

# **Introduction To Liturgy**

In the Light of  
Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Liturgical Documents

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Lit 004

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The work of a priest is in some way comparable to that of a general advocate. In order to be able to defend cases of politicians, business people, doctors or clergy, the lawyer needs to some extent, besides acquiring the requisite knowledge in law, to be familiar with the world of these different areas. Similarly a priest in the modern world is prepared to serve the needs of men and women in different fields: peasants as well as politicians, traders as well as teachers. Now, while lawyers may specialise so that one finds legal representatives specifically for copyright law or computer technology, priests do not generally do so, with the exception perhaps of a few areas such as prison and military chaplains, hospital chaplains, or those trained to form other priests. Adequate seminary training therefore, aims at producing priests who are “all rounded”, and who can feel comfortable in the different sectors of the ever-changing society. In working towards this end, seminary authorities have introduced, among other things affiliation to universities, local or foreign. This has in turn led to overloading of the seminary syllabus, to the bewilderment of students who have to cover so much more, as well as traditional seminary staff who must compress so much academic material within the given time, while at the same time giving enough room to the necessary spiritual and moral formation of the seminarians. The result is that in spite of the seven years of post-college training – a period which is longer than that required for most university degrees – the time in the major seminary is hardly enough to produce an academically “well-baked” priest, not mentioning the other aspects of a priest’s training which are in no way less important.

This booklet is one in a series that emerged in the course of liturgy lectures in St. Paul's National Seminary, at the time of affiliation to external universities. The writer realised like other fellow lecturers, that it was almost impossible to cover the material taught before the affiliation, while at the same time giving due time to the new university program. On the other hand reducing the areas covered in liturgy would have meant sending out priests who were ill-prepared for their ministry in that all-important aspect of a pastor's life. The alternative course of action would then be to cover less in class, while giving a future priest a package of ready reference in his pastoral activity.

The series therefore is a form of liturgical companion, written particularly with a pastoral orientation. It is written with the realisation that in the modern world of fast-moving technology the most important thing is not to know all that is necessary in one's area of work, for that is absolutely impossible. Rather, it is to know where to look for the answers in case of questions. For that reason, a lot of effort has been put in referring to the basic liturgical sources that are available to pastors.

Because it is a form of "liturgical companion" it renders itself beneficial also to those priests and other pastoral workers who are already in the field. The book is not a substitution for the actual rituals. That would be both unnecessary since such rituals are available and impossible since it would imply reproducing a great bulk of material. Rather, it is a parallel to the corresponding ritual. It helps the pastor to see the rationale behind the rubrics. It brings in focus the importance of the General Introduction, Instructions or Norms, relating them to other relevant liturgical sources as well as adapting them to the present situation.



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## **WHAT IS LITURGY**

### PRELUDE

Students in the first year of theology already know a lot about the liturgy. In general they will have been participating at Mass for several years, most since the time they were at the minor seminary, and many even earlier than that. Many have had a chance during their earlier seminary formation, to play important liturgical roles like acting as Master of Ceremonies, Sacristans, Choir Masters and Conductors. Moreover quite often they will have had a chance to study liturgy as one of the disciplines offered at the philosophicum.

These students are normally already instituted officially as Lectors and Acolytes. It is assumed that they know the liturgical role they have undertaken with these titles. They are already familiar, through their pastoral-spiritual year experience, with serving at the altar, ministering to the sick, conducting a Eucharistic service or Sunday celebration in the absence of a priest, conducting of funeral services, etc. Many will have had a chance to carry out preparation of baptismal candidates as well as marriage couples; others will have attended parish liturgical committees. Again others may have been involved at training of choirs, organising of procession dances, organising of children and youth liturgies. That is enough experience to say that they already know a lot about the liturgy, so that what is going to be studied is not at all new to them.

There is, however, the constant danger attached to studying a subject that is already very familiar. This is the danger of belittling the importance of the material studied, and

thinking that after all we know it already. It is the danger of considering as boring what is already familiar. The lecturer, sensing this, may often skip what is otherwise important and unknown to some, assuming that they already know it. On the other hand he may often repeat what they actually already know, thus wasting both their time and his own.

## DEFINITION

Different books on the liturgy give different definitions and descriptions of the subject.<sup>1</sup> the definition below is just one among several possible ones.

Liturgy may be defined as “the celebration of God’s redeeming love in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, taking place in his Church”

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<sup>1</sup> The encyclical *Mediator Dei*, no. 25, defines liturgy as “the public worship which our Redeemer as head of the Church renders to the Father, as well as the worship which the community of the faithful renders to its Founder, and through him to the heavenly Father. In short, it is the worship rendered by the Mystical Body of Christ in the entirety of its head and members.” AAS, 39(1947) 528-529. Canon 834 of the present code is more elaborate and describes the liturgy in the following words “The Church carries out its office of sanctifying in a special way in the sacred liturgy, which is an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy, by the use of signs perceptible to the senses, our sanctification is symbolised and, in a manner appropriate to each sign, is brought about. Through the liturgy a complete public worship is offered to God by the head and members of the mystical body of Christ. This worship takes place when it is offered in the name of the Church, by persons lawfully deputed and through actions approved by ecclesiastical authority.” However, “the liturgy can be defined in many ways, depending on what one wishes to stress: the priestly office of Christ, its ecclesial dimension, its symbolic nature, its component elements. In a sense there is no single definition of the liturgy that encompasses all its various aspects. Often one should be satisfied with a description of its components and with a general notion that emerges therefrom.” *A Handbook for Liturgical Studies*, p. 10.

It is a “celebration”, in the sense that it is an act of joy, of salvation, indeed of celebration. This is true of any occasion at which liturgy is celebrated, including those of sorrow. Even at a funeral there is the celebration of hope of a resurrection, of God’s forgiveness, of gratitude to Christ for having given us through his sacrifice, the possibility of entry into eternal life. Even at the anointing of the sick the same hope in eternal life as well as in bodily recovery is present. Certainly the joy and hope celebrated at a funeral or before imminent death is not the same as the joy and hope experienced at a wedding or ordination ceremony. Nonetheless all liturgy is essentially pervaded by this element of celebration.

It is a celebration in the first place of God the Father’s love. As is expressed in the prayer of absolution, God the Father has so loved the world and reconciled it to himself through his Son. He has sent the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of sin. It is the initiative of the Father that enables us now to celebrate, in gratitude to that active love.

Liturgy is the always a celebration of the Paschal Mystery, the salvific passion death and resurrection of Christ.<sup>2</sup> Whenever we are gathered for the celebration of the liturgy some aspect of that Paschal Mystery must feature if that liturgy is to be authentic. Liturgy in that sense is always a celebration of an historical event.

Authentic liturgy is made possible through the action of the Holy Spirit, who makes our prayers effective and who expresses these prayers to God in a way that is beyond our words.

Liturgy is an act of the community that is the Church.<sup>3</sup> This is true regardless as to whether the liturgy is celebrated

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<sup>2</sup> See “Liturgy as celebration of the Paschal Mystery” on page 23.

<sup>3</sup> See page 29.

individually or not. More will be said about this ahead. Of course it is preferable wherever possible that liturgy is celebrated communally rather than individually. The most prominent example regarding this is the celebration of the Eucharist. Although it is permissible, even recommended, that a priest celebrates Mass everyday, even individually,<sup>4</sup> at the same time he must as much as possible see to it that he does so with at least one member of the faithful.<sup>5</sup>

Another term that needs to be described in relation to liturgy is “celebration”. Liturgical activity is often referred to as celebration: celebration of the Eucharist, of baptism of funerals, of anointing, etc. In ordinary speech to celebrate implies to make merry, to be actively happy. Celebration is a communal joyful activity. The term has been borrowed to describe every liturgical activity. This *ἔμπλεος* that in every liturgical activity there is an element of joy and of hope. This is true not only on such obviously joyful moments such as marriage, baptism, and ordination; it is also true of the less joyful moments like funerals, anointing of the sick; as well as the more routine liturgical acts such as the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours. In each of these liturgical act there is joy and hope. A Christian funeral is a celebration of hope in the resurrection and the fullness of the life to come, even if this is usually done amidst pain and sorrow. The same applies to the anointing of the sick. The basic content of liturgical activity is Christ’s passion, death and resurrection, and even if this was a most painful thing, it is a cause and promise of

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<sup>4</sup> *General Instruction 2002*, no. 199: “An individual priest is, however, permitted to celebrate the Eucharist individually, though not at the same time as a concelebration is taking place in the same church or oratory...”

<sup>5</sup> *General Instruction 2002*, no. 254: “Mass should not be celebrated without a minister or at least one of the faithful, except for a just and reasonable cause. In this case, the greeting, the introductory or explanatory remarks and the blessing at the end of Mass are omitted.”

happiness to us. That is what it means to celebrate the liturgy.

#### ETYMOLOGY

In secular Greek the word meant an activity undertaken for the good of the people, the public good. The word λειτουργος derives from two Greek words: “λαος” meaning people and “εργον” meaning work.

In the Old Testament it denoted divine worship and the ministry of the Levites. Similarly in the letter to the Hebrews Christ is called a minister (λειτουργος) of the sanctuary.

In current usage the term denotes the public worship of the Church. Liturgy is to be distinguished from private prayer and from popular devotions. It is essentially communal. It has to do with some aspect of the Paschal Mystery and it must be under the official ρεγυλατιον of the Church. Because liturgy involves God and the community it is said to have a vertical and horizontal dimension.

## VERTICAL DIMENSION<sup>6</sup>

In the Liturgy mankind communicate with God. "In the liturgy God is speaking to his people and Christ is still proclaiming his Gospel. And the people are responding to God by both song and prayer."<sup>7</sup> The ascending dimension involves praise, thanksgiving, petition, intercession, expiation, vows and promises. Man lifts up his heart to God using the means that are proper to his nature: his own thoughts and feeling, "in spirit and in truth" and his material tools; symbols, gestures, voice, etc. In the descending dimension the sanctification of man by God is achieved. It also takes different forms such as granting of favours, forgiveness, blessing, and, ultimately, eternal life.

## HORIZONTAL DIMENSION (LITURGY AS COMMUNAL PRAYER)<sup>8</sup>

The horizontal dimension is the communal aspect of the liturgy, the relation among the members of the worshipping community. It involves in a sense the entire community of

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<sup>6</sup> "As the exercise of Christ's priestly office, the liturgy includes a twofold movement: from God to us to sanctify us; from us to God as our adoration in spirit and in truth" *Liturgical Formation in Seminaries*, Appendix, 8e. See also Martimort, "The Dialogue between God and his people", in Martimort, *The Church at Prayer*, vol. I. Pp. 131-171; Dalmais I.H., "Theology of Liturgical Celebration: The Double Movement of the Liturgy: Glorification of God and Sanctification of the Human Race", *Ibid.* 245-248.

