By the end of the second century the table-sharing event which was prominent in the ministry of Jesus had become a cultic bread and wine ritual within Christian worship. Likewise, the food which began as a meal had become divinized, sacramental elements which were used to thwart toxins and which needed to be protected from mice. The process by which these changes happened is complicated and involves certain history-of-religion concerns about divine food, cultural anthropological studies about food and communal boundaries, the connection between eucharistic rites, baptismal rites, and social history, as well as the well-known patristic phenomenon that writers can at once speak literalistically about eucharistic elements and then, in polyvalent fashion, speak allegorically about the eucharist.\footnote{E.g., see Ambrose, who can speak literalistically about the eucharistic elements, and then speak of the eucharist as the kiss of Christ of which the Song of Solomon is a type (DeSacra 4.14–20; 5.5–17). For an English translation, see R.J. Deferrari, \textit{Saint Ambrose} (Washington, 1963), pp. 302–304, 311–14. Cf. R.J. Halliburton, “The Patristic Theology of the Eucharist,” in C. Jones et al. (eds.), \textit{The Study of Liturgy} (New York, 1978), pp. 201–208.} Can these various historical and theological issues hold together, and if so how? I want to use the prayers in chapters 9–10 of the \textit{Didache} as the focus around which to gather these issues into a whole and to construct a larger picture of church history and developing sacramental theology.

In order to provide a better understanding of the ecclesiological and sacramental evidence which the prayers of \textit{Didache} 9–10 provide, I want first to place the early stratum of these prayers within the table-sharing ministry of Jesus. Simply put, in order to see the trajectory of table-sharing as it becomes the holy Eucharist of divine food, it is necessary first to see where the trajectory begins (section I). The divine-food motif itself next will be examined through a discussion in which I want to suggest a functional approach to the under-
standing of the role of sacred food within church settings (section II), Next I will turn to the larger question of eucharistic theology and church organization toward which the evidence of the second century points us. I will identify connections which may be made between the eucharistic developments as they appear in Didache 9–10 and the organization of the community of the Didache as it is seen in parts of chapters 11–15. Here, the organization of chapters 1–10 as a manual for Christian initiation will be important. Section III thus will consider divine food according to the way in which it marks the extramural boundary between the Christian community and the communities which were left behind by recent converts. Section IV will look at the role which this same divine food played within the emerging internal organization of the church, whose intramural boundaries now have been marked.

I

That which eventually became the sacrament which variously is called the Lord’s Supper, Holy Communion, the Eucharist, and the Mass does not have its origins in any putative last supper that Jesus shared with his disciples. There was no last supper of Jesus such as that which is portrayed in Paul’s letter to Corinth or in the gospels. This view, which has been argued cogently in recent years, cannot be dismissed as merely the opinion of a few overly-skeptical (German) NT scholars. We must be clear about the NT material or we will not understand rightly the development of this rite, and thus will not grasp the material of the Didache adequately. The passion narratives of the gospels, which include the last supper scenes, are ecclesial compositions. The redaction-critical work on Mark which dates from Willi Marxsen through Burton Mack has borne this out. So also, the recent work which has been done by the Jesus Seminar of the Westar Institute (California) on synoptic issues and the sayings of Jesus clearly
