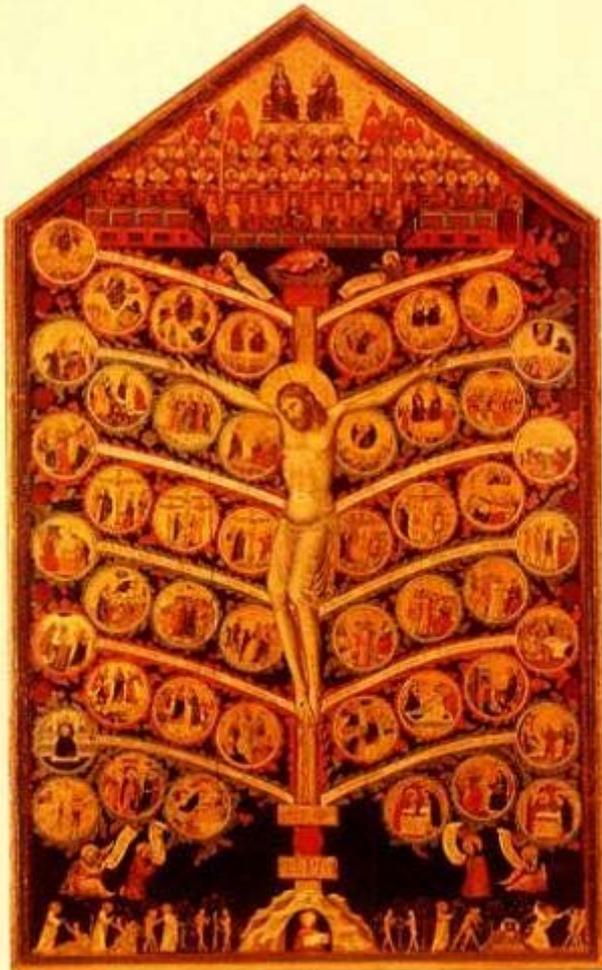


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"I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." –John 12:32

FOUR VIEWPOINTS FROM THE LITURGY SYMPOSIUM

BRISBANE

December 2003

These four papers were initially presented at *The Brisbane Archdiocesan Liturgy Symposium*, 4th December 2003, in celebration of forty years since the promulgation of *The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. The occasion was sponsored by *St Paul's Theological College* and *The Archdiocesan Liturgical Commission*

1. *Of Great Advantage: the Use of the Mother Tongue*

Tom Elich

THE USE OF THE MOTHER TONGUE has been one of the most obvious results of liturgical reform in the last forty years. As the Council predicted, it has proven to be of great advantage and has been eagerly welcomed.

Nevertheless there is a minority view that what has happened to the language of the liturgy is not what the Second Vatican Council intended.

◆ Scholar turned conservative advocate, Klaus Gamber, wrote that we cannot claim to have done what the Council actually wanted: *to use the vernacular exclusively in liturgical worship was not a change stipulated in Article 36...* (*The Reform of the Roman Liturgy: its Problems and Background*, 1993, p. 60).

◆ In 1998, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger spoke at the 10th anniversary celebrations of *Ecclesia Dei*, the document extending the possibilities for using the Tridentine Mass. *On the subject of language, [the Constitution on the Liturgy] says that Latin should be retained, while giving a greater place to the vernacular 'above all in readings, instructions, and in a certain number of prayers and chants'.*

◆ In a talk given in Sydney on 30 May this year, George Cardinal Pell remarked, *The most immediate consequence to follow from the Council was the introduction of the celebration of the Sacraments in the vernacular languages, rather than Latin, something the Council itself never decreed and which Pope John XXIII did not foresee* (Catalyst for Renewal, Bishops Forum).

While each of these statements is nuanced in its own way, I do not believe that the thrust of this position is supported by the text of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* itself, nor by the debates which occurred on the floor of the Council. I will argue that the Council knew exactly what it was doing and deliberately left open the expansion of the vernacular liturgy such as we have seen throughout the world in the last forty years. I will focus on this issue alone and will not treat the broader process of liturgical *inculturation* of which the vernacular is a part, nor the related questions of *translation* into the vernacular, and the *authority* responsible for liturgy in the vernacular. This latter is a pity because I suspect that the issue of Latin-versus-Vernacular was the chief way in which local and

universal ecclesiologies were debated in the early days of the Vatican Council.

