

*Invoking Baptism*

*Bot mendyd with a medecyn ye are made for to lyuye –  
 Pat is fullought in fonte with faitheful bileue.*

– St. Erkenwald

Because of the importance of Baptism and the sacramental actions performed there, that is, exorcism of the devil and Baptism of a person with water in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Anglo-Saxon healers transport aspects of its liturgy into charm rituals. Whereas Baptism relieves the soul from original sin and from other repented sins in older candidates, charms invoke Baptism to restore the body from illness. The Church made sure that Christians received the sacrament, and what is more, that they understood its significance as well as the Latin form and meaning of baptismal prayers. As a result, numerous baptismal prayers and liturgical analogues allude to Baptism when they appear in charms. At the center of baptismal invocations is the Creed, the confirmation of belief that sets the foundation for Baptism. The use of the Creed in folk medicine suggests that Christians understood the confession they uttered and the potency of Baptism. When the Creed is recited or sung during charm performance, traditional referentiality opens a semiotic pathway that creates anew in the audience imagination the Creed's previous performances. Participants would recall Baptisms they witnessed on Holy Saturday and other times, for the Apostles' Creed was the baptismal Creed, and it was integral to the rite. It was also the occasion for which Christians had memorized or had subsequently been taught the Creed. That recollection ultimately leads to the invocation of Baptism as a force for healing.

A charm text containing the Creed need not be overtly baptismal, therefore, to evoke and invoke Baptism. Simply the uttering of the Creed points back to Baptism; saying it or hearing it, charm participants would reflect on the significance of Baptism, the fact of their own salvation.

Consider an example from *Leechbook III*'s ritual to treat a "weden heorte" 'wood-heart' (frenzy):

Leoht drenc wiþ weden-heorte: elehtre, bisceopwyr, ælfþone, elene, crop-leac, hind hioloþe, ontre, clate. Nim þas wyrta þonne dæg and niht scade. sing ærest on ciricean letania. and credan. and Pater Noster. gang mid þy sange to þam wyrtum ymbga hie þriwa ær þu hie nime. and ga eft to ciricean gesing. xii mæssan ofer þam wyrtum þonne þu hie ofgoten hæbbe (*Leechbook III* lxviii, fols. 126v–127r, Cockayne 1865, II: 356).

[A light drink for wood-heart: lupine, marsh mallow, bittersweet nightshade, elecampane, leek, wood sage, garden radish, greater burdock. Take those plants when day and night divide. Sing in church first a litany, and a Creed, and a Pater Noster. Go to the plants with the song; and go around them three times before you touch them. And go again to church, sing twelve Masses over the plants when you have poured [an unspecified substance] over them.]

Intensive prayer and liturgy are to be performed in the charm ritual. A litany, a Creed, and a Pater Noster are to be sung in church, presumably with the herbal ingredients present, then Masses finish the medicinal preparation. Nothing is obviously baptismal in the charm except the Creed. The church where Baptisms take place is there, but there is no font water mentioned, no salt, no anti-demonic prayers or formulas, no godparents, no vestments, no priest or bishop stipulated for the charmer's first visit to the church. Neither litany nor Pater Noster are unique to Baptism. Both are sung, however, during Baptism along with the Creed, which is not exactly a prayer, but an assertion of belief. The litany is chanted during the blessing of the baptismal water on Holy Saturday, and the Lord's Prayer is recited among preparatory prayers. The presence of these liturgical utterances reinforces the baptismal context established by the Creed. Baptism is evoked even while non-baptismal, non-liturgical, non-Christian movements take place: the healer approaches the plants while singing, circles the plants three times before touching them, and takes the herbs at dawn or dusk. The operation of charm rituals is, in sum, more subtle and multifaceted than the charm text indicates. What participants hear or utter in the performance arena resonates in their memories. That resonance is purposeful. It is intended by the charm composer, for it provides a psycho-social and spiritual foundation for the channeling of power when Baptism is invoked.

This chapter attempts to reconstruct the distinct oral-traditional context for charm formulas that allude to, evoke, and invoke Baptism. Its purpose

is to identify and account for the liturgical resonance of baptismal elements deployed in charms. While it is impossible to reconstruct fully the background knowledge possessed by charm participants, an inventory of religious and cultural traditions about Baptism establishes its parameters.

The discussion centers on the Creed, an essential component of Baptism that appears consistently in charms that invoke the sacrament. The chapter argues that verbal and physical allusions to Baptism are meant to enable charms to channel the ceremony and sacrament for the purpose of healing the sick. We begin by establishing the centrality of the sacrament to the mission of the Anglo-Saxon Church. That the dogma of baptismal regeneration is received is apparent in English texts in the vernacular, from charm remedies to religious and heroic poetry, some of which is quoted here. After reviewing the baptismal liturgy, the chapter surveys the corresponding charm components that serve as an index of Baptism. According to their frequency in charms, we find the Creed, water and its ritualized use for washing, the Pater Noster, anti-demonic utterances, and the sign of the Cross.<sup>1</sup> A case study illustrates the role of such signs in alluding to Baptism in a *Lacnunga* charm.

The chapter concludes by demonstrating how charms manipulate liturgical components and re-situate them for a folk remedy. The integrity of baptismal utterances and acts is often compromised from a liturgical perspective, when they are re-purposed for charm healing. The accommodations that result allow charms simultaneously to invoke Baptism while accomplishing something different. Charms draw upon the liturgy of Baptism and channel its power to remove or ward off disease-spirits and relieve the sick of their complaints.

## 1.1 **Baptism and Its Contexts**

### 1.1.1 *The Creed*

Laity knew well the Creed and Pater Noster, for both were the gifts of Baptism. Adult candidates for membership, such as Danes who were converting, ideally received instruction on Christian belief and the mysteries of the Eucharist during the Lenten period preceding their Easter Baptisms.<sup>2</sup> The Apostles' Creed functions throughout those forty days as a "Roman catechism for the instruction of candidates for baptism" (Jungmann 1959: 78). The words and the meaning of the prayers were imparted by the bishop, who would later test his pupils. To be eligible for Baptism, catechumens must commit the Lord's Prayer and Creed to

memory. Most everyone else, baptized as infants, would learn the Pater Noster and Creed as children. Whether godparents act on behalf of children or adults are baptized, the entire congregation participates in the ceremony: at least every year at Easter, the community is reminded of their own baptismal vows. Confirmation – an independent rite in England since the tenth century – presented an additional opportunity for older children to be reminded of the prayers' form and significance.<sup>3</sup>

After children were baptized, their godmothers and godfathers were duty-bound to teach them the Apostles' Creed. For Wulfstan (Bishop of London, Worcester, and Archbishop of York, d. 1023), instruction should begin just as soon as the child was able to talk. Godparents repeated what they themselves had been taught. It was the clergy's responsibility to teach and explicate the Creed for the entire congregation, often in sermons preached during Lent. Annually priests were obliged to preach on the meaning and significance of both Pater Noster and Creed. Sermons delivered in English were to reinforce the message, as Ælfric of Eynsham (abbot, c.955–c.1010) insists:

Ælc cristen man sceal cunnan his Pater noster and his Credan. Mid þam Pater nostre he sceal hine gebiddan, and mid þam Credan he sceal his geleafan getrymman. Se laeow sceal secgan ðam læwedum mannum þæt andgit to ðam Pater nostre and to þam Credan, þæt hi witon hwæs hi biddan æt Gode, and hu hi sceolon on God gelyfan (*De Penitentia*, "Of Penitence," *Catholic Homilies* II, Thorpe 1844–46, II: 604).

[Every Christian man shall know his Pater noster and his Creed. With the Pater noster he shall pray, and with the Creed he shall confirm his belief. The teacher shall say to the laymen the sense of the Pater noster and of the Creed, that they may know what they pray for to God, and how they shall believe in God (Thorpe 1844–46, II: 605).]

Wulfstan warns that adults who do not know the prayers are not good Christians and therefore cannot be baptized or confirmed, receive the Eucharist, or be buried in a consecrated grave.<sup>4</sup> Ælfric states it plainly. Salvation is at stake: "for the sentence is very awful that Christ spake, that no unbaptized man shall come to eternal life" "for ðan ðe se cwyde is swiðe egelisc þe crist cwæð. þæt nan ungefullod mann ne becymð to ðam ecan life" (Ælfric, "Sermon on the Lord's Epiphany," *Catholic Homilies* II.III, Thorpe 1844–46, II: 51; Godden 1979: 26).

Those who commit the Creed to memory and are baptized escape spiritual penalties. Correspondingly, spiritual benefits await the baptized who affirm their faith. The Creed has a transformative effect upon

speakers: in a recursive fashion, faith strengthens faith. As St. Augustine of Hippo (354–430) declares, “these few words are known to the faithful, to the end that in believing they may be made subject to God; that being made subject, they may rightly live; that in rightly living, they may make the heart pure; that with the heart made pure, they may understand that which they believe.”<sup>5</sup>

The one Creed learned by every Christian was the Apostles’ Creed. Typically the Apostles’ Creed was prayed in Latin, but even as early as the eighth century, Bede (c.672/673–735) recommends its translation into English along with the Pater Noster in order that “the unlearned, that is to say those who only know their own language,” whether laity, clergy, or monk, “must learn to say them in their own tongue and to chant them carefully” (“Letter to Egbert,” McClure and Collins 1999: 345–46). To the same end, Ælfric, and Wulfstan after him, went so far as to provide an Old English translation of both.

Eadwine’s mid-twelfth-century Psalter (Cambridge, Trinity College Library, MS R.17.1, fol. 279r–279v) contains both the Latin text and glossed English translations of the Apostles’ Creed:

Credo in deum patrem omnipotentem creatorem caeli et terra; Et in Iesum Christum filium eius unicum dominum nostrum qui conceptus est de spiritu sancto Natus ex Maria uirgine, Passus sub Pontio Pilato Crucifixus, mortuus et sepultus. Descendit ad inferna tertia die resurrexit a mortuis, Ascendit ad caelos sedet ad dexteram Dei patris omnipotentis Inde uenturus (est) iudicare uiuos et mortuos. [the rest is missing from ms.] Credo in spiritum sanctum sanctam aecclesiam catholicam sanctorum communionem remissionem peccatorum carnis resurrectionem uitam aeternam. Amen.

Ic gelefe on gode fædera ælwealend / ealmihtig sceppend heofones and eorðan and on helende crist suna his anlich drihten ure. Syo þe akynned is of ðam halig gaste boran of M [aria uirgine]. [Polode under Pontius] pilate and on rode ahangen dead and beberiged. He adun astæh to hellæ. Ðriddan degge he aras fram deaða. He astah to heofone. Sit on swi[ð]ran healfe godes fæderes ealmihtig. Ðanen he is to comene and to demenna quiche and deade. Ic gelefe on halig gast and on halig gesomnunge fulfremede [and] halegan himennesse [and] forgyfenysse synne [and] flecsces uparisnesse [and] lif eche. Beo hit swa.

The *Eadwine Psalter* is an enhanced copy of the *Utrecht Psalter* with a beautifully illuminated “C” beginning the Latin *Credo*, and the rest of the first word written in gold paint.<sup>6</sup> For the sake of comparison, here is the Apostles’ Creed said today:

I believe in God,  
 the Father almighty,  
 Creator of heaven and earth,  
 and in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord,  
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
 born of the Virgin Mary,  
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
 was crucified, died and was buried;  
 he descended into hell;  
 on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
 he ascended into heaven,  
 and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
 from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
 the holy Catholic Church,  
 the communion of saints,  
 the forgiveness of sins,  
 the resurrection of the body,  
 and life everlasting.

Amen.<sup>7</sup>

Ælfric does not underestimate the gift of these vernacular translations:

Her is geleafa, and gebed, and bletsung, læwedum mannum, ðe ðæt leden ne cunnan (*Catholic Homilies* II, Thorpe 1844–46, II: 596).

[Here is belief, and prayer, and blessing, for laymen who know not Latin (Thorpe 1844–46, II: 597).]

