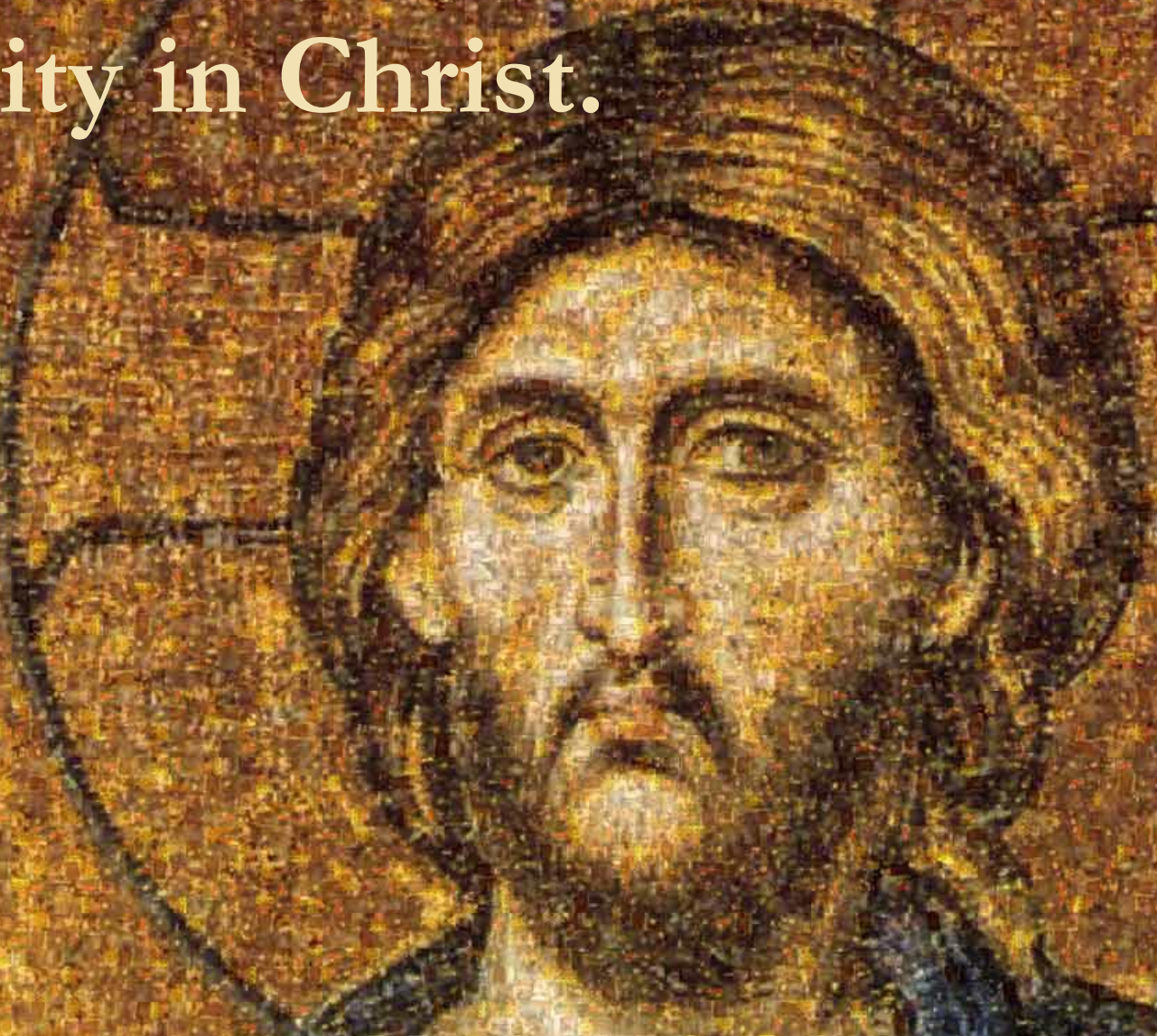


The Church Fathers on the New Solidarity in Christ.



Part 2: Understanding Solidarity as a new way to say “We” in Christ

1. Meaning of Solidarity
2. We have considered how Jesus’ solidarity with us sheds light on his identity.
3. How does Jesus’ solidarity with us give us a new identity? How does it give us a new way to say “we”?
4. New way to say “we” (Church Fathers) → Balthasar describes as “acting area” opened up *in Christ*.