<sup>7</sup> SC, 33.

<sup>8</sup> Martimort A.G. "Structures and Laws of the Liturgical Celebration: The Assembly", in Martimort *The Church at Prayer*, vol. I, pp. 89-111; Mark Francis, "The Liturgical Assembly", in *Handbook for Liturgical Studies*. Vol. II, *Fundamental Liturgy*, ed. Anscar J. Chupungco. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1997, 114-129. Regarding "Community of the Church and Liturgical Celebrations" see SC 2, 6, 41-42, 48; GIRM 1-6, 14-16, 20, 101; CB 11-14; DMC 11; HLS 1-7; EACW 9-10; FYH 1-15; DD 31-54; GILH 20-27.

believers.<sup>9</sup> It is not only the members gathered at prayer that are affected by the liturgical action, but the entire Church. The Church Militant is involved to the extent that the worshipping community prays for its various needs both spiritual and material. Even non-Christians are involved through the intercessions of the worshippers. The Church Triumphant is also involved in the sense that those here on earth at worship appeal to their intercession before God. Even the angels are involved in the same sense.<sup>10</sup> To these may be added the Church Suffering, i.e. the souls in Purgatory. They look to the prayers, intercessions and suffrages of the Church on earth for their quick relief.

However, the horizontal aspect touches this family of humanity only in the second place. In the first place we consider the assembly itself and the dynamics necessary for an authentic worship. In order that liturgy is not an action of a crowd marked by chaos it has to be guided by some rules of communication: it must be orderly, planned and prepared. Order in the liturgy is seen in people sticking to specific times for worship, in harmony in singing, which in turn means that people listen to each other in order to be united with one voice. It ought to respect a hierarchy of ministries so that each has their role and play only those roles assigned to them. The liturgical content itself is guided by established regulations, which we commonly call rubrics.

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<sup>9</sup> Can 837 §1: "Liturgical actions are not private but are celebrations of the Church itself as the 'sacrament of unity', that is, the holy people united and ordered under the bishop. Accordingly, they concern the whole body of the Church, making it known and influencing it. They affect individual members of the Church in ways that vary according to orders, role and actual participation."

<sup>10</sup> Regarding the saints' and angels' involvement in the liturgy see "The Liturgy and the Law of the Cosmic Universality of the Kingdom of God: Liturgy, Saints and Angels" in Cyprian Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, pp. 336-361.



## WHAT IS LITURGY ACCORDING TO VATICAN COUNCIL II?

*Sacrosanctum Concilium* is an extensive document, which sets down the norms of renewal of the entire Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council. It is made up of seven chapters.

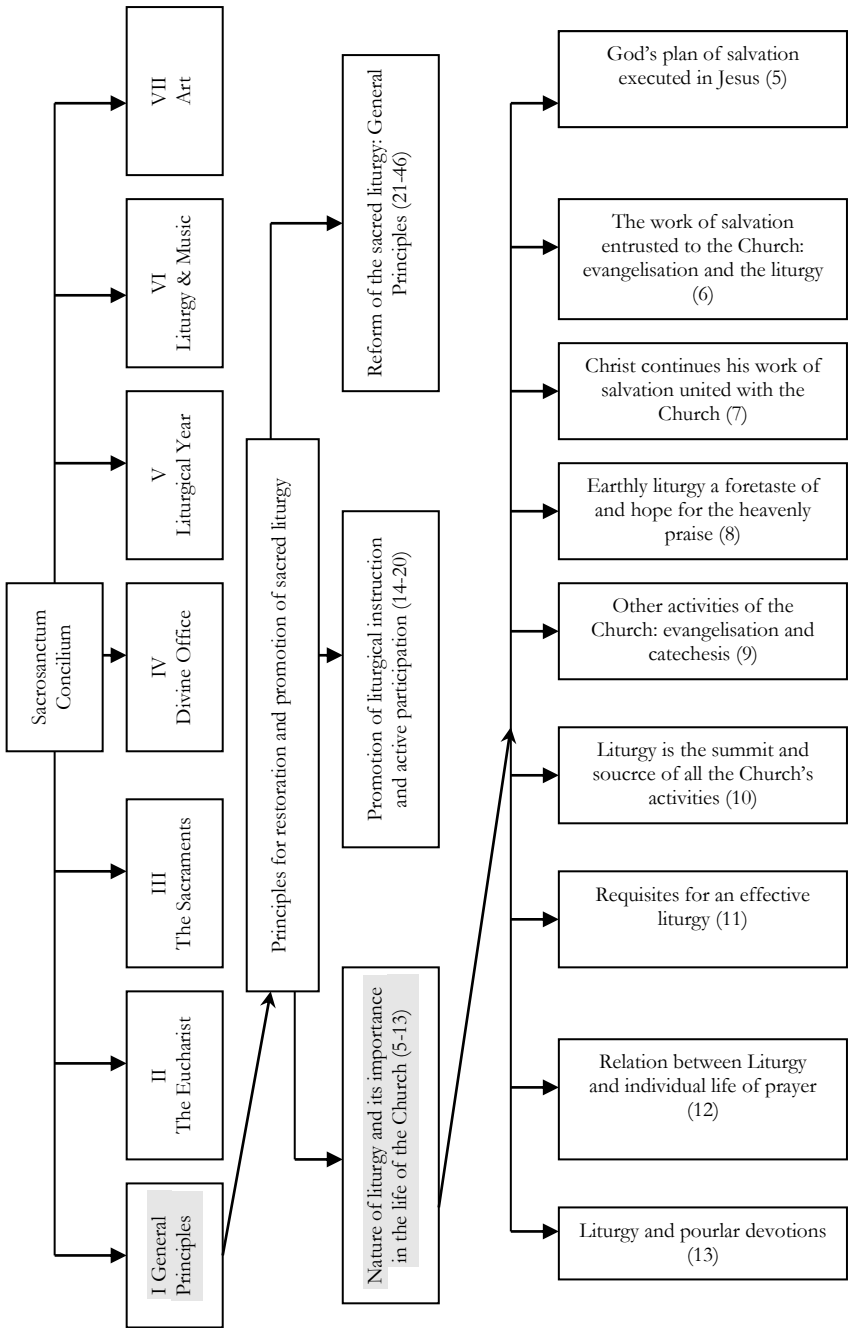
Chapter one deals with the General principles for the Restoration and Promotion of the Sacred Liturgy. Chapter II focuses on the Eucharist. Chapter III regards the sacraments and the sacramentals. Chapter IV deals with the Divine Office. Chapter V regards the Liturgical Year. The appendix also regards specific issues on the possibility of altering the calendar. Chapter VI deals with Sacred Music. Finally chapter seven regards Sacred Art and Sacred Furnishings.

The first chapter again has three parts of which the first one is the area of our interest. Numbers 5 to 13 gives an understanding of the mystery of the liturgy. In the first place a good understanding of the liturgy must situate it within the context of God's plan of salvation, and how that plan was executed beginning in the Old Testament and climaxing in Jesus' earthly activity, passion, death and resurrection. In order to further that work of salvation Jesus commissioned his disciples to proclaim the gospel to all creatures, to bring them into the Church through baptism, and to administer to them through the Eucharist and other sacraments. Christ continues his work in the Church and he is present through various ways. Thus liturgical celebration is both the work of Christ and his Church. The earthly liturgy unites us with the Church in heaven, and gives us hope for the final and glorious union which is yet to come. Besides the liturgy there is also other activities of the Church such as evangelisation for the bringing in of new members and catechesis for the nourishment of those already there. But all other activities

lead to the liturgy and draw their strength from it. In order that the liturgy is fruitful the mind must be attuned to the words, and one must co-operate with the heavenly grace gained in it.<sup>11</sup> It must also be nourished by other private prayer of each individual. It is also assisted by the commendable popular devotions. The whole teaching is summarised in the diagram below.

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<sup>11</sup> Many people wonder why is it that sometimes people who receive communion everyday can do wicked things. They also wonder how it is that some people who never receive communion at all can be very good people. The question is then unavoidable to them: what difference does the reception of communion do? Relapsed Christians often use that as an excuse for not frequenting Church service and not bothering about sacraments. It is important to know that the liturgy does not function automatically.



Sacrosanctum Concilium

I General Principles

II The Eucharist

III The Sacraments

IV Divine Office

V Liturgical Year

VI Liturgy & Music

VII Art

Principles for restoration and promotion of sacred liturgy

Nature of liturgy and its importance in the life of the Church (5-13)

Promotion of liturgical instruction and active participation (14-20)

Reform of the sacred liturgy: General Principles (21-46)

Liturgy and popular devotions (13)

Relation between Liturgy and individual life of prayer (12)

Requisites for an effective liturgy (11)

Liturgy is the summit and source of all the Church's activities (10)

Other activities of the Church: evangelisation and catechesis (9)

Earthly liturgy a foretaste of and hope for the heavenly praise (8)

Christ continues his work of salvation united with the Church (7)

The work of salvation entrusted to the Church: evangelisation and the liturgy (6)

God's plan of salvation executed in Jesus (5)

## LITURGY AS A UNIFIED ACTION OF LOVE

Sometimes we see liturgy as separate acts, how can we live liturgy as life-experience, worship in spirit and truth? The answer to that is that liturgy is an expression of love. John the evangelist teaches us that God is love. And so the celebration of liturgy is our seeking contact with a God who is love. Liturgy is celebrated as a loving response to a loving God. So, whatever is done must be seen as belonging to that same act of love. The manner in which Sacrosanctum Concilium describes what liturgy is by putting it in the context of God's plan of salvation, as we have seen above, brings out this aspect clearly. When one listens to the Word, one is paying attention to the instruction the loving God is giving as guidance to the conduct of the beloved. When one takes communion during the Eucharist, one is receiving that greatest gift of the Son which cost him pain and shame; in order to nourish and strengthen the one's he loves. If one sings a song in the liturgy, concentrating on the words, one will see that every good song is a song of love to the beloved. If one celebrates the sacrament of Reconciliation, it is in order to be worthy of the divine Lover who is so holy and who is always hurt by sin. If one says the Divine Office, it is to participate in the salvific work of Christ. One is adding one's little voice and contributing to the salvation of others, which is actually the work of Christ. When one tries to live by what one has heard in the liturgy, this pleases the Lord very much. It is a loving response to a loving call, and so on.