Apart from the Mass, we find the Creed, or credal statements, appearing most prominently in the Christian rite of initiation; the sacrament of Baptism; and other ceremonies, including exorcisms, making use of “materials,” not only water but also oils and salt. There were two Creeds used in the early Church. First is the fourth-century Nicene Creed, also called the Mass Creed for its use in the Eucharist within the declaration of fellowship that begins the Mass of the Faithful.<sup>8</sup> It enters the Roman Rite after 1014. Beginning *Credo in unum Deum*, the Nicene Creed stresses the nature of the Triune God. The other Creed is the so-called Apostles’ Creed, also known as the minor or baptismal Creed. The appellation derives from the medieval legend of its origins: the apostles were supposed to have written this Creed collectively, each contributing one essential article, on Pentecost when under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Although each of the doctrines espoused in this Creed can be correlated

with statements current in the apostolic period, the legend itself dates from the sixth century.<sup>9</sup> The Apostles' Creed (*Credo in Deum*) was used by the Anglo-Saxons for Baptism, instruction, and in monastic liturgies, especially those at Easter.<sup>10</sup>

One additional credal statement was used by the early English Church: the Athanasian Creed, a long explanation of Catholic belief and worship emphasizing the unity of the Trinity. Liturgical documents refer to it by its opening words, *Quicumque vult* [*salvus esse*] 'Whoever wishes [to be saved]'. From the end of the eighth century onward, the Athanasian Creed was inserted into psalters (for example, the *Paris Psalter*), along with the Lord's Prayer and Apostles' Creed (Kelly 1964: 43). In the Anglo-Saxon Church, the *Quicumque vult* was used at Prime on Sundays. It is not until the thirteenth century that the Athanasian Creed is generally considered one of "three creeds" (Kelly 1964: 44). As a result, I exclude the one charm containing the *Quicumque vult*, namely *Contra febres*, from my corpus of Creed charms.<sup>11</sup>

### 1.1.2 *Credal Statements in Poetry*

Credal statements, like other material drawn from liturgy, accompany biblical narrative into Anglo-Saxon poetry. The creation of these texts in the native language of the people attests to society's assimilation of the doctrine promulgated by the Church.<sup>12</sup> We find allusions to the Apostles' Creed in poetic paraphrases and other alliterative verse. *The Dream of the Rood* restates part of the Apostles' Creed fairly explicitly. We hear, for instance:

hit is wuldres beam,  
 se ðe ælmihtig god on þrowode  
 for mancynnes manegum synnum  
 ond Adomes ealdgewyrhtum.  
 Deað he þær byrigde, hwæðere eft dryhten aras  
 mid his miclan mihte mannum to helpe.  
 He ða on heofenas astag. Hider eft fundað  
 on þysne middangeard mancynn secan  
 on domdæge dryhten sylfa,  
 ælmihtig god, ond his englas mid,  
 þæt he þonne wile deman, se ah domes geweald,  
 anra gehwylcum swa he him ærur her  
 on þyssum lænum life geearnað

(*The Dream of the Rood*, ll. 97–109, Krapp 1932: 64).

[ ... the tree of glory  
 On which Almighty God once suffered torments  
 For mankind's many sins, and for the deeds  
 Of Adam long ago. He tasted death  
 Thereon, and yet the Lord arose again  
 By His great might to come to human aid.  
 He rose to heaven, and the Lord Himself,  
 Almighty God and all His angels with Him  
 Will come onto this earth again to seek  
 Mankind on Doomsday, when the final Judge  
 Will give his verdict upon every man,  
 What in this fleeting life he shall have earned

(Hamer 2015: 171–73).]

A looser paraphrase of the Creed is found in *The Phoenix*, though it clearly represents the article that Christ arose from the dead on the third day. Toward the end of the poem, the bird's rebirth is likened to Christ's Resurrection:

Deah he deapes cwealm  
 on rode treow ræfnan scolde,  
 þearlic wite, he þy þriddan dæge  
 æfter lices hryre lif eft onfeng  
 þurh fæder fultum. Swa fenix beacnað,  
 geong in geardum, godbearnas meaht,  
 þonne he of ascan eft onwæcneð  
 in lifes lif, leomum gebungen

(*The Phoenix*, ll. 642–49, *Exeter Book*,  
 Krapp and Dobbie 1936: 94–113).

[Though he must suffer the blow of death on the rood tree,  
 that terrible torment, by the third day after his body's fall  
 he assumed life again through the help of the Father.  
 So the Phoenix signifies, fresh in the fold, the might  
 of the God-child, when he rises once more from the ashes  
 into the life of lives, equipped with his limbs.]<sup>13</sup>

Another metrical version of the Apostles' Creed is preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 121. In this devotional work, the Latin half of ten major tenets is followed by an English meditation on the significance of that verse.<sup>14</sup> However the poetry was composed – orally or in writing – oral-traditional poetics incorporate the bilingual apposition as a form of variation. The Latin, *Credo in deum patrem omnipotentem* 'I believe in God the Father Almighty', for instance, alternates with the Old English, "ælmihstig fæder up on rodore" 'Almighty Father in heaven on



high' (ll. 1–2, Dobbie 1942: 78; Bradley 1995: 541). Following *Tertia die resurrexit a mortuis* 'On the third day He rose again from the Dead', the reader or hearer is reassured of God's loyalty to His people:

and ða his rice began,  
þone uplican eðel secan,  
cwæð þæt he nolde nænne forlætan  
þe him forð ofer þæt fylían wolde  
and mid fæstum sefan freode gelæstan

("The Creed," ll. 36–40, Dobbie 1942: 79).

[then he went seeking to his kingdom, that homeland on high, and said that he would abandon no one who ever after that would follow him and with a steadfast spirit hold loyal to his friendship (Bradley 1995: 542).]

Here, as elsewhere, the Creed's presence in traditional English poetry reveals the strength and intimacy of its connection to the people.

### 1.1.3 *Baptism*

Before analyzing the role of the Creed and other baptismal components in charms let me place them in the context of the sacrament in early medieval England. While the seven sacraments were not established as such until the Council of Trent (1545–63), Baptism and the Eucharist were regarded as sacraments by Church Fathers.<sup>15</sup> As a necessity for salvation, Baptism lay at the heart of Anglo-Saxon Christianity. Vernacular poetry honors Baptism, just as it honors the Creed. Poems in Old English commend the institution as a means of incorporating a person into the mystical body of Christ, as the heroic epic *Andreas* demonstrates. After a flood has punished the Mermedonians, cannibals who had captured the apostle St. Matthew and imprisoned his fellow apostle, St. Andrew, God raises the heathens from the dead in order that they might renounce the devil who had held them in thrall.<sup>16</sup> The episode concludes when those who "rise up alive from their watery graves . . . partake / of the sacrament of Baptism through God's power" (*Andreas*, l. 1669, ll. 1682–83, Williamson and Shippey 2017: 233). In gratitude they build a church, whereupon,

a festive host of men and women  
Began to gather throughout the city.  
They promised to forgo their heathen faith,  
Their ancient gods, their false idols –  
To follow the Lord's will, accept his laws,  
And live in the promise of his eternal love.

They embraced this faith and boldly approached  
 God's holy messenger for a bath of baptism.  
 The sacrament was established and embraced by all  
 Who promised to serve God and follow his faith  
 The church was consecrated in the eyes of God.  
 The Lord's commandments were the law of the land

(*Andreas*, ll. 1682–93, Williamson and Shippey 2017: 233).

Extolling Baptism as initiation into a worldly community of Christians, *Andreas* does not neglect its salvific import. As the people convert, Baptism provides them spiritually with “a promise of peace, / A covenant with God, a pledge of protection – / His grace and glory in a place beyond torment” (*Andreas*, ll. 1675–77, Williamson and Shippey 2017: 233).

That sense of security would resonate with the poem's audience, for Anglo-Saxon Christians were familiar with Baptism, through their own Baptisms or through participation in that of others. Preachers had taught them the meaning of the sacrament and had explained the liturgy. Both Ælfric and Wulfstan wrote homilies on Baptism in English. In his sermon on Epiphany, Ælfric summarizes the baptismal dialogue renouncing the devil and affirming belief. He avoids the Latin actually used for Baptism and explains the credal interrogation using English:

Se mæssepreost axað þæt cild. and cwæð; Wiðsæcst ðu deofle? Ðonne andwyrst se godfæder þæs cildes wordum and cwæð; Ic wiðsace deofle; Þonne axað he eft; Wiðsæcst ðu eallum his weorcum? He cwæð ic wiðsace; He axað þridan siðe; Wiðsæcst ðu eallum his getotum? He cwæð ic wiðsace; þonne hæfst he wiðsacen, on ðisum ðrym wordum deofle. and eallum leahtrum; Ðonne axað he gyt; Gelyfst ðu on ðære halgan ðrynnysse. and soðre annysse? He andwyrst ic gelyfe; Se Godes ðen befrinð þonne gyt; Gelyfst ðu þæt we sceolon ealle arisan min urum lichaman on domes dæge togeanes criste. and þæt ðær gehwa onfo edlean ealra his weorca, swa swa he ær on life geearnode? He andwyrst ic gelyfe; And se preost gefullað þæt cild mid þisum geleafan (*In Aepiphania Domini*, “Sermon on the Lord's Epiphany,” *Catholic Homilies* II.III, Godden 1979: 27).

[The mass-priest asks the child, and says, “Dost thou renounce the devil?” Then answers the godfather in the words of the child, and says, “I renounce the devil.” Then again he asks, “Dost thou renounce all his works?” He says, “I renounce.” He asks a third time, “Dost thou renounce all his vanities?” He says, “I renounce.” Then will he have renounced, in these three sentences, the devil and all sins. Then he yet asks, “Believed thou in the Holy Trinity and true Unity?” He answers, “I believe.” The minister of God inquires yet further, “Believest thou that we all shall arise with our bodies on doom's day before Christ, and that there every one will receive the reward of

all his works, as he has merited in life?" He answers, "I believe." And the priest baptizes the child with this belief (Thorpe 1844–46, II: 53).]

In order that English speakers could understand what happened during the ceremony, Wulfstan defines the meaning of the Latin words *godparents* would pronounce. They would say,

*Abrenuntio*, þæt is on Englisc, ic wiðsace heononforð æfre deofles gemanan. *Credo*, þæt is on Englisc, ic gelyfe on God ælmihtigne þe ealle ðing gescop and geworhte (*Sermo de Baptismate*, Bethurum 1957: 181).

[*Abrenuntio*, that is in English, I henceforth renounce forever the devil's companions. *Credo*, that is in English, I believe in God almighty who created and wrought all things.]

Baptism cleansed individuals from the guilt of original sin and its main penalty, damnation to hell. Other rites performed at Baptism helped to mitigate further consequences of original sin, as St. Augustine explains: "even little children undergo exsufflation, exorcism; to drive away from them the power of the devil their enemy, which deceived man that it might possess mankind" ("On the Creed: A Sermon to the Catechumens," *De Symbolo ad Catechumenos*, Section 1, Schaff 1887: 368).<sup>17</sup> By the tenth century, infant (that is, child) Baptism was the common practice in Western Christianity, including the Anglo-Saxon Church (although immigrants from Scandinavia might be received as adults).<sup>18</sup> Performed as necessary throughout the year, especially when infants or adults were in danger of dying, Baptisms traditionally took place at the Easter vigil, that is, on Holy Saturday or on Pentecost.<sup>19</sup> The *Missal of Robert of Jumièges*, for instance, celebrates the Resurrection with provisions for Baptism (see Wilson 1896: 93–100).

The Latin rite for Baptism used by the Anglo-Saxons in the eleventh century survives in four English service books (Keefer 1995: 101–102):

- The *Leofric Missal* (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 579);
- The *Missal of Robert of Jumièges* (Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 274);
- The *Red Book of Darley* (CCCC 422, pp. 367–422);
- The *Winchcombe Sacramentary* (Orléans, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 127 [105]).

The baptismal formulas in these books follow the basic structure of Benedict of Aniane's early ninth-century Supplemented Hadrianum version of the *Gregorian Sacramentary*, with the exception of *Leofric*, which

has its component parts in the “wrong” order.<sup>20</sup> All of the Latin ordines presuppose primarily infant Baptism. Let me highlight the rites briefly. Baptism in the *Red Book of Darley*, which may have been designed for the use of local priests, contains additional rubrics such as specifications for the role and responses of the child’s godparents (Gittos 2005b: 70–75). In addition to its baptismal ordines, The *Missal of Robert of Jumièges* (Bishop of London and Archbishop of Canterbury, died c.1052–55) contains an abbreviated ritual for baptizing the sick, which is comprised of an exorcism followed immediately by Baptism (Wilson 1896: 100). The *Winchcombe Sacramentary* integrates an ordo for Baptism with the Vigil Mass for Easter (Davril 1995; Bedingfield 2002: 175).

Because the rites for infant Baptism had developed out of a sequence of instructional and initiatory rites intended for adults, early English ordines record “a sometimes clumsy conglomeration of actions” (Gittos 2005b: 70–71). The arrangement of the rite also differs from one service book to another. Commonly, however, baptismal liturgies include prayers for the making of a catechumen, benediction of salt, exorcisms, anointing with oil and saliva, signing the Cross on the candidate’s head and body, renunciation of the devil, benediction of the font, credal interrogation and affirmation of belief in the Trinity, trine immersion with baptismal formula, and post-baptismal imposition of hands and anointing with chrism. A chrisal-cloth is laid on the candidate’s head, a lit candle placed in his or her hand, and a final prayer concludes the ceremony (Gittos 2005b: 71–73).