The first thing to notice is that the question of the vernacular in liturgy was not new. The decision of the Second Vatican Council represented a very significant shift in policy but not a rupture with what had gone before. Ormond Rush would call this momentous change a 'micro-rupture' in the great tradition of the Church (*Still Interpreting Vatican II: Some Hermeneutical Principles*, to be published in 2004).

◆ In 1562, the Council of Trent did not reject the vernacular in principle but merely the proposition that the liturgy *must* be celebrated in the vernacular; it decided that the use of the spoken tongue *did not appear expedient* (Sess. 22, ch. viii and canon ix).

◆ In 1947, Pope Pius XII in his encyclical on the liturgy *Mediator Dei* affirmed the use of Latin as *an imposing sign of unity and an effective safeguard against the corruption of true doctrine*. He admitted that *the adoption of the vernacular in quite a number of functions may prove of great benefit to the faithful, but to make such concessions is for the Apostolic See alone* (Pt. 1, ch. 5). He takes the same line in his closing address to the participants in the First International Congress of Pastoral Liturgy which was held in Assisi in 1956.

◆ At this Congress, the Cardinal-Archbishop of Lyons Pierre Gerlier outlined the proliferation of bilingual Rituals in which some key texts for the celebration of the sacraments were retained in Latin while the rest of the rites could be celebrated in the vernacular. Such Rituals had been approved by the Holy See for areas using French, German, English, and Italian, among others, and projects had been instigated by the Holy See itself for areas in Asia and Africa .

When it came time to prepare a document on liturgy for the Council, the extent of the vernacular was a key question and a source of tension. It came up in almost every subcommittee of the Preparatory Commission when they began to meet in 1960. They worked to the principle that Latin must be maintained for the clergy and the vernacular must be introduced for the sake of the faithful. There were long and emotional discussions.

Next there is a story of subterfuge. The final document of the Preparatory Commission was adjusted by the Central Commission and was ready to go to the Council. But before it was printed, further changes were made by the Roman Curia. French liturgist Aimé George Martimort drew up a list of the changes and circulated them among the bishops at the Council. One significant change concerned the use of the vernacular. Instead of local bishops conferences being able to determine or decide (*statuere*) the extent and the manner of use of the vernacular, it was now for them merely to propose (*proponere*). In the first case, the Holy See would simply review the decision made, in the latter the Holy See would be the one to act on the suggestions of the bishops conferences. This issue was debated and the word *statuere* was restored to the text, but balanced by a provision that the enactments of bishops conferences would be approved or confirmed by the Holy See.

Indeed the whole debate on the vernacular was detailed and extensive for it took place before procedures were in place to draw a discussion to a close. In the long debate on the first chapter, no less than 80 bishops spoke on the vernacular. After Guilford Young gave up his right to speak because his thunder had been stolen by previous speakers, the only Australian intervention on the subject was Sydney Auxiliary, Thomas Muldoon, who was happy to have the vernacular for the Liturgy of the Word, but not for the part that really mattered! He is mainly famous for then asking that the debate be concluded. Every possible argument for and against was aired. In favour of Latin, the arguments turned on unity, universality, a sense of mystery, and Latin's concision and stability. In favour of the mother tongue, arguments appealed to the pastoral realities of active participation, understanding and catechesis, prayerfulness, and the situation of mission churches. Then, when the discussion moved to Chapter 2 on the Eucharist and Chapter 3 on the other sacraments and Chapter 4 on the Divine Office, the issue of the vernacular came up again and again. I think it is safe to say that the Council knew exactly what it was doing in leaving certain possibilities open and in placing different viewpoints side by side.

The use of the mother tongue is a classic example of the Council reaching consensus by the 'method of juxtaposition', to adopt another phrase of Ormond Rush (*Still Interpreting Vatican II*, 2004). *Ecclesial unanimity was achieved at that particular time through the retention of conflicting*

attitudes. This 'contradictory pluralism' of the Council documents allows compromise, ambiguity, internal incoherence and conflicting viewpoints to remain in a text which everyone can approve.

Paragraph 36 of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* begins by asserting that *the use of Latin is to be preserved in the Latin rites*. Then comes a statement on the vernacular which is deliberately not restrictive: *But since the use of the mother tongue, whether in the Mass the administration of the sacraments, or the other parts of the liturgy, frequently may be of great advantage to the people, the limits of its use may be extended. This will apply in the first place to the readings and instructions and to some prayers and chants...* The third proposition empowers bishops conferences *to decide whether and to what extent the vernacular is to be used*, these enactments being approved, that is, confirmed by the Holy See.