Think of the love between a mother and a child. Whatever a good mother does for the child is love: whether she washes and dresses it, whether she suckles it, whether she sings a lullaby before the child sleeps, or whether she tells it to sit properly. Even when she takes the child for an injection, in spite of what the child might think, this is an act of love. If the child learns to respond appropriately to its mother, whatever it does also becomes an act of love; whether this is to do its homework, or go to the well for water, or carry the little baby or even play at the right moment. Even the cry for help is a sign of loving trust in the mother. The mutual active love of both mother and child increases their happiness and joy. Mother and child do not cease seeing the separate acts of their daily life as separate. But these acts are all bound by one force: love. The same can happen in the liturgy.

## IMPORTANCE OF LITURGY<sup>12</sup>

Why is liturgy so important among ecclesiastical disciplines? In the first place it is because Christ continues through the liturgy his activity of saving of humanity.<sup>13</sup> In that sense it is said to surpass all other activities of the Church, since the primary activity of the Church is that of being a vehicle of salvation to others. Liturgy is also a participation as well as foretaste of the activity of our homeland, heaven.<sup>14</sup> Our true and lasting joy will consist in beholding and praising the infinite beauty and goodness of God, and that we already do in the liturgy. Because that goodness and beauty is still veiled we do not experience, at least not all the time, and not fully, that fullness of happiness. But we continue to praise and to worship guided by faith. We are in constant union with the divine in the liturgy, only this union is experienced sacramentally rather than physically. Liturgy has also been described as the summit and source of the Church's activities.<sup>15</sup> All the Church's activity should lead to union with God. At the same time it is through this union that the Church is empowered anew to go out into the world and to continue with the laborious mission.

From a pragmatic point of view liturgy is important because it occupies a major area in the life of a priest.<sup>16</sup> Almost daily he will be expected to carry out some liturgical action, most prominent of which is the celebration of Mass. It is very important for his own peace of mind, if for no other reason, that he is both competent and happy to carry out an activity which he must carry out daily anyway. One who finds liturgical celebration bothersome, but who nonetheless has to carry it out on a daily basis must lead a really miserable life. On the other hand liturgy can become the source of a priest's happiness, an activity to look forward to everyday.

Quite often people judge a priest by the way the priest celebrates the liturgy. Many of those who only come to the parish for the Sunday Mass have no

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<sup>12</sup> "...The purpose then for which priests are consecrated by God through the ministry of the bishop is that they should be made sharers in a special way in Christ's priesthood and, by carrying out sacred functions, act as his ministers who through his Spirit continually exercise his priestly function for our benefit in the liturgy..." *Presbyterorum ordinis* no. 5.

<sup>13</sup> SC, 7.

<sup>14</sup> SC, 8

<sup>15</sup> SC, 9

<sup>16</sup> PO, 5

other interrelation with the priests apart from the celebration of the liturgy. The way a priest celebrates the liturgy, what he says and does may attract people to seek further contact with him or may send them away from this particular priest if not from the Church all together.

All this means that a pastor must make a constant effort both to be competent at the liturgy and to learn to love what he does. He must seek all possible ways of making this liturgy meaningful to the people. For a continued celebration of a live and meaningful liturgy there is no substitute for a good preparation of each celebration.

## PRINCIPLES OF LITURGY

A definition alone does not exhaust the rich reality which is the liturgy. We need to expand our knowledge of the concept by viewing the same reality from a different perspective, namely of the major principles of the Liturgy. Needless to say, the elements already contained in the definition will again feature in the principles, since it is the same reality examined. The first three principles show that liturgy is basically a relation between humanity and the three Persons of the Trinity.

### LITURGY LEADS TO THE FATHER<sup>17</sup>

One who is observant at worship notices how liturgical prayer is often addressed to the Father. An observation of the Opening Prayers or Prefaces will show how often these prayers begin with Father, or Almighty God, or God our Father... and how in the way they end the Father is addressed in the second person singular, while the Son (and the Holy Spirit) are referred to in the third person. This element of addressing prayer to the Father is characteristic of much of liturgical prayer.

In the economy of salvation the Father is the initiator. He sent the Son for the salvation of the world. The Son's activity was always conducted in obedience to the Father. The Son's role was that of mediation between the Father and humanity, he was the High Priest. As well as that he was the victim offered to appease the Father for the sins of humanity. The Church's liturgy therefore addresses prayers to the Father through the mediation of the Son. In the Eucharist for instance the perfect victim is offered to the Father, while the community adds its own imperfect sacrifice *to the Father*.

### LITURGY AS CELEBRATION OF THE PASCHAL MYSTERY<sup>18</sup>

Another prominent element of the liturgy which strikes the careful observer is how liturgy is a celebration of events that occurred in history, and how the various events that make up salvation history all revolve around one central

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<sup>17</sup> SC, 5-6.

<sup>18</sup> SC, 6-7.

event: the Paschal Mystery, or the salvific passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The centrality of the paschal mystery comes out whether we celebrate each Sunday which is the day the Church commemorates his resurrection from the dead; whether we celebrate the Easter Triduum fulcrum of the entire liturgical life of the Church, whether we go through the different liturgical seasons which in fact are patterned on the earthly life of the master, or whether we celebrate the daily Eucharist: we commemorate the paschal mystery. The celebration of other sacraments too is related to the paschal mystery since they are given their salvific power through the meritorious sacrifice of Christ. Even what seems to be peripheral to the liturgy is related to and derives its authenticity from the paschal mystery. The memory of saints is memory of those who have imitated Christ to perfection in his passion, aided by his power.

The fact that all liturgy is in a certain way a celebration of the Paschal Mystery comes out very clearly in the layout of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. There is no specific title dedicated to “Liturgy as the celebration of the Paschal Mystery” in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Rather, one gathers from the different topics, that the Paschal Mystery underlies all liturgical celebrations. It is the realisation of God’s plan of salvation, began long ago and climaxed in the passion, death and resurrection of his Son (no. 5-6). This mystery is commemorated in a prominent way in the celebration of the Eucharist, for the Lord instituted it “in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the ages until he should come again...” (no. 47). It is the source of efficacy of all the sacraments and sacramentals. And so, for “well-disposed members of the faithful the liturgy of the sacraments and sacramentals sanctifies almost every event of their lives with the divine grace which flows from the paschal mystery of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ.” (no. 61).<sup>19</sup> It is the same mystery celebrated in the Liturgical year, particular once a week on Sunday and once a year on Easter, but as well as in the unfolding of the liturgical seasons from incarnation to Ascension and Pentecost (no. 102). Even the memory of Mary (no. 103) and that of the martyrs and saints (no. 104) are

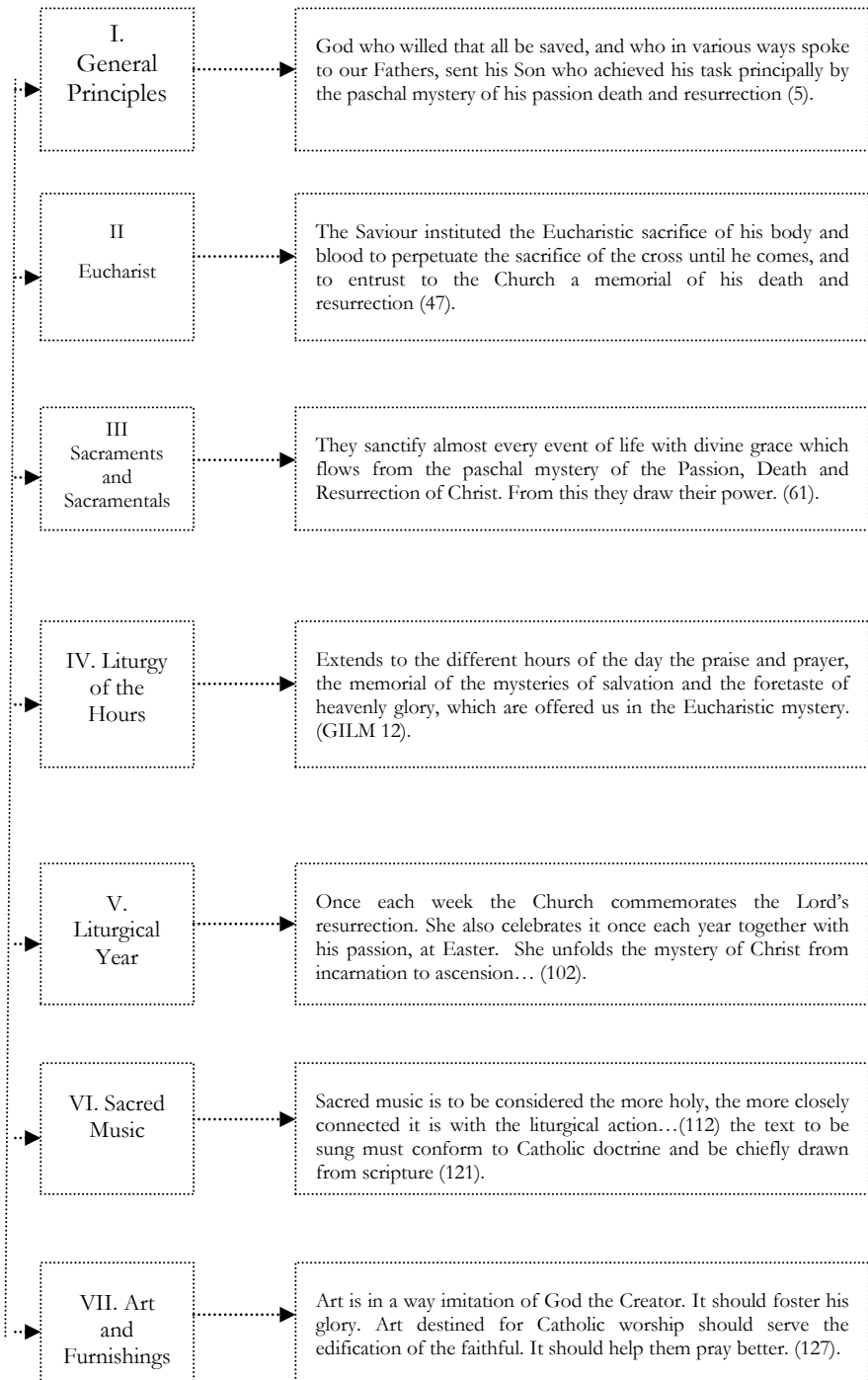
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<sup>19</sup> *Sacrosanctum Concilium* does not spell out clearly the relation between the Paschal Mystery and the Divine Office, but this is brought out more in the General Instruction to the Liturgy of the Hours especially in its explanation of the relation between the Liturgy of the Hours and the Eucharist (no. 12) as well as its relation with the Liturgical Year (nos. 204-256).



celebrated in as far as they relate to the paschal mystery. sacred music and art are relevant to the extent that they help promote worship of this mystery.

