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FIDES IN AUGUSTINE'S
SERMONES AD POPULUM
A UNIQUE REPRESENTATION
AND THEMATISATION OF *GRATIA*

Anthony DUPONT*

Résumé. – Dans ses écrits anti-pélagiens, Augustin soutient que l'*initium fidei*, la croissance de la foi et la *perseuerantia* dans la foi sont le résultat de la grâce divine prédestinée. Cet article examine si le thème de la prédestination de la foi figure aussi dans les *sermones ad populum* prêchés durant la controverse pélagienne. Ces sermons constituent des moyens pour encourager les auditeurs à s'engager activement dans la foi chrétienne. À première vue, il ne semble donc pas très 'tactique' pour le prédicateur d'insister sur le rôle exclusif de la grâce divine dans la foi de l'homme. Nos recherches révèlent que, bien qu'Augustin ne rejette pas la grâce de la foi dans ses *sermones* (ce thème est en effet présent, même s'il est peu explicite), l'évêque d'Hippone accorde plus d'importance au rôle de l'homme dans le processus de la foi. Cette préférence est probablement due au genre de l'exhortation, spécifique aux sermons. Comme tels, les sermons montrent que la doctrine augustinienne de la grâce est un rien plus équilibrée qu'on ne le présume parfois.

Abstract. – In his anti-Pelagian writings, Augustine asserts that the *initium fidei*, the growth of faith and the *perseuerantia* in faith are the result of God's predestined grace. The present article studies whether the topic of the predestined grace of faith is likewise present in the *sermones ad populum* preached during the Pelagian controversy. Sermons are meant to exhort the listeners to actively engage in the Christian faith. At first sight it thus does not seem 'tactic' for the preacher to stress that only divine grace has a role to play in the human *fides*. Our research revealed that despite the fact that Augustine does not deny the grace of faith in his *sermones* (this topic is even, although scarcely explicit, present), the bishop of Hippo pays more attention to the human role in the faith process. This preference is probably caused by the specific exhortative genre of the *sermons*. As such, the *sermones* show that Augustine's doctrine of grace is somewhat more balanced than sometimes is presumed.

Mots-clés. – Augustine, *sermones ad populum*, grace, Pelagian controversy, *initium fidei*, perseverance, predestination

* KU Leuven Faculty of Theology, Research Unit History of Church and Theology Sint-Michielsstraat 4 bus 3101, B-3000 Leuven, Belgium.

Anthony.Dupont@theo.kuleuven.be

INTRODUCTION

In his anti-Pelagian writings, Augustine emphasizes that the *initium fidei*, the growth of faith and the *perseuerantia* in faith are rather the result of God's *gratia* than a human accomplishment. Intertwined with Augustine's anti-Pelagian reflection on faith is his claim that predestination, which comprises both the conversion to (*initium fidei*) and the perseverance in faith (*perseuerantia*), is an unmerited divine gift. Coming to and persevering in faith is predestined, and this predestination is an expression of God's gratuitous grace.

Predestination – a fundamental theme of the (Semi-)Pelagian controversy – does at first sight not appear frequently or explicitly in Augustine's *sermones*. Sometimes it is assumed that Augustine deliberately opts to avoid some topics of his doctrine of grace in his sermons because their content seems not 'proper' or not 'tactic' from a pastoral perspective.¹ The bishop of Hippo himself seems to substantiate this hypothesis, by e.g. advising to not teach this doctrine to people who would not understand it in *De dono perseuerantiae* 23, 58, or to not worry about predestination, but instead just attempt to lead a good life in *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 8, 16.² Recently, scholars such as D. Ogliari tend to accept that Augustine, despite his own two advises referred to here above, did not recoil dealing with all aspects of his doctrine of grace in his sermons, such as predestination, but did this perhaps not as often and in-depth as in his systematic

1. A meticulous and exhaustive study of the theology and spirituality of Augustine's *sermones* and his pastoral preaching office remains lacking, although a number of excellent introductions to the material in question have been published, including : G. LAWLESS, « Augustine of Hippo as Preacher », in : F. LEMOINE, C. KLEINHENZ (eds.), *Saint Augustine the Bishop. A Book of Essays*, (Garland Medieval Casebooks ; 9), New-York/London 1994, p. 13-37. G. LAWLESS, « Preaching », in : A. D. FITZGERALD (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, Grand Rapids/Cambridge 1999, p. 676-677. CH. MOHRMANN, « Saint Augustin prédicateur », in : CH. MOHRMANN, *Études sur le Latin des Chrétiens*, Vol. 1, Rome 1958, p. 391-402. G. PARTOENS, « Augustin als Prediger », in : V. H. DRECOLL (ed.), *Augustinus Handbuch*, Tübingen 2007, p. 242-247. G. PARTOENS, « Sermones », in : V. H. DRECOLL (ed.), *Augustinus Handbuch*, p. 393-416. M. PELLEGRINO, « General Introduction », in : J. E. ROTELLE (ed.), *Sermons I (1-19), On the Old Testament*, (The Works of Saint Augustine, A Translation for the 21st Century ; 3/1), New-York 1990, p. 13-163. M. PONTET, *L'exégèse de S. Augustin prédicateur*, (Théologie ; 7), Paris 1946. É. REBILLARD, « Sermones », in : A. D. FITZGERALD (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages*, p. 773-792. F. VAN DER MEER, *Augustine the Bishop : the Life and Work of a Father of the Church*, London, 1961.

For further reading on : Augustine's formation as homilist ; the genre, occasion, context, public and significance of a *sermo* ; the preparation and style of Augustine's *sermones* ; the content of Augustine's *sermones* and the importance of their study ; the chronology and dating of the *sermones ad populum*, we would like to refer to : A. DUPONT, *Gratia in Augustine's Sermones ad Populum during the Pelagian Controversy. Do Different Contexts Furnish Different Insights ?*, (Brill's Series in Church History ; 59), Leiden/Boston 2013, p. 3-35.

2. Cf. M. LAMBERIGTS, « Predestination », A. D. FITZGERALD (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages. An Encyclopedia*, p. 677-679, p. 679.

treatises.³ A famous example that Augustine does not remain silent about 'hard' theological issues in his preaching, is *sermo* 294 (27/06/413),⁴ in which Augustine literally states for a broad audience that if infants die without being baptised, eternal fire is their fate.⁵

The topic of predestination has many manifestations in Augustine's doctrine of grace. The status of faith – completely gratuitous or at least partly the result of human choice – puts the matter of predestination very clear. For this reason the present article examines the position of *fides* in Augustine's *sermones ad populum* in order to establish whether, and if so, to what degree Augustine preaches on predestination.

3. "There are also those who believe that Augustine made a distinction between the speculative/theoretical level and the level of (*ortho*)*praxis*, and that this distinction would correspond to the distinction that should be made between his dogmatic treatises, on one side, and his speeches and sermons to the people, on the other. Although we must acknowledge that speculative and practical theology are situated on different levels, we do not believe that so sharp a distinction can be made between the two realms. We should rather emphasize their fruitful interplay, and the evidence is there to prove that Augustine did not confine himself to discussing predestination in the field of theological speculation alone. Traces of the importance he attached to translating his theological thought into a pastoral language for the benefit of the faithful can be found in speeches and homilies. This shows clearly that the bishop of Hippo did not recoil from preaching openly to his people on issues such as the exclusion of unbaptized children from the kingdom of heaven, God's gratuitous deliverance through baptism from the *massa perditionis* and the *numerus certus* of the elect [*sermo* 26, 13-15 ; 27, 7 ; 47, 15 ; 158 ; 294, 7, 7-8 ; *Enarrationes in psalmos* 64, 2 ; 134, 8-9 ; 150, 3 ; *Tractatus in Euangelium Ioannis* 12, 12 ; 45, 12 ; 53, 5-10 ; 68, 1 ; 86, 2 ; 87, 3]. We might perhaps agree that, in comparison with his theological treatises, Augustine would soften the tone of his sermons and speeches, but even then it does not seem that that was always the case [*Tractatus in Euangelium Ioannis* 53, 6]."

D. OGLIARI, *Gratia et Certamen. The Relationship between Grace and Free Will in the Discussion of Augustine with the so-called Semipelagians*, (BETL ; 169), Leuven 2003, p. 329-330, p. 329 (n. 137).

4. Rebillard : 27/06/413, Gryson : 27/06/413, Hombert : 27/06/413. Even though there exists much literature on the dating of specific *sermones*, we refer at each dating of a *sermo* to three recent chronological overviews, i.e. of É. Rebillard, P.-M. Hombert, R. Gryson, (sometimes G. Partoens's and E. Hill's is added). R. GRYSON, B. FISCHER, H. J. FREDE, *Répertoire général des auteurs ecclésiastiques Latins de l'Antiquité et du Haut Moyen Âge*, 5^e édition mise à jour du Verzeichnis der Sigel für Kirchenschriftsteller, (Vetus Latina, Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel ; 1/1), Freiburg 2007. P.-M. HOMBERT, *Nouvelles recherches de chronologie augustiniennne*, (Collection des Études Augustiniennes, Série Antiquité ; 163), Paris 2000. G. PARTOENS (ed., inl.), J. LÖSSL, *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Sermones in epistolas apostolicas CLI-CLVI*, (Corpus christianorum, Series latina ; 41 Ba, Aurelii Augustini Opera ; 11, 7) Turnhout 2008. É. REBILLARD, « Sermones », in : A. D. FITZGERALD (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages*, p. 773-792. J. E. ROTELLE (ed.), E. HILL (trans., notes), *Sermons*, (The Works of Saint Augustine, A translation for the 21st Century ; III/1-11), New-York 1990-1997.

5. s. 294, 7. Cf. infra.

P.-M. Hombert observed that, although the more general theme of grace is present in Augustine's preaching in the years 395-411,⁶ some specific aspects of his doctrine of grace