Not just a renewed “I,” but a renewed “We”

What we call the doctrine of the Atonement – the way in which Jesus is believed to atone for the sins of all humankind by receiving a punishment He did not deserve in place of all who did deserve it – is predicated upon the way in which the Word Incarnate by His self-emptying, sacrificial love, first in the Incarnation itself and then in the earthly life, passion, death and resurrection, created a renewed humanity, meaning a new bond among humans in himself.



Divine Child Abuse?

The doctrine is prone to caricature if not understood properly, as though God the Father is wrathful towards humans on account of human sin, and won't be appeased until He sees a sacrifice of human blood that is worthy of His attention, namely, His own beloved Son. This can seem like divine child abuse.

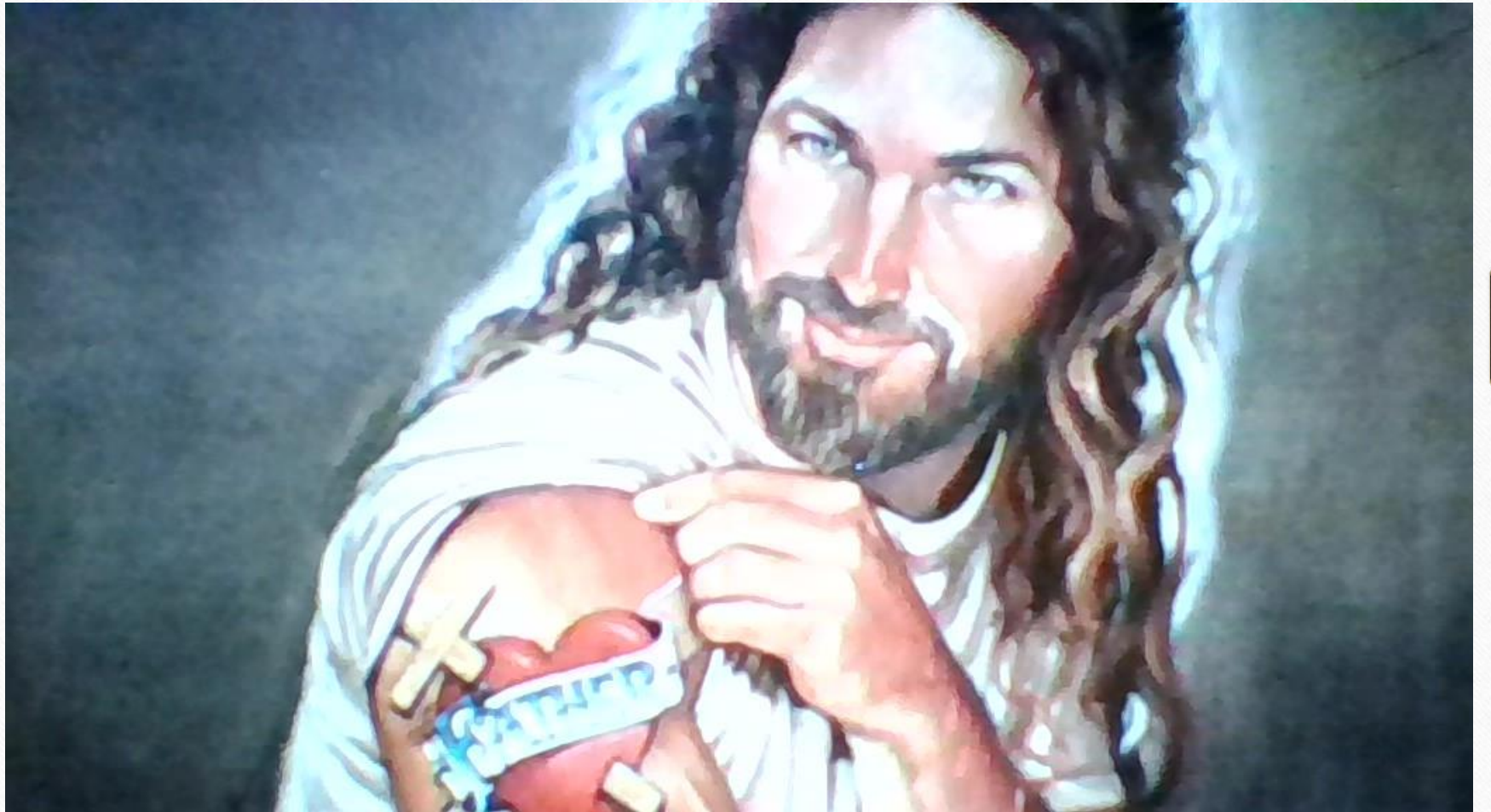


But what is this “justified in his blood”? What I want to know is the potency of this blood that believers should be justified in it, is it really the case that when God the Father was angry with us he saw the death of his son on our behalf and was reconciled to us? Does this mean then that his son was already so reconciled to us that he was even prepared to die for us while the Father was still so angry with us that unless the Son died for us he would not be reconciled with us? (Augustine, *The Trinity*)