Below is a graphic representation of the notion of the Paschal Mystery in the different chapters of the document, as well as in other related subsequent documents.



THE HOLY SPIRIT AS THE SOURCE OF THE LITURGY'S  
EFFECTIVENESS<sup>20</sup>

What may not be so obvious in the celebration of the liturgy is the essential

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<sup>20</sup> See “Spirito Santo” in Sartore & Triacca, eds. *Nuovo Dizionario di Liturgia*, 1311-1324.

role of the Holy Spirit. Quite often people erroneously oppose the liturgy celebrated by the Charismatic Renewal to that of the traditional Church as if the former is one imbued by the Spirit and the latter is not. If liturgy does not reflect the central role of the Holy Spirit this is a defect of those who celebrate it not of the liturgy in principal. To say that the Holy Spirit has a central role in the liturgy is not simply to seek to complete the holy Triad.

Christ promised his apostles the Holy Spirit who would be their guide and helper. In fact they were all hidden and afraid to come in the open until they received the Holy Spirit and started to preach with vigour. The feast of Pentecost rightly celebrates the birth of the Church. Jesus also revealed to the Samaritan woman, that the new worshipers would worship the Father in spirit and in truth. True, they must employ what is material: gestures, postures, signs, etc. But these are the means towards a spiritual worship.<sup>21</sup>

In the Eucharist the Holy Spirit is invoked to come over the gifts that they become the Body and Blood of the Lord.<sup>22</sup> All the other sacraments are made effective through the power of the Holy Spirit. The baptism received by Christians is distinguishable from that of John the Baptist for the forgiveness of sin, for this is made through the power of the Spirit and fire.<sup>23</sup> In confirmation the baptised receive the gift of the Spirit.<sup>24</sup> In ordination the prayer of consecration invokes the Spirit upon the candidate.<sup>25</sup> Forgiveness according to the words of Christ is given through those who have received the power of the Spirit, to bind and loose what is on earth.<sup>26</sup> Even in those sacraments in which the work of the Spirit is not so obvious he is actually there and operative. In the anointing of the sick again the prayer said over the infirm invokes the presence and work of the Spirit.<sup>27</sup> In Matrimony the couples celebrate the love of Jesus for his Church. But the love of Jesus is none other than the Spirit who is the binding force in the God-head. Even the

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<sup>21</sup> See “**Error! Reference source not found.**” on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

<sup>22</sup> See “**Error! Reference source not found.**” on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

<sup>23</sup> “I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” Mark 1: 8. See also Luke 3: 16; John 1:33 and the dialogue with Nicodemus in 3:1-10.

<sup>24</sup> Acts 8: 14-17 “Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.” See also Acts 19:6.

<sup>25</sup> See “**Error! Reference source not found.**” on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, in the *Rite of Ordination*.

<sup>26</sup> John 20: 22-23.

<sup>27</sup> See “**Error! Reference source not found.**” on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

prayer of the Divine Office it is the Spirit who aids those who pray by expressing the inexpressible.<sup>28</sup> It is he who makes the Church understand what is read in the scriptures. The presence and work of the Holy Spirit is evident in such liturgical gestures as the laying on of hands, anointing with oil, baptising with water, blowing; he is depicted in liturgical art and architecture, traceable in the eucharological texts and in the words of scripture.

These first three principles indicate that God is at the centre of every authentic liturgical activity. This has several implications. It means that the act of worship is authentic to the extent that it focuses on God. Listening to God is a key element in liturgical prayer.<sup>29</sup> It also means that when God speaks he requires a response that goes beyond listening. The liturgy sends us to a mission from God.

It is possible, and indeed it happens quite often, however, that God is not put at the centre during the celebration of the liturgy. The consequences of that is the development of familiarity and routine in one's manner of celebration. Or it may result into a liturgy celebrated with conceit and performance; to impress rather than to inspire. Or again one whose focus of attention is self rather than God may at times be weighed down with nervousness and anxiety because of the fear of making mistakes and of being judged by others.

We are helped to put God at the centre of our celebration through preparation, through concentration on the mysteries celebrated (in spirit and in truth John 4: 23-24), through reverence<sup>30</sup>, and through leading a life that is coherent with what we celebrate.

## LITURGY IS THE ACTIVITY OF THE ENTIRE CHURCH

To go back to the dimensions of the liturgy, while the above principles reflect the vertical dimension, the present principle reflects the horizontal. Liturgy is a communal activity. The gathered assembly for liturgical celebration is guided by certain principles so that the celebration is an orderly human activity. In the celebration all must play an active participation. Each member or group of members has a definite role that they play, and only that role. The full, active

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<sup>28</sup> See “**Error! Reference source not found.**” on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

<sup>29</sup> “But in order that liturgy may be able to produce its full effects it is necessary that the faithful come to it with proper dispositions, that their minds be attuned to their voices, and that they cooperate with heavenly grace lest they receive it in vain.” SC, 11 Cf. 2Corinthians 6: 1.

<sup>30</sup> See “Reverence”, in Peter E. Finks, *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship*. Pp. 1098-1100.

and conscious participation of all requires an adequate liturgical catechesis.<sup>31</sup> The hierarchical nature of the Church is reflected in its celebration of the liturgy. There are those of its members with special roles as ordained ministers, as well as several offices of the non-ordained.

But liturgy goes beyond the small community involved in the actual act of worship. It embraces the entire Church. It also affects the rest of the members of the Church on earth, since it is the continued activity of Christ for the salvation of all. It affects the sinners for whose repentance and conversion we pray. Even those that are excommunicated or cut off from the sacramental life of the Church are included. Members of other Christian denominations, those of non-Christian religions and even non-believers are not excluded. Then the liturgy involves the members of the Church triumphant to the extent that the Church on earth appeals to their intercession. This is particularly realised through the celebration of the memory of saints. They on their part are not indifferent members, but being already in that perfect heavenly liturgy are eager and solicitous for our salvation. The Church on earth also intercedes for the suffering Church in purgatory that depends on the prayers of the living for their quick relief.

### LITURGY IS OF A PILGRIM PEOPLE

The word “pilgrim” has two characteristics. It describes people who have a definite goal, which goal guides and orients their present action. It also describes people who in spite of this goal are still on the move and must grope with all the practical problems they encounter on the journey. The Church as made up of a people on the move whose true and lasting homeland is heaven and this is reflected in its liturgy.<sup>32</sup> The prayers said in the liturgy orient the

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<sup>31</sup> “Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebration... in the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy the full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else...yet it would be futile to entertain any hope of realising this unless pastors of souls, in the first place, themselves become fully imbued with the spirit and power of the liturgy and capable of giving instruction about it.” SC, 14.

<sup>32</sup> “In the earthly liturgy we take part in a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy which is celebrated in the Holy City of Jerusalem toward which we journey as pilgrims, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, minister of the holies and of the true tabernacle. With all the warriors of the heavenly army we sing a hymn of glory to the Lord; venerating the memory of the saints, we hope for some part and fellowship with them; we eagerly await the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, until he our life shall appear and we too will appear with him in glory.” Cf. Philippians 3:20; Colossians, 3:4.

members to that lasting home. The liturgical year begins and ends with the theme of last things. The Eucharist is the new and everlasting covenant; the bread of eternal life. The entire earthly liturgy is a participation in the heavenly liturgy. This may not sound so terribly exciting. A scenic might even say that if heaven is nothing but a form of celebration of liturgy as it is celebrated here then it is not worth the trouble. And yet the deepest longings of the human heart are met in the vision of God and the irresistible praise, which is consequent to that encounter. Eternal life, is this: to know the Father and Christ whom he has sent. And one day before the courts of God is better than a thousand elsewhere.

But at the same time those who take part in the liturgy are still living here on earth. They use signs perceptible to senses in order to communicate with the invisible because they are embodied souls. The sacraments and other signs they use are vehicles of the invisible grace.

#### LITURGY IS BOTH UNIVERSAL AND LOCAL<sup>33</sup>

It is somewhat consoling for one to find little difficulty in joining in the act of worship far away from one's own country and culture. The universality in matters of worship found in the Catholic Church is not shared with so many other Christian denominations that have greater local variation. This universality underscores the Church's being Catholic and apostolic. It gives a sense of belonging to one family of Christ built on the apostles. It shows that we have become one family of God in spite of culture or race or colour. Of course there are major variations even within the Catholic Church, particularly when it comes to Eastern and Western Rites, or Western non-Roman rites. In this context we are focussing on the Roman rite. Within the same rite there is a general unity of structure that gives that sense of belonging to the same liturgical family.

To maintain this unity requires that liturgical practice is faithful to the teaching of the Church. One needs to develop a positive attitude to this fidelity: not to see it as subservience and rigidity, but as communion according to the mind of Christ. One needs to learn to value and respect long time-tested traditions, in order to avoid repeating mistakes that have been done in the past. Such a positive attitude is the fruit of acquisition of liturgical knowledge, of diligent

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<sup>33</sup> Martimort A.G. "From Local Assembly to Universal Church: Diversity and Unity in the Liturgy", in Martimort *The Church at Prayer*, vol. I, pp. 113-129.

study. More specifically it means that liturgy ought to be celebrated according to the official liturgical books.

The universality of the liturgy, positive though it is, is not meant to stifle variety and the richness that each unique culture adds to it. While retaining its universal nature the liturgy must at the same time be meaningful to each people in their local context. It respects those elements of culture that are not contrary to the faith. In order to maintain the delicate balance between universality and locality, within the liturgical books are indicated the areas of adaptation to local conditions. The adaptation of the liturgy to local culture requires among other things, being abreast with inculturation proposals within the liturgy, being alert to the needs of the people, being knowledgeable about their culture and the fact that it is a dynamic reality.

### LITURGY SHOULD BE MARKED BY NOBLE SIMPLICITY

It is a natural tendency to reserve the best for those whom we love most. It is an act of wisdom to give to the beloved what we know to be pleasing to them. In the liturgy, which involves a relationship between God and his people, the same principle may be applied. We call it the principle of noble simplicity. In *Sacrosanctum Concilium* it is mentioned in reference to the revised text of the rites: “the rites should be distinguished by a noble simplicity. They should be short, clear, and free from useless repetition. They should be within the people’s powers of comprehension, and normally should not require much explanation.”<sup>34</sup> This principle can be extended to apply to all that concerns the liturgy: from the liturgical environment, the vessels and vestments used, to ceremonial actions.