Let us look more closely at the service from the *Red Book of Darley*, which incorporates English rubrics. A two-part dialogue between celebrant and child (represented by godparent) precedes Baptism: the priest asks a succession of questions, guided in the second half by the tenets of the Creed. Baptism proper begins with a series of exorcisms which culminate with the candidate’s being asked to renounce Satan, all his works, and all his pomp (cf. Lat. *pompa* ‘triumphal procession’; Jungmann 1959: 80). The *Red Book of Darley* directs a child’s godfather – in English – to make avowals on his or her behalf:<sup>21</sup>

Ahsi her þ(æ)s cild(e)s [naman] þonne secge se godfæder þæs cildes naman þonne cweðe.

*Abrenuntias satane.*

þa godfæderas.

*Abrenuntio.*

þonne cweþe se preost.

*Et omnibus operibus eius.*

Ðonne cweþe se godfæder.

*Abrenuntio.*

Ðonne cweðe se preost. git þriddan siþe.

*Et omnibus pompis eius.*

Ðonne andswarige se godfæder.

*Abrenuntio . . .*

Ðonne nime se preost mid his þuman of ðam ele. and ahsige þæs cildes namen  
and wyrce rode tacn betwux þam breostum and cweðe

*Et ego te lineo oleo salutis. in cristo ihesu domino nostro in uitam eternam.*

Ahsige her se preost þæs cyldes namem. ðonne secge se godfær þæs cildes  
naman. Ðonne sette se preost his hand uppam þæs cildes heafod. and cweðe

*Credis in dominum patrem omnipotentem creatorem celi et terre. et in.*

Ðonne andswarige se godfæder.

*Credo.*

Ðonne cweð se preost gyt oþre syðan.

*Credis et in ihesum cristum filium eius unicum dominum nostrum natum et  
passum.*

Ðonne andswarige se godfæder.

*Credo.*

Ðonne cweðe se preost git þriddan siðe.

*Credis et in spiritum sanctum, [sanctam] ecclesiam catholicam, sanctorum com-  
munionem, remissionem peccatorum, carnis resurrectionem, et uitam eternam.*

*Amen.*

Ðonne andswarie se godfæder git þriddan siðe.

*Credo.*

Ðonne ahsige se preost þæs cildes namen. Ðonne secge se godfæder þæs cildes  
nama.

*Vis baptizari.*

Ðonne cweðe se godfæder.

*Volo.*

Ðonne nime se preost þæt cild and dippe þæt cilde on þæt wæter and cweþe.

*Et ego te baptizo in nomine patris.*

and dippe þæt cild oðre syðe on ðæt wæter. and cweðe.

*Et filii.*

and dyppe hyt ðriddan siðe. and cweðe.

*Et spiritus sancti. Amen*

(CCCC 422, pp. 388–90, ll. 36–53, Page 1978: 153–54).

[Here let the priest ask the child's name. Let the godfather state the child's  
name. Then let the priest say,

*Do you renounce Satan?*

Let the godfather answer,

*I renounce.*

Then let the priest say,

*And all of his works?*

Then let the godfather say,

*I renounce.*

Then let the priest say for the third time,

*And all of his pomps?*

Then let the godfather answer,

*I renounce.*

Then let the priest take oil with his thumb and ask the child's name, and sign the Cross between the child's breasts [near the heart] and say,

*I anoint you with the oil of salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord, unto life everlasting.*

Then let the priest ask the child's name. Then let the godfather state the child's name. Then let the priest set his hand upon the child's head and say,

*Do you believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth?*

Then let the godfather answer,

*I believe.*

Then once again let the priest say,

*Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, Who was born and Who suffered?*

Then let the godfather answer,

*I believe.*

Then let the priest say for the third time,

*Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?  
Amen.*

Then let the godfather answer for the third time,

*I believe.*

Then let the priest ask the child's name, and let the godfather state the child's name.

*Will you be baptized?*

*I will.*

Then let the priest take the child and dip the child in the water and say,

*... I baptize you in the name of the Father.*

And let him dip the child another time in the water and say,

*and of the Son*

And let him dip it a third time and say,

*and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.]*

After candidates or godparents renounce the devil and his works in a triple interrogation, the candidate is then anointed.

Then another triple interrogation takes place, building to the climax of the rite. The candidate or godparent is asked to affirm belief in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and in the following articles of the Apostles' Creed. Just as the response "I believe" is given to each of the three questions, so the

candidate is plunged into the font water, three times in all, during which the priest proclaims, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” The baptismal rite ends with the neophyte’s first Communion. At the kernel of the rite of Baptism is, in the words of Cyril of Jerusalem, the confessing of the “saving confession” (Kelly 1950: 39).

In addition to this interrogatory creed, much earlier in the service or even in the course of the ceremonies preparatory to the Baptism itself, there was another occasion to affirm belief on behalf of candidate and community. This time it was the case of reciting a declaratory Creed, the content of which was in large measure adopted from the baptismal interrogations (Kelly 1950: 52). Rubrics in the *Gelasian Sacramentary* enjoin the priest to pronounce the Creed “with his hand on the children’s heads” outside of the baptistery (Kelly 1950: 38). When, over the years, Lenten scrutinies are abridged and incorporated into the baptismal liturgy, the Creed comes to precede the blessing of the font (for example, *Red Book of Darley*). Later practice, based to some degree in earlier custom, underscores the public nature of the affirmation. According to the Sarum Manual’s medieval form for the making of the catechumen, during the prelude to Baptism, the priest asks parents, godparents, and others assembled to say the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, and *Credo in Deum*. The priest then repeats these prayers out loud for everyone to hear (Collins 1960: 30).

## 1.2 The Components of Charms Invoking Baptism

### 1.2.1 *The Creed*

Because the Creed protects the steadfast, St. Augustine advises its daily use:

Receive, my children, the Rule of Faith, which is called the Symbol (or Creed). And when ye have received it, write it in your heart, and be daily saying it to yourselves; before ye sleep, before ye go forth, arm you with your Creed (“On the Creed: A Sermon to the Catechumens,” *De Symbolo ad Catechumenos*, Section 1, Schaff 1887: 368).

For instance, by saying the Creed at the morning Office, as Bede advises (repeating St. Ambrose), the faithful should arm themselves “as a kind of spiritual antidote to the poison with which the devil tries by day and night” with wicked cunning to infect them (McClure and Collins 1999: 345–46):

verba symboli matutinis semper horis fideles quique decantent, et hoc se quasi antidoto spiritali contra diaboli venena quae illis interdiu vel noctu

astu maligno obicere posset, praemuniant (“Letter to Ecgbert,” King 1930, II: 456–57).

Along with the people’s knowledge of their words and meaning, their authorization by the Church encourages the use of both Pater Noster and Creed in charms (for example, *Old English Penitential*, fols. 1–19, *Ecgbert’s Penitential*, Frantzen 2003–22). Ælfric informs his flock similarly: “he who wishes to journey any whither, let him sing his *Paternoster* and *Credo*, if he know [them], and cry to his Lord, and cross himself, and travel without care through God’s protection, without the devil’s sorceries.”<sup>22</sup>

Declarations of belief taking the form of the Creed are included in Anglo-Saxon healing rituals for precise reasons. Most important, the Bible tells us that Jesus healed the faithful simply because they believed. While the Creed takes the form of an affirmation of belief, its illocutionary force as a speech act in charms is that of an indirect request for help fighting off danger or disease. Uttering the Creed, a supplicant asks the Lord for health by virtue of belief.

Because Anglo-Saxons had faith in its efficacy, in summary, prayer was commonly used in many circumstances outside of religious services, especially in healing rituals like those prescribed in charms. This is particularly true of the Pater Noster and the Creed, as we witness in a *Lacnunga* charm for a heart ailment:

Gif wænnas eglia mæn æt þære heortan: gange mædenman to wylle þe rihte east yrne and gehlade ane cuppan fulle forð mid ðam streame, and singe þæron ‘Credan’ and ‘Pater noster’; and geote þon(ne) on oþer fæt, and hlade eft oþre and singe eft ‘Credan’ and ‘Pater noster’, and do swa þ(æt) þu hæbbe þreo; do swa nygon dagas; sona hi(m) bið sel (*Lacnunga* clxxvi, fol. 189r, Pettit 2001, I: 120).

[If ‘wens’ afflict a person at the heart; let a virgin go to a spring which runs directly east and draw up a cupful in the direction of the current, and sing thereon the Creed and the Our Father; and then pour it into another vessel, and again draw up a second (cupful) and sing again the Creed and the Our Father, and continue until you have three; do so for nine days; he will soon be better (Pettit 2001, I: 121).]

Stephanie Clark’s assertion that both Pater Noster and Creed lack meaning in charms (and act as charm incantations because “their content has little relation to their use”) underestimates the tradition behind their use (2018: 211). Evidence from early medieval medical texts such as *Bald’s Leechbook* (Books I and II), *Leechbook III*, and *Lacnunga* indicates that the Church achieved its educational goals for personal use of the Lord’s Prayer and the



Creed. Because both texts belong to Baptism, moreover, their presence in charms resonates within the context of the sacrament and its observance.

Through incantation sets, charm composers construct specific ritual environments in which they embed the uttering of the Creed. To a very limited extent, these environments exhibit a likeness to baptismal services. A careful balancing act is accomplished wherein baptismal actions occur in an altered setting. From the outset we must note that none of the charms contain the baptismal formula (*ego te baptize in nomine Patris. et Filii. et Spiritus Sancti*) or a variant of the words that baptize. It follows that none of the charms perform Baptism; nor do they attempt to imitate its administration. Indeed, the utterances and gestures that signify Baptism in charms are applied only indirectly to people. Healers anoint herbs that will be used to heal the sick. They anoint objects with Oil of Unction, then use them to simulate the anointing of a patient (as in *Leechbook III* lxii.d, discussed below). This sleight of hand would create infelicities in actual Baptism. Far from compromising traditional remedies, actions that sound and seem baptismal allude to the sacrament. What is more, these incongruities prove telling, for they reveal the integration of ecclesiastical texts and gestures into traditional practices.

For the charm performer, his or her patient, and for any other participants, charms could derive great power from the recitation of the Creed, which could wield the implicit power of faith for healing. When the Creed is prescribed in charms, the Latin and Old English forms, *credo* or *creda*, generally appear without specification of which Creed, if either, is required.<sup>23</sup> Beyond an opening word or phrase, the words themselves are not provided in the charm text. Familiarity with the text is assumed, in keeping with community knowledge. While we do not know how much of the Creed was to be uttered in each charm, instructions tell the performer to “sing” the Creed, indicating that the entire Creed was to be performed. Only twice does the opening line distinguish the form. *Credo in deum patrem* ‘I believe in God the Father’ identifies the Apostles’ Creed in one charm (*Lacnunga* lxiii, fol. 148r), and *credo in unum* ‘I believe in one [God]’ indicates the Nicene Creed in another (*Lacnunga* xxxi, fol. 140v).<sup>24</sup> Because the essential affirmation of faith is the same for both Creeds, it may not actually matter which Creed is repeated as a charm formula. Indeed the two are sometimes switched or conflated. Ælfric’s sermon on the Creed, for instance, begins with the Apostles’ Creed but then evolves into an exposition of the Nicene Creed’s statements on the nature of the Trinity (*De Fide Catholica, Catholic Homilies I*, Clemons 1997: 335–44). Then, too, the *Red Book of Darley* requires the priest to sing his *mæsse credan . . . credo in*

*unum Deum*, rather than Apostles' Creed, at the start of its baptismal liturgy.<sup>25</sup> Although ambiguous in most of the charms, evidence from the individual texts, namely, the presence of baptismal utterances and gestures, nevertheless suggests that the default was the Apostles' Creed.

Having established a context of the Creed's familiarity and baptismal significance, we can now scrutinize the Anglo-Saxon charms in which it appears. Seven charms containing nine distinct rituals in *Bald's Leechbook*, *Leechbook III*, and *Lacnunga* require the singing of *credo* or *creda*. In all but two rituals, the unknown Creed is probably the declaratory Apostles' Creed, given the larger context of each charm. The Apostles' Creed is specified in one other charm. The Creed works on two levels when patient and audience hear it as an incantation. First, the Creed in itself reminded Christians that the strength of their belief could be used to "defend themselves against the assaults of evil spirits" (Bede, "Letter to Egbert," McClure and Collins 1999: 345–46). Second, it reminded them of their Baptism and the power of the sacrament. Although it is ancillary to Baptism when it appears in charms, the Creed transports the liturgical traditions associated with it into the charm. Whether actually said or merely cited, the presence of the Creed brings to the healing rite the confidence of catechetical instruction and the certainty of Church membership. The healer who repeats the Creed claims his or her baptismal birthright as a Christian, his or her soul sealed and marked as God's own.

While the Creed functions within the context of Baptism, it functions within a similitude of baptismal action in charms. A number of elements from Baptism allude to the sacrament. Along with the Creed, to restate, the important indices of Baptism found in charms are water and its ritualized use for washing, the Pater Noster, anti-demonic formulas and prayers (simulating exorcisms) and exorcistic gestures (simulating exsufflation and Effeta), and signing the Cross. All these features are interdependent, and they act in concert. The presence of one baptismal constituent substantiates the allusiveness of another. In the presence of the Creed, these signs invoke Baptism.