6. Hombert concludes, broadly speaking, that the doctrine of grace is present in Augustine's preaching between 395 and 412, albeit in summary fashion and in passing. In contrast to the sermons after 412, however, there is no single homily in the period that has been devoted in its entirety to the topic. In addition, the references to grace in the sermons are never theoretical or systematic. Augustine is consistently dependent on and determined by the scriptural text on which he is offering comment in his sermons on grace. This presence is evenly divided throughout the period in question and does not become observably more intense after 405, the moment at which Pelagius criticised the *Da quod iubes* of the *Confessiones* in Rome. The content of grace relates in the first instance to Christ himself (*gratia Christi*), as does *gratia* as the *auxilium quotidianum* and as the *gratia iustificationis*. Significant antitheses are also present : grace-Law, grace-nature, grace-merit, Adam-Christ, baptism-*concupiscentia*, humility-pride, giving-receiving, desire-capacity, and election-rejection. The Donatist controversy appears to have left its mark on Augustine's early preaching. He accuses the Donatist clergy of behaving as if they owned grace and insist that the latter belongs to God and God alone. Scripture passages such as Rom. 10 :2-3 and Jer. 17 :5, used against the pride of the Donatists, are revisited a few years later as ammunition against the Pelagians (pp. 218-221). The exegesis of a number of biblical themes – such as the *profundum crucis*, the miraculous catch of fish (153 fishes in total ; John 21 :11), the pouring of the Holy Spirit into the hearts of the faithful (Rom. 5 :5) – is given a specific anti-Pelagian significance after 412 that it did not enjoy prior to 412. According to Hombert (pp. 231-242), similarities between pre- and post-412 *gratia* preaching outweigh the differences : “La prédication augustinienne antérieure à 412 atteste en effet amplement une riche et importante doctrine de la grâce. Si riche et parfois si vigoureuse dans ses formulations qu'on serait même tenté de la qualifier d'« antipélagienne ». Mais à tort, car il ne s'agit là que des convictions profondes d'Augustin.” (p. 231.) Hombert observes that there appears to be no discernible evolution in Augustine's thought on the gratuity of grace (*gratia gratis data*). This was an element of Augustine's convictions from the outset and is to be found unchanged – *semper et ubique* – throughout his writings, including pre-412 and beyond *Ad Simplicianum*. Indeed, the continuity of his doctrine of grace is best demonstrated on the basis of his preaching on its gratuitous character. According to Augustine – before, during and after the Pelagian controversy – the underlying reason for this gratuity is the sinfulness of the human person who deserves to be condemned and nothing more (pp. 231-234). Along similar lines, the theme of God rewarding his own gifts and not human merit is prominently present in the early sermons, including ss. 32, 12 ; 62, 8 ; Dolbeau 4, 6 ; Denis 24, 5 (pp. 234-236). The idea that human persons do what is good because God realises this within them is also attested prior to 412 (e.g. in s. Frangipane 5, 6 ; pp. 236-238.) God's grace comes to the aid of human weakness. This *gratia* theme is also clearly evident prior to the Pelagian controversy in sermons such as s. 32, 8-9. Augustine insists repeatedly that the exercise of certain virtues is one of the fruits of grace (s. 55, 2 ; s. 343, 5 ; s. Dolbeau 12, 12). In this context he continuously insists that the martyrs received the help of God in their martyrdom (s. Denis 13, 2 ; 14, 5 ; 15, 3) (pp. 238-241). Hombert also points out that other themes are present prior to 412 : true freedom is received from God as a gift, daily perseverance is a grace, as are the *suavitas* and the *dulcedo gratiae* (p. 242). Hombert concludes (pp. 243-245) : “S'il fallait qualifier la doctrine de la grâce d'Augustin antérieurement à la controverse pélagienne, nous dirions volontiers qu'il s'agit d'une possession tranquille d'une doctrine incluant déjà l'essentiel des thèmes qui seront plus tard développés. [...] il ne faut pas s'étonner si beaucoup de thèmes n'apparaissent pas avant la controverse pélagienne. La raison en est des plus simples : c'est que l'occasion de les développer a manqué à Augustin. [...] Augustin est un pasteur avant tout, c'est-à-dire un homme dont la parole et les écrits répondent aux nécessités du moment, aux sollicitations dont il est l'objet, aux besoins de ses fidèles, aux événements, ou encore aux impératifs de la liturgie. [...] Si donc Pélagie n'était jamais apparu, la théologie augustinienne de la grâce en serait certainement restée à ce que nous avons brièvement analysé : une théologie relativement limitée dans ses analyses, quoique bien réelle et riche d'accents typiques qu'on ne trouve pas chez d'autres auteurs, c'est évident.” (p. 244.) P.-M. HOMBERT, « Augustin, prédicateur de la grâce au début de son épiscopat », in : G. MADEC (ed.), *Augustin Prédicateur (395-411) (Actes du Colloque International de Chantilly, 5-7 septembre 1996)*, Paris 1996, p. 217-245.

– which he expressed in his more systematic treatises of that period – are however absent.⁷ Augustine's teaching on the gratuity of election and on predestination as developed in *Ad Simplicianum* (396/398) appears not to have been echoed in his early preaching. While the theme of Jacob and Esau is present in his sermons, it is not used in relation to the mystery of divine *electio* as Augustine does in *Ad Simplicianum*. Instead the twin brothers symbolize the distinction between the converted *gentes* and rejected Israel, or the good and the bad Christians respectively within the one Church.⁸ The idea that the *initium fidei* is a grace of God is completely absent in Augustine's early preaching.⁹ Romans 7 is present prior to 412, but the way it is employed anticipates nothing of what we find him say about it after 417 in *sermo* 30 (417),¹⁰ for example, or *sermones* 151-154 (417/418).¹¹ In *Ad Simplicianum*, Augustine writes about the divine grace that works directly on our human *uoluntas* in order to make it good. Augustine's homilies are silent about this divine intervention in the human will, perhaps because it was difficult to suggest such a thing without appearing to deny free will. Such sensitivity with respect to the free will is according to Hombert typical of the preaching prior to the Pelagian controversy. During the controversy itself, however, he emphasizes the powerlessness of the human will and our need for God's help, an emphasis not found prior to 412.¹² In this contribution we intend to study whether the topic of the predestined grace of faith is likewise absent in the post-411/412 *sermones*, which are situated during the Pelagian controversy in which this topic held a crucial place.

7. P.-M. HOMBERT, « Augustin, prédicateur », p. 221-231.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 221-224.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 224-226. D. Marafioti studies the presence of the concept of *initium fidei* in Augustine's early writings (until 397), in which Augustine – not willing to compromise the human autonomy – regards the *initium fidei* rather as a result of the human free will than as a gift of divine grace. C. Harrison notices that Augustine, in his early exegesis of Paul in *Epistulae ad Romanos inchoata expositio*, *Expositio quarundam propositionum ex epistula Apostoli ad Romanos* and *Expositio Epistulae ad Galatas* written in 394-396, reacting against Manichean determinism, associates the *initium fidei* with the human will. Harrison observes that this idea is a *hapax* in Augustine's *oeuvre*, differing fundamentally from the content of his previous writings, in which he also recognized the impact of divine grace in matters of faith. In *Ad Simplicianum* (396), Augustine realized that this acceptance of a free will after the fall, an idea he first formulated in the said commentaries on Paul's letters to the Romans and the Galatians, could not be maintained. This is why he used *Ad Simplicianum* to counter the hypothesis that the human will can come to faith on its own initiative. Augustine harks back at this juncture to his earlier ideas, but with a new terminology and greater clarity whereby he insists that the *initium fidei* is also grace. In other words, *Ad Simplicianum* is not a radical break with the past, rather it is a return to his original ideas in order to correct an 'error' made in the context of his anti-Manichean exegesis of Paul in 394-395. C. HARRISON, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology : an Argument for Continuity*, Oxford 2006. D. MARAFIOTI, « Il problema dell' "Initium Fidei" in sant'Agostino fino al 397 », *Augustinianum* 21, 1981, p. 541-565.

10. Rebillard : 412-416, Gryson : September/October 416, Hombert : September-October 416, Partoens/Lössl : late September-early October 417.

11. Rebillard : October 417, Gryson : May 418, Partoens/Lössl : late September/beginning October 417 or May 418. P.-M. HOMBERT, « Augustin, prédicateur », p. 226-227.

12. P.-M. HOMBERT, « Augustin, prédicateur », p. 227-229.

More in particular, we will investigate whether Augustine puts the same stress on *gratia fidei* in his *sermones ad populum* as in his grace treatises that are situated in the Pelagian controversy.¹³ Is there a difference in the treatment of faith (as a form of grace, of predestination) in the anti-Pelagian writings (which are systematic and polemic in nature) and the *sermones* (which have a pastoral and exhortative motivation) ? This question is not illogical. After all, Augustine did not avoid difficult theological subjects in his sermons.¹⁴ He tried to explain complex theological problems and difficult Scripture texts as simply as possible, taking into account the capacities of his audience. We repeat our question : is this also the case for the topic of grace in general and of *gratia fidei/praedestinatio* in

13. This question was also the basis of the following articles, of which this article is a continuation and a thorough revision of research results : G. PARTOENS, « Prédication et liturgie. Le cas des sermons d'Augustin prononcés à Carthage en septembre-octobre 417 », in : N. BÉRIOU, G. MORENZONI (eds.), *Prédication et Liturgie au Moyen Âge*, (Bibliothèque d'Histoire culturelle du Moyen Âge ; 5), Turnhout 2008, p. 23-51. A. DUPONT, « *Gratia Fidei* in the Anti-Pelagian *Sermones ad Populum*. *Sermones* 143 and 144 : the Rare Appearance of John 16, 7-11 », in : G. PARTOENS, A. DUPONT, M. LAMBERIGTS (eds.), *Ministerium Sermonis. Philological, Historical and Theological Studies on Augustine's Sermones ad Populum*, (Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia ; 53), Turnhout 2009, p. 157-197, p. 173-189.

For an analysis of the interaction between Augustine's rhetorical and theological thinking in his sermons, see : B. KURSAWE, *Docere, delectare, mouere : Die officia oratoris bei Augustinus in Rhetorik und Gnadenlehre*, (Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Altertums, Neue Folge ; Reihe 1. Band 15), Paderborn 2000. For a study of the rhetorical structure of Augustine's sermons, see : L. MECHLINSKY, *Der 'modus proferendi' in Augustins 'sermones ad populum'*, (Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Altertums, Neue Folge ; Reihe 1. Band 23), Paderborn 2004.

14. "[...] si nous posons la question de savoir quel est le contenu concret de ses sermons, quels sont les sujets qu'il traite, il faut répondre que sa prédication est inspirée et nourrie par toute son activité littéraire : tout ce que saint Augustin a traité dans ses travaux revient pratiquement dans sa prédication. Même les questions théologiques les plus difficiles et les plus abstraites, comme sa théologie trinitaire, sont discutées dans ses sermons. Pendant toute sa vie sa prédication reflète son activité de théologien et d'écrivain. Il est totalement dépourvu de cet orgueil du savant qui considère sa science comme si difficile et si profonde qu'il ne veut pas en parler aux gens simples. C'est un fait remarquable que ce prédicateur qui s'efforce de parler une langue simple et compréhensible, qui fait des concessions à ses auditeurs en ce qui concerne la forme extérieure de sa prédication, ne leur relâche rien quand il s'agit de la doctrine. La prédication augustinienne revêt un caractère nettement théologique et spéculatif. Il donne dans ses sermons la plénitude de ses connaissances théologiques et de ses expériences spirituelles." CH. MOHRMANN, « Saint Augustin prédicateur », in : CH. MOHRMANN, *Études sur le Latin des Chrétiens*, Vol. 1, Rome 1958, p. 391-402, p. 402.

Pellegrino lists theological themes discussed in Augustine's sermons : Trinity, Christology, Pneumatology, Ecclesiology, Sacramentology, Eucharist, Harmatology, Eschatology. M. PELLEGRINO, « General Introduction », in : J. E. ROTELLE (ed.), *Sermons I (1-19), On the Old Testament*, (The Works of Saint Augustine, A Translation for the 21st Century ; 3/1), New-York 1990, p. 13-163, p. 56-73. Cf. also G. BROCARD, « *Prêcher, c'est instruire, plaire et toucher* ». *La parole de la prédication dans le sermon 137 de saint Augustin. Les enjeux théologiques de l'acte homilétique dans la liturgie eucharistique*, (Mémoire de maîtrise en théologie), Paris 1993. A. OLIVAR, *La Predicación Cristiana Antigua*, (Biblioteca Herder, Sección de Teología y Filosofía ; 189), Barcelona 1991, p. 383-385. H. RONDET, « La théologie de saint Augustin prédicateur », *BLE* 72, 1971, p. 81-105, p. 241-257.

particular? Moreover, in his sermons, he also warns his listeners against wrong theological opinions such as those of the Pelagians, against which tenet he deployed his doctrine of grace in its fullest strength in his systematic writings.