Liturgy should be noble in the sense that God deserves the best from us. He gave us nothing less: his only Son, the Holy Spirit, eternal life in his presence. Whatever is used in the liturgy should be dignified. That God appreciates a generous heart<sup>35</sup> is clearly demonstrated in the story of Cain and Abel and the

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<sup>34</sup> SC, 34.

<sup>35</sup> “Take from among you an offering to the Lord; let whoever is of a generous heart bring the Lord's offering: gold, silver, and bronze...” Exodus 35:5ff; “Be generous when you worship the Lord, and do not stint the first fruits of your hands. With every gift show a cheerful face, and dedicate your tithe with gladness. Give to the Most High as he has given to you, and as generously as you can afford. For the Lord is the one who repays, and he will repay you sevenfold.” Sirach 35: 10-14.



difference in their offerings to God.<sup>36</sup> A person should not be in a hurry to criticise ancient cultures that built elaborate and expensive Churches to honour God. Nobility in the liturgy requires that we avoid what is casual and careless.

At the same time liturgy should be marked by simplicity, just as God is simple and is pleased with simplicity. He does not drink the blood of bulls. No amount of earthly wealth would suffice to compensate him for his goodness, for not all the animals in the world would be enough for a burnt sacrifice for him. He is not impressed by pomp or earthly honours. Such offering to him is abhorrent particularly if it involves the oppression of his people. In practice the liturgy should avoid to aim at standards beyond the income of the people. It should avoid the superfluous or pretentious.

In a class on inculturation a student once asked me whether one could not have a monstrance fashioned out of a cow's horn or a chasuble made out of barkcloth rather than have a golden monstrance or an imported chasuble. After all, the student added, it is Christ who gives value to what we have. Certainly one can have these liturgical objects fashioned from local material as long as a) that material is considered of value in our culture, and b) it is not considered out-dated and backward, for even our cultures are not static but ever progressing.

The observation by the student that it is Christ who gives value to our little worth was an important one. For Christ gave value to the manger of Bethlehem, transforming an eating trough for animals into a cradle for the King of kings. He gave value to the wood of the cross, transforming what was an infamous and ignoble symbol of shame, pain and death into a sign of victory and salvation; an identification mark for every Christian. He gave value to the widow's donation of two coins describing it as much more than the big sums donated by the rich. This gives us confidence in the knowledge that no one can ever be too poor to worship him. Nobody is so impoverished as to have nothing to offer him. He takes us as we are. Nonetheless, that does not mean that anything goes. Mary and Joseph put him in a manger simply because they could not find a better place. The widow gave two coins simply because that was all that she had. If a horn is all that we have, then it is good enough for Jesus. But if we could afford an ivory monstrance and we reserve the ivory for our beds, to use a horn for Jesus, then we fall out with the God

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<sup>36</sup> Genesis 4:4ff.

who loves a generous giver. For those who sow meekly will have a meagre harvest.

The *General Instruction to the Roman Missal* mentions several areas of the liturgy where noble simplicity applies: regarding the gestures of ministers: “The gestures and posture of the priest, the deacon, and the ministers, as well as those of the people, ought to contribute to making the entire celebration resplendent with beauty and *noble simplicity*, so that the true and full meaning of the different parts of the celebration is evident and that the participation of all is fostered;”<sup>37</sup> with regard to churches: “Church décor should contribute towards the church’s *noble simplicity* rather than ostentation. In the choice of materials for church appointments there should be a concern for genuineness of materials and an intent to foster the instruction of the faithful and the dignity of the entire sacred place;”<sup>38</sup> with regard to sacred furnishings in general: “As in the case of the building of churches, so also regarding all sacred furnishings the Church admits the artistic style of each region and accepts those adaptations that are in keeping with the culture and traditions of each people, provided that all fit the purpose for which the sacred furnishings are intended. In this matter as well, a *noble simplicity* should be ensured such as is the best companion of genuine art,”<sup>39</sup> and for anything intended for Church use: “Every effort should be made to ensure that even as regards objects of lesser importance the canons of art be appropriately taken into account and that *noble simplicity* come together with elegance”<sup>40</sup>

#### LITURGY IS THE SOURCE AND SUMMIT OF THE CHURCH'S LIFE<sup>41</sup>

Liturgy does not exhaust the Church’s activity. There are individuals and even denominations that have made the error of abandoning all activity and spend all their time in prayer. Usually that is an indication of the beginning of fanaticism! To invert Christ’s teaching: man does not live on the word of God alone but also on bread. There must be time to work, to listen to the needs of others, to attend to our own human material needs. There should be time to evangelise and to seek new members for the Church.

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<sup>37</sup> *General Instruction 2002*, no. 42.

<sup>38</sup> *General Instruction 2002*, no. 292.

<sup>39</sup> *General Instruction 2002*, no. 325.

<sup>40</sup> *General Instruction 2002*, no. 351.

<sup>41</sup> SC, 10.

Nonetheless liturgy is described as the source and summit of the Church's activities. It is summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the fount from which all her power flows. From the liturgy we gain new strength through prayer, for the Lord says, "without me you can do nothing". We are edified and enlightened by the word we hear. We are cleansed of our sins and admonished not to sin any more. We are challenged to go out and be the salt and light to the world. We are strengthened by the Eucharist. "from the liturgy, therefore, and especially from the Eucharist, grace is poured forth upon us as from a fountain, and the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God to which all other activities of the Church are directed, as toward their end, are achieved with maximum effectiveness."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

## **LITURGY AND OTHER ECCLESIASTICAL STUDIES**

## LITURGY AND SCRIPTURE<sup>43</sup>

The bible is the source or at least foundation of liturgical texts. A traditional caricature was more likely to present a Protestant with a bible in hand and a Catholic with the rosary. This would give the impression that the typical characteristic of Catholic worship was the rosary just as the bible was for Protestant worship. Indeed even up to today generally the average Protestant has much greater familiarity with the bible than his Catholic counterpart. Yet scripture does not feature any less in Catholic worship than it does in Protestant worship.

When we talk of the relationship between scripture and liturgy the first thing that comes to mind is probably the readings we hear at Mass and at the celebration of sacraments. Then to that maybe added the psalms recited in the Liturgy of the Hours. Yet the whole of Catholic worship is inspired by and imbued with the spirit of scripture. That the influence of scripture on the liturgy extends much wider than just the readings is expressed in one of the general norms for the reform of the liturgy put down in the document on the Sacred Liturgy:

“Sacred scripture is of the greatest importance in the celebration of the liturgy. For it is from it that lessons are read and explained in the homily, and psalms are sung. It is from the scriptures that the prayers, collects, and hymns draw their inspiration and their force, and that actions and signs derive their meaning.”<sup>44</sup>

In the celebration of the Eucharist, apart from the readings and the responsorial psalm scripture also inspired the composition of all the eucharological texts; including the opening prayer, the prayer over the gift, the preface and the Eucharistic prayer, as well as the concluding prayer. Hermeneutic studies done at a higher level of the study of liturgy reveal exactly from which text of scripture each of the ideas in these prayers was drawn. Many of the prayers and songs of the Mass are drawn from scriptures.

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<sup>43</sup> Cf. Can. 836: “Since Christian worship, in which the common priesthood of Christ’s faithful is exercised, must proceed from and rest upon faith, sacred ministers are to strive diligently to arouse and enlighten this faith, especially by the ministry of the word by which faith is born and nourished.”

<sup>44</sup> SC, 24.

Examples are the Gloria that reflects the song of the angels at the first Christmas night. The Sanctus that echoes the awe expressed by the heavenly beings before the holy majesty of God in the vision of the call of Isaiah. The Our Father, is a prayer taught directly by the Lord to his disciples. The Lamb of God recalls the words of the Baptist as he pointed out the Messiah to his disciples. And the words of the centurion who surprised Jesus by his unwavering faith are repeated before communion: “Lord I am not worthy to receive you, but only say a word...”

In the liturgy of the hours, there are the psalms and biblical canticles (Canticles are genuine psalms or hymns of praise, which are found in biblical books outside the book of Psalms), as well as scriptural readings themselves. The writings of the fathers found in the office of readings, although not drawn directly from scripture, are inspired by it and reflect its teaching. The same applies to the hymns and antiphons.

While the sacraments are all ultimately traceable from Jesus as their ultimate founder and source of their efficacy, they are also to be celebrated in the context of scriptural readings. Baptism, Eucharist, Penance and Ordination originate more directly from the Lord. Matrimony and Anointing less directly.

Even the Church year traces its origins ultimately from Scripture, beginning with the paschal mystery as its central point. Pentecost was originally the Jewish feast of weeks. Even the celebration of Sunday, which is a commemoration of Christ’s resurrection, replaced the celebration of the Jewish Sabbath.

Apart from the influence of the scriptures on the readings and texts of the liturgy, the bible is also the source of numerous liturgical gestures and symbols such as the sign of the cross, kneeling, prostration, beating of the breast, standing, etc.

Within this liturgy course we shall have constant recourse to the relation between bible and liturgy by tracing the origins of many of the liturgical elements. A more thorough study of this relationship will be treated in the encounter with the lectionary as well as the divine office.

## LITURGY AND SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Every three years the Pontifical Urban University issues out to its affiliated institutes a list of theses for the Bachelor's degree in theology. When one examines the theses of successive three-year periods, one realises that apart from the change of wording, the content of the theses remains essentially the same, for indeed the content of the degree is the theology of the Catholic faith which remains the same doctrine in its essentials.

The amount of space given to each theological discipline in the list of theses reflects roughly the level importance of the respective discipline in Catholic teaching. Thus for instance, Scripture and systematic theology always take the greatest amount of space, then others follow: church history, canon law, liturgy, moral theology, pastoral theology, etc.

As a lecturer in sacred liturgy I always felt sorry that in this list of theses liturgy appeared to be peripheral, if one went by the amount of space given to it, in comparison to the major subject. Out of the thirty three theses for the years between 2004 and 2007, for instance, only two (number 25 and 33) directly addressed liturgy. The few others that mentioned it did so almost in passing and in connection with other subjects (for instance theses 5, 24 and 27). But a more careful rereading of the theses brings one to the realisation that practically all the different areas of Catholic theology constitute the subject matter of liturgy. Every aspect is brought to bear on the life of the faithful mainly through liturgy. This is true also with regard to systematic theology. It is through the liturgy that the majority of the faithful become acquainted with the doctrine of the Church, and not just as food for the mind, but as a reality to be lived. By way of illustration I quote some of the theses on systematic theology:

- Explain briefly the truth of the One God: how it is possible for all human beings to know certainly this truth intuitively through the light of reason; how traces of one of its proofs can be found in the spiritual experience of different religions and peoples; and how finally this truth was arrived at from the complete revelation of the same living God in Salvation History. Wherever appropriate sketch a plan of responses to the objections of atheism.
- On Trinitology: Explain briefly the dogma of the Holy Trinity: how it has already been symbolized in the economy of the Old Testament; how it has been fully revealed in the New Testament; which principal

Councils defined its essential elements; which could be the most common and acceptable theological explanations.

