently maintained.⁶⁸ It is notable, therefore, that Guidi, despite having used the language of charisms during the council in previously submitted suggestions, never describes the

63 McDonnell, 'Infallibility as Charism at Vatican I', *One in Christ* 15.1 (1979), pp. 21–39 at p. 37.

64 Ibid, p. 37.

65 From '*De Romani Pontificis infallibilitate*' to '*De Romani Pontificis infallibili magisterio*'.

66 Jean-Pierre Torrell, 'L'infalibilité pontificale est-elle un privilège "personnel"?', *Revue de Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques* 45 (1961), pp. 229–245 at p. 242 n.28.

67 Thils, *Primauté et infaillibilité*, p. 175. McDonnell, 'Infallibility,' p. 37.

68 John Meinert identifies six key theologians on actual grace post-*Aeterni Patris*: Michel Labourdette, Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, Jacobus Ramirez, Bernard Lonergan, M. C. Wheeler, and Joseph Wawrykow. Meinert notes that all six hold that 'actual grace is a species (or quasi-species) of *gratia gratum faciens* ... distinct from *gratia gratis data*

grace of infallibility in such a way.⁶⁹ On the other hand, Gasser, while accepting and incorporating Guidi's idea of transience, never refers to the grace of infallibility as an actual grace, instead calling it a charism.⁷⁰ Rather than merging the two positions, as has been done by later commentators, it seems apparent that both sides presented mutually exclusive theological categories.⁷¹ But, of these two alternatives, only the charismatic interpretation was given doctrinal backing. As Manning explained after the council:

The word charism is used to express not a *gratia gratum faciens*, as theologians say – that is, a grace which makes the *person acceptable* in God's sight – but a *gratia gratis data*, or a grace the benefit of which is for *others*, such as prophecy or healing, and the like. Now these gifts, as may be seen in Balaam, Caiaphas, and Judas, were not graces of sanctification, nor gifts that sanctified the possessor.⁷²

(the charisms)'. John M. Meinert, *The Love of God Poured Out: Grace and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in St. Thomas Aquinas* (Emmaus Academic, 2018), pp. 15–16. Bonaventure's concept of *gratia gratis data* (particular grace), however, overlaps with what Aquinas calls *auxilium Dei* (actual grace). Similar variant usages continued to appear until at least the sixteenth century (found in Marislius of Inghen and Vega, as discussed by Suárez in *De Divina Gratia*, pp. 88bff), but this usage had disappeared by Vatican I.

69 Guidi twice used the term *charismatibus* in his suggested changes to chapter IV of *De Ecclesia Christi* (M51, pp. 782–3, at p. 783) and in a more significant schematic proposal (M51, pp. 905–910 at p. 907).

70 Gasser, *Infallibility*, pp. 49, 50, 64.

71 With Guidi and Pellegrinetti on one side, and Franzelin on the other, we have here another dispute on grace between Jesuits and Dominicans.

72 Henry E. Manning, *The True Story of the Vatican Council* (London: Henry S. King, 1977), pp. 181–182. The parallel with prophecy is particularly interesting because of the similarities that Guidi's presentation of infallibility as an actual grace has with Aquinas' treatment of this charism: 'Now none can take to prophecy when he wills ... Thus prophecy is not a lasting disposition [*non est habitus*] ... Now prophetic light does not inhere in the mind of a prophet as a permanent form – for then the prophet would always have the faculty of prophesying, which is patently false ... It remains then that prophetic light inheres in the soul of a prophet by way of a transient passion or impression': Aquinas, *Prophecy*, pp. 8–11. Manning may have been drawing from this source since, even in his initial charismatic formula, he had insisted, like Guidi, that the assistance 'is not inherent in the person of the Pontiff' (M51, p. 699), and he later noted that infallibility is not 'a quality inherent in the person whereby, as an inspired man, he could at any time and on any subject declare the truth': Manning, *True Story*, p. 179. Aquinas himself, in an earlier work (*Quodlibet* 1x.16), had also suggested a link between prophecy and infallibility. Horst summarizes: 'Just as Caiaphas – despite his wickedness – unwittingly prophesied in his capacity as high priest (*pontifex*) ... [Aquinas argued] so on the occasion of a canonization the pope pronounces

We can conclude, therefore, that while a key element of Guidi's thought was embraced, his locating of the assistance within the wider theology of grace was not. What was taken up by Gasser and entered the teaching of both Vatican Councils was that the charism of infallibility – in a manner somewhat *analogous* to actual grace – is present only in the moment of the definition. Rather than being an actual grace, the grace of infallibility is, consequently, a transient charism.