Charms may also rely on prayers and other utterances that contribute to baptismal celebrations but are not at the core of the liturgical performance. These are strongly associated with Baptism but are not particular to it. Recalling the song of the angels at the birth of Jesus, the exclamation, *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, signals the joy of the neophyte's first Communion. Following the *Kyrie*, the *Gloria* helps to open the Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. The *Litany of the Saints* (*Litaniae Sanctorum*) may be sung during the blessing of the font, especially at the Easter Vigil and Pentecost, but it is

not necessary for the performance of the sacrament. Verses from the Gospel similarly may be read, but do not determine the success of the liturgy. All these belong to the solemnity of the performance, and accordingly, their allusiveness proves weaker than that of the signs just considered. Chiefly they support other allusions in the channeling of Baptism.

### 1.2.2 *A Continuum of Usage*

As we will see, the degree to which Baptism is evoked and invoked depends on the significance and frequency of baptismal allusions within a particular charm. Although the Creed's expression of belief is crucial to the working of a charm, a larger constellation of elements in these charms call upon Baptism as a healing rite. While not every Creed charm also contains water and anti-demonic formulas and the sign of the Cross, the presence of some or all of these elements in combination with the Creed invokes the baptismal liturgy. In *Lacnunga* lxiii, as we will see, a critical mass of allusions suggests Baptism during the initial stages of preparing a salve.

When baptismal elements are exploited in charms, the strength and productivity of their allusiveness varies. In the absence of Creed and other important signs, the baptismal allusions in *Leechbook III* lxii.c may remain vague or unproductive, thus offering us a counter-example to baptismal evocation and a contra-indication of invocation. This charm for elf disease deploys baptismal elements such as the sign of the Cross and drops of holy water. It also relies on holy salt, which is blessed at Baptism and on Sunday before Mass and used for making ordinary holy water:

Eft wiþ þon: lege under weofod þas wyrte, læt gesingan ofer .viii. mæssan: recels, halig sealt, .iii. heafod cropleaces, ælfþonan niopewardes, elenan. Nim on morgen scenc fulne meoluce. Dryp þriwa haliges wæteres on. Supe swa he hatost mæge. Ete mid .iii. snæda ælfþonan and þonne he restan wille, hæbbe gleda þær inne. Lege stor and ælfþonan on þa gleda and rec hine mid þæt he swæte and þæt hus geond rec and georne þone man gesena and þonne he on reste gange, ete .iii. snæda eolenan and .iii. cropleaces and .iii. sealtas and hæbbe him scenc fulne ealað and drype þriwa halig wæter on. Besupe ælce snæd. Gereste hine siþþan. Do þis .viii. morgenas and .viii. niht. Him biþ sona sel (*Leechbook III* lxii.c, fol. 124r–124v, Cockayne 1865, II: 346–47).

[Afterwards for that [elf disease], lay these plants under an altar [along with] frankincense, holy salt: three heads of leek, the lower part of bittersweet nightshade, and elecampane. Let nine masses be sung over [them]. Take a cupful of milk in the morning. Drip holy water into [it] three times. [Let him] sup as hot as he can. Eat with three morsels of bittersweet

nightshade and when he wants to rest, have coals therein [his room]. Lay frankincense and bittersweet nightshade on the coals and smoke him with [it] until he sweats, and smoke that house entirely, and eagerly make the sign of the cross on that person and when he goes in to rest, [give him to] eat three morsels of elecampane, and three [morsels] of leek and three [morsels] of salt, and have a cupful of ale for him and drip holy water three times on. [He must] consume each morsel. Let him rest afterwards. Do this nine mornings and nine nights. He will soon be well.]

The charm's holy salt, laid under the altar along with incense and edible plants, refers to salt consecrated previously in church. Later in the charm ritual, the patient is given three morsels of salt. Whether or not it is salt from the altar, the feeding alludes to the placement of salt in the mouth of the catechumen toward the beginning of Baptism as the celebrant states, *accipe salem sapientie propitiatus in uitam aeternam* 'receive the salt of wisdom as a token of propitiation unto eternal life'.<sup>26</sup> John the Deacon (*floruit* CE 500) explains that the catechumen receives blessed salt to signify that "the distemper of corruption is thoroughly settled by the gentle action of the divine salt" ("Letter to Senarius," c.500, Whitaker 2003: 209). The three-fold dripping of holy water into the milk adds another, albeit indirect, reference, alluding to baptismal infusion or aspersion.<sup>27</sup> More holy water may be dripped on the patient, if the Old English preposition *on* refers to him or her and not to the ale. The cup of milk could represent another allusion; time has rendered it opaque, if so. The milk may allude to the milk and honey given to the newly baptized to signify God's promise of a land flowing with milk and honey (Leviticus 20.24), the "land of resurrection to everlasting bliss."<sup>28</sup> This practice, discontinued in the seventh century, may be lost to memory, rendering the allusion unproductive. As we can see, therefore, the presence of baptismal allusions does not automatically cause Baptism to be invoked. When, in contrast, the Creed is specified in charms, its clear and strong evocation leads to the channeling or invocation of Baptism.

We can situate baptismal referents – and gauge their productivity – by envisioning a continuum of usage. Table 1.1 illustrates the range of elements found in nine Creed charm rituals, from the minimal presence of Creed and water to the additional presence of anti-demonic anointing prayers (also associated with the Visitation of the Sick) to additional solemnities. The larger the cluster of baptismal features, the richer the associations and the more powerful the subsequent invocation of Baptism. Note that a single charm may have multiple allusions and may be listed more than once in the chart.

Table 1.1 *Elements alluding to Baptism in charms*

Basic allusions to Baptism ≫		≫≫ Additional allusions to Baptism					
Creed & water	Pater Noster	Ritual use of water (dip, pour, wash)	Sign Cross Triune Blessing	Litany	Anti-demonic anointing prayer (simulated)	Exsufflation Effeta (simulated)	Gospel Lection
<i>Lac</i> xxix	<i>Lac</i> xxix	<i>Lac</i> xxix	<i>Lac</i> xxix	<i>Lac</i> xxix			<i>Lac</i> xxix
<i>Lac</i> xxxi							
<i>Lac</i> lxiii							
<i>Lac</i> clxxvi	<i>Lac</i> clxxvi	<i>Lac</i> clxxvi			<i>Lac</i> lxiii	<i>Lac</i> lxiii	<i>Lac</i> lxiii
<i>Bld Lcb</i> I.lxii.c	<i>Bld Lcb</i> I.lxii.c	<i>Bld Lcb</i> I.lxii.c	<i>Bld Lcb</i> I.lxii.c				<i>Bld Lcb</i> I.lxii.c
<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.a	<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.a	<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.a	<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.a	<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.a			
<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.b	<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.b	<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.b		<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.b			
<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.d	<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.d		<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.d	<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.d			
<i>Lcb</i> III lxviii	<i>Lcb</i> III lxviii				<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.d	<i>Lcb</i> III lxii.d	
[unspecified substance]							

1.2.3 *The Pater Noster*

The use of the Creed and Pater Noster as charm incantations speaks to the success of the Church's mission to teach the basic tenets of the Christian faith. Almost 80 percent (seven out of nine) of the charm rituals that deploy the Creed to invoke Baptism rely on the Pater Noster. Its connection to Baptism is both basic and profound, as we have seen. Children baptized as infants were given the prayer as a legacy of Baptism. For those baptized as adults, the Pater Noster provides a door to Baptism and thus to the Church. In both cases, the Lord's Prayer is tied to remaining on the path to salvation.

Learned in childhood or at initiation into the Church, the Lord's Prayer is to be prayed several times a day, according to churchmen. Inside a church or out, the English could pray it with a sense of entitlement. Theirs to pray in His name, the Lord's Prayer is given to the people themselves directly by Christ. Teaching His followers to pray, He authorizes people to address God as "Father." The only prayer Jesus gives His disciples survives in two versions and in three texts. Giving God's people the prayer in their own tongue, Ælfric provides this text of the Lord's Prayer:

Ðu ure Fæder, þe eart on heofenum, sy ðin nama gehalgod. Gecume þin rice. Sy ðin willa swa swa on heofenum swa eac on eorðan. Syle us to-dæg urne dæghwomlican hlaf, and forgif us ure gyltas swa swa we forgyfað þam ðe wið us agyltað. And ne læd þu na us on costnunge, ac alys us fram yfele. Sy hit swa (*Catholic Homilies* II, Thorpe 1844–46, II: 596).<sup>29</sup>

[Thou our Father, who art in heaven, be thy name hallowed. Thy kingdom come. Be thy will as in heaven so also on earth. Give to us today our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive them that sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Be it so (Thorpe 1844–46, II: 597).]

The use of the Lord's Prayer is both personal and communal. By tradition of its origin, the Lord's Prayer serves as the vehicle for special requests of the Father. The English people prayed it privately and when they came together as a congregation for celebrations of the Eucharist, the Visitation of the Sick, and Baptism. At Baptism, the Pater Noster is uttered near the beginning of (or immediately prior to) the service. In the *Missal of Robert of Jumièges*, rubrics for it appear after the Gospel reading and shortly before the pre-baptismal Effeta.<sup>30</sup> In the *Red Book of Darley*, the priest recites the Pater Noster and Creed before tracing the sign of the Cross in the candidate's right palm.<sup>31</sup>

Although the people heard and prayed the Lord's Prayer during Baptism, the English were used to hearing and praying the Pater Noster in church, more generally, when they attended Mass, which they were expected to do on Sundays and feast days.<sup>32</sup> Whether or not individuals themselves received Communion, they repeated the Pater Noster publicly, at least in part, when they were present at Mass. Because the prayer allowed the faithful to receive the sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, it was thought fitting that all of the faithful should participate in saying it (Jungmann 1951–55, II: 287). Directions in early service books tell us that the whole congregation was meant to join in its repetition. While some prayers are said by the priest alone, and other prayers are said by the priest on behalf of the people, the Pater Noster is apportioned between priest and people. By the eighth century, for instance, rubrics specify that all the people must conclude the prayer by saying *Sed libera nos a malo* 'but deliver us from evil' (Jungmann 1951–55, II: 288). Audience participation is more than symbolic; it is essential in the public praying of the Pater Noster. After all, it is the personal – albeit communally performed – prayer that is recited during the liturgy. Whether the assembly speaks the prayer's final plea, which is the most appropriate part of the Pater Noster for curing maladies, or whether the choir or parish clerk speaks in their place, "the people say the Our Father along with the celebrant" (Jungmann 1951–55, II: 288).

Its role in the Eucharistic liturgy is ancient. Because the request for daily bread had been taken in the figurative sense as a plea for spiritual sustenance, the Pater Noster has long been used as a Communion prayer. In this location in the official service since the fifth or sixth centuries, it summarizes and recapitulates the Eucharistic prayer while initiating Communion. For this reason, the Pater Noster is used whenever Communion is celebrated outside the larger Mass, for example, on Good Friday and at Communion of the Sick. The prayer prepares a Christian for Communion and for the reception of the Sacrament and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

When a person was gravely ill or dying, it was the Pater Noster that was brought along with the Host by visiting clergy. One wonders whether the sick might have come to expect the praying of the Pater Noster in a solemnity performed at their sickbeds. The praying of the Pater Noster within charm rituals might have offered a particular comfort because of its association with the Communion of the Sick administered during the *Visitatio*. The Lord's Prayer accompanied Christians throughout their lives, as the Church ministered to them from Baptism to sickness and death.

In short, the Pater Noster is incorporated into charms not merely because everybody knows it, but because the Anglo-Saxons recognize its centrality to supplication and worship, private or communal. The regard that the early English held for the Lord's Prayer is reflected in vernacular poetry and prose. Three poetic renderings of the Lord's Prayer survive from the period.<sup>33</sup> Perhaps better known among literary works are three separate dialogues between Solomon and Saturn. Written in Old English, they offer evidence of the early medieval devotion to praying the Pater Noster. The preservation of the dialogues in two manuscripts, one of which also contains the *Red Book of Darley* with its Anglo-Saxon baptismal liturgy, suggests the appeal of this literature. Whether or not the Solomonic dialogues were widely read in early medieval England, their treatment of the Pater Noster indicates its impact on the spiritual imagination (Anlezark 2009: vii). In these dialogues the prayer is changed fantastically from linguistic utterance into animate being. The prayer that acts as a conduit to the Father becomes a creature who acts on behalf of the Father. The Our Father can even assume the form of our Father (Anlezark 2009: III–12).