- On Creation: Explain the doctrine of the creation of all things by God, the nature and role of spiritual and material beings, of human beings and the doctrine of the constant Providence of God according to Revelation in Holy Scripture and in the Tradition of the Church. Wherever appropriate outline a plan of responses to so-called scientific objections and the problem of evil in the world.
- Explain the dogma of Original Sin; in conformity with the data of Sacred Scripture, of the definitions of the Magisterium and of the most common and acceptable theological explanations; illustrate the doctrine of free will and human responsibility.
- Explain the doctrine of the grace of God, with reference to the mystery of Redemption and the gift of the Holy Spirit; add a summary sketch of the principal disputes concerning grace, which have taken place in the course of Church history.
- Explain the event of the Incarnation, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ Son of God; show the principle elements of the Christological mystery in the dogmatic formulations of the relevant Church councils.
- Explain the doctrine concerning the Virgin Mary as Mother of God and Mother of the Church, making reference to Council definitions and to the most recent documents of the Magisterium.
- Explain in synthesis the traditional doctrine of the Church regarding the coming of Christ in glory and the fundamental points of Eschatology regarding both the single person as well as the entire creation.

These theses portray different divisions of systematic theology such as Revelation, Trinitology, Creation and divine Providence, Grace, Christology, Mariology, Eschatology, etc. Clearly, systematic theology takes a large chunk of the list of theses in comparison to liturgy. And yet it is true that all this teaching of the Church is availed to the people of God largely through the liturgy. It is expounded as the opportunities avail themselves in the course of the liturgical year. One might explain the Church's teaching on creation on a day when the creation story of Genesis is read. The dogma of the Holy Trinity might be developed on Trinity Sunday. The theme of the "Last Things" comes



out prominently towards the end of the liturgical year and in the first two weeks of Advent. One might also choose to expound an aspect of the same theme during a requiem Mass. The Christological theme forms the basis of the liturgical year, and indeed of all liturgy. From this illustration it is sufficiently clear that liturgy is related to systematic theology in the sense that it provides the milieu or forum through which the Church's doctrine is brought to bear on the lives of the faithful in the portions they can digest. In a word, the Church's doctrine is expressed in its liturgy.

Having said this it is important also to emphasise the fact that liturgy must not be turned into a lecture in systematic theology. There is always a way of bringing profound truths to the understanding of the simple. That is what Jesus did throughout his teaching. I have never forgotten an old priest who in the course of giving us a retreat came to the session with an uprooted pineapple plant. The very sight of the plant raised a lot of curiosity, everyone wondering what he meant to use it for. He held it in one hand and with the other pointed to the roots and asked the attendants what that was. We answered that that were roots of a pineapple. He then pointed to the leaves and asked the same question, and finally he pointed to the fruit. He then asked us whether he was holding three pineapples in his hands, and we answered as in a catechism class that, no, he was holding one pineapple. Then he concluded that such was the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

## LITURGY AND ECUMENISM

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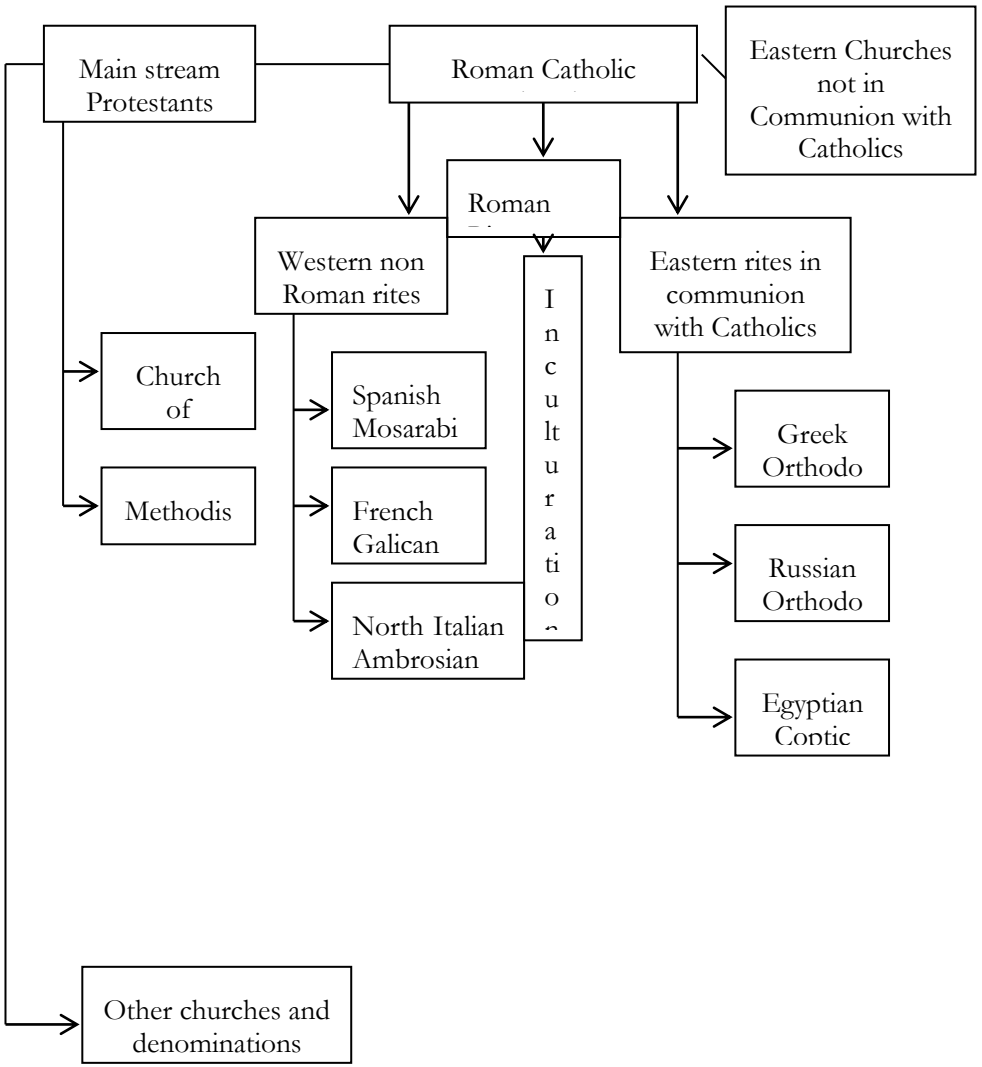
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Figure 1: The Scope of Ecumenical Collaboration



# Ecumenism

The chart above demonstrates the Christian Churches and their ecumenical relationship. One may divide Christendom in three basic categories. From the Catholic point of view the centre is the Roman Catholic Church. on the one extreme there are the Churches of the Reformation, which can further be subdivided in two categories. Closer to the Catholic Church are main stream Protestant Churches such as the Anglican, the Methodist and the Lutheran Churches. A little more removed are the other Churches such as the Baptists, the Seventh Day Adventists, the Pentecostal Churches and the Jehovah Witnesses. One can talk of ecumenism with regard to those Christian Churches that are not hostile to the Catholic Church. on the other hand one has the Churches of the Eastern Rite that are not in communion with the Catholic Church, that is to say, which do not acknowledge the authority of the Pope as Vicar of Christ. Within the Catholic Church there are three other subdivisions. The Western non-Roman Rites comprise of the Ambrosian Rite in Northern Italy, the French Gallican Rite and the Spanish Mosarabic Rite. On the other hand there are the Churches of the Eastern Rite which are in communion with the Catholic Church, such as those of the Coptic Rite, the Greek Orthodox, and the Russian Orthodox Churches. Ecumenical collaboration is at a closer level with these Churches because of greater common ground with the Roman Catholic Church. within the Roman Rite, which is the central stream, there are also local variations, according to place and culture. However, here one talks of inculturation rather than ecumenism.

*Introduction: Why is the study of Ecumenism and Liturgy important?*

There are parts of the world where the Catholic faith is so predominant that an ecumenical study is purely of academic interest. However, these are few. Even in the most Catholic countries there has been an infiltration of other Christian denominations. The more common situation is that where Christians of different creeds rub shoulders. To take the example of Uganda, almost wherever there is the Roman Catholic Church, there is also the Church of Uganda, which is part of the Anglican Communion. These two came almost at the same time during the early days of evangelisation. As well as the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Uganda, there are other Christian denominations like the Seventh, Greek Orthodox Church, the Seventh Day Adventists, as well as smaller sects like the "Saved" (Balokole), Pentecostal Church, Baptist Church, etc.

The future pastor therefore must be prepared to work in an ecumenical environment. He will constantly meet with the problem of losing members of the faithful to different Christian denominations around him. On the other hand sometimes he will have to know how to deal with those from other denominations who would like to be accepted in the Catholic Church, or simply who ask to receive one or another sacrament. There will be occasions of prayer such as marriages, funerals, or civil gatherings at which people from different denominations have come together. If he is in charge of Catholic schools or hospitals, he will find that many of the members are from different denominations. He will know how to relate with them properly in the liturgy. Members from his own Church will fall in love with those of other religions and come to him to bless their marriage, etc.

Focusing on those areas which are multi-denominational, we realise that we live side by side with many people with whom we have so much in common as regards faith and worship. Even when we do not interact with such people in matters pertaining to worship, we meet and interact in many other different ways. Socially it is common that we have the same place of work, we meet at different social functions such as weddings, funerals, national gatherings, etc. Children of different denominations share the same schools, so do prisoners. We face the same problems whether these are economical, environmental or social.

To many non-Christians all Christians are grouped in the same category. Differences as to whether this is a Catholic, that is Anglican and the other is a Presbyterian have very little meaning to one who has not taken pains to be interested in Christianity and its different ramifications. The same generalisation is made by us with regard to other religions. One may never have realised the great differences between the various Moslem sects. They are all Mohammedans as far as one is concerned. To the non-Christians who bundles all Christians together the merits of one denomination of Christians is to the credit of all just as the mistakes of one sect are attributed to the whole of Christianity. For that reason too, we need to work towards Christian unity in order to give to the world a Christian image that is coherent and convincing.