Charismatic Infallibility

At this point, then, we find the answer to the question. There is only one category to which the grace of infallibility can belong. As previously noted, hierarchical gifts are related to an ontological character given through sacramental ordination, and are 'of their nature stable, permanent, and irrevocable' (1E13). The rejection of these attributes being ascribed to the grace of infallibility is one of the few things upon which all the major figures at Vatican I agreed. The assured ontological permanence of hierarchical gifts is precisely what papal infallibility does not possess. As McDonnell writes: 'Christ's promise of the Spirit does not constitute a new fixed property in the person of the pope but is a *lux transiens*, (a passing light), directed to that extended moment which is the defining process. Much less is it a permanent ontological quality which enables the pope to operate under direct and immediate inspiration.'⁷³ The grace of infallibility, while related to a hierarchical office, cannot, therefore, be considered a hierarchical gift. As a result, it must, in the technical sense *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* uses the term, be a charism. This notably changes the way that *Pastor Aeternus* is read. The grace of infallibility, as a charism, can now be recognized as a 'powerfully dynamic' reality (1E2), bestowed by the Spirit who 'blows where he wills' (1E12) and, resultingly, has something of an 'unforeseeable nature' (1E17). Likewise, to apply Sullivan's previously quoted commentary, we can state that the grace of infallibility 'involves a direct intervention of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church ... [it] is an immediate intervention of the

his sentence in the same prophetic spirit. In other words, when judging as pope, the pope enjoys a *charisma veritatis*, a kind of inspiration to speak the truth. Here is an idea that is of obvious and great importance in tracing the history of papal teaching authority – yet strangely enough, Thomas never repeated it again': Horst, *Dominicans*, pp. 14–15. This prophetic connection is also found in Guido Terreni (who likewise references Balaam and Caiaphas: *ibid.* pp. 35–36) and Suárez (*De Divina Gratia*, p. 106b).

73 McDonnell, 'Infallibility', p. 39

Spirit, in which he exercises his sovereign freedom ... *in a way that cannot be foreseen or controlled by man*’.

This discovery, then, tends towards precisely the same conclusions offered by the epistemological understanding of reception, but is arrived at through the exegesis of magisterial documents rather than historical study. It theologically elucidates that which had previously only been observed and acknowledged, and thus provides what was formerly lacking. How is it that a pope (or council) could, from an a priori perspective, appear to fulfil the necessary conditions and yet (potentially) fail to teach infallibly? Precisely because infallibility is a charism and therefore cannot be compelled but must, in any particular moment, be freely given by the Spirit.⁷⁴

This solution is especially attractive, for Roman Catholics at least, because of the manner in which it is found. It is reached not by sidelining *Pastor Aeternus* but by through looking at it more closely. Thanks to the developing doctrine of charisms over the last fifty years, we today have a means of penetrating deeper into the dogma than the Council Fathers themselves possessed. By placing the magisterially-weighted texts in dialogue with each other we are able to discover aspects that, while already present in a certain form, had not been drawn out or developed. This is an almost text-book example of re-reception whereby, as Fergus Kerr notes, ‘a doctrine long held simply begins to look different in the context of a newly promulgated doctrine.’⁷⁵

Conclusion

‘*Pastor Aeternus*’, writes John J. Hughes, ‘is a classic example of the “incomplete but not false” expression of dogmatic truth which, according to *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, is a recurring feature of dogmatic history.’⁷⁶ The dogma of infallibility, in light of developments in the doctrine of the charisms, begins to look quite different, and the historically questionable quasi-sacramental understanding of a priori infallibility, that which is so ecumenically problematic, becomes almost impossible to sustain. Following Vatican I, Newman had looked to a future where ‘a new Pope, and a reassembled Council may trim the

74 This also helps explain the discernment that took place around papal documents. *Lumen Gentium* notes ‘judgment as to their [charisms] genuinity... belongs to those who are appointed leaders in the Church’ (LG 12). This, *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* says, ‘applies generally for every charism’ (IE9 n.27).

75 Fergus Kerr, *The Twentieth-Century Catholic Theologians: From Neoscholasticism to Nuptial Mysticism* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006), p. 50.

76 Hughes, ‘Hans Küng’, p. 380.

boat'.⁷⁷ This started with Vatican II's teaching on collegiality (particularly in relation to primacy) and, as this essay has argued, can continue with *Iuvenescit Ecclesia's* teaching on the charisms (particularly in relation to infallibility). The following quote from Cardinal Léon Suenens, reminiscing about the immediate ecumenical reaction to his famous Vatican II speech on the charisms of the faithful, seems an appropriate close:

A few days after my speech, I read, in the report prepared by the Secretariat for Ecumenical Affairs in Rome, that the Orthodox Bishop representing the Patriarch of Moscow had mentioned my statement concerning charisms; he had affirmed that this could be the starting point for the work toward the unification of the Churches. I believe, indeed, that the full recognition of the role of the Holy Spirit within the Church is essential to any ecumenical dialogue.⁷⁸

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⁷⁷ Quoted in Page, *Dr. Newman*, p. 187.

⁷⁸ Léon J. Suenens, *Memories and Hopes*, trans. Elena French (Dublin: Veritas: 1992), p. 141.