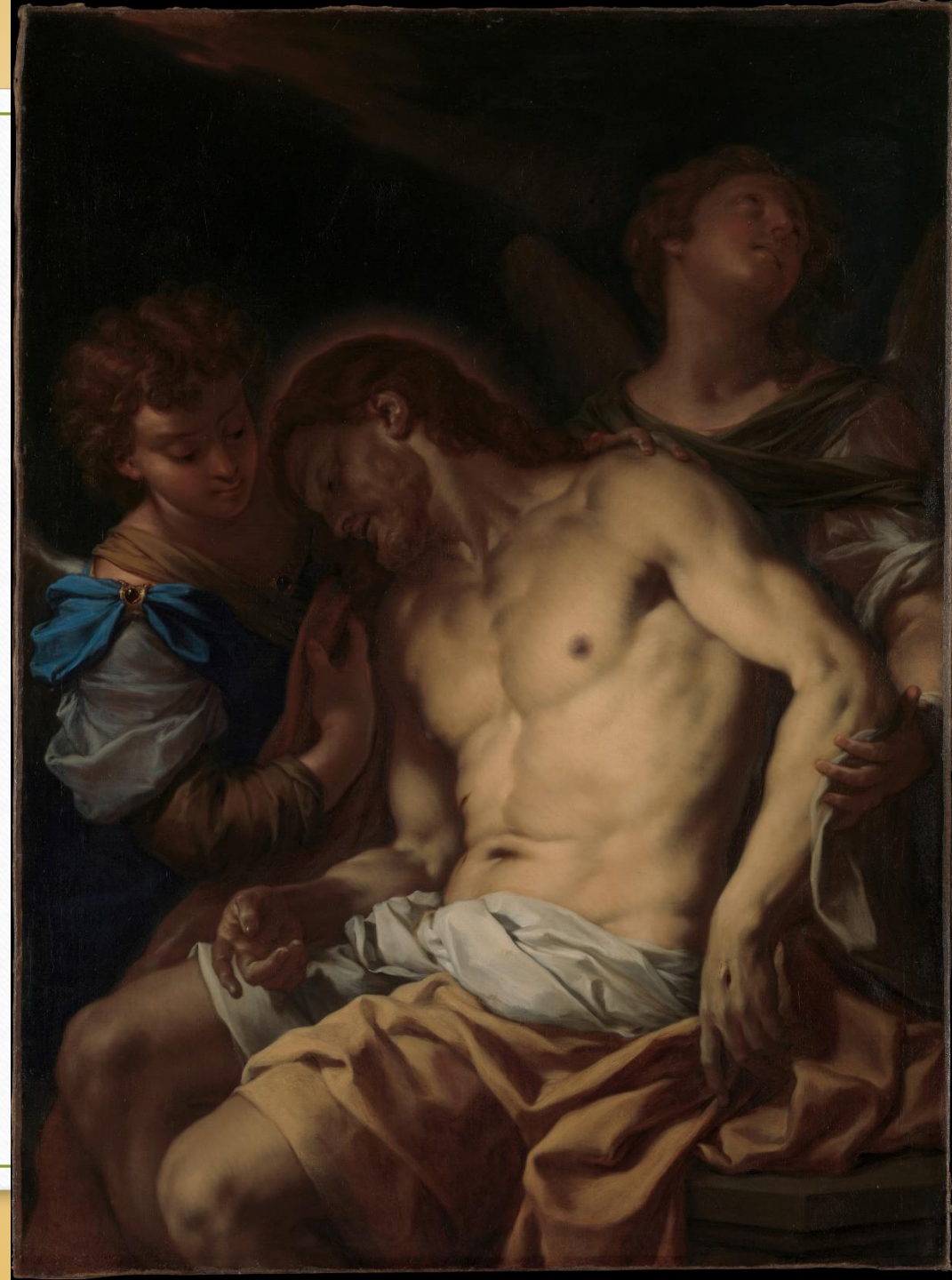
Analogy of a gang, bound in lawlessness



“Like us in all things except sin”