In order to be adequately prepared ecumenically it would be of great advantage if a student were to have an opportunity to study the liturgies of other Christian denominations in details, that is including their history, theology, and the actual rites. Such a study would give him a full appreciation of the good there is in other denominations. It would help him to get rid of some of the prejudices against these denominations. It might even help him to improve on his own way of conducting the liturgy in the Catholic Church. At the same time such a study would give the student a more objective and critical evaluation of these denominations' manner of worship. Any dialogue with any one of the other Christian denominations would be based not on ignorance, as is often the case but on knowledge and deep respect of the other.

Such a study would even be richer if it did not simply stop at book knowledge, rather if the student had an opportunity to attend some of the worship gatherings of these denominations.

However, to indulge in a study that does justice to the liturgy of other Christian Churches demands more time than that allocated to the study of liturgy in the seminary. Moreover delving in the liturgy of another Church requires a mature and critical mind, that is firmly schooled in one's own doctrine, knowing what is essential in it and what is dispensable.

The first reason then for the study of Liturgy and ecumenism is to equip the student to work in an ecumenical environment. The material is necessarily selected to give due allowance to other topics of equal importance.

The second reason is that today more than in the past perhaps, the Church realises that ecumenism is a must and not an option. The separation between

the different followers of Christ damages the very cause of Christ. We cannot claim to serve Christ while at the same time we promote division among ourselves. Christ's "last will" one could say, was that his followers might be one, as he and the Father are one. That unity and love were to be a sign by which the world would know that they are his followers.

### *Challenge of the gospel*

Perhaps the greatest spar towards Christian unity, also in liturgy, is the challenge of the gospel. We actually share the same scriptures and claim to live by them. However, a sincere, consistent living by these scriptures cannot but bring about unity. Christ's message requires unity from his followers. It involves forgiveness, brotherly love and settling of differences among us. Division and hostility among Christians is a sign that we have not been fully coherent in living what we profess. Moreover disunity is counter-productive to the cause of evangelisation. How can people possibly preach unity in a convincing manner when they themselves are divided?

Division among Christian denominations is the surest sign that we have erred, somehow somewhere. The Truth is one. God's will is that we should be one. If we are not one, the only explanation is that something on our part went wrong somewhere. Many claim to be in the right and consider the others to be in the wrong. That cannot be true in all the cases.

There are cases in our own faith where in the past errors were made. While they were made they were not considered to be as such. Rather than justify those errors now, they should sober us to humility. There is no guarantee that similar errors cannot be made now.

The example of the Jewish leaders in the time of our Lord should serve as a great lesson to us today. Even earlier than that one can think of the case of Jeremiah. His contemporaries thought that the temple could not be destroyed because it was the dwelling of God. God could not abandon his people. Yes He could not, but they could abandon God, and the consequences would be the same. We have the same confidence in the protection of the Church by the Holy Spirit.

The teaching of its leaders is free from error only if its leaders live of God as of one bread only. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, neither a bad tree good fruit.

### *Mind of the Church on Ecumenism*

Vatican Council II did give a lot of consideration on ecumenism. With regard to the ecumenical implication in liturgical matters the basic liturgy document, however, gives indications rather than actual treatment of these matters.

#### From Sacrosanctum Concilium

While *Sacrosanctum Concilium* does not explicitly treat ecumenism and liturgy for the major part, it has innovations that favour and are a basis for the promotion of ecumenism. In the first place document ushered in far reaching liturgical reforms that broke rubricism and centralisation of liturgy, allowing more dialogue, an element which would certainly be welcome to Protestant Churches. Theologically the document on Sacred Liturgy regarded worship as a dialogue between God and his people rather than as duty to be fulfilled. The promotion of the principle of Active participation, which in fact is the basic principle of the whole liturgical reform, further made the liturgy more open to ecumenism. Thus by degrees the liturgy moved from liturgical uniformity to unity in diversity. Other advancements which opened the dialogue particularly with the Churches of the reformation was the place given to the table of God's word in the liturgy,<sup>45</sup> the change of the language of the liturgy from Latin to the different vernaculars, the celebration of the Eucharist facing the people, the re-introduction of communion under both kinds, the clear preference of communal to individual celebration, the re-introduction of the Prayers of the faithful and the willingness to consider an ecumenically viable form of the calendar.

#### From the Decree on Ecumenism

Another document in which Vatican Council II made pronouncement relevant to the relation between liturgy and ecumenism is in the Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis redintegratio*) promulgated on the 21 November, 1964. This document stresses the importance of baptism (RU 3): "...for men who believe in Christ and have been properly baptised are put in some, though imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church... in spite of [obstacles] it remains true that all who have been justified by faith in baptism are incorporated into Christ; they therefore have a right to be called Christians, and with good reason are accepted as brothers by the children of the Catholic Church."

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<sup>45</sup> SC, 51.



The Decree on Ecumenism further makes an encouragement of what it terms *communicatio in sacris* with eastern Churches in no. 15: "[the Eastern Churches,] although separated from us, yet possess true sacraments, above all - by apostolic succession - the priesthood and the Eucharist, whereby they are still joined to us in closest intimacy. Therefore some worship in common (*communicatio in sacris*), given suitable circumstances and the approval of Church authority, is not merely possible but is encouraged.

For further guidelines regarding the relation between liturgy and ecumenism one has to look in the post-Conciliar documents.

*Areas to be considered in the study of Liturgy and Ecumenism*

The study of ecumenism in relation to liturgy embraces examines those areas in the liturgy which have ecumenical implications. Practically all do. With regard to the Eucharist for instance one has to take into consideration the question of sharing the celebration of Mass with other denominations: when and under what conditions may a Catholic partake of the Eucharist of another Church or vice versa.<sup>46</sup> When communion in a different Church is not possible what possibilities are there that the different worshipers can still pray together? Similar questions can be asked in relation to the rest of the sacraments. Which Churches does the Catholic Church consider to have a valid baptism and on what grounds? In such cases what is the procedure of accepting members of such Churches into the Catholic Church? Under what conditions may one baptise conditionally? How do you treat a non-Catholic who approaches you asking for the sacrament of reconciliation, or anointing of the sick? What conditions must a non-Catholic party meet in order to be wedded with a Catholic in the Catholic Church? May a pastor give a blessing to a non-Catholic who asks for it, and under what conditions? And so on.

Other plausible areas that can be exploited in the quest for ecumenism such as bible services and bible sharing, preparation of homilies, singing of Christmas carols, etc. There is today the Week of Christian Unity which ends on 25 January, the feast of St. Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles. In many churches there is now the growing tradition of celebration of the Way of the Cross

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<sup>46</sup> For instance consider the regulation in *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 85: "Catholic ministers licitly administer the Sacraments only to the Catholic faithful, who likewise receive them licitly only from Catholic ministers, except for those situations for which provision is made in can. 844 par. 2, 3, and 4, and can. 861 par 2. In addition, the conditions comprising can. 844 par 4, from which no dispensation can be given, cannot be separated; thus, it is necessary that all of these conditions be present together.

during Holy Week, particularly on Good Friday. It is also possible for Christians to celebrate a modified form of the Liturgy of the Hours, in as far as the Divine office to the greater part consists of the psalms, Christian prayers taken from the Scriptures which we have in common. Christians of different creeds can also meet and pray with and for the sick, since sickness is a common ailment.

At this stage the study gives the basic principles which will be encountered later on. The different ecumenical aspects of each topic will be treated when that topic is studied.

### *Practical Problems in the exercise of liturgical ecumenism*

The endeavour towards Christian unity immediately encounters a problem; that of a multiplicity and divergence of doctrine of Christian denominations. It is not possible to establish a single policy of approach towards other Churches. Some are close to the Catholic Church others are much more distant. Within Churches of the Eastern rite there are those that are in communion with the Catholic faith and recognise the authority of the pope while others are not. Among Protestant Church the high Anglican Church is so similar in its liturgy that to a careless observer, the celebration of the Eucharist in one Church could easily be mistaken for the other. In contrast the various branches of the Lutheran Church, the Methodists and the Presbyterian would seem to be more distant. Some Churches are quite open to ecumenism. Indeed the move towards Christian unity and the establishment of the World Council of Churches in the last century was spearheaded mainly by Protestant Churches. On the other hand some other Churches are downright hostile to the Catholic Church. Among those that are more critical may be counted the Seventh Day Adventist, some branches of the Baptists and the Jehovah Witnesses. This lack of good will on the part of some Churches is a great hindrance to ecumenism.

Another step-back is that of doctrinal difference. Authentic ecumenism is not the rash and hasty giving away of what one holds to be the truth in the name of brotherhood. Love and truth are divine characteristics that should not be opposed. In true ecumenism it is important to preserve authentic doctrine. On the other hand undue attachment to non-essential liturgical practices would constitute a hindrance.

*Present day achievements in the field of Liturgy and Ecumenism*

From the time of the Second Vatican Council until today there has been much ground covered in regard to liturgy and ecumenism. Weekly celebration of the Eucharist is now common among many Protestant Churches that formerly celebrated it only rarely. Catholics and Protestant are today concordant, not only in theory but also in practice, on the equal importance of the table of God's word and the table of the Eucharist. There is growing agreement on the nature and structure of the Eucharistic prayers.<sup>47</sup> More than ten Churches have formulated a lectionary patterned on the Catholic lectionary, earlier known as the Common Lectionary and today referred to as the Revised Common Lectionary. There is more agreement on the main features of the liturgical year. It is true that the date of Easter is not yet resolved. However, the Roman Catholic calendar regained primacy of the temporal cycle and reduced on the Sanctoral cycle, a move that brought it closer to its separated brethren. On the other hand Protestant Churches regained on their part the importance of the Temporal and Sanctoral cycles. There has been greater agreement on the celebration of Baptism, the Liturgy of the Hours and the Easter Vigil. Different Churches borrow from each other hymns thus enriching their own musical heritage. Among its various activities the World Council of Churches published an ecumenical calendar of intercessions, thus enabling churches to pray for each other around the world on a weekly basis. There is now a greater possibility of common ecumenical prayer services. These can be organised either by one community inviting another to join it in its particular liturgy, or by the two communities formulating a liturgy elements they have in common. There are even favourite times for doing this such as Lent, the Week of Christian Unity and the World Day of Peace (first January). In many parts of the world different denominations hold joint prayer meetings on national days such as Independence Day, Women's Day, Labour Day, etc. BEM has made suggestions on common celebrations of Baptism, Eucharist and Ordination. The Lima Liturgy has made an attempt to realise these suggestions.

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<sup>47</sup> Particularly with regard to the fourth Eucharist prayer among the Episcopal and Unitarian Methodist Churches in the USA.