Commensurate with the prayer's embodiment, its written form wields power unsurpassed. In the poem *Solomon and Saturn I*, the individual Roman letters that spell out "Pater Noster" (accompanied by their runic symbols in CCCC 422) do battle with the devil and his demons on behalf of the human soul (Anlezark 2009: 44). Medieval textual theory provides a context for the anthropomorphized letters. If texts "hold the power of speech of those absent," as Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe applies Isidore's notion to their interpretation, then the letters of the Pater Noster embody the power of Christ, who spoke these words to the Father (Anlezark 2009: 29; O'Brien O'Keeffe 1990: 52).

To the extent that the Pater Noster embodies the Word, "his" power is real rather than symbolic:

Golden is God's utterance, studded with gems . . . (l. 63). He can fetch the soul from everlasting night under the earth, however deep the fiend fasten it with chains . . . (ll. 68–70). He destroys hunger, plunders hell, breaks the surge, builds up glory . . . (ll. 73–76). He is the healer of the lame, light of the sightless, so also he is the door of the deaf, the tongue of the mute, shield of the culpable, the hall of the Creator, . . . saviour of the people (*Solomon and Saturn I*, ll. 77–80, CCCC 422, Anlezark 2009: 67).

The eschatological battle continues in *Solomon and Saturn Pater Noster Prose*. Solomon explains that the Pater Noster assumes thirty guises as he



fighters the devil in his mutating form. In his final manifestation, “the Pater Noster will be transformed more gloriously into the likeness of the Lord” (*Solomon and Saturn Pater Noster Prose*, ll. 9–33, CCC 422, Anlezark 2009: 73). After describing the radiant heart of the Pater Noster, Solomon generalizes, “and the Pater Noster, he can press and twist all creation in his right hand” (*Solomon and Saturn Pater Noster Prose*, ll. 92–93, CCC 422, Anlezark 2009: 77). The Pater Noster’s ultimate victory makes the prayer the perfect lorica in the here-and-now:

And he who will eagerly sing the utterance of God truly and will cherish it always without misdeeds, he can cause the hated spirit, the fighting enemy, to flee (*Solomon and Saturn I*, ll. 84–88, CCC 422, Anlezark 2009: 69).

The Solomonic dialogues exemplify the traditional resonance of the Pater Noster. Anglo-Saxons knew the Lord’s Prayer by heart, and tradition taught them its power.

The meaning and significance of the Pater Noster – along with Church authorization – make it ideal for charm healing. While the Lord’s Prayer brings independent power to healing rituals, it also helps to invoke Baptism in certain charm contexts. Unlike the Creed, its allusive power is not specific. Because the Our Father is used so generally, in a variety of circumstances both personal and liturgical, the strength of its baptismal resonance may depend on what else accompanies it in a given charm. Its versatility as a prayer may override specific associations, in other words, unless additional baptismal allusions foreground the Pater Noster’s role at Baptism. The Pater Noster does not gain resonance from other allusions in such cases, but rather, these highlight its traditional associations with Baptism.

The Pater Noster alludes to Baptism to treat wood-heart or frenzy, as we have seen, in the presence of Creed and litanies in *Leechbook III* lxviii, fols. 126v–127r. It is similarly productive in cooling fever. The Pater Noster alludes to Baptism in combination with the Creed, water, exorcistic language, and the sign of the Cross in *Bald’s Leechbook* I.lxii.c. Biblical quotations, psalms, the Sanctus, and the Memorial Acclamation add to the treatment:

Pis mon seal writan on husldisce and on þone drenc mid halig wætere  
þwean and singan on.

+ + + + + A + Ω + + + + +<sup>34</sup>

In principio erat uerbum et uerbum erat apud deum et deus  
erat uerbum. Hoc erat in principio apud deum omnia per  
ipsum facta sunt.

Þweah þonne þæt gewrit mid halig wætre of þæm disce on þone drenc. Sing þonne Credo and Pater Noster and þis leoþ.

Beati Immaculati þone sealm mid ad dominum þam xii gebed sealmum.

Adiuro uos frigores et febres. per deum patrem omnipotentem et per eius filium / Jesum Cristum per ascensum et discensum Salvatoris nostri ut recedatis de hoc famulo dei. et de corpusculo eius, quam dominus noster inluminare Instituit. Uincit uos leo de tribu iuda radix dauid. Uincet uos qui uinci non potest. + Cristus natus. + Cristus passus. + Cristus venturus. + aius. + iaus. + iaus. + Sanctus. + Sanctus. + Sanctus . . . (*Bald's Leechbook* I.lxii.c, fols. 50r–51v).

[One shall write this on a paten and wash it off into the drink with holy water, and sing over it:

+ + + + + A + Ω + + + + +

In the beginning was the Word: and the Word was with God: and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him [John 1.1–3].

Wash with holy water the writing from the paten into the drink. Then sing Credo and Pater Noster and this charm:

The psalm Beati immaculati [Psalm 118], along with [In my trouble I cried] to the Lord, [and] the twelve prayer psalms.

I adjure you, cold and hot fevers, by God the Almighty Father, and by His Son Jesus Christ, by the ascent and descent of our Saviour, that you recede from this servant of God and from his body, whom our Lord created and illuminated. The lion from the tribe of Juda, the root of David [Apocalypse 5.5], has conquered you, He who cannot be conquered has conquered you. + [that is, make the sign of the Cross] Christ is born. + Christ has suffered. + Christ will come again. + Holy. + Holy. + Holy [Greek]. + Holy. + Holy. + Holy [Latin] . . .]

Note the modified devil-expelling formula, *Adiuro* . . . (explored below). In this remedy, “fever” stands in for accursed devils and unclean spirits, but the exorcistic formula otherwise remains. The charm’s allusion to exorcism joins the Pater Noster, Creed, water, and the Cross to invoke Baptism.

If the Pater Noster’s distinctive power were not enough, its association with Baptism and its liturgical performance helps to evoke Baptism. The charm action signals for charm patients the spiritual grace that works on their behalf. Invocation of Baptism brings good medicine to the sick, along with comfort and reassurance to other charm participants.

## 1.2.4 Water

Having considered Pater Noster and Creed, let me survey the other important indices of Baptism as they appear in charms, beginning with water. Technically, water alone is the necessary matter of Baptism. Water's role in charms is, of course, not inevitably associated with Baptism. Most charms incorporate water as an ingredient or means of preparing remedies (for example, for soaking herbs). Water offers a basic medium for pharmaceutical compounds, though its use is not by default. The selection of water is as purposeful as that of wine, goat's milk, honey, oil, or ale. Willow twigs and oak bark are boiled in water, softening their flesh. Sweetened water is drunk, and cold water is heated by hot irons or stones to steam or bathe patients.

Water is also associated with spiritual purity, which gives it the power to transform. Restorative waters offer an important tool for the Anglo-Saxon leech. Most rituals that invoke Baptism require a particular kind of water, namely, holy water or water from a baptismal font (sometimes both kinds are used at different stages of preparation of a healing compound):

- halig water* 'holy water' (for example, *Bald's Leechbook* I.lxii.c, fol. 52r);
- fontwater* 'font water' (for example, *Leechbook III* lxii.d, fol. 125r);
- font water gehalgodum* 'hallowed font water' (for example, *Leechbook III* lxii.a, fol. 123r);
- water gehalga fonthalunge* 'water blessed in a ceremony at a baptismal font' (*Lacnunga* lxiii, fol.147v).<sup>35</sup>

The Church gave the people font water for their personal use when the font was blessed.<sup>36</sup> Families could sprinkle their homes with this water, and healers could employ it in their remedies. Five charm rituals specifying holy water or font water also direct the utterance of the Creed. In two charms from *Lacnunga* we observe a correlation between the nature of the water and a specific Creed: *Lacnunga* lxiii requires baptismal-font water along with the baptismal (Apostles') Creed, while *Lacnunga* xxxi requires holy water and the Nicene Creed (fol. 148r; fol. 140v). Regardless of which Creed is specified, eight of the nine charm rituals that contain the Creed rely on water that has been distinguished through blessing or set apart for ritual use. It may also be the case that the unspecified substance in *Leechbook III* lxviii was assumed to be water.

Along with font water, fresh water may also be used for Baptism, as it was routinely in the early Church. Between the sixth and the ninth centuries, English missionaries used local rivers for Baptism, in imitation of Christ's Baptism in the River Jordan.<sup>37</sup> One charm ritual alluding to Baptism prescribes water from a running stream, and one depends on spring water, both of which have biblical precedents.<sup>38</sup> In the previously cited *Lacnunga*

clxxvi against wens that affect the heart, the Creed and Pater Noster are sung over spring water drawn by a virgin.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps recalling Christ's Baptism and ancient Baptisms by the river, a virgin (*unmaelne mon* 'immaculate person') in *Lacnunga* xxix must stand in a stream, to "fetch in silence against the current half a sextarius of running water."<sup>40</sup> The water she scoops will make a holy drink against "elfish magic and . . . all the temptations of the Devil." Let me repeat the text quoted in the Introduction:

Pis is se halga drænc wið ælfsidene and wið eallum feondes costungum:

Writ on husldisce: "In principio erat uerbum" us(que) "non comprehenderunt," et [p]l(ura) "Et circumibat Ih(esu)s totam Galilea(m) docens" usq(ue) "et secuti sunt eum / turbe multe"; "D(eu)s in nomine tuo" usq(ue) in finem; "D(eu)s misereatur nobis" usq(ue) in finem; "D(omi)ne D(eu)s in adiutorium" usque in finem.

Nim cristallan and disman and sidewaran and cassuc and finol, and nim sester fulne gehalgodes wines; and hat unmælnne mon gefeccean swigende ongean streame healfne sester yrnendes wæteres; nim þonne and lege ða wyrt ealle in þ(æt) wæter and þweah þ(æt) gewrit of ðan husldisce þærin swiðe clæne; geot þon(ne) þ(æt) gehalgade win ufon on ðæt oþer.

Ber þon to circean; læt singan mæssan ofer, ane / "Omnibus," oðre "Contra tribulatione[m]," þridan "S(an)ct(a) . . . Maria."

Sing ðas gebedsealmas: "Miserere mei D(eu)s," "D(eu)s in nomine tuo," "D(eu)s misereatur nobis," "D(omi)ne D(eu)s," "Inclina D(omi)ne," and "Credo," and "Gloria in excelsis D(e)o," and letanias, "Pat(er) n(oste)r"; and bletsa georne in ælmihtiges Drihtnes naman and cwæð, "In nomine Patris et Filii et Sp(iritu)s S(an)c(t)i sit benedictum"; bruc syþþan (*Lacnunga* xxix, fols. 136r–138r, Pettit 2001, I: 16).

[This is the holy drink for (?) elfish magic and for all the temptations of the Devil:

Write on a paten: "In the beginning was the word" as far as "comprehended it not" [John 1.1–5], and furthermore "And Jesus went about all Galilee teaching" as far as "and great crowds followed him" [Matt. 4.23–25]; "God in your name" [Psalm 53] until the end; "May God have mercy on us" [Psalm 66] until the end; "Lord God to my aid" [Psalm 69] until the end.

Take crystallium and disme and zedoary and cassuc and fennel, and take a full sextarius of . . . [blessed] wine;<sup>41</sup> and have a virgin fetch in silence against the current half a sextarius of running water; then take and place all the plants in the water and wash the writing off the inside of the paten very cleanly; then pour the . . . [blessed] wine from above unto the other [liquid].

Then carry it to church; have masses sung over it, first "By all [the saints]," second "Against trouble," third "Holy Mary."

Sing these precatory psalms: "God have mercy on me" [Psalm 50], "God in your name" [Psalm 53], "May God have mercy on us" [Psalm 66], "Lord God" [Psalm 87] . . . "Incline thy ear, O Lord" [Psalm 85], and the Creed,

and “Glory to God in the highest,” and litanies, the Our Father; and zealously bless [it] in the name of almighty God and say, “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit let it be blessed”; then use it (Pettit 2001, I: 17).]

Water is also used for ritual actions. The biblical texts written on a paten in *Lacnunga* xxix, are washed, that is, incorporated, into an herbal liquid (fols. 136r–137v). Water conveys the utterances into medicine when it washes the paten “swiðe cline” ‘very cleanly’ (fol. 137v).

Ceremonial actions performed with water are just as important as the water itself. In Baptism, “ablution” is performed three times while invoking the three persons of the Trinity. Charm parallels draw our attention. In several charms we find a kind of three-fold immersion akin to that performed in Baptism. Attacking elf disease, the healer is directed to “bind all the plants in a cloth; dip it three times in hallowed font water” (*Leechbook III* lxii.a, fol. 123v). In addition to immersion, charms enact infusion, imitating the pouring of water, which may be done at (and here allude to) Baptism of the sick. Holy water is poured three times into a medicinal drink in *Leechbook III* lxii.b (fol. 124r). Accompanied by prayer, proclamation, and ritualized gestures like those found in Baptism, charm water washes away the evils of disease.