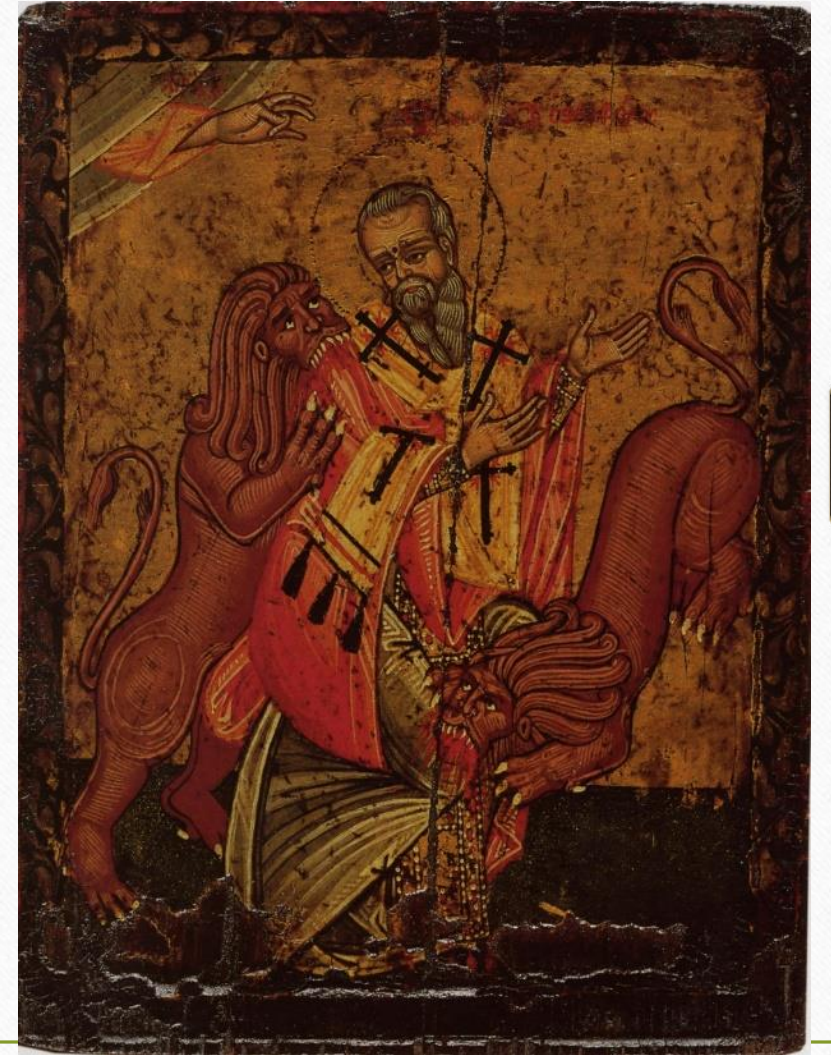


The Church is the new solidarity in Christ, founded on his blood. The Church is a communion or solidarity in the intimate self-gift of the Word incarnate, that is, in His blood, shed out of love, “for the sake of humans and our salvation.”



St. Ignatius of Antioch: Christ's blood *is* our communion

His point is that if the Lord only “seemed” to shed his blood on our behalf, then he only “seemed” to love us. His love is something real in this world of time and history, and it was such a great love it cost Him his life. It is this love — this blood — which is the basis for communion in the Church, which IS that communion.



Scriptural Images for the Church

1. The Church as the Bride of Christ
2. The Church as the Body of Christ



After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), “I am thirsty.” **29** A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. **30** When Jesus had received the wine, he said, “It is finished.” Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.
(John 19:28-30)

Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. **32** Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. **33** But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. **34** Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. **35** (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows[a] that he tells the truth.) **36** These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, “None of his bones shall be broken.” **37** And again another passage of scripture says, “They will look on the one whom they have pierced.” (John 19:31-37)

The Church is born primarily of Christ's total self-giving for our salvation, anticipated in the institution of the Eucharist and fulfilled on the cross. "The origin and growth of the Church are symbolized by the blood and water which flowed from the open side of the crucified Jesus" (*Lumen Gentium*, 3; Cf. John 19:34). "For it was from the side of Christ as he slept the sleep of death upon the cross that there came forth the 'wondrous sacrament of the whole Church'" (*Sancrosanctum Concilium*, 5). As Eve was formed from the sleeping Adam's side, so the Church was born from the pierced heart of Christ hanging dead on the cross (Cf. St. Ambrose, *In Lucam*, 2, 85-89).

(Catechism of the Catholic Church #766)



Cantica. 6. 1.

Vilcher Exc.