## LITURGY AND COMMUNICATION

*“Communication regards not what we intend to say but what we are understood to say”*

### Bibliographical reference:

John Bryden Rodges, *Liturgy and Communication*.

Anthony D’Souza. *Leadership: A Trilogy on Leadership and Effective Management*.  
Bandra-Bombay: Better Yourself Books, 1987. (See chapters 13-17).

Peter E. Finks. *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship*. Pp. 235-237; 825-827.

Many will have had the experience of going to a church and finding so many people standing or sitting outside hardly hearing anything said within the church. Quite often such people will be tempted to indulge in their own conversation. They stand when they see others stand, and sit when others take their seats. After the celebration they will go home content that they have been to Sunday Mass. But in fact there is a total barrier of communication between the minister(s) and these worshipers.

Others can recall the experience of entering a Church where the echo does not allow one to hear properly what is said at the altar. Or it may be that there are no microphones, or that those which are there are too noisy. Other impediment to communication in the liturgy may be the crying of a baby or the continuous cough of someone. Still the impediment in communication may be with the minister himself. Lack of a good knowledge of the language, stammer, a voice that is too soft or too loud, reading too fast or too slow, the use of some distracting gesture, etc may be distraction in the manner one communicates.

There is also that standard joke of a minister who was fumbling with a malfunctioning microphone and said, partly to himself: “there is something the matter with this mike”. The congregation who were used to not hearing

him properly but giving the right responses anyway, answered as was appropriate for that part of the Mass: “and also with you”!

Communication is not limited to the horizontal dimension that is between ministers and the rest of the worshipers. It may also be on the vertical level: between God and the worshipers. We may be so engrossed in our own difficulties that we hardly pay attention to what is said or done. It may be a sense of guilt that is the impediment. Many factors may make it such that the act of worship has little or no value to the nourishment of our souls. The reason for this too can be attributed to a failure of communication. Liturgy is communication, whether one sees it on the horizontal or vertical level. It is communication with God, and the channel of communication must be appropriate to the subjects of communication. God is spiritual therefore the spiritual aspect is essential in communicating with him. He is holy hence sin blocks communication in the liturgy. he is merciful so repentance restores the broken process of communication. He has created us hence our poor resources are nonetheless sufficient. He is perfect so too we try to offer him the best we have.

However, for a moment we shall leave alone communication on the vertical level and restrict ourselves to communication between the minister and the worshipers. We can see that an effective liturgy cannot afford to ignore the skills of communication. The Instruction on Liturgical formation in Seminaries stresses the importance of learning communication skills in the liturgy course:

“...It is extremely necessary that the students learn communication skills, as well as the use of the media. It is essential in liturgical celebrations that the faithful understand not only what the priest says in the homily or in presidential prayers, but also what he is meant to express by gesture and action. Formation in communication skills is of such high importance in the reformed liturgy that it deserves very special consideration<sup>48</sup>.”

How do we learn the skills of communication? In this respect liturgy has a lot to learn from the secular world. Professional communicators take great pains to study the skills of communication. These include actors, broadcasters, advertisers and singers. They learn the art of capturing the attention of the audience and retaining it. They must be constantly creative. Their role is not just to entertain, but to put a definite message across. Liturgy can make use of

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<sup>48</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Instruction on Liturgical Formation in Seminaries*, 58.

some of these skills. However, there is an essential difference between liturgy and other communicators. Liturgy communicates truth, whatever skills it employs.

Some of the areas in which communication skills are particularly important in the liturgy are the art of preaching or homiletics, the art of good reading, the adaptation of the celebration of the Eucharist to special groups such as children, youth, the handicapped, the illiterate, etc.

The time allocated to the liturgy does not permit a full course in liturgy and communication. However, some of the required skills in the areas mentioned above will be pointed out at the appropriate moments.

## LITURGY AND CANON LAW

Canon Law makes legislation on all areas of the Church's life. This legislation is not an invention. This legislation is not an invention of canon lawyers, but is derived from the Church's disciplines including the liturgy. By putting the Church's teaching into legislation ambiguities are avoided, and the Church is guided in an orderly manner towards its destiny. In the case of liturgical law, what is found in the code is the unequivocal restating of the contents of liturgical documents. A liturgical student cannot afford to ignore liturgical legislation.

Liturgical law does not stifle creativity as many erroneously suppose. Rather, the purpose of liturgical law is to guide creativity on the right path. Law provides the proper manner of procedure towards authentic liturgical creativity. At the same time it eliminates bad liturgical practices. It safeguards against the danger of repeating past liturgical mistakes. It also safeguards the universality of Catholic liturgy. By directing adaptations it ensures unity in diversity.

In this course constant reference is made to the code of Canon Law where appropriate. But since the student will cover the same material in his study of Canon Law details are not discussed in class. At the back of this work there is an elaborate index of all the canons that are relevant to liturgy. In case of any doubt about any specific matter on the liturgy one is enabled to find what the

legislation of the Church by using this index together with the Code of Canon Law.

## LITURGY AND CATECHESIS

A difference is often made between “Catechesis” as the instruction in the Christian faith given to those who are already converted to the faith; and “Catechetics” as the discipline of teaching others the skills of imparting the Christian teaching or Catechesis.

Vatican Council II acknowledged the important role of the liturgy as a meaning of Christian formation or Catechesis. The frequent celebration of liturgy does not only nourish the souls of the worshipers. It also teaches them more about their faith. The same Council emphasised the importance for pastors to give an adequate catechesis to the faithful as a means to bring them to that desired full, conscious and active participation in the liturgy.

If the practice of the liturgy is a means of imparting and receiving Christian formation or *Catechesis*, its study must also involve the study of imparting that formation or *Catechetics*. This does not mean of course that the study of the liturgy substitutes the study of Catechetics in the seminary. That is too important a discipline to be fully covered in the liturgy course.

In this course the relation between liturgy and Catechetics comes out most prominently in the study of Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, (RCIA). Otherwise the whole course does give the student some skills of teaching the Christian teaching.

## LITURGY AND SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality may rightly be termed the “soul of the liturgy”. Liturgy is meant to inspire, to sanctify, to move to action; and Spirituality does the same. The two disciplines differ when spirituality focuses on the individual while liturgy on the community. However, they complement each other. Private prayer is important for a fruitful celebration of the liturgy. On the other hand communal prayer is important for a balanced spirituality.

## LITURGY AND PASTORAL THEOLOGY

As stated in the General Introduction, the arrangement of this entire course has a pastoral bias, in the sense that it has as primary purpose to equip seminarians with the necessary liturgical tools for their future pastoral work. For that reason there is hardly need to make an elaborate discussion of the relationship between liturgy and pastoral theology. For the sake of giving a complete picture, however, mention is made of the relation between the two disciplines.

Liturgy and pastoral theology relate in the first place because they both deal with the same areas although from a different point of view. They treat such existential topics as the reality of sin and who to deal with the sinner. The pastor might consider pastoral counselling as well as administration of the sacrament of reconciliation. Suffering and disease: the same pastor might make a visitation of the sick and include administration of the anointing of the sick. Marriage has the pastoral aspect which includes the proclamation of bans, stole fees, writing of marriage certificates, proper custody of registers, counselling of the unstable, etc. It also has the liturgical aspect whose centre is the administration of the sacrament of matrimony together with the preparation for it. The same analysis can be made on baptism, confirmation, ordination, burial, etc. Each discipline treats an aspect of the same reality. In practice however, the well-trained pastor should be able to integrate the knowledge of both disciplines in the execution of his pastoral and liturgical duties.

There are many questions whose answers require the knowledge of the two disciplines. There is the pastoral question of administration of baptism to those whose parents do not pay Church tithe, or are in concubinage, or who do not attend pre-baptismal instruction. There is the necessity of making exhaustive inquiry before administering conditional baptism. There is the question of whether to administer anointing of the sick to those who are in concubinage. There is the insufficiency in certain cases of giving the sacrament of reconciliation without needed counselling.

## HISTORY OF LITURGY

Anyone who has made a study of the history of any rite or part of it will readily realise that a thorough and exhaustive historical study of the liturgy requires much more time than is available in a seminary curriculum. Such



exhaustive study is possible only at higher levels of specialisation, at which a student studies nothing else but liturgy. Even there historical studies must be highly selective.

Yet today more than ever it is acknowledged that a study of any rite would be incomplete without recourse to its history. It is stated in the Instruction for Liturgical Formation that: “Since today the historical part of the liturgy has assumed great importance, there is good reason for the lectures to go carefully into the history of the rites. This will provide a better perception of their meaning and the ability to distinguish between unchangeable elements, divinely instituted, and other elements ‘not only may but ought to be changed with the passage of time if they have suffered from the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become pointless.”

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This course strives to include an historical inquiry wherever needed. But for reasons that are stated above this inquiry is highly selective and minimal. It is guided by the purpose of seeking to throw light to the present situation, not studying history for general information or for the joy of knowing what was done in the past.

The particular approach used is here is not to treat the history of liturgy in general, but of each rite during its introduction. That way one is able to relate its historical development with the present praxis. The student is further encouraged to make a personal further inquiry in the history of the rite. For this reason abundant relevant sources are given both in the Bibliographical Sources at the beginning of the topic and in the footnotes.

## SUMMARY

The foregoing shows that all ecclesiastical studies are related and form one complex unit. The one mystery common to all of them is God’s Word of salvation. The different disciplines treat it from different points of views. Scripture considers it as presented to us through the inspired writers. Dogmatic theology considers it as understood, interpreted and transmitted in the Church. Church History considers how the Church has lived it in the world down through the ages. The Word of God as celebrated in worship is the subject matter of liturgy. Spirituality presents it as it is meditated, contemplated and lived by individual members of the faithful. Pastoral

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<sup>49</sup> Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Instruction on Liturgical Formation in Seminaries*, 47.

Theology presents it as it is lived day by day in the Church's structures and parishes. Canon Law formulates in precise terms for edification and regulation of the Church's life. Moral Theology studies it as it is interpreted to be a guide for our social and individual behaviour.

Liturgy as one of these disciplines relates to each of them in a more specific way. The biblical content of the mysteries celebrated in worship is what we call liturgy and scripture. Liturgy and dogma, expressed in other words is the theological content of the liturgical rites. The ever-changing forms of worship down through the centuries constitute liturgical history. The pedagogical role of liturgy, as well as the effort to enable others to understand what they celebrate is what we call liturgical catechesis. Liturgical norms and practices as formulated in precise terms is what constitutes liturgical law. The consideration of the primary purpose of liturgy as one of bringing us closer to God constitutes liturgical spirituality, etc.







