

To speak of "the *ground* of faith" is presumably only verbally different from speaking of "the *foundation* of faith." But, then, "the ground of faith," also, is systematically ambiguous in that it may likewise mean any of the following three things:

- (1) *the essential or substantial ground of faith*, i.e., the *primal source*, explicit as well as implicit, authorizing faith;
- (2) *the organic or ministerial ground of faith*, i.e., the *primary authority* authorizing faith, as well as any *secondary authority* that it in turn authorizes; and
- (3) *the dogmatic or doctrinal ground of faith*, i.e., the *twofold assertion* (or the *two assertions*) constitutive of the primary authority explicitly as such, as the original and originating witness immediately authorized by the primal source.

In many of my writings—I think especially of "The Apostles' Creed"—I have used the term "the ground and object of faith," often qualifying it by distinguishing further between "immediate" and "ultimate" (or "primal") ground and object. But this would seem to raise the question, Is "the *object* of faith," also, systematically ambiguous, in that it may have any of three closely related, but different, senses? And this question seems all the more pertinent if, as I've long argued, there are no good reasons for scrupling to affirm belief in the holy catholic church when one affirms the creed.

So far as I have been able to see, there's every reason to say that "the *object* of faith," also, may be taken in any of the same three senses, as meaning:

- (1) *the essential or substantial object of faith*, i.e., transcendently, *ultimate reality in its meaning for us* and, historically, *the decisive representation of its meaning*;

(2) *the organic or ministerial object of faith*, i.e., *the witness immediately authorized by this decisive re-presentation as well as the community constituted to bear it; and*

(3) *the dogmatic or doctrinal object of faith*, i.e., *the twofold assertion (or the two assertions) necessarily presupposed or implied by the essential or substantial object of faith and constitutive of its organic or ministerial object.*

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