### 1.2.5 *Signing the Cross*

Blessing or sanctifying in the name of the Trinity has significance for the English and is frequent in charms. The visual sign of blessing, that is the sign of the Cross, is connected with the Trinitarian formula. In *Lacnunga* xxix, prayers, psalms, and the Creed are intoned over a potion made with holy water, and then a Trinitarian formula is pronounced: “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit let it be blessed” (fol. 138r, Pettit 2001, I: 17). There is no doubt in Catherine Karkov’s mind that an Anglo-Saxon poetic audience would connect the signing of the Cross with liturgical performance (2005: 248). Such would be the case for charm participants as well, who, in light of other baptismal allusions in performance, would identify the liturgical action as integral to Baptism. Within that evocative context the Cross gesture makes manifest the spiritual effects of Baptism.

Candidates for Baptism are marked with the sign of the Cross at numerous stages of the baptismal liturgy. After the breathing ceremony that opens the *Darley* Baptism, the priest makes the sign of the Cross (“rode

tacn”) to bless the child, first on the forehead and then on the breast (p. 367, l. 2, Page 1978: 151). A post-baptismal anointing in *Darley* centers around the signing. Immediately upon baptizing him or her, the priest takes oil and marks the sign of the Cross on the child’s neck while saying, *in nomine Patris. et Filii. et Spiritus Sancti* (pp. 390–91, Graham 1993: 443; Page 1978: 154). In the *Missal of Robert of Jumièges*, a pre-baptismal anointing applies Oil of Catechumens in the shape of the Cross. Following an exhortation for the devil to depart (*recede*), the priest or bishop begins to sign the Cross on the candidate’s body (eyes, ears, nose, heart) while saying, *Signo te signaculo dei Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti* ‘I sign you with the seal [or sign] of God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit’ (*Ad caticuminum faciendum*, *Missal of Robert of Jumièges*, Wilson 1896: 93). The seal is the Name of God.

Whenever the sign of the Cross is made, the gesture conveys the power of the Crucified Christ. Clergy and religious sign the Cross to bless persons, animals, objects, and other parts of Creation. The English Church urged Christians to trace the sign of the Cross upon themselves. Laity and religious would have performed the Cross blessings found in charms that did not otherwise require a priest (Jolly 2005: 231). “Making” the Cross on oneself involves four touchings; “drawing” the Cross in the air or on something involves two strokes. Either action defies Satan and fights evil. Blickling Homily IV for the Third Sunday in Lent explains the devil’s retreat on seeing the sign,

mid Cristes rode tacne us gebletsian, þonne flyhþ þæt deofol fram us; forþon him biþ mara broga þonne ænigum men sy, þeah hi mon slea mid sweorde wiþ þæs heafdes (*Dominica Tertia in Quadragesima*, Morris 1880: 47).

[[Let us] bless ourselves with the token of Christ’s Cross. Then the devil will flee from us, because it is a greater terror to him than the sword may be to any man, if one were about to strike off his head (Morris 1880: 46).]

In the context of late-Saxon Christianity, the Cross is, in Karen Jolly’s words, “both symbol and sign, the allegorical bridge mediating between the spiritual and the physical” (2005: 236). Because the sign of the Cross has “miraculous powers,” medicinal remedies incorporate it as a “tool of empowerment” (Jolly 2005: 236).

Several Creed charms prescribe the sign of the Cross, just as other charms do (for example, *Bald’s Leechbook* I.ix, fol. 20v). *Bald’s Leechbook* I.lxii.c for fever, quoted above, also contains numerous Crosses written into the text by the scribe to direct the signing of the Cross. In *Leechbook III* lxii.a (fol. 123v) for elf disease, the charmer is to “writ him cristes mæl”

‘write Christ’s mark’ on the patient’s limbs. *Leechbook III* lxii.d, again for elf disease, prescribes a sequence of Cross blessings: using Oil of Unction to sign the Cross over a written formula, using the written formula to sign the Cross over a drink, and using the writing wet by the drink to sign a Cross over every limb (fol. 125r).

Blessing in the name of the Trinity and making the sign of the Cross do not in themselves allude to Baptism. The signing with Crosses is present in almost every sacrament and ritual. As it did in *Bald’s Leechbook I*.lxii.c, the signing of the Cross in *Leechbook III* lxii.d gains particular baptismal resonance in light of the Creed, font water, the Pater Noster, and anti-demonic formulas.

### 1.2.6 *Anti-Demonic Formulas*

Before discussing the use of anti-demonic formulas to vacate disease, a note about terminology is necessary. Following Henry Ansgar Kelly (1985), *exorcism* generally refers to a rite or prayer for expelling possessing demons through prayers to God and threats addressed to the devil or demons. The term *anti-demonic* refers to “devil-expelling” and “devil-repelling” formulas. “Devil-expelling formulas” deal with indwelling demons already present, while “devil-repelling formulas” may be prayed against demons returning and are therefore apotropaic (Kelly 1985: 20–23). Formulas designed to ward off the temptations of the devil are also apotropaic, that is, protective. Used specifically, the term *exorcism* refers to the direct address of the devil or demons, which involves intimidating or threatening them in some way. Anti-demonic prayers or formulas urging God to expel spirits, or subjunctive prayers (for instance, “May God expel them”), represent *indirect exorcisms*.

While the term *anti-demonic* refers to formulas used liturgically, I use the term *anti-demonic* more generally to refer to the remedial analogues of Church formulas. I apply the term to charms in order to emphasize charms’ therapeutic reuse of the liturgical formulas. The retention of the term in a different context (charms) obscures to some extent charms’ different purpose. Within charms, anti-demonic forms vacate disease-spirits, not the devils or demons fought by the Church. My practice privileges the *shape* of the charm incantations. Even when anti-demonic formulas address fever and elves, their structure resembles their liturgical counterparts. The reuse of structures seems to be strategic on the part of the charm composer. Liturgical-looking, anti-demonic incantations fight disease with a show of Church power. They evoke the weapons used by the



Church to defeat evil. As this book argues in Chapter 6, the reuse of a form for a different purpose exemplifies charms' characteristic re-contextualization of ecclesiastical material to support remedy. More immediately, my application of a term with dual referents imposes the need for careful assessment of surface forms. Any ambiguity about the nature of an utterance that looks liturgical must be resolved through a careful examination of function. That determination requires us to assess discursive and socio-cultural context.

We find numerous allusions to ecclesiastical exorcism in charms. These take the form of anti-demonic prayers as well as acts of breathing and anointing that resemble exsufflation and Effeta. In analyzing the adaptation of exorcistic formulas or gestures for charms, it is not enough merely to recognize that a particular charm utterance or act originates in pre-baptismal exorcism or has an analogue in a particular rite's pre-baptismal exorcism. Nor is it sufficient to observe that a charm defeating elf disease uses language originating in pre-baptismal exorcism (for example, *Leechbook III* lxii.d). Either or both may be the case, but why does source or analogue matter? As we observe later, by locating analogous texts we observe the charm forms' distinctiveness, allowing us to infer its modification of a liturgical model. The anti-demonic prayers found in charms are not identical with or used in the same way as pre-baptismal formulas. Consider the anti-demonic prayer from *Leechbook III* lxii.d, which resembles an indirect exorcism from the *Leofric Missal* (the full Latin versions follow below):

- Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, drive out every attack of the Castalides from your servant, [Name to be supplied], through the imposition of this writing, from the head, . . . (*Leechbook III* lxii.d, fols. 124v–125r);
- Holy Lord, Father Almighty, Eternal God, drive out the devil from this man, through the imposition of this writing and through the taste of this water, from the head, . . . (*Leofric Missal*, fol. 312r–312v, Orchard 2002, II: 437–38).

Because ailments were attributed to spiritual agency, only forceful words and rituals could vanquish them (Jolly 1996: 123). Insofar as exorcism cast out the devil before Baptism, formulas from pre-baptismal exorcism were readily borrowed into charm utterances. By simulating exorcism in charms, utterances based in analogous anti-demonic prayers expel disease-spirits. Exorcistic gestures are adopted to the same end in charm rituals.

Let me review the liturgical formulas pronounced as precursor to Baptism. After the priest makes the sign of the Cross on the child's head,



according to *Darley* rubrics, his prayers culminate in the *Ergo maledicte* exorcism:

Exorcizo te inmunde spiritus in nomine patris. et filii et spiritus sancti ut exeat et recedas ab hoc famulo dei. ipse enim tibi imperat maledicte dampnate qui pedibus super mare ambulauit et petro mergenti dexteram porrexit. Ergo maledicte . . . (*Red Book of Darley*, p. 373, l. 14, Page 1978: 151; *Missal of Robert of Jumièges*, Wilson 1896: 95).<sup>42</sup>

[I exorcize you, unclean spirit, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, that you go out and depart from this servant of God. For He commands you, accursed one, who walked on His feet upon the sea and stretched out His right hand to Peter as he was sinking [Matt. 14.22–33]. Therefore accursed one . . .]

Here is the complete *Ergo maledicte* exorcism, as found in the *Missal of Robert of Jumièges*:

Ergo maledicte diabole recognosce sententiam tuam et da honorem deo uiuo et uero. da honorem. iesu christo filio eius et spiritui sancto et recede ab hoc famulo dei. quia istum sibi deus et dominus noster iesus christus ad suam gratiam et benedictionem fontemque baptismatis dono uocare dignatus est, et hoc signum sanctae crucis quod nos fronti eius damus. tu maledicte diabole numquam audeas uiolare. per. (Wilson 1896: 95).

[Therefore, accursed devil, acknowledge your sentence, and give honor to the living and true God: give honor to Jesus Christ His Son, and to the Holy Spirit; and depart from this servant of God, because God and our Lord Jesus Christ has vouchsafed to call him to His holy grace and benediction and font by the gift of baptism. And this sign of the holy Cross, which we give upon his forehead, do you, accursed devil, never dare to violate.]

The celebrant's demand that the devil acknowledge his sentence refers to the priest's previous command that it depart "before the judgment of God," given at the *Effeta* (discussed below).

Both indirect exorcisms and exorcistic formulas addressing the devil, as above, make their way into charms. *Lacnunga* lxiii, fol. 149v contains an exhortation from a larger anti-demonic utterance associated with the Visitation of the Sick. Despite its use at the Visitation of the Sick (discussed in Chapter 4), the utterance draws upon the pre-baptismal exorcism just quoted:

Unde ergo, maledicte, recognosce sen(ten)tiam tuam, et da honorem D(e)o, et recede ab [h]oc famulo D(e)i, ut pura mente deseruiat consecutus gratiam (*Lacnunga* lxiii, fol. 149v, Pettit 2001, I: 34).

[Wherefore, accursed one, recognize your sentence, and give honor to God, and withdraw from this servant of God, so that, having acquired grace, he may zealously serve with a pure mind.]

Although originally meant for a person at Baptism, the *Ergo maledicte* is sung over medicinal herbs that are added to butter from a cow of one color to create a holy salve. It is to be chanted by a priest within the charm performance: “lay the plants by the bowl, and then let a priest consecrate them. Let him sing these prayers over them . . .”<sup>43</sup> Amid other allusions to Baptism, the exorcistic formula also alludes to Baptism. In the world of charm logic, exhortations for the devil to vacate the salve ingredients protect the sick from the agents of illness, namely disease-spirits such as elves.

Indirect exorcisms (that is, prayers to God) are also adapted for charm rites. The utterance of the *Leechbook III* lxii.d prayer seen above helps to counter an ailment known as elf disease:

Sing þis ofer þam drence and þam gewrite.

Deus omnipotens pater domini nostri iesu cristi. per Inpositionem huius scriptura [scripturae] expelle a famulo tuo N. Omnem Impetuu [impetum] castalidum.<sup>44</sup> de capite. de capillis. de cerebro. de fronte. de lingua. de sublingua. de gutture. de faucibus. de dentibus. de oculis. de naribus. de auribus. de manibus. de collo. de brachiis. de corde. de anima. de genibus. de coxis. de pedibus. de compaginibus. omnium membrorum intus et foris. amen (fols. 124v–125r, Cockayne 1965, II: 348–50).

[Sing this over the drink and the writing:

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, drive out every attack of the Castalides from your servant, N, through the imposition of this writing, from the head, from the hair, from the brain, from the forehead, from the tongue, from under the tongue, from the throat, from the gullet, from the teeth, from the eyes, from the nose, from the ears, from the hands, from the neck, from the arms, from the heart, from the soul, from the knees, from the hips, from the feet, from the joints of all limbs outside and inside. Amen.]

Like *Lacnunga* lxiii, *Leechbook III* lxii.d incorporates forms borrowed from the Visitation of the Sick that retain associations with Baptism. Appropriate to its medicinal use, the charm prayer corresponds closely with a post-baptismal prayer placed under the rubric *super energvmino baptizato*, in the *Leofric Missal*.<sup>45</sup> This devil-expelling prayer is to be said after the Baptism of a person possessed by an evil spirit:

Domine sancte pater omnipotens aeterne deus, per impositionem scripture huius et gustum aquae, expelle diabolum ab homine isto. De capite, de capillis,

de uertice, de fronte, de oculis, / de auribus, de naribus, de ore, de lingua, de sublingua, de gutture, de collo, de corpore toto, de omnibus membris, de compaginibus memborum suorum intus et foris, de ossibus, de uenis, de neruis, de sanguine, de sensu, de cogitationibus, de omni conuersatione, et operetur in te uirtus christi in eo qui pro te passus est, ut uitam aeternam merearis. Per. (*Leofric Missal*, 2479, fol. 312r–312v, Orchard 2002, II: 437–38).