The main aim of preaching is to incite Christians to embrace the Christian faith, not to sin anymore, to continuously work actively at a Christian life, to dedicate them to prayer. Thus, the question is whether Augustine in his sermons, just as in his anti-Pelagian writings, explains that this life of good works, prayer and faith is ultimately not the work of human beings but that it is the fruit of God's predestining grace, and moreover that humans do not have any part, initiative or responsibility in their salvation. After all, at first sight it does not seem very tactical from the pastoral point of view to urge the faithful to do their best and at the same time to say that, actually, they do not have any initiative, control and responsibility, but that everything is the work of God and that all human choices and actions are predestined. The goal of the *sermones ad populum* was to encourage the faithful to embrace the right faith and to be actively committed as believers in a Christian praxis and devotional life. Therefore it seemed relevant to investigate whether he is doing so in the same way as he did in his anti-Pelagian (polemical) tractates, where the emphasis is placed on all inclusive grace. For this reason, this article presents an inventory of the presence of the topics of faith and predestination in *sermones* that can be considered as containing anti-Pelagian elements.¹⁵

We will discuss the finding places of these topics in the *sermones* when they bear any significance regarding the relation between human responsibility and divine grace. We opted to present this oversight in a thematic way – themes related to Augustine's doctrine of grace – and not in a chronological way, since the chronology of the *sermones* is not without any debate. Despite these chronology discussions, some *sermones* can however be dated and placed within the content wise evolution of the Pelagian controversy with some certainty. For example, during the period of September-October 417 Augustine held in Carthage a series of at least 11 *sermones* against Pelagianism – *sermones* 26, 30, 131, 151-156, 163, 165 – which we will study with great care in this article.

15. ss. 26, 30, 71, 72A, 100, 114, 115, 125(?), 125 A, 128, 131, 137, 143, 142(?), 144, 145(?), 151-156, 154A, 158, 159, 160(?), 163, 163A, 165, 166, 168, 169, 170, 174, 176, 181, 183, 193, 214(?), 250, 260D, 270, 272B, 283(?), 290, 293, 294, 299, 333, 335B, 348A, 351(?), 363, 365(?).

1. – IS FAITH A WORK OF MAN ?

Sermo 165 (417)¹⁶ is a strong example of anti-Pelagian polemics. *Sermo* 165, 6 for example speaks in a satirical way about *nouelli*, clearly referring to the Pelagians, without however mentioning their name, and attacking their opinion of infant baptism, or at least Augustine's representation of their baptismal doctrine. In the most vehement way he argues that also innocent babies are born with original sin, the core of his anti-Pelagian doctrine of grace.¹⁷ It is however curious to observe that in such a sermon with a clear anti-Pelagian stance, Augustine is not so clear about the status of faith. *Sermo* 165, 2 deals with the role of the human will in the act of faith.¹⁸ Augustine explains that Paul in Eph. 3 :13-16 indicates that in order to receive the *gratia diuinae bonitatis*, man has to open his *uoluntas*, so that God, through his Spirit, would strengthen man with *uirtus*.¹⁹ This strengthening happens according to Eph. 3 :16c-18 : “in interiore homine habitare Christum per fidem in cordibus uestris [...] atque ita in charitate radicati et fundati possitis comprehendere cum omnibus sanctis [...] quae sit latitudo, longitudo, altitudo et profundum.”²⁰ Whether this *fides* of Eph. 3 :17 belongs according to Augustine to the *gratia* to be received on behalf of God, or because of the preparing of the *uoluntas* to man himself, he does not make explicit. Otherwise put, he does not state whether this *fides* is given to man to enable man to receive grace or that it is a part of man's active opening his will to receive grace, which would be a very (semi-)Pelagian idea. In the continuation of his sermon Augustine however shifts faith to the level of grace in an indirect way. He states that the *comprehendere* of Eph. 3 :18 refers to the insight into the four dimensions (width, length, height, depth) of the cross and that this insight is given by

16. Rebillard : near 417, Gryson : 417.

17. In a sharp fictive dialogue (*dialecticon*) Augustine makes his ‘Pelagian adversary’ contend in a stubborn way that God creates each man immortal. The death of new borns is in this Pelagian schema explained as a punishment of personal sins of babies, committed in the period between their conception and death. Augustine strongly denies that the death of infants can be explained by personal sinfulness, since they cannot sin personally without *uoluntatis arbitrium*. The only sin they possess, is the sin they inherited from Adam. Consequently, their death is caused by this Adamic sin. “Ecce infantes in suis utique operibus innocentes sunt, nihil secum nisi quod de primo homine traxerunt habentes : quibus propterea est gratia Christi necessaria, ut in Christo uiuificentur, qui in Adam mortui sunt ; ut quia inquinati sunt generatione, purgentur regeneratione.” s. 165, 7. *PL* 38 c. 906/28-33. Augustine concludes with his exegesis of Rom. 5 :12 : All are condemned in Adam, also the babies. All, also the infants, need the same grace of Christ (s. 165, 9). Cf. G. PARTOENS, « The Pelagians on Immortal Babies and Sinning Foetuses. A Rhetorical Analysis of Sermon 165 with Particular Attention to §§ 6-8 », in : J. YATES, M. LAMBERIGTS (eds.), *Sicut scripsit apostolus : The Text of the Apostle Paul in Augustine and his Pelagian Opponents (411-430)*, (The Bible in Ancient Christianity series), Leiden/Boston 2009, in print.

18. s. 165, 1 makes clear that Augustine does not want to deny the necessity of the consent of human free will, but that he only wants to deny the idea that free will is all what man needs. Man's will has to consent, but however is weak without God's help.

19. Cf. G. PARTOENS, « Prédication et liturgie », p. 36-39.

20. s. 165, 2. *PL* 38 c. 903/38-43.

God to man.²¹ This *comprehendere* comes – in Augustine's thinking – very close to *credere*. In this way the gift character of grace is affirmed and is actually applied on faith, be it in a very indirect way while the rest of the sermon is anti-Pelagian in a very direct way.²²

Sermo 335B (415-420)²³ is an exhortation to imitate the martyrs. Augustine asks to, just as the martyrs, only put faith in Christ (*fidere, fides*). “[...] fidas in eo : princeps principum Deus ipse te a<d>iuuat, ut fidas. Fidus esto de fide [...]”²⁴ Augustine admits it is the martyr himself who does not trust himself, despises death, does not deny Christ, believes, obeys to God's order. Consequently, faith is a part of man's works. Augustine however immediately adds that man is not able to achieve all this without the Helper (Ps (145) 146 :5), without Christ.²⁵ As such, Augustine envisages a balance between human action and divine assistance.²⁶

2. – BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF FAITH

Sermo 174 (411-413)²⁷ introduces the subject of faith within the context of God's priority (Rom. 8 :30). Man does not come to the cleanser of sin, if first God has not seen that man in sin. “Vt uideremus, uisi sumus ; ut diligeremus, dilecti sumus.”²⁸ This principle of God's priority Augustine applies to Zachaeus. Christ had already welcomed Zachaeus in Zachaeus' heart. Next, Zachaeus could receive him in his house. Christ was already in Zachaeus' heart. It was Christ Himself speaking to Himself the words coming from Zachaeus' mouth. Christ lives through faith in the heart of those who believe. Augustine quotes here Eph. 3 :17 : “habitare Christum per fidem in cordibus uestris.”²⁹ The question is whether this prior residing of Christ points towards the fact that belief in Christ has been given to Zachaeus, or whether this belief is actually Zachaeus' own response to that inhabiting. Augustine says about Zachaeus : “Qui magnum et ineffabile beneficium putabat, transeuntem uidere, subito meruit in domo habere.

21. s. 165, 3-5.

22. s. 165, 2. “Det, inquit, uobis [Eph. 3 :16]. Non enim habetis, nisi det uobis.” *PL* 38 c. 903/35-39.

“Cette interprétation, qui touche au mystère de l'élection et qui est typique de l'exégèse d'Eph 3,18 à l'époque de la controverse pélagienne, exclut que la grâce divine, dont il est question dans les versets 14-16, soit interprétée comme la récompense divine de quelconque mérite de la part de l'homme.” G. PARTOENS, « Prédication et liturgie », p. 38.

23. s. Guelf. 31. Rebillard : 410-412, Gryson : 415-420, Hombert : 415-420.

24. s. 335B, 4. *MiAg* 1 p. 561/18.

25. s. 335B, 5.

26. Augustine underlines the human responsibility of faith in s. 142, 8. He states that believing before seeing is the way to deserve *uisio*. “Credere antequam uideas, meritum est futurae uisionis.” By postponing the gift of these *boni*, the human capacity is trained. This postponement renders man capable to receive what he/she longs for and is promised by God. This *sermo* however is only situated in the Pelagian controversy by Hill (413-417) and not by Rebillard (404) and Gryson (404-406). Cf. G. PARTOENS, « A More Original Version of S. 142 of Saint Augustine », *Augustiniana* 60/2, 2010, p. 119-144.

27. Rebillard : 411-413, Gryson : 413, Hombert : 411-413.

28. s. 174, 4. *PL* 38 c. 942/55.

29. s. 174, 5. *PL* 38 c. 943/14.

Infunditur gratia, operatur fides per dilectionem ; suscipitur Christus in domum, qui iam habitabat in corde.”³⁰ That Zachaeus receives grace is evident, but whether this is also the case with his belief is less clear. Has faith been given to him, or is it his own initiative ? The general tone of the *sermo* denies any human merit and underlines for example that babies are brought to baptism by the faith of others.

A current theme within the *sermones* is the faith of Mary, from which Christ is born. *Sermo* 290 (feast of John the Baptist (24th of June) in the period 412-416)³¹ points to the difference between the reactions of Zachary and Mary to the angel’s promise that they will have a child. Zachary inquired about the way in which and the means through which this would happen, and this he did from disbelief. He and his wife were already old. For this disbelief he was punished with muteness (Luke 1 :20).³² Mary asks the same question (Luke 1 :18), but with her it was not like Zachary a question coming from disbelief, but merely a request for more information. Mary did not doubt the promise, she had no lack of hope.³³ Augustine exclaims : “O uere gratia plena (cf. Luke 1 :28).”³⁴ “Quis hanc explicet gratiam ? Quis huic gratiae gratias agendo sufficiat ?”³⁵ What exactly the *gratia*-status is of Mary’s faith, Augustine does not explain. The continuation of the *sermo* can point in a certain direction. On the basis of Mary’s words in Luke 1 :53 Augustine draws a distinction between *humiles* and *indigentes* (the hungry from Luke 1 :53) and the *superbi* and *inflati* (the rich from Luke 1 :53). Here Augustine draws a parallel with the contrast between the Pharisee (full of *superbia* and not of *iustitia*, Luke 18 :10-12) and the publican (who humbly confesses his own sinfulness, Luke 18 :13) in the temple.³⁶ Those who call themselves rich, pride themselves and say : “si uolo, iustus sum ; si nolo, iustus non sum.”³⁷ The ‘Pharisees’, the ‘rich’, think that – although they received from God *caro, sensus, anima, mens* and *intelligentia* – *iustitia* is their own, that they can decide for themselves, that it is within their *potestas* to be *iustus*. Augustine replies that this is completely wrong and he ends with the call to the ‘rich man’ on the basis of 1 Cor. 4 :7 (“Quid enim habes, quod non accepisti ?”),³⁸ to thank the Lord at least for what the rich one claims to possess,

30. s. 174, 5. *PL* 38 c. 943/4-5.

31. Rebillard : 24/06/412-416, Gryson : 24/06/412-416.

32. s. 290, 4.

33. s. 290, 5.

34. s. 290, 5. *PL* 38 c. 1315/2.

35. s. 290, 5. *PL* 38 c. 1315/4.

36. s. 290, 6.

37. s. 290, 7. *PL* 38 c. 1316/3.