Paragraph 54 on the eucharist acknowledges that *in Masses celebrated with the people a suitable place may be allotted to their mother tongue. This is to apply in the first place to the readings and the 'universal prayer', but also, as local conditions may warrant, to those parts belonging to the people*. All this is referred back to paragraph 36 and the competence of bishops conferences. It is also envisaged that *a more extended use of the mother tongue within the Mass* may be desirable, in which case the provisions for a more radical adaptation of the liturgy (# 40) are to be observed. Finally, *steps should be taken enabling the faithful to say or sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass belonging to them*. This is perhaps a concession to the specialists in Gregorian chant who were among the strongest opponents of the vernacular. Today the practice is more common in other countries than it is in Australia .

Paragraph 63 allows that *the vernacular may be used in administering the sacraments and sacramentals because the use of the mother tongue... can often be of considerable help for people*. Because the Divine Office is especially the domain of the clergy, the provisions here are more restrictive but paragraph 101 allows dispensation in individual cases. *In accordance with the centuries-old tradition of the Latin rite, clerics are to retain the Latin language in the divine office. But in individual cases the Ordinary has the power of granting the use of a vernacular translation... to those clerics for whom the use of Latin constitutes a grave obstacle to their praying the office properly*. This provision was not to apply to religious.

The compromises and contradictions are obvious, but what is also apparent is that the Council deliberately opens the way for further development at a local level. There were many requests, for example, to retain Latin for the sacramental formulae and for the canon of the Mass, but these are not found in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. In fact, the retention of Latin for sacramental formulae was explicitly voted out by an amendment put to the Council just the day before the entire Constitution was approved. This was not a limitation which the Council wished to impose. The Council was opening doors, not shutting them.

The reception by the Church of the vernacular in liturgy was swift and overwhelming. By 1967, the whole liturgy was being celebrated in the vernacular. Does this constitute a distortion of the mind of the Council? I would say not. The pastoral decisions were taken at local level as the Council had decreed and every step was approved by the Holy See. I see it rather as a sign that the time was ripe. What of the statement that the use of Latin is to be preserved in the Latin rites? I would argue that this is so by the very fact that the 'typical editions' of our liturgical books are produced in Latin. This remains a powerful sign of Catholic unity and a safeguard of ancient liturgical tradition.



2. The Warm and Living Love of Scripture

Elizabeth Harrington

INTRODUCTION

The Second Vatican Council opened with a liturgy in which the Book of the Holy Scriptures was carried in solemn procession among the Council Fathers and placed before them for veneration. This rite, which has since become common practice in the celebration of the Mass, anticipated the pastoral decision of the council to restore the Scriptures to a central place in the life of the Church.

The first volume of *Schemata* to be examined at the Council contains seven drafts, with the one of the Liturgy fifth on the list. However, the first four were doctrinal in nature and concern was expressed to the Pope by members of the Preparatory Commission that the Council could get bogged down in complex theological discussion at its opening session. As a result, it was announced at the second general congregation on October 16, 1962 that the sacred liturgy was to be the first item on the agenda for examination by the Fathers.

After a lengthy process of discussion, interpretations, amendments and changes, the final schema was put to the vote. The result was 2147 for, 4 against.

The definitive approval and promulgation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* took place on December 4, 1963 in the presence of Pope Paul VI, exactly 400 years to the day since the decision by the Council of Trent to leave the task of effecting liturgical reform to the Holy See.

Paragraph 24 of the Constitution put into words what had been conveyed ritually at the Council's opening liturgy.

Sacred Scripture is of the greatest importance in the celebration of the liturgy. For it is from Scripture that the readings are given and explained in the homily and that psalms are sung; the prayers, collects and liturgical songs are scriptural in their inspiration; it is from the Scriptures that actions and signs derive their meaning. Thus to achieve the reform, progress and adaptation of the liturgy, it is

essential to promote that warm and living love of Scripture to which the venerable tradition of both eastern and western rites gives testimony.

The success of the reforms envisioned by the Council was depicted as depending, not on new doctrine or strict regulations, but on developing within the Catholic faithful an emotional, spiritual attachment to the Word of God, the living tradition of scripture.