[Holy Lord, Father Almighty, Eternal God, drive out the devil from this man, through the imposition of this writing and through the taste of (this) water, from his head, from his hair, from his brow, from his forehead, from his eyes, from his ears, from his nose, from his mouth, from his tongue, from under his tongue, from his throat, from his neck, from his whole body, from all (his) limbs, from the joints of his limbs outside and inside, from his bones, from his veins, from his nerves, from his blood, from his senses, from his thoughts, from all (his) actions. And may the power of Christ work in you, [the power which is] in Him who suffered for you. Through . . .]

With its enumeration of body parts, the *Leofric* prayer has parallels at the chrismation after Baptism in the eighth- or ninth-century *Stowe Missal*.<sup>46</sup> *Leechbook III* lxii.d, in summary, contains an exorcistic prayer with parallels in baptismal liturgies. Relocated within a charm, the anti-demonic prayer finds a new context and application: sung over a medicinal preparation, the utterance encumbers elves.

### 1.2.7 *Exsufflation and Effeta*

During the baptismal ritual, the priest blows his breath into the face of a candidate in order to cast out the devil. If a bishop or priest blows into the face of a candidate before the act of Baptism, the breathing (known as *exsufflation* or *insufflation*) may be considered exorcistic (Kelly 1985: 87). If that breathing takes place elsewhere in the baptismal service, that is, after exorcism, it may be a further exorcistic operation. Alternatively, if specifically connected with the devil, it may constitute a “dramatic recapitulation” or “informal gesture of repudiation” rather than an exorcism (Kelly 1985: 87; Hill 1985: 134). Whether exorcistic or rhetorical, exsufflation constitutes a mark of contempt for the devil. As John the Deacon remarks, the devil “receives exsufflation, because the old deceiver merits such ignominy” (“Letter to Senarius,” Whitaker 2003: 209). In either case, the breathing ceremony could have a prophylactic or apotropaic function (Kelly 1985: 87). Kelly finds it just as likely that the breathing has a positive function in strengthening the candidate; it may signify the imparting of the Holy Spirit, rather than, or in addition to, removing evil from the candidate (1985: 87).

Anglo-Saxon baptismal ordines sometimes include exsufflation, instructing that the devil is to be exorcized by the priest's blowing his breath on the candidate's face (Forbes 2013: 104). In the *Red Book of Darley* the baptismal rite opens with the priest breathing on the child:<sup>47</sup>

ðonne blawe se preost .iii. on þæt cild and cweðe  
*Exi ab eo lea spiritus immunde et da locum spiritui sancto paraclito in nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti* (p. 367, l. 1, Page 1978: 150–51).

[Then let the priest blow on that child three times and say,  
*Go out from him/her, unclean spirit, and give way to the Holy Spirit the Paraclete, in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.*]<sup>48</sup>

After the priest's breath has expelled demonic forces from the candidate, the child is blessed with the sign of the Cross (*Darley*, p. 367, ll. 2–4, Page 1978: 151).

Exorcism and blessing are followed by anointing in baptismal rites. Anointing lies at the center of Christian healing, but the Effeta, that is, anointing the ears and nose with saliva prior to Baptism, has a special rationale. The priest's words, *Epheta, quod est, adaperire in odorem suavitatis* 'Epheta, that is, be opened, unto the odor of sweetness', echo the words of Jesus in Mark 7.32–35, *Eppheta quod est adaperire*, as He cured the man who could not hear or speak by putting His fingers into the man's ears, and after spitting, touching his tongue.<sup>49</sup> During the pre-baptismal Effeta ceremony in the *Gelasian Sacramentary*, the priest touches the candidate's ears and nose while bidding that his or her senses be opened to the odor of sweetness, and also warning the devil to "to flee before the judgment of God."<sup>50</sup> Immediately following exsufflation in the *Darley* Baptism, the Effeta is performed through a series of movements:

Do her se preost mid his spatle on þæs cildes nostyrlum and cweð,  
*Effeta quod est adaperire.*  
 Do her se preost mid his spatle on þam winstran nosðyrlum. and cweðe,  
*In odorem suauitatis.*  
 Do nu her se preost mid his sp(atle) on þæt swiðr(e) ear(e) and siððan on  
 þam winstran  
*Tu autem effugare, diabole adpropinquabit enim iudicium dei. amen* (p. 388,  
 ll. 33–35, Page 1978: 153).<sup>51</sup>

[Here let the priest put his spittle on the child's nostrils and say,  
*Effeta, that is, be opened.*  
 Here let the priest put his spittle on the left nostril and say,  
*To the odor of sweetness.*  
 Here let the priest put his spittle on the right ear and afterward on the left  
 [and say],  
*But you, O Devil, flee! The judgment of God will draw nigh.]*

We find – and explore below – an imitation of the exorcistic ceremonies of exsufflation and Effeta in *Lacnunga* lxiii: “put your spittle on it, and blow on it” (fol. 148r). These gestures join anti-demonic prayers and other baptismal allusions to invoke the sacrament of Baptism in the creation of a holy salve. Before turning to *Lacnunga* lxiii, let us examine an Effeta borrowed from Baptism in another charm. Although it lacks the Creed and other allusions that collectively evoke Baptism, *Leechbook III* xxiv exploits the baptismal Effeta to ease discomfort. The charm ritual consists entirely of an anointing, where the healer “spat spīþ” ‘spits spittle’ on a painful joint while singing nine times, *Malignus obligavit; angelus curavit; dominus Salvavit* ‘The malignant one has bound [the sufferer]; the angel has cured [him]; the Lord has healed [him]’ (fol. 116r). The remedy re-contextualizes the baptismal action by anointing joints instead of the person’s face and uttering a healing incantation that works sympathetically in lieu of the declaration, *Epheta*.

### 1.2.8 *Supplemental Gospel Lections*

Sacred forms not necessarily associated with Baptism additionally support healing in charms: for example, psalms, Gloria in excelsis Deo, the Benedicite, and Gospel lections. Although they do not by themselves allude to Baptism, these forms are incorporated into charms that invoke the sacrament. The Gospel lections chosen in *Lacnunga* xxix deserve attention, for behind each selection is a history rooted in ancient baptismal traditions. The resulting allusions to Baptism are both productive and non-productive.

As we have seen, *Lacnunga* xxix channels Baptism through a variety of means. The Bible verses found there, however, are not common to the late-Saxon liturgy. The Gospel lection for Baptism in *Darley* (p. 376, l. 17, Page 1978: 152) is taken from Mark 10.13–16:

And they brought to him young children, that he might touch them. And the disciples rebuked them that brought them. Whom when Jesus saw, he was much displeas'd and saith to them: Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Amen I say to you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter into it. And embracing them and laying his hands upon them, he blessed them.

In *Robert of Jumièges* (Wilson 1896: 96) the Gospel, which is read before the blessing of the font with the Litany of the Saints, comes from Matthew 11.25–30:

At that time Jesus answered and said: I confess to thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and

prudent, and hast revealed them to the little ones. Yea, Father; for so hath it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered to me by my Father. And no one knoweth the Son, but the Father: neither doth any one know the Father, but the Son, and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal him. Come to me, all you that labour, and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take up my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek, and humble of heart: and you shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is sweet and my burden light.

Both passages support baptismal rites as they urge God's people to come to Jesus with the trust of a child. They are also appropriate to infant Baptism.

Rather than assigning either of the passages used in contemporary baptismal ordines, three charms, *Lacnunga* xxix, *Lacnunga* lxiii, and *Bald's Leechbook* I.lxii.c, incorporate John 1.1, a text associated with ancient celebrations of the sacrament. The opening words of St. John's Gospel seem to have been popular in charms and remedies, and are repeated in medical texts from the Middle Ages into the sixteenth century (Pettit 2001, II: 38–39). In *Lacnunga* xxix and *Bald's Leechbook* I.lxii.c the first verses of John are written on a paten and the Scripture is subsequently washed into the drink. *Lacnunga* lxiii similarly requires the charmer to sing, "In the beginning." The passage from John 1.1 alludes to Baptism in these charms but succeeds only to the extent that charm participants recognize them as baptismal. In fact, they originate within the older pre-baptismal tradition of the giving of the Gospels, a series of actions that precedes the introduction of the Creed and the Pater Noster to the candidate during his or her catechumenate.<sup>52</sup> During this ceremony, the deacon reads to the catechumens from the beginning of each of the four Gospels, after which the priest relates each Gospel to its author (Cabié 1988: 66). The lection from the Gospel of John returns in late medieval rites of initiation: John 1.1–14 is read after Mark 9.16–28 in the Sarum Manual (Collins 1960: 30; Pocknee 1959: 499). Hence charms that mandate John 1.1 preserve relics of earlier ecclesiastical traditions. If, during the late-Saxon period, the allusive force of John 1.1 does not derive from Baptism, it may originate in the lection's use in charm remedies. When, over time, the Bible verses are no longer pertinent or perceived as pertinent to the baptismal liturgy, the non-productive allusions remaining in charms may be re-analyzed. Now pertinent to the charm itself, the lections allude to charm healing.

With its selection of a second Gospel text in addition to John 1.1, *Lacnunga* xxix departs from baptismal allusions to substitute a passage relevant to physical healing. The ritual to produce a holy drink directs the writing of Matthew 4.23–25. This lection relates Jesus's healing of the sick:

et circumibat Iesus totam Galilaeam docens in synagogis eorum et praedicans evangelium regni et sanans omnem languorem et omnem infirmitatem in populo et abiit opinio eius in totam Syriam et obtulerunt ei omnes male habentes variis languoribus et tormentis comprehensos et qui daemonia habebant et lunaticos et paralyticos et curavit eos et secutae sunt eum turbae multae (Matt. 4.23–25).

[And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom: and healing all manner of sickness and every infirmity among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria, and they presented to him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and such as were possessed by devils [that is, demonians], and lunatics, and those that had palsy, and he cured them: And great crowds followed him.]

Because the text is associated with disease, the lection from Matthew 4.23–25 appears often in early missals (Pettit 2001, II: 39). With logic as well as liturgical precedent this Gospel is brought into charms. Its content befits the purpose of *Lacnunga* xxix: to target elfish magic and the temptations of the devil. Just as Jesus healed then, in Galilee, the healer bids, may He heal now, here in England. Scripture is put to use in the operation of sympathetic magic. In yet another way, something sacred is tailored for work in traditional medicine.

The non-baptismal reading from Matthew 4 joins a baptismal lection (John 1.1) that, by the time charm xxix is written into *Lacnunga*, no longer refers to Baptism but instead alludes to folk healing. The mixed set of Gospel allusions combines with the important baptismal allusions conveyed by Creed, water and washing, Pater Noster, and Triune blessing. Litanies further the evocation of Baptism. Psalms lend their aid, as does the Gloria in excelsis Deo, and the most powerful of all liturgies, the Eucharist. In the presence of these other baptismal allusions, the three Masses may also allude indirectly to the neophyte's first Communion. Thus, singly and in combination, baptismal and other ecclesiastical utterances invoke Baptism to instill power within a curative drink.

Table 1.2 reviews the baptismal elements exploited by charms by presenting the incantation set used for the verbal medicine of invoking Baptism. The texts and gestures contained in the set represent possible choices from which individual charm composers draw in order to heal through the invocation of Baptism. In the far left hand column, the label, "contextual knowledge," refers to the background knowledge, belief, and experience participants hold regarding Baptism. The label appears in braces to indicate that this knowledge, which varies for participants, frames the incantation set. The Church's message about



Baptism and examples of the ways in which people learn of its necessity are noted in this column. As previously established, contextual knowledge causes each allusion or reference to resonate for participants, leading to the invocation of Baptism through performance of the incantation set.

Within an individual charm, the selection of some or all of the elements reviewed in Table 1.2 combine with the Creed to evoke and subsequently invoke the baptismal liturgy.

### 1.3 Baptismal Invocation: A Case Study

In *Lacnunga* lxiii, a critical mass of allusions invokes Baptism during preparation of a holy salve. Prominent among them is the borrowing and repurposing of liturgical exsufflation and Effeta, the anointing with saliva. Here are the series of instructions from *Lacnunga* lxiii for preparing a holy salve:

And ðus man sceal ða buteran gewyrcean to ðære haligan sealfe: æt anes heowe[s] cy, þ(æt) heo sy eall reod oððe hwit and unmæle, mon ða buteran aðwere; and gif ðu næbbe buteran genoge awæsc swiðe clæne, mængc oðre wið, and ða wyrta ealle gesearfa swiðe smale tosomne, and wæter gehalga fonthalgunge,<sup>53</sup> and do ceac innan / in ða buteran.