38. In this article, we find 1 Cor. 4 :7 quoted in ss. 30, 163, 168, 290, 299. P.-M. Hombert offers an overview of the use of 1 Cor. 4 :7 in Augustine’s preaching in the period 411-418 (esp. s. Lambot 7, s. 155, 4 ; 168, 3 ; 185, 3 ; 284, 3 ; 299, 3-5 ; 351, 4 ; 363, 2-4). The sermons in question, which are not systematic tractates that explicitly deal with the subject of grace, are geared towards instruction in the Christian life. Nevertheless, they use the verse for the most part in the same sense as the aforementioned tractates. The verse occurs with frequency in Augustine’s preaching. It is applied to various realities, but its fundamental object is to underline the gifts of God (God grants *iustificatio*, salvation, the theological virtues, good works and concrete virtues such as *continentia*

namely *caro, sensus, anima, mens, intelligentia*. Without applying it to faith, the stress in this sermon is put on God's gifts. On the same feast of John the Baptist, 24th of June, in the year 413 Augustine uses in *sermo* 293 the same contrast between Mary and Zachary.³⁹ Mary and Zachary give almost the same response to the angel, yet with a different intention in their heart. Zachary asks the question about 'how' (Luke 1 :18) from disbelief, Mary on the other hand, from belief (Luke 1 :34). God penetrates the thoughts hidden in both replies. Because of his disbelief Zachary is struck with dumbness.⁴⁰ Mary however believed, "Et fide concipitur. Fit prius aduentus fidei in cor uirginis, et sequitur fecunditas in utero matris."⁴¹ This wording does however not make clear whether Mary's belief is her own doing, or whether this belief has been given to her.

The theme of the conversion of Saul to Paul regularly crops up in Augustine's *sermones-corporis*. In *sermo* 299 (29/06/413)⁴² Augustine emphasizes that God rewards Paul for the gifts – the waged good war, the completed race, the kept faith – which God Himself has given to Paul. Paul returns to God what he already has received from God – Augustine quotes here 1 Cor. 4 :7.⁴³ Saul/Paul – the persecutor – does not deserve his conversion. It was granted to him not because of his merits, but gratuitous as grace, from God's *miser cordia*. This happened as a paragon for all who will believe in Christ : that no one should ever despair to seek forgiveness when even Saul was granted forgiveness.⁴⁴ Thus, Paul's beginning and keeping of faith are gratuitously given to him by God. Augustine's concluding exhortation points on the one hand to an active component of man in this *perseuerantia*. He asks the faithful to hold on to their belief, stand firm against those who question the stability of the faith. About the group, patently obvious as the 'Pelagians', who, according to Augustine increase in number, he says :

and *patientia*), invite us to be humble, and trust in divine grace. As a consequence, the verse tends to be associated in the preaching context with subjects such as pride and humility. For Hombert, this confirms his conclusion that humility and gratitude are the foundations of Augustine's theology of grace. For the use of 1 Cor. 4 :7 (and 1 Cor. 1,31) during the period 411-418 and in the context that all good works and virtues are granted to us by God : see P.-M. HOMBERT, « La confession de l'Église "glorieuse dans le seigneur" : "Qu'avons-nous que nous n'avons reçu ?". Le témoignage de la prédication 412-418 », in : P.-M. HOMBERT, *Gloria gratiae. Se glorifier en Dieu, principe et fin de la théologie augustinienne de la grâce*, (Collection des Études Augustiniennes, Série Antiquité ; 148), Paris 1996, 198-217. For the use of 1 Cor. 4 :7 and the idea of the grace filled gift of the *initium fidei* in the period 418-430, see : P.-M. HOMBERT, « Rendus fidèles et persévérants "afin de se glorifier dans le seigneur" », in : P.-M. HOMBERT, *Gloria gratiae*, p. 284-313. See also : M. LAMBERIGTS, « The Presence of 1 Cor. 4, 7 in the Anti-Pelagian Works of Augustine », *Augustiniana* 56, 2006, p. 373-399.

39. Rebillard : 24/06/413, Gryson : 24/06/413, Hombert : 24/06/413.

40. s. 137, 3 (Rebillard : 408-411, Gryson : Lent 410/420 rather 412/416, Hombert : 410-420) : Jesus saw the faith of Peter in his confession (John 21 :15-17).

41. s. 293, 1. *PL* 38 c. 1327/37-39.

42. Traditionally, this *sermo* is situated on June 29th 418. Hombert argues convincingly – based on elements of content, clear links with the (anti-Pelagian) writings of 412-413 and the manuscript tradition – in favour of June 29th 418. P.-M. HOMBERT, *Nouvelles recherches*, p. 387-398.

43. s. 299, 3. s. 299, 5.

44. s. 299, 6.

“sed non uincant patientiam nostram : nec tamen euertant fidem nostram.”⁴⁵ The faithful are in other words in this sense, themselves responsible for the rightness of their belief, to defend themselves : “aduersus nouitates disputationum, humanarum utique, non diuinarum.”⁴⁶ With this Augustine on the other hand refers again to the divine character of belief.

3. – FAITH IN SCRIPTURES

John 16 :8-11⁴⁷ – and particularly the explanation of the triptych *peccatum, iustitia, iudicium* – only occurs two times in Augustine’s *sermones* : *sermones* 143 and 144. The elaboration of these three concepts in *sermo* 143 (410-412)⁴⁸ – respectively not believing in Christ, *spiritualiter* believing Christ, actively resisting the devil – suggests within the framework of faith as a gift of grace a special attention for the human role in faith. Salvation exists in being incorporated into the body of Christ through faith (*per fidem*). While the human sin through and in Adam happens *naturaliter*, salvation happens through belief, via adoption by God, to become *filius Dei*. “In eum quippe credentes, filii Dei fiunt ; quia ex Deo nascuntur per adoptionis gratiam, quae est in fide Iesu Christi Domini nostri”.⁴⁹ Augustine remarks that all sins are rectified by believing in the Lord. Then he asks himself (rhetorically) on which sin the Holy Spirit will pass judgment at his coming, seeing that Christ had announced in John 16 :8 : “arguet mundum de peccato, et de iustitia, et de iudicio” ? John 16 :9 answers that this is the sin of not believing in Christ. This concerns the most fundamental sin, the sin which binds all sins together. Only to the extent that the faithful hold on to their belief in Christ – through which they become children of God and co-heirs of Christ by adoption (because of John 1 :12 : “dedit illis potestatem filios Dei fieri, credentibus in eum”) – do they not sin. This sin of unbelief was added to the sins of those who do not believe after the coming of Christ (cf. John 15 :22), and this sin of unbelief holds together all their other sins. This applies notably also to the unbelief of the Jews. For those who do believe, this absence of unbelief is the reason that their sins have been forgiven. Augustine thus states that salvation stands or falls with belief in Christ.⁵⁰ The Holy Spirit comes and will judge according to the sin of unbelief. The arrival of the Holy Spirit is a gift of grace, bestowed upon the faithful. Whether we should consider faith itself as grace, as a gift of the Holy Spirit, has not been sharply set down by Augustine. We could even contend that Augustine heightens the confusion by saying : “Non autem esset meritum grande credentium et beatitudo gloriosa, si semper Dominus in resuscitato corpore

45. s. 299, 12. PL 38 c. 1376/24.

46. s. 299, 12. PL 38 c. 1376/25.

47. “Ipse arguet mundum de peccato, et de iustitia, et de iudicio. De peccato quidem, quia non crediderunt in me. De iustitia, quia ad Patrem uado ; et iam non uidebitis me. De iudicio, quia princeps huius mundi iudicatus est.”

48. Rebillard : 410-412, Gryson : 410-412.

49. s. 143, 1. PL 38 c. 785/7.

50. s. 143, 2.

humanis oculis appareret.”⁵¹ Is it then a human merit to believe in the Lord without seeing his risen body? Also in the continuation of this *sermo*, Augustine does not clarify that faith itself is already a gift of grace, but this position can be considered the implicit consequence of the reasoning behind this sermon. Augustine continues his sermon by explaining that the gift – *hoc magnum munus* – of the Holy Spirit exists in a spiritual longing for Christ – not with the eyes of flesh such as with Thomas (cf. John 20 :28-29), but with purified minds – in the (risen) form in which Christ is equal to the Father (and therefore not in the form of the Incarnation). With Rom. 10 :6-10, Augustine argues that salvation consists of belief in the risen Christ and in *iustitia*.⁵² When Augustine here thus states that seeing Christ *spiritualiter* is a gift of the Spirit, we can conclude that he means that belief in Christ is a *gratia*-gift of the Spirit. This he confirms in the further development of the sermon : “Cum ergo hanc beatitudinem, qua non uidemus et credimus, nullo modo haberemus nisi eam a Spiritu Sancto acceperimus ; [...]”⁵³ On the basis of Rom. 10 :6-10, in which Paul links belief in the resurrection of Christ with belief in *iustitia*, Augustine returns to the initial pericope from John 16. For the Holy Spirit comes to *arguere* the *iustitia* of the world (John 16 :8-10). The *iustitia fidei* is to be found in believing *spiritualiter* in Christ, not *carnaliter*.⁵⁴ Here, it becomes once more unclear to which degree belief is a completely gratuitous gift of grace, when Augustine states that this belief *spiritualiter* is the only belief with which we can be justified, with which we ‘deserve’ (*mereri*) to contemplate the Word. Maybe Augustine intended it to be more subtle, for he states that if the bodily Christ would not have gone away, belief *spiritualiter* – which is necessary to be justified – would never have been possible. To put it briefly, belief *spiritualiter* is necessary to earn contemplation, but this necessity has been made possible by Christ and is in this respect a gift of Christ.⁵⁵ Augustine further adds that man, reconciled by God, can see Him *spiritualiter*.⁵⁶ Reconciliation by God is in other words a second condition, a second gift of God, which leads to a correct contemplation of God and therefore to salvation. Augustine ends his consideration on *iustitia* with the pericope : “iustus ex fide uiuit” (Rom. 1 :17 ; Gal. 3 :11 ; Hab. 2 :4).⁵⁷ Once more Augustine offers no opinion on whether this *fides* comes from human merit or is God’s gratuitous gift. He explains the pericope with a sentence in which human passivity (*perficimur*) and activity (*uiuimus*) are coupled with each other : “siue ergo quia in illo resurgentes, et in illo ad Patrem uenientes inuisibiliter et in iustificatione perficimur ; siue

51. s. 143, 3. *PL* 38 c. 786/4.

52. s. 143, 3.

53. s. 143, 4. *PL* 38 c. 786/37.

54. s. 143, 4.

55. s. 143, 4. “Semper quidem diuinitate nobiscum est : sed nisi corporaliter abiret a nobis, semper eius corpus carnaliter uideremus, et nunquam spiritualiter crederemus ; qua fide iustificati et beatificati, id ipsum uerbum Deum apud Deum, per quod facta sunt omnia, et quod caro factum est, ut habitaret in nobis, corde mundato contemplari mereremur.” *PL* 38 c. 786/42.

56. s. 143, 4.

57. s. 143, 4. *PL* 38 c. 787/9.

quia non uidentes et credentes ex fide uiuimus, quoniam *iustus ex fide uiuit* [...].”⁵⁸ However, here also Augustine does not clarify exactly the status of *fides*, belonging to human activity or passivity. The third subject of judgment of the Holy Spirit is the *iudicium* (John 16 :8.11) : how the believers deal with the devil’s external attacks, is the object of the *iudicium*. Those who withstand this external attack – martyrs preeminently – do this in the power of Christ. Successful resistance against the devil is grace, a gift of the Holy Spirit. “Sed in quo uicerunt, nisi in illo in quem crediderunt, et quem non uidentes dilexerunt, et quo dominante in cordibus suis pessimo dominatore caruerunt ? Et hoc totum per gratiam, hoc est, per donum Spiritus Sancti.”⁵⁹ With this Augustine emphasizes the element of grace in the workings of the Holy Spirit. However, whether this working of grace also bestows the gift of belief Augustine does not make explicit. This emerges also in fact in the last sentence of the *sermo*, in which he briefly restates his explanation of John 6 :7-11 : “Recte itaque idem Spiritus arguit mundum, et de peccato, quia non credit in Christum : et de iustitia, quia qui uoluerunt crediderunt, quamuis in quem crediderunt non uiderunt ; et per eius resurrectionem se quoque in resurrectione perfici sperauerunt : et de iudicio, quia ipsi si uellent credere, a nullo impedirentur, quoniam princeps huius mundi iam iudicatus est.”⁶⁰ This closing sentence puts faith rather with human will power - *uelle* - than with divine initiative.