6

Regia coelestis natum petit oscula Regis Iamq; ardens animis ad amabile pectus anhelat. Nectare grata magis redolentq; unguenta sacra SPONSUS amans comitem sistit penetrabilis imis: Oscula, SPONSA, oris diu spirantia odorem, Unde velut niveum lac nutrimenta redundant. More Halitus: Ergo hanc thalamo dignatur ~ ipsam Huicq; ferunt alij Proceres sua dona faventes.

By contemplating the pierced side of Christ, Benedict says, we can understand the starting point of this encyclical letter, God is Love. It is there in the image that the Gospel of John presents to us, it is there that this truth can be contemplated. It is from there that our definition of love must begin. In this contemplation the Christian discovers the path along which his life and love must move.

(Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, 7)

Union with Christ is also union with all those to whom he gives himself. I cannot possess Christ just for myself; I can belong to him only in union with all those who have become, or who will become, his own. Communion draws me out of myself towards him, and thus also towards unity with all Christians. We become “one body”, completely joined in a single existence. Love of God and love of neighbour are now truly united: God incarnate draws us all to himself. (Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, 14)

“One body”

“And the two
shall become
one flesh”
(Eph. 5)



Scilicet hæc SPONSA est, et FLOS & nobile germen Atq; uelut ramis Mali felici obumbrat.
Quem DEVS ante alios SPONSVS sibi prætulit omnes, Et fructu beat ubertim folijsq; decorat.

Dextera DEI cultus, & ritus fraude carentes, Hinc uelut ex hilarata meo latatur, & altis
Læua magistratus & publica munia signat: Exilit acta iugis, Cæruæ de more uolantis.

Basic Meaning of “Catholic”

Latin: Catholica

Greek: katholikos (καθ’ ὅλης, Acts 9:31)

Κατα (according to / throughout)

όλος (the whole)

- *According to the whole*
- *Throughout the whole*

“Body of Christ” in Augustine

TOTUS CHRISTUS
(WHOLE CHRIST)

HEAD

MEMBERS



Whose fear is it? Christ's certainly, he says, or is it our fear perhaps? Surely we cannot attribute fear to Christ as his passion loomed when we know that was what he had come for. When he reached that suffering for which he had come, was he afraid of imminent death? Surely even if he had been human only and not God he could have been more joyful at the prospect of future resurrection than fearful because he was about to die, couldn't he? (Augustine, *Expositions on the Psalms* 1-32)

But in fact he who deigned to assume the form of a slave, and within that form to clothe us with himself, he who did not disdain to take us up into himself, did not disdain either to transfigure us into himself, and to speak in our words, so that we in our turn might speak in his. This is the wonderful exchange, the divine business deal, the transaction effected in this world by the heavenly dealer. He came to receive insults and give honors, he came to drain the cup of suffering and give salvation, he came to undergo death and give life. Facing death, then, because of what he had from us, he was afraid, not in himself but in us. When he said that his soul was sorrowful to the point of death, we all unquestionably said it with him.

(Augustine, *Expositions on the Psalms* 1-32)

Because the whole Christ consists of Head and body. The Head is he who is the savior of his body, he who has already ascended into heaven; but the body is the Church, toiling on earth. Were it not for the body's linkage with its Head through the bond of charity, so close a link that Head and body speak as one, he could not have rebuked a certain persecutor from heaven with the question, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? (Acts 9:4).(Augustine, *Expositions on the Psalms 1-32*)

Christ is speaking here in the prophet; no, I would dare to go further and say simply, Christ is speaking. He is going to say certain things in this psalm that we might think inappropriate to Christ, to the excellent dignity of our Head, and especially to the Word who was God with God in the beginning. Some of the things said here may not even seem suitable for him in the form of a servant, that form which he took from the Virgin; and yet it is Christ who is speaking, because in the members of Christ there is Christ. I want you to understand that Head and body together are called one Christ. To make this quite clear he says, when speaking of marriage, They will be two in one flesh; so they are two no longer, but one flesh (Mt 19:5-5)...So out of two people one single person comes to be, the single person that is Head and body, Bridegroom and bride.

(Augustine, *Expositions on the Psalms* 1-32)



*Et curæ & moesti gemitus & quicquid acerbi Ergo his affatur complexi pectus amici, Quisquam alijs Posthæc diuino Emblemate pingunt Florentes instar vitis sue arboris alte.
Ante fuit SPONSE, SPONSO aufugere recepto; Nunc es o ipse meus, nec me, te præter, habebit Cantantes placite speciosa Encomia formæ, CERVA uelut properans, in Regni appellat Olympi.
Cantica. 4. 1.*