Genim þon(ne) ænne sticcan and gewyrc hine feðorbyrste; writ onforan ðas halgan naman: Matheus, Marcus, Lucas, Iohannes.

Styre þon(ne) mid ðy sticcan ða buteran, eal þ(æt) fæt; ðu sing ofer ðas sealmas, “Beati immaculati” . . ., ælcne ðriwa ofer, and “Gloria in excelsis D(e)o,” and “Credo in D(eu)m Patrem,” and letanias arime ofer, þ(æt) [i]s ðara haligra naman and “D(eu)s m(eu)s et Pater,” et “In principio,” and þ(æt) wyrmgældor; and þis gældor singe ofer:

Acre acre arnem nona ærnem beoðor ærnem. / nidren. arcun cunað ele harassan fidine.

Sing ðis nygon siðan, and do ðin spatl on, and blaw on, and lege ða wyrta be ðæm ceace, and gehalg[ie] hy syððan mæssepreost (fol. 148r, Pettit 2001, I: 32).

[And thus one must make the butter for the holy salve: from a cow of one colour – all red or white and without deformity – let the butter be churned; and if you do not have enough butter wash (?)it very cleanly, mix other (butter) with it, and shave all the plants together very finely, and . . . [bless] water at the . . . [blessing] of a font, and put a bowl (of it) from within into the butter.

Then take a stick and make it (?)four-pronged; write on the front [(?)of each ‘prong’] these holy names: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.

Then stir the butter with the stick, (stir) the whole vessel; sing these psalms over it: “Blessed are the undefiled” [Psalm 118] . . ., each one three times over it, and “Glory to God in the Highest” [the Gloria], and “I believe



Table 1.2 *Incantation set for the invocation of Baptism as a verbal medicine*

{Contextual knowledge}	Creed	Pater Noster	Ritual use of water	Sign Cross Triune Blessing	Anti- demonic anointing prayer (simulated)	Exsufflation Effeta (simulated)	Gospel lection
<p>Baptism is necessary for salvation  <i>E.g. hear homilies; receive instruction;  attend Baptism, Visitation, and Mass  liturgies; hear poetry and pray  devotional texts; attend charm rites</i></p>							

in God the Father” [the Apostles’ Creed] and recite litanies over it, that is, the names of the saints and “My God and Father,” and “In the Beginning” [John 1.1] and the ‘worm’-incantation; and sing this incantation over it:

Acre arcre arnem nona ærnem beoðor ærnem. nidren. arcun. cunað ele harassan fidine.

Sing this nine times, and put your spittle on it, and blow on it, and lay the plants by the bowl, and then let a priest consecrate them (Pettit 2001, I: 31–33).]

When the healer anoints the salve with saliva and blows breath on it, the gestures recall the actions from the baptismal rite. After stirring butter mixed with font water and singing various utterances over it, the healer intones, “Acre arcre arnem nona ærnem beoðor ærnem. nidren. arcun cunað ele harassan fidine” (fol. 148r, Pettit 2001, I: 32). An allusion to Effeta follows the chant: the healer is directed to, “put your spittle on” the preparation of butter and water. Then the healer is to “blow on it,” sanctifying the preparation through an allusion to exsufflation.<sup>54</sup> Exsufflation in the context of this charm provides a “gesture of repudiation” that heightens the drama of the charm performance, but the blowing of breath on the butter is far removed from actual liturgical exorcism.

The words that precede spittle and breath are not baptismal, but evince their re-contextualization. Edward Pettit locates the *acre arcre* power-words in an Irish incantation used for a skin wound or poisonous swelling (2001, II: 68). The gestures performed after the chant, however, allude more straightforwardly to Baptism. While the healing force of *Lacnunga* lxiii ultimately derives from its invocation of the Visitation of the Sick, as we see in Chapter 4, this part of the charm ritual is grounded in allusions to Baptism. What comes next in the charm secures their productivity. After the herbal butter has been blown upon and daubed with spittle by the healer, who need not be a priest, a priest blesses it. His job is to expel disease-spirits from the salve. Then follows the kind of anti-demonic prayer performed at Baptism and previous seen in *Leechbook III* lxii.d:

D(omi)ne, s(an)c(t)e Pater, om(ni)p(oten)s eterne D(eu)s, p(er) inpositionem manu(u)m mearum refugiat inimicus diabolus a capillis, a capite, ab oculis, a naribus, a labi(i)s, a linguis, a sublinguis, a collo, a pectore, a pedibus, a calcaneis, ab uniuersis confaginib(us) membrorum ei(u)s, ut non habeat potestatem diabolus, nec lo- / quendi, nec tacendi, nec dormiendi, nec resurgendi, nec in die, nec in nocte, nec in tangendo, nec in somno, nec in gressu, nec in uisu, nec in risu, nec in legendo; sed in nomine D(omi)ni Ih(es)u (Cristi), qui nos suo s(an)c(t)o sanguine redemit, qui cum Patre

uiuít et regnat D(eu)s in s(e)c(u)la s(e)c(u)lor(um). Amen (*Lacnunga* lxiii, fols. 149v–150r, Pettit 2001, I: 32).

[Lord, holy Father, omnipotent (and) eternal God, by the application of my hands may the Enemy, the Devil, flee from the . . . [hair], from the head, from the eyes, from the nose, from the lips, from the tongue, from the . . . [throat], from the neck, from the breast, from the feet, from the heels, from the whole framework of his members, so that the Devil may have no power [over him], neither in speaking, nor in keeping quiet, nor in sleeping, nor in rising, nor by day, nor by night, nor in touching, nor in rest, nor in . . . [walking], nor in . . . [seeing], nor in laughter, nor in reading; so be it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, who redeemed us by his holy blood, who lives and reigns with the Father, God forever and ever. Amen (Pettit 2001, I: 33).]<sup>55</sup>

*Lacnunga* lxiii reinforces the connection between its rite and baptismal exorcism with the charm's additional mandate for "wæter gehalga fonthalgung," that is, water blessed at the blessing of the font. The healer will add a bowl of the water to the herbal butter, aiding its transformation into the "haligan sealf" 'holy salve' (fol. 148r, Pettit 2001, I: 32). Following the recitation of a psalm and other formulas, the Apostles' Creed is to be repeated. As the sacrament of Baptism is evoked through these allusions, *Lacnunga* lxiii channels the liturgy's power.

When, as the charm continues, the patient is asked to submit to penitence, we hear an allusion to Confession: "turn, Lord, the thoughts of this man and his heart, so that he may confess all his sins and all the iniquities which he has . . ." (Pettit 2001, I: 35). With this penitential prayer, the baptismal allusions are subsumed into allusions to the Visitation of the Sick:

D(OMI)NE mi, rigo [rogo] te, Pater te deprecor, Filii obsecro te, D(omi)ne et Sp(iritu)s S(an)c(tu)s [Sancte], ex totis uirib(us), s(an)c(t)a trinitas, ut delas omnia opera diaboli ab isto homine; inuoco s(an)c(t)am trinitatem in admini[cu]lu(m) meum, id est Patrem et Filiu(m) et Sp(iritu)m S(an)c(tu)m; conuerte D(omi)ne / istius homines [hominis] cogitationes et cor ei(us), ut confiteantur [confiteatur] omnia mala sua et om(ne)s iniquitates ei(us) que [h]abet, ut uenit [ueniant] omnia bona sua et [ad] uoluntatem eius; unde ergo, maledicte, recognosce sent[ent]iam tuam, et da honorem D(e)o, et recede ab [h]oc famulo D(e)i, ut pura mente [te] deseruiat consecutus gratiam (*Lacnunga* lxiii, fol. 149r–149v, Pettit 2001, I: 34).<sup>56</sup>

[My Lord, I ask you, Father I entreat you, Son I implore you, Lord and Holy Spirit, . . . [with all my strength], Holy Trinity, [that] you obliterate all the works of the Devil from this man; I invoke the Holy Trinity to my aid, that

is Father and Son and Holy Spirit; turn, Lord, the thoughts of this man and his heart, so that he may confess all his sins and all the iniquities which he has, so that he may (?)submit [strengthen?] all his good deeds and his will . . . [Wherefore], accursed one, recognize your sentence, and give honour to God, and withdraw from this servant of God, so that, . . . [with grace acquired], he may zealously serve [you] with a pure mind (Pettit 2001, I: 35).]

By the end of *Lacnunga* lxiii, the charm performance moves from the invoking of Baptism to the invoking of *Visitatio Infirmorum*, harnessing the great power of both sacraments to heal the afflicted.

#### 1.4 Conclusion

Charms enact a similitude of Baptism; they deploy the Creed, Pater Noster, the sign of the Cross, ceremonial water, litanies, anti-demonic prayers, exorcistic actions, and anointing. Gospel readings flesh out the representation. Each individual utterance and gesture brings the traditions and uses associated with it to the remedy, while the singular force of the Creed intensifies the baptismal resonance of each. By invoking Baptism, charms defend patients from disease-spirits and wash away the symptoms of their attack.

The presence of the signs that index Baptism – to offer an analogy from linguistics – is not unlike the presence of certain linguistic features that collectively characterize a particular variety or dialect. The features may not be unique to that dialect, but when a critical number of them appear together they identify the speaker as belonging to a particular speech group. Similarly the presence of multiple elements so closely associated with Baptism leads us to acknowledge its evocation and channeling for the purpose of healing. When we look closely at the environment in which baptismal utterances and gestures are embedded, however, we notice a dislocation.

At the same time they borrow liturgical forms for healing, charms claim them as their own, remedial analogues. We witness this appropriation in the way charms manipulate liturgical utterances and gestures and combine them with more traditionally Germanic practices in the same remedy. The very charm that alludes to Baptism may require incomprehensible power-words or the “worm incantation” (*Lacnunga* lxiii, fol. 184v). Charms that require a virgin to draw water from a stream or spring merge Germanic folkways along with ecclesiastical practices.

The borrowing of baptismal features allows for allusion and invocation even while the charm re-frames the actions common to that rite. The *Ergo maledicte* utterance found in *Lacnunga* lxiii resembles a pre-baptismal exorcism. Yet the context in which the exorcism occurs is altered by Anglo-Saxon healers so that herbal ingredients receive prayers and exhortations. Similarly in *Leechbook III* lxii.d, an anti-demonic prayer proves doubly removed, being sung over a drink used to anoint a patient. The indirect nature of the action is not unlike the use of holy water for blessing or font water for healing. The protective effects of *Lacnunga* lxiii and *Leechbook III* lxii.d may well also apply indirectly to the sick person, to ward off disease-spirits. Malediction – via an object – may well vacate them from the patient. While the mechanism for such healing may be contrary to what we can infer about liturgical practice, the incongruities are not intended to impede healing. In fact, the exorcistic formula, *Ergo maledicte*, may allude so strongly to pre-baptismal exorcism that charm participants interpret it precisely as exorcistic and extend the exorcism, via the salve, to disease-spirits. The literal words of the exorcism remain, but its spiritual work is reinterpreted.

Whereas Christ's act of healing is enacted at Baptism, charms re-situate the liturgical actions. The details are altered but the baptismal context remains clear. Charm incantations substitute for Christ's command: unintelligible power-words are chanted to ward off malady. The loci of baptismal Effeta, that is, nostrils and ears, are stripped of their symbolic significance; afflicted body parts and herbal ingredients receive expectoration. The saliva belongs to a charm performer, not to a priest who represents Jesus. Breath is blown on ointment instead of a human face. *Lacnunga* lxiii mimics exsufflation and Effeta within an altered context that foregrounds the folk-traditional nature of the healing rite. In numerous ways, charms take advantage of both ecclesiastical and folk traditions. At the same time baptismal gestures are adapted – almost but not quite beyond recognition – they remain signs of sacramental healing. Actions associated with Baptism convey healing through traditional referentiality, even as charms refashion important and familiar components of the liturgy.

Traditional medicine takes advantage of healing options wherever they originate. As our examples have shown, charms deploy a variety of techniques, and that variety distinguishes charm healing from other means (for example, the Visitation of the Sick). Embedding baptismal allusions in a folk-traditional context, charms temper and strengthen ecclesiastical matter for practical gain. The resulting incantation sets act as verbal medicine.

We can still hear the liturgical echoes in these incantatory sets. But, if this resonance misleads us into regarding charms as liturgies, we risk forcing charms into a mold they will not fit, and, as a result, blur the features that make them distinct. Re-contextualized liturgical material allows a charm to self-identify, or declare its status as charm rather than liturgy. By acknowledging their hybrid nature, that is, their mixed origin and composition, we are reminded to take charms on their own terms. Charms thereby offer a window into the multifaceted nature of Anglo-Saxon medicine.