Sermo 144 (around 416)⁶¹ also contends that when the Holy Spirit comes He will judge the world on its (actually only) sin of not believing in Christ, the sin which includes all sins. The reason why grace is called grace is that it is no payment as a reward after a meritorious service, but rather it is a gift being granted *post ueniam delictorum*. Augustine gives the reason for this very briefly : seeing that the whole of mankind (since Adam) is sinful, no human being exists who would be able to earn grace with merit.⁶² Augustine continues by specifying the correct form of *credere* as *credere* in which *fides*, *spes*, and *dilectio* (*credere*, *sperare*, *diligere*) coincide. Also the demons believed in Christ, however not in the correct way, not with *spes* and *dilectio*.⁶³ Through faith, Christ enters the believer and the believer becomes a member of Christ’s body, and this is only possible if belief and love are also present.⁶⁴ In *sermo* 144 *iustitia* belongs to Christ. The *iustitia* from and for Christ is that He ascends to the Father. This allows Augustine again to emphasize the context of grace. Christ’s coming to earth was not something which mankind deserved ; it was no expression of *iustitia*, but

58. s. 143, 4. *PL* 38 c. 787/11.

59. s. 143, 5. *PL* 38 c. 787/34-37.

60. s. 143, 5. *PL* 38 c. 787/38.

61. Rebillard : 412-416, Gryson : around 416.

62. s. 144, 1. “Gratia quippe Dei, donum Dei est. Donum autem maximum ipse Spiritus Sanctus est ; et ideo gratia dicitur. Cum enim omnes peccassent, et egerent gloria Dei ; quia per unum hominem peccatum intrauit in mundum, et per peccatum mors, in quo omnes peccauerunt : ideo gratia, quia gratis datur. Ideo gratis datur, quia non quasi merces redditur post discussionem meritorum, sed donum datur post ueniam delictorum.” *PL* 38 c. 788/20-27.

63. s. 144, 2.

64. s. 144, 2.

of God's *misericordia*.⁶⁵ In this *misericordia* Augustine sees above all a moral lesson for the believer. Man can only reach *iustitia*, in extending himself *misericordia*,⁶⁶ and by following Christ's example of humility (by becoming human as God, Phil. 2 :3-8). Because of God's humility, it is *iustitia* that He ascends to the Father (again Phil. 2 :9-11).⁶⁷ The believers will, being part of Christ, share in Christ's Ascension.⁶⁸ Already believers, together with Christ the head, form the one Christ, albeit still only in belief and hope. After the final resurrection of the dead, when this hope is fulfilled, the *iustificatio* of man will also be fulfilled. This *iustificatio* is fulfilled by the Lord.⁶⁹ He repeats several times that *iustitia* is directed to man, and completed by God, in other words, that man himself does not bring this about.

In *sermo* 363, 2 (412-416)⁷⁰ Augustine combines *Hab. 2 :4* (Rom. 1 :17 ; Gal. 3 :11) "*iustus ex fide uiuit*", with Rom. 4 :5 : "crendo in eum qui iustificat impium, ut deputetur fides eius ad iustitiam." Based on this Augustine says about God's people (the *fideles*, baptized ones) "per fidem iustificati sunt...", "sed gubernasti iustitia tua populum tuum, non praesumentem de iustitia sua, sed ex fide uiuentem sub gratia tua : populum tuum hunc, quem liberasti."⁷¹ In other words, Augustine is careful not to give the impression that man deserves *iustitia* through faith. *Iustitia* and *fides*, as is evident from Rom. 1 :17 and Rom. 4 :5, are bound closely together. *Iustitia*, however, does not come from man, but is the result of grace. In brief, this also applies to *fides*.⁷² *Sermo* 158 (around 418)⁷³ emphatically posits that belief is a gift from God which precedes human initiative. God does not call man because man honours Him. No, man honours God, because God has called him.⁷⁴ When man turned away from God, God called man. While man was a sinner, man became justified by God.⁷⁵ On the basis of *Hab. 2 :4* in *sermo* 158, 4, *iustitia* and *fides* are connected with each other. *Fides* is given to man. Christians already have some *iustitia* – namely by believing what they cannot see (John 20 :27-29) – but that *iustitia* still has to grow by receiving the Holy Spirit and by making daily progress.⁷⁶ Here it does not concern the *fides* of demons (Js. 2 :19) – *fides* out of fear – but the *fides* of Peter (Mt. 16 :16-17) in which hope and love are present, a belief which works through love

65. s. 144, 2-3.

66. s. 144, 3.

67. s. 144, 4.

68. s. 144, 5.

69. s. 144, 6.

70. Rebillard : Easter Vigil ? 412-416, Gryson : Probably Easter Vigil 414.

71. s. 363, 2. *PL* 39 c. 1637/14.

72. Within the anti-Pelagian sermons, Rom. 4 :5 only appears further in s. 160, 7 (Rebillard : 397, Gryson : 415-416, Hombert : 415-416). Rom. 4 :5 and Rom. 10 :4 link *iustitia* and *fides* together. However, Augustine forcibly points out that this *iustitia* is the work of God and not that of man.

73. Rebillard : not before 418, Gryson : near 418.

74. s. 158, 3.

75. s. 158, 1 ; 3 ; 4.

76. s. 158, 5.

(Gal. 5 :6).⁷⁷ Belief and hope disappear when they have reached their goal, namely to see God.⁷⁸ In this context Augustine quotes Eph. 3 :17 to underline that Christ is present in the human heart through faith.⁷⁹ Belief is in other words God's initiative, in which man has to answer in the right way, and in this answer of faith he/she is helped by the Holy Spirit.

Augustine summarizes his *sermo* 168 (around 416)⁸⁰ : "Verum dicis : tu credidisti, sed non tibi tu fidem dedisti. Vnde autem credidisti, nisi ex fide ? Fides in te donum Dei est."⁸¹ Based on Eph. 6 :23 Augustine connects *fides* with *caritas* and *pax*. Good Christian faith is the starting point and peace the final goal. This faith works *per dilectionem* (Gal. 5 :6), and can thus be distinguished from the faith of demons (Jas. 2 :19 ; Mk. 1 :24 ; 3 :11), who only believe out of fear. As with the demons, Peter also recognizes Christ as the Son of God, but his confession is rooted in love rather than fear (Mt. 16 :16-17).⁸² Faith rooted in love and love rooted in faith lead to genuine *pax*, a peace without *pestis* and without *hostis*, the peace that is the ultimate goal of all good *desideria*. Augustine speaks in *sermo* 168, 2 of *initium in fide/a fide*, in order to underline the fact that faith works through love. This, however, is not the technical *gratia* term *initium fidei*. T. G. Ring points out that the use of the expression here is unrelated to the question whether the beginning of faith is divine grace or human merit. In the sermon in question, the concept

77. s. 158, 6. *Credere in Deum*, as a personal movement towards God (out of love : Gal. 5 :6) is more than mere *credere Deum*. The demons also did this, but in contrast to the faith of Peter, the faith of the demons lacked *caritas/dilectio*. For the frequent use of this theme by Augustine, see : E. TeSelle, « Faith », in : A. D. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages*, p. 347-350, p. 349. E. TeSelle, « Credere », *Augustinus-Lexikon* II, 1/2 (1996), c. 119-131, c. 128-129. In her analysis of Mt. 16 :13-23 on the role of Peter, A.-M. La Bonnardière states with respect to the *fides Petri* : "Ce thème reparaît même dans deux sermons contre les pélagiens (168, 2, 2 ; 158, 6, 6) : l'homme qui va au Christ commence par la foi : quelle foi ? celle des chrétiens, dont Pierre donne l'exemple : la foi qui aime." A.-M. La Bonnardière, « 'Tu es Petrus'. La péricope Matth. 16, 13-23 dans l'œuvre de saint Augustin », *Irénikon* 34, 1961, p. 451-499, p. 466-467. For the example of Peter, see also : M. Dulaey, « Les larmes de Pierre chez Augustin (Mt. 26, 69-75 et parallèles) », in : I. Bochet (ed.), *Augustin philosophe et prédicateur, Hommage à Goulven Madec, Actes du Colloque International organisé à Paris 8-9 septembre 2011*, Paris 2012, p. 464-486. R. B. Eno, « Forma Petri - Petrus, figura ecclesiae : The Uses of Peter », *Augustiniana* 41, 1991, p. 659-676. D. Louit, « Le reniement et l'amour de Pierre dans la prédication de saint Augustin », *RecAug* 10, 1975, p. 217-268.

78. s. 158, 7 ; 8.

79. s. 158, 8.

80. Rebillard : immediately before 416, Gryson : around 416, Hombert : circa 416.

81. s. 168, 1. *PL* 38 c. 911/50.

82. s. 168, 2. "Sed fides debet esse christianorum, non daemoniorum. [...] Discernenda est ergo fides daemonum a fide sanctorum. [...] O Domine, hoc tibi dixerunt et daemones : quare ipsi non sunt beati ? Quare ? Quia daemones hoc dixerunt timore, Petrus amore. Ideo initium est a fide. Sed quali fide ? Quam definiuit apostolus : *neque circumcisio aliquid ualet, neque praeputium, sed fides* [Gal. 5 :6]. Dic quae fides ? *Quae per dilectionem operatur* [Gal. 5 :6]. Hanc daemones non habent fidem, quae per dilectionem operatur : sed soli serui Dei, soli sancti Dei, soli fide filii Abrahae, soli filii dilectionis, filii promissionis ; ideo dicta est *et caritas* [Eph. 6 :23]." *PL* 38 c. 912/9-31.

functions only to underline the fact that faith works through love.⁸³ Augustine argues in *sermo* 168, 2 that Paul presents *pax*, *caritas* and *fides* in reverse order in Eph. 6 :23. Faith is the starting point (*initium in fide*), the goal is peace (*finis in pace*).⁸⁴ This peace, faith and love are entirely from God, from whom all good things come. Augustine substantiates his argument here with quotations from the Scriptures, namely 1 Cor. 1 :31 ; 4 :7 ; Eph. 6 :23, and concludes that the human person has received everything as a gift. Augustine adds to these Biblical quotations that mature faith accepts that all good things come from God, and that faith itself comes from God. “Quae est fides plena et perfecta ? Quae credit ex Deo esse omnia bona nostra, et ipsam fidem.”⁸⁵ This is precisely the mature faith of Abraham.⁸⁶ Augustine points out that Paul admits in 1 Cor. 7 :25 to having received everything. Paul does not claim that he received *misericordia* because he was *fidelis*. On the contrary, he received *misericordia* so that he might become *fidelis*.⁸⁷ For Augustine, the conversion of Saul to Paul represents a paradigmatic example illustrating that faith is a question of grace. Saul persecuted Christians. In other words, he had no personal merits whatsoever to appeal to. His heart was full of evil. All Saul possessed was the *merita damnationis* and not the *merita liberationis*. He was an unbeliever, yet he still received *misericordia*. It is God himself who decides whether such an evil person should be granted *misericordia*. In the last analysis, it is God himself who says “hoc uolo”.⁸⁸ Augustine thus points out that if an unbeliever and persecutor of Christians – who had nothing of the Christian faith – can come to faith through God’s *misericordia*, then the source of that faith must have been God and not Saul/Paul.⁸⁹ Augustine associates the theme of faith as the gift of God with the theme of prayer. He does this in the first instance in order to underline the grace character of faith. To have faith one must pray in faith. To pray in faith you must have faith, since it is faith that is at prayer in a person. The human person, however, is incapable of praying in faith if he or she does

83. T. G. RING, « Der Anfang des Glaubens : Verdienst oder Gnade », *Augustiniana* 54, 2004, p. 177-202, p. 178 (n. 8).

As a concise survey of the secondary literature on Augustine’s thought on the *gratia* status of faith in general, we would like to refer to the following entries in standard reference works for the study of Augustine : M. DJUTH, « Initium Fidei », in : A. D. FITZGERALD (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages*, p. 447-451. E. TeSELLE, « Faith », in : A. D. FITZGERALD (ed.), *Augustine through the Ages*, p. 347-350, p. 348. E. TeSELLE, « Fides », *Augustinus-Lexikon* II, 7/8 (2002), c. 1333-1340. E. TeSELLE, « Credere », *Augustinus-Lexikon* II, 1/2 (1996), c. 119-131. Cf. also : J. OROZ RETA, « La Gracia Inicial o el “Initium Fidei” según san Agustín », in : F. VAN FLETEREN (ed.), *Augustine Mystic and Mystagogue*, (Collectanea Augustiniana), New-York 1994, p. 231-249.

84. s. 168, 2. “Audi apostolum ipsum fidei disputatorem, et gratiae magnum defensorem : audi eum dicentem, *pax fratribus, et caritas cum fide* [Eph. 6 :23]. Magna tria dixit, pax, caritas, fides. A fine coepit, ad initium terminavit. Initium est enim in fide, finis in pace. Qua enim credimus, ipsa est fides. [...] O Domine, hoc tibi dixerunt et daemones : quare ipsi non sunt beati ? Quare ? Quia daemones hoc dixerunt timore, Petrus amore. Ideo initium est a fide. Sed quali fide ? Quam definiuit apostolus : *neque circumcisio aliquid ualeat, neque praepitium, sed fides* [Gal. 5 :6].” *PL* 38 c. 912/3-26.

85. s. 168, 3. *PL* 38 c. 913/4.

86. s. 168, 3.

87. s. 168, 3.

88. s. 168, 4.

89. s. 168, 7.

not first receive that faith. We pray that we might persevere (*perseuerare*) in the good that we already have and for the addition of the good that we do not yet have. This prayer does not take place in such a manner that the faith, with which one prays, comes first and is then given to God. Rather, the faith with which we address our appeal to God in prayer is also a gift of God. Both faith and prayer are given by God to humankind. Faith, with which people pray to God and in so doing offer back to God, is first received from God. Augustine concludes with reference to 1 Cor. 4 : 7 : “ergo de Deo das Deo : ex eo quod tibi dedit, a te accipit.”⁹⁰ Here he makes reference once again to the case of Saul who had no faith of his own to offer. The faith of Saul was thus clearly received and not of his own merit. Indeed, Saul, like every other unbeliever, had nothing to offer God. Yet Stephen prayed for him and for all unbelievers that they would come to faith.⁹¹ Augustine continues his reflection on Stephen’s prayer and ends his sermon with a pastoral exercise designed to help the faithful realize that faith is a gift : “Ergo, fratres mei, ut noueritis etiam fidem a Domino Deo esse nobis, orate pro illis qui nondum crediderunt.”⁹² This leads him to the conclusion that we should strive for humility, because faith is a *donum Dei*. “Nemo se extollat, nemo sibi arroget, quasi sibi aliquid dederit. Qui gloriatur, in Domino gloriatur [1 Cor. 1 : 31].”⁹³ Augustine argues against a fictional adversary in this homily. The said adversary claims : ‘but I already believe’ and argues in other words that personal faith precedes God’s promise, which thus becomes deserved. Augustine’s response is unequivocal : faith is a gift.⁹⁴ He invites his adversary to ‘listen to the apostle, the promoter of faith, the defender of grace.’⁹⁵ His imaginary adversary then retorts : ‘you say faith, love and peace come from God, well why don’t you prove it.’ Augustine answers : ‘let us call upon the testimony of the apostle Paul.’⁹⁶ According to Augustine, the adversary then goes on to argue that human faith comes first and that the human person only prays for perseverance thereafter in the good that he or she already has and for the addition of the good that he or she does not yet have. Augustine repeats that the human person has received everything from God.⁹⁷ He then advises his adversary to look at the example of Saul⁹⁸ and to listen to what Paul has to say.⁹⁹ Augustine insists in addition that God is to be heard in the words of the preacher – appointed by God – and not the preacher himself.¹⁰⁰ In short, *sermo* 168 insists within a clear polemical context that *fides* comes from God.

90. s. 168, 5. *PL* 38 c. 914/9.

91. s. 168, 6.

92. s. 168, 8. *PL* 38 c. 915/13.

93. s. 168, 8. *PL* 38 c. 915/23-24.

94. s. 168, 1.

95. s. 168, 2.

96. s. 168, 3.

97. s. 168, 5.

98. s. 168, 6.

99. s. 168, 7.

100. s. 168, 5.

4. – FAITH LINKED WITH OTHER GRACE THEMES

The heteronymous nature of faith is also a part of Augustine's plea for *baptismum paruulorum*. *Sermo* 176, 2 (412-414) states that *infantes*, burdened with the illness of another (Adam), are saved by the faith of another (godparents).¹⁰¹ *Sermo* 181 (416-417)¹⁰² states that the believer comes to faith through the bath of rebirth. All sins are forgiven through baptism. Now, the believer lives under grace, in faith, and has become a member of Christ, a temple of God.¹⁰³ Baptism made man a believer, but not an *iustus*, someone without sin.¹⁰⁴ In *sermo* 260D (416/417)¹⁰⁵ Augustine explains that baptized infants are called believers.¹⁰⁶ Infants have no personal share in their baptism as confirmation of their belief. Older catechumens, however, do.¹⁰⁷

Sermo 115 (412-413)¹⁰⁸ combines *fides* and *oratio*. Prayer without belief is pointless. "Si fides deficit, oratio perit."¹⁰⁹ Belief is the *fons orationis*. In order to pray, man has to believe. Belief results in prayer. Prayer results in a firm belief. A perfect belief however, cannot be found here on earth, not even among the apostles. The apostles ask the Lord to increase their faith (Luke 17 :5), just as the man in Mark 9 :24 who professed to believe and at the same time asked the Lord to help him overcome his unbelief.¹¹⁰ Here, Augustine wants, in the – for him – typical anti-Pelagian polemic, to stress the humility of the true believers (in contrast with the 'proud' Pelagians). This points to the aspect of grace in belief.

The theme of belief, and the connection with *iustitia*, is treated at length within the opposition between law/works and belief, a theme that surfaces particularly in the *sermones*. In *sermones* 270 (416)¹¹¹ and 272B (417)¹¹² the theme that the law is fulfilled by belief is at

101. Rebillard : 414, Gryson : 412-413, Hombert : 413-414, Partoens : 413-414.

102. Rebillard : 416-417, Gryson : near 416.

103. s. 181, 1 : "Sed accessit per fidem ad lauacrum regenerationis homo fidelis, et omnia dimissa sunt ei ; iam sub gratia uiuit, in fide uiuit, membrum Christi factus est, templum Dei factus est : [...]." PL 38 c. 979/52.

104. s. 181, 1-2.

105. Rebillard : Sunday after Easter after 412, Gryson : Sunday after Easter 416-417.

106. s. 260D, 2 : "Vos christiani estis, baptizati estis, fideles estis, membra ecclesiae estis, et habetis maculas et rugas ?" PL 38 c. 980/53.

s. 181, 8 explains that Christians with good faith, do not commit deadly sins, but only daily sins that can be erased by daily prayer.

See also the early *sermo* 294 (Rebillard : 27/06/413, Gryson : 27/06/413, Hombert : 27/06/413). s. 294, 14 : "Nam ideo et consuetudine ecclesiae antiqua, canonica, fundatissima, paruuli baptizati fideles uocantur." PL 38 c. 1343/47. s. 294, 17 : "Iam superius disputaui, credit in altero, qui peccauit in altero : dicitur, credit ; et ualet, et inter fideles baptizatos computatur." PL 38 c. 1346/27.

107. s. 260D, 2.

108. Rebillard : 413, Gryson : 412/413 ?.

109. s. 115, 1. PL 38 c. 655/19.

110. s. 115, 1.

111. Rebillard : Pentecost 416 ?, Gryson : Pentecost 416.

112. Rebillard : Pentecost, 10/06/417, Gryson : Pentecost near 413/415.

the forefront. This belief is considered parallel with grace, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the *caritas* given by God.¹¹³ *Sermo* 152 (417/418)¹¹⁴ distinguishes three different kinds of law within Paul's letter to the Romans : the law of sin and death, the Mosaic law, and the law of the Spirit of life (Rom. 8 :2). This last one is the law of *miser cordia*, of belief and not of deeds. This law liberates man from the law of sin and death, it is the law of grace. The Mosaic law cannot accomplish this, since it only shows the sin, and does not take it away.¹¹⁵ In *sermo* 156 (417/418)¹¹⁶ Augustine draws attention to the fact that Paul makes clear to the pagans that belief renders the necessary assistance in order to fulfil the law. Without belief the law cannot be fulfilled, this contrary to the Jews who believe that the law and one's own *uires* are sufficient to direct the *liberum arbitrium*, to be able to arrive at *iustitia*. God gives *iustitia* to *omnes credentes* (Rom. 10 :3-4). Augustine does not however clarify what the relation is between *fides* and *liberum arbitrium*, what the human share is in *fides* and in the *iustitia* which is obtained (*impetrare*) by belief ; and whether this *fides*, which assists in fulfilling the law and begs for help, is earned or given.¹¹⁷ This Augustine answers partially in the continuation of his sermon, in which he describes the right belief – the belief of the faithful and not of the demons. Belief can only work well through love (cf. Gal. 5 :6), and this love is given to man through the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5 :5) : it is a *donum Dei*.¹¹⁸ Augustine preaches similarly in *sermo* 163 (September 24 417)¹¹⁹, that whoever wants to escape from the threats of the law – Augustine refers here to the law of sin – must seek refuge in the assistance of the Holy Spirit. “*Quod enim lex imperat, fides sperat.*”¹²⁰ In this sermon Augustine emphasizes the need for God's help. At the same time, Augustine states on the basis of Gal. 3 :22 that Christ's promise of grace is given *ex fide* to the *credenti*. Grace is given (1 Cor. 4 :7), and not earned.¹²¹ Whether this *fides* is a gift

113. s. 270, 3-4 ; 6-7. s. 272B, 3 ; 7.

114. Rebillard : October 417, Gryson : May 418, Partoens/Lössl : late September/early October 417 or May 418.

115. s. 152, 5.

116. Rebillard : October 417, Gryson : May 418, Partoens/Lössl : 17/10/417 or May 418.

117. s. 156, 4 : “Commendat autem hoc assidue commendans fidem gentibus, qua fide impetrent adiutorium et impleant legem : non per legem, sed uires implendi impetrantes per fidem. Ad hoc assidue dicit et commendat ista apostolus propter Iudaeos, qui de lege gloriabantur et libero arbitrio suo legem sufficere arbitrabantur. Ac per hoc quia libero arbitrio suo legem sufficere arbitrabantur *ignorantes Dei iustitiam* – id est ex fide iustitiam a Deo datam – *et suam uolentes constituere* – quasi suis uiribus impletam, non clamante fide impetratam – *iustitiae Dei*, sicut dicit, *non sunt subiecti. Finis enim legis Christus*, ait, *ad iustitiam omni credenti* [Rom. 10 :3-4].” CCL 41Ba p. 141/98-108. PL 38 c. 851/50.

118. s. 156, 5 : “[...] quia fides bene operari non potest nisi per dilectionem. Ipsa est enim fidelium fides, ne sit daemonum fides – quia et *daemones credunt, et contremiscunt* [Iac. 2 :29]. Illa est ergo laudabilis fides, ipsa est uera gratiae *fides quae per dilectionem operatur* [Gal. 5 :6]. Vt autem habeamus dilectionem et ex ea possimus habere bonam operationem, numquid eam nobis nos dare possumus, cum scriptum sit, *Caritas Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris per Spiritum Sanctum qui datus est nobis* [Rom. 5 :5]. Caritas usque adeo donum est Dei, [...]” CCL 41Ba p. 143/139-147. PL 38 c. 853/3.

119. Rebillard : 417, Gryson : 24/09 not before 417, Partoens/Lössl : 24/09/417, Hill : September 24 417.

120. s. 163, 11. PL 38 c. 894/39.

121. s. 163, 11.

of grace Augustine does not make explicit. *Sermo* 169 (416-424)¹²² asserts that who believes in God will not pursue his own justice, but he will fulfil the law with the justice received from God. For the fullness of the law is *caritas* and that *caritas* is given through the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5 :5).¹²³ Despite the goodness of this law, Augustine nevertheless explicitly declares that *iustificatio* does not come from man, but is entirely God's grace.¹²⁴ Augustine quotes here Eph. 2 :8-9 : "Gratia salui facti estis per fidem ; et hoc non ex uobis, sed Dei donum est : non ex operibus."¹²⁵ An attuned refrain in this *sermo*, which is a discussion of Phil. 3 :3-16, is that man did not base *iustitia* on the law of his own accord, but through faith in Christ (*iustitia per fidem Christi, in fide, ex fide Christi*), a justice coming from God (*ex Deo*).¹²⁶ Also *fides* comes therefore from God and not from man. This *iustitia* is not forced on man against his will – man has to consent, but God does the *iustificatio*.¹²⁷ The apostle testifies according to Augustine (as a result of Phil. 3 :12-13) that he also received his belief, power, hope, and love from God.¹²⁸

Sermo 26 (September-October 417)¹²⁹ deals with *fides* in the context that the grace of creation is not sufficient to be saved, but that also grace from Christ is needed.¹³⁰ God, and not man has created man. The believers themselves have also been created by God. Man being just, and also being faithful (at which Hab. 2 :4 (Rom. 1 :17 ; Gal. 3 :11) connects *iustitia* to *fides*), comes from God and not from man.¹³¹ Christians and pagans share natural grace. The higher grace, however, is the grace through which Christians are Christian.¹³² According to Paul the law does not justify. Christ has died to justify through faith those who are not justified by the law.¹³³ Augustine does two things with *fides* in *sermo* 26. Firstly, he puts justification and belief parallel with each other. Secondly, he emphasizes that both are the result of God's grace. *Natura, iustitia* and *fides* are *gratia*.¹³⁴ With Eph. 2 :8 Augustine identifies the aspect of grace within *fides* : "Nemo illi prior aliquid dedit, nemo exigit debitum. *Gratia salui facti estis per fidem, et hoc non ex uobis, Dei*

122. Rebillard : 416, Gryson : September 416, Partoens : 416-424.

123. s. 169, 10.

124. s. 169, 2 ; 3

125. s. 169, 3. *PL* 38 c. 916/55.

126. Phil. 3 :9 : s. 169, 7 ; 10 ; 12 ; 13 ; 16.

Sermo 170 (from 417) discusses the same pericope and explains that *iustitia* is not based on the law, but on the faith in Christ and that this *iustitia* is given by God to man (s. 170, 1 ; 8).

127. s. 169, 13.

128. s. 169, 16. "Quid est quod nondum acceperat ? Fidem habebat, uirtutem habebat, spem habebat, charitate flagrabat, uirtutes operabatur, inuictissime praedicabat, omnes persecutiones tolerabat, in omnibus patiens, amans ecclesiam, sollicitudinem omnium ecclesiarum corde gestans : quid nondum acceperat ?" *PL* 38 c. 924/56.

129. Rebillard : November 18 397-401, Gryson : 25/09/417, Partoens/Lössl : (Thursday 18 ?) October 417.

130. s. 26, 1.

131. s. 26, 5. "Fideles sumus – si tamen sumus quando ista contra gratiam disputamus – sed ecce fideles sumus. Etiam fideles, etiam iustos, quia iustus ex fide uiuit, ipse fecit nos, et non ipsi nos." *CCL* 41 p. 351/97-98.

132. s. 26, 5. Cf. s. 26, 9.

133. s. 26, 9.

134. s. 26, 12-15.

donum est."¹³⁵ Augustine also reiterates this emphatically at the end of his *sermo* : "Nihil ergo nobis, fratres mei, ex eo quod aliquid sumus, si tamen in eius fide aliquid sumus, quantumcumque sumus, nihil nobis arrogemus, ne et quod accepimus perdamus."¹³⁶ Augustine follows the three-step-reasoning : (1) we are what we are through God, through what we have received from God. (2) We are what we are through faith, we are what we are through believing in Him. (3) This results in the conclusion that belief is received.

True belief is in essence connected to *caritas*. *Sermo* 145 (412-415) states that God has given *caritas* to man, by believing in Scripture.¹³⁷ Man did not give this *caritas* to himself : the Holy Spirit did this (Rom. 5 :5).¹³⁸ In *sermo* 71 (417/419-420) Augustine explains that when Christ says in Mark 16 :16 that all those who believe and are baptized will be saved, Christ does not mean with this all believers and baptized people, but only those who believe through love (Gal. 5 :6).¹³⁹ In the same sermon Augustine further declares : "primum ergo in nos, ad accipiendam uitam aeternam, quae in nouissimo dabitur, de bonitate Dei munus uenit ab initio fidei, remissio peccatorum."¹⁴⁰ The *remissio peccatorum* comes, in other words, as a gift owing to God's goodness and stems from the *initium fidei*. However, whether this *initium fidei* comes also as a gift from God, Augustine does not make clear.

Sermo 131, delivered on Sunday 23rd of September 417 at Carthage,¹⁴¹ against the *inimici gratiae Christi*,¹⁴² claims that belief is *gratia* : "...ipsum credere doni esse, non meriti..."¹⁴³ Augustine substantiates this position with John 6 :65 ("nemo uenit ad me, nisi cui datum fuerit a Patre meo") and John 6 :44 ("nemo uenit ad me, nisi Pater, qui misit me, traxerit eum"). The Father does not bring (*ducere*) man to Him, but draws (*trahere*) man. This *uiolentia* comes to the heart, not to the flesh. This is not a hard or painful *uiolentia*, but in contrast *dulcis, suauis*. It is this *suauitas* which draws man. Also a sheep is drawn when it is shown grass when hungry. This sheep is not physically ("corpore") forced, but drawn by a craving ("desiderio").¹⁴⁴ On the one hand, faith is a task. Augustine calls on his audience to believe in the crucified one, to withstand the stormy winds and waves of this life's ordeals and enticements. Augustine asks

135. s. 26, 14. CCL 41 p. 358/309.

136. s. 26, 15. CCL 41 p. 358/324.

137. s. 145, 4.

138. s. 145, 4.

139. s. 71, 16.

140. s. 71, 19. RB 75 p. 83/390.

141. Rebillard : 23/09/417, Gryson : 23/09/417, Partoens : 23/09/417. Cf. G. PARTOENS, « Prédication et liturgie », p. 43-46.

142. s. 131, 9.

143. s. 131, 2. PL 38 c. 730/8.

144. s. 131, 2. "Ista uiolentia cordi fit, non carni. Quid ergo miraris ? Crede, et uenis ; ama, et traheris. Ne arbitreris istam asperam molestamque uiolentiam : dulcis est, suauis est ; ipsa suauitas te trahit. Nonne ouis trahitur, cum esurienti herba monstratur ? Et puto quia non corpore impellitur, sed desiderio colligatur." PL 38 c. 730/8.

to believe in Christ, because : “ubi credis, ibi uenis.”¹⁴⁵ On the other hand belief is grace. For the cross makes sure that man does not sink. Augustine emphasizes moreover that who does not climb on board of faith, only has to blame himself. Those who do climb on board, must not attribute this to himself (*arrogere*). Here, Augustine refers back to John 6 :66.¹⁴⁶ In other words, that belief has been given according to Augustine. This understanding should incite to humility and gratitude.¹⁴⁷ In the remainder of the sermon Augustine underlines that man has received *iustitia* from God as *gratia*, that God is at work in man. Moreover, one can only proceed on the *uia iusta* by the grace of the free gift of faith.¹⁴⁸ *Sermo* 30, 10 (417)¹⁴⁹ explains Mt. 11 :28-29 : “*Venite ad me omnes qui laboratis et onerati estis, et ego uos reficiam, tollite iugum meum super uos.*”¹⁵⁰ Augustine first elucidates that ‘coming to the Lord’ means believing in the Lord. Next, he underlines – by quoting 1 Cor 4 :7 – that man did not come to the Lord on his own capacities. This *uenire* is no human merit. Substituting *uenire* for *credere* and claiming that *uenire* is given to man, thus implies that also faith is a gift of the Lord.¹⁵¹

Sermo 163A, 3 (after 416)¹⁵² quotes Gal. 5 :22-23 : “*Fructus enim spiritus gaudium est, pax, longanimitas, benignitas, bonitas, fides, mansuetudo, continentia.*”¹⁵³ From the one hand, *spiritus* can refer to the battle between spirit and flesh. Man has to fight this battle, but needs God’s help to do this. From the other hand, *spiritus* can indicate the H. Spirit donated by God. The great and humble belief of the Canaanite woman (Mt. 15 :26-28) symbolizes the faith of the *gentes*. She offers an example of perseverance in prayer.¹⁵⁴ By originally neglecting her, Christ tested her *perseuerantia*. *Sermo* 348A, 12 (416) contends that perseverance in faith goes beyond the human capacities and that one has to pray in order that one’s faith would not fail.¹⁵⁵

Sermo 183 (416-419)¹⁵⁶ argues, on the basis of James 2 :19 that faith in itself is not sufficient, good works are also needed. Peter came to his profession in Mt. 16 :16 (out of love : *ex amore*), not from himself (*de suo*).¹⁵⁷ The pericope Mt. 16 :16-17 shows according

145. s. 131, 2. *PL* 38 c. 730/20.

146. Augustine seems to have quoted John 6 :66 only during the Pelagian controversy, most often to indicate that faith is a freely given gift of God, that man cannot attribute to a preceding merit (frequently combined with John 6 :44). For an analysis of all occurrences of this verse in Augustine, cf. G. PARTOENS, « Prédication et liturgie », p. 44, n. 92.

147. s. 131, 3.

148. s. 131, 5.

149. Rebillard : 412-416, Gryson : September/October 416, Hombert : September-October 416, Partoens/Lössl : late September-early October 417.

150. s. 30, 9. *CCL* 41 p. 388/203-205.

151. s. 30, 10.

152. Rebillard : after 416, Gryson : after 416.

153. s. 163A, 3. *MiAg* 1 p. 626/13.

154. s. 154A, 5-6 (Rebillard : October 417, Gryson : -, Partoens/Lössl : earlier than 417).

155. Rebillard : 416, Gryson : May 15th - beginning of June 416, Hill : 415.

156. Rebillard : 416-417, Gryson : 417/419 ?.

157. s. 183, 14. Mt. 16 :17 : this insight is revealed to Peter, ‘not by flesh and blood’, but by the Father.

to Augustine the difference between what Peter received from God and what he has from himself. Belief in Christ is given to Peter. But by contrast Peter's fear and anxiety for the death of Christ, the fact that Peter forgot that Christ had announced to die and resurrect (quoting John 10 :18 and John 15 :13) (*obliuio, trepidatio, horror, timor mortis*), come entirely from Peter himself. Augustine summarizes his sermon : "Sperate in Dominum, et uerae fidei bona facta coniungite. Confitemini Christum in carne uenisse, et credendo, et bene uiuendo, et utrumque ab illo acceptum tenete, ab illo augendum et perficiendum sperate."¹⁵⁸ The true belief in Christ's incarnation is received from God, as also the growth and perfection of this belief are his work. Man must not place his hope in man, and if man praises (*gloriari*), man should praise the Lord. In the closing prayer of the *sermo*, Augustine asks his congregation to pray that God will make their faith grow, lead the human mind (*mens*), and gives *spiritalis cogitationes*. In short, in a sermon in which Augustine pointed out the human obligation of Christological orthodoxy (namely to believe in the right way in Christ's incarnation), Augustine emphasizes that belief itself and the growing in that belief are God's work.

This fourth chapter investigated the presence of faith related to grace topics in *sermones*, including a group of *sermones* which clearly deals with grace in an anti-Pelagian manner (e.g. the collection of *sermones* preached in Carthage in autumn 417 were eminently present in this chapter : ss. 26, 30, 131, 152, 154A ?, 156, 163). Despite the fact that we observed a strong emphasis on God's grace within the human act of faith in this group of sermons, Augustine is careful not to neglect human activity in explaining the essential *gratia* dimension of *fides*. Yet, the general impression remains that within the *sermones* the grace-status of faith is not entirely systematically worked out, and that no real *sermo de gratia fidei contra pelagianos* can be identified. Moreover, only seldom Augustine's *sermones* mention *fides* in the context of *gratia*.

5. – PREDESTINATION

Traces of Augustine's doctrine of predestination in his *sermones* are very scarce and are rather implicit. *Sermo* 158, 3 (around 418),¹⁵⁹ quoting Rom. 8 :30-31, states that faith is a divine gift preceding human initiative. *Sermo* 174, 4-5, as already discussed here above underlines God's initiative in faith by the example of Zachaeus. Christ saw Zachaeus first. Zachaeus could see Christ because he was previously seen by God.¹⁶⁰ Augustine enlarges this to the whole of humanity, by quoting the words of Christ said to Nathanael. God was first. In order that we could see, we were first seen, in order that we could love, we were first loved. Ps. 59 :10 testifies of this reality : "Deus meus, misericordia eius praeueniet me."¹⁶¹ Zachaeus

158. PL 38 c. 994/24-25.

159. Rebillard : not before 418, Gryson : around 418.

160. s. 174, 4.

161. s. 174, 4. PL 38 c. 942/56-57.

could receive Christ in his house, because Christ was at that moment already in the heart of Zachaeus.¹⁶² The same sermon applies the idea of predestination to *paruuli* : “Commendauerim caritati uestrae causam eorum qui pro se loqui non possunt. Omnes paruuli tanquam pupilli considerentur, etiam qui nondum parentes proprios extulerunt. Omnis praedestinatorum numerus paruulorum populum Dei quaerit tutorem, qui exspectat Dominum saluatorem.”¹⁶³ Regarding infant baptism *sermo* 294, 7 (27/06/413)¹⁶⁴ states : “Paruulus non baptizatus pergit in damnationem.”¹⁶⁵ At the same time Augustine confesses to not understand why a baby is baptized in time to be saved and another not. He considers this predestination as a deep mystery and states that man cannot understand how God's election proceeds, referring to Rom. 11 :33-36. *Sermo* 348A, 3-4 (416)¹⁶⁶, in the context of prayer, illustrates Augustine's thinking on faith as a (by God being tempted to) consent (*persuasio* by *caritas*). Faith is in the *potestas* of man linked to the *potestas* of God : “non est potestas nisi a Deo (Rom. 13 :1)”.

Sermo 26, 4 (September-October 417)¹⁶⁷ explains that also pagans, godless people and enemies of the church are created by God, even though they do not belong to his flock. “Communis est omnibus natura, non gratia.”¹⁶⁸ All men have the same nature in common, but not the same *gratia*. The grace which established human nature, by which human beings are created, is common to Christians and pagans. The greater grace, however, is the one which makes Christians believers, and this, pagans do not have in common with Christians.¹⁶⁹ According to the bishop of Hippo, Pelagius assimilates grace with the gift of free will. He would prefer him to proclaim the typical Christian faith, which gives faith and perseverance in the practice of the good, and not only the gift by which God has created all human beings.¹⁷⁰ God made his choice who would belong to his flock before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1 :4). He has all who He is going to create to be chosen with himself in his foreknowledge.¹⁷¹ In *sermo* 137, 3 (410-420)¹⁷² Augustine mentions that Christ knew Peter before Peter knew himself. The doctor (Christ) knows how the disease of the patient (Peter) will evolve.

162. s. 174, 5.

163. s. 174, 9. *PL* 38 c. 944/40-45.

“Nous sommes surpris en effet de voir que le problème de la prédestination ne tient pas une place prépondérante dans les discours expressément dirigés contre les Pélagiens.” H. RONDET, « La prédestination augustinienne. Genèse d'une doctrine », *Sciences Ecclésiastiques* 18, 1966, p. 229-251, p. 246 (n. 125).

164. Rebillard : 27/06/413, Gryson : 27/06/413, Hombert : 27/06/413.

165. s. 294, 7. *PL* 38 c. 1339/36.

166. Rebillard : 416, Gryson : May 15th – beginning of June 416, Hill : 415.

167. Rebillard : November 18 397-401, Gryson : 25/09/417, Partoens/Lössl : (Thursday 18th ?) October 417.

Cf. G. PARTOENS, « Prédication et liturgie », p. 40-42.

168. s. 26, 4. *CCL* 41 p. 350/78.

169. s. 26, 7. Cf. s. 26, 5.

170. s. 26, 8-9.

171. s. 26, 4.

172. Rebillard : 408-411, Gryson : Lent 410/420 rather 412/416, Hombert : 410-420.

CONCLUSION

We observed several ways in which the topic of *gratia fidei* made its appearance in *sermones* linked with the Pelagian controversy. In some *sermones* faith is accredited to grace in an implicit and indirect way. Despite grace is not denied, more attention is paid to the human role in the faith process (ss. 115, 143, 144, 163A, 165, 335B). In other *sermones* Augustine clearly stresses the priority of God and His grace, but does not concretely apply it on *fides* when this topic surfaces in the sermon (ss. 30, 71, 145, 156, 163, 174, 290, 299, 348A). The preacher Augustine on other occasions describes faith as grace (ss. 26, 152, 158, 168, 183, 270, 272B, 363), a gift just like baptism (ss. 176, 181, 260D). *Sermones* 131 and 161 contain the most elaborated and nuanced discourses on faith : it is given as grace, provided that man freely consents with it. Augustine's homiletic approach with faith as grace is – not less than in his systematic treatises – very biblical, e.g. 1 Cor. 4 :7 (ss. 30, 163, 168, 290, 299) and Hab. 2 :4 (ss. 26, 143, 158, 363) are biblical *topoi*.

We can thus concur with the thesis of D. Ogliari : the 'speculative' and so-called 'pastoral difficult' theological themes of *gratia fidei* and of *predestinatio* do not lack in the *sermones* situated in the Pelagian controversy. However, the presence of these related topics is not very high profile, and is actually quite parallel to its absence in the earlier sermons as Hombert observed. Contrary to the pre-412 *sermones*, in the anti-Pelagian *sermones* the topic of faith as grace and predestination is not completely absent, but it is rarely elaborated, even in *sermones* with an explicit anti-Pelagian *gratia* agenda (as e.g. the 11 Carthaginian *sermones* of 417). While the *sermones* after 411/412 do not deny the grace character of the *initium fidei* and the *perseuerantia fidei*, they rarely thematise faith as *gratia*, as *praedestinatio*. In the anti-Pelagian tractates, by contrast, the grace of faith would appear to be particularly anti-Pelagian themes and independent topics. An initial explanation for this difference might argue that Augustine presumes it to be superfluous to speak about the beginnings of faith in a sermon for the faithful in the middle of a liturgical prayer service, designating faith as grace for a public already engaged in faith. Furthermore, his sermons are fundamentally exhortative and normative. Rather than describing the *gratia* essence and predestined character of the morally good life and of Christian faith, the sermons are first and foremost an invitation to live the morally good life, to pray, to opt for the right faith, and to do so actively time and again.

As far as the chronology of the Pelagian controversy is concerned, we have observed that the anti-Pelagian *sermones* taken as a whole do not reflect the various phases of the Pelagian controversy. Certain aspects of the controversy with Julian of Aeclanum and of the so-called semi-Pelagian controversy are lacking. We have observed that Augustine rarely if ever thematises faith and predestination as grace – theme's characteristic for these two later phases of the Pelagian controversy. We noted above that one possible explanation for such lacunae was the specific genre of the *sermones*. An alternative explanation might suggest that *sermones* with clear traces of the two later phases of the controversy have not been preserved.

An additional option would be to argue that Augustine's North African public ultimately considered the discussion closed after 418. Augustine may have simply preferred to let sleeping dogs lie now that the situation had apparently calmed down in North Africa. Perhaps also he simply confined the debate to his correspondence, his polemic with Julian, and his dialogue with the monastic communities of Hadrumetum, Marseille and the Provence, believing that the problem was no longer an issue in North Africa or endeavouring not to rake it up again. While it is evident that Augustine responds to accusations and questions from those who make and pose them, it would appear that such questions no longer stemmed from his preaching public.

A significant difference between anti-Pelagian tractates and *sermones* is apparent in the fact that the *sermones* do not explicitly thematise the topics of *gratia fidei*. The specifically pastoral-exhortative genre of the sermon and the unique content-based thematisation of the question of grace within the *sermones* would appear to be mutually related. The study of the *sermones ad populum* thus offers a valuable addition to our understanding of Augustine's doctrine of grace as it is found in the anti-Pelagian writings. Other contexts do not offer fundamentally different insights in this regard, although they do exhibit differences in the representation and thematisation of the same insights.

As such, this article explored the pastoral and anthropological-ethical dimension of Augustine's treatment of grace as he formulated this in his preaching. In his doctrinal treatises, especially his writings dealing with the Pelagian controversy, Augustine staunchly defended the absolute priority of God's grace ('all good human actions are brought about by God's grace'), especially regarding *initium fidei*/perseuerantia as predestined. In his *sermones*, Augustine did not deny the priority of grace, but as a preacher he preferred to stress the human role. The genre of the sermon has much to do with how Augustine explains grace in his *sermones*. Augustine repeatedly makes clear to his listeners the necessity of doing one's best to live ethically, to live according to the Christian faith. The bishop of Hippo did thus not exclude a role for human responsibility at all. This treatment of grace and human free will in the *sermones* can be explained by the purpose of sermons in general, which was an exhortation to an ethical life, and by the rhetorical approach that such a purpose required, for instance frequent appeal to (biblical) images, use of dialogue, and a more moderate, less sharp polemical tone, directed at a live (and probably most often broad) audience. As such, our study of Augustine's *sermones* shows that he was more balanced than sometimes supposed in the image of Augustine as overemphasizing divine grace and neglecting all human endeavours. While Augustine was thought to have provoked a one-sided emphasis on divine grace in Western thinking, his own ideas in this regard seem to be much more balanced.

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