Other sections of the document also stress the importance of Scripture in the Church's liturgy. It speaks of Christ's presence when the holy Scriptures are read in the Church "since it is he himself who is speaking" (# 7). The holding of Bible services is given encouragement, particularly where no priest was available (# 35.4). Paragraph 51, in the chapter on the eucharist, instructs that "the treasures of the Bible are to be opened up more lavishly, so that a richer share in God's word may be provided for the faithful". The readings of the Divine Office were to be arranged "so that the riches of God's word may be easily accessible in more abundant measure" (# 92a). Professors of Scripture were told it was especially important for them to bring out the connection between their subject and the liturgy (# 16).

A RETURN TO TRADITION

While this emphasis given to Scripture was surprising to many Catholics, readings from the Word of God had been an important aspect of Christian worship from the beginning, as it had been in the Jewish tradition where Christianity had its genesis. Justin Martyr, in his account of the eucharist in his community around the year 155, describes a celebration which commences with readings from the prophets and the memoirs of the apostles.

Over the centuries, more and more rituals were added to the Mass so that readings from scripture were gradually overshadowed. Martin Luther and the reformers after him eliminated many of these ceremonial accretions. The Puritan Service of the Word of 1644, for example, consisted of: Call to Worship, Readings from Scripture, Prayer before the Sermon, Preaching of the Word, Prayer after the Sermon, Sung Psalm and Solemn Blessing.

The Roman Catholic Church responded to the Reformers' call to base Church life and worship only on what was set down in the Bible ('*sola scriptura*') by emphasising – indeed, overemphasising – the importance of tradition and the role of the sacraments, especially the Mass.

The Liturgy of the Word in the Tridentine Order of Mass included an epistle reading and a Gospel reading. There was no reading at all from the Old Testament. The Lectionary for Mass used a one-year cycle of readings.

The fact that according to Canon Law, one's Mass obligation was fulfilled by being present from the offertory until the priest's communion clearly gave the impression that the scripture readings which preceded this were unimportant.

At the same time as many of you would have been singing “Sweet Sacrament Divine” at primary school in the 1950s, the favourite chorus at my Presbyterian Sunday School was “Oh, the best book to read is the Bible”!

INFLUENCES FOR CHANGE

(a) The Biblical Movement

The emphasis on scripture in the Constitution had its basis in the liturgical and biblical reforms of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

In 1943, Biblical studies had been encouraged by Pius XII's Encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu* which brought to an end repression of Catholic study of the Bible and opened the way for Catholics to embrace the historical – critical approach to the Bible that was prominent in Protestant scholarship. The acceptance of the method was affirmed when, at the Council, an original draft of the Decree on Divine revelation (*Dei Verbum*) which reflected the old proof-texting style, was withdrawn by John XXIII and rewritten by biblical scholars of the new school.

From being almost a closed book for the faithful, Bible reading was being encouraged on a popular level. In 1957 a scripture portion became a prominent part of the journal “Worship” and eventually led to the publication of the popular, “The Bible Today”.

Another pointer to later developments was seen at the International Congress of Pastoral Liturgy held in Assisi in 1956. One of the major lectures at the Congress was delivered by Archbishop (later Cardinal) Augustin Bea on the topic “The Pastoral Value of the Word of God in the Sacred Liturgy”. It included many principles found in CSL.

For twenty years Bea was rector of the Pontifical Bible Institute in Rome and came under attack for promoting modern techniques of biblical studies. John XXIII responded by elevating Bae to cardinal in 1959 and appointing him president of the new Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity in 1960.

(b) Influence of Other Churches

There is no doubt that the renewed interest in scripture in the Catholic Churches was in large part due to the influence of the practice of other Churches.

Whereas for nearly four centuries Roman Catholic and Protestant worship operated in almost total isolation from each other, the first half of the 20th century saw the dividing walls start to crumble and the first signs of ‘cross fertilisation’.

The presence of observers from other Churches at Vatican II was a sign of this growing openness. The Anglican and Lutheran Churches each appointed two observers, and there was one each from the World Council of Churches and the ecumenical Taizé community in France. Their role was simply to observe – they never took part in the discussions and never asked to speak. Only on one occasion did the Concilium ask for the view of the observers, and that was on the question of whether to retain the existing Lectionary of the Roman Missal or to develop an entirely new one. All expressed a desire for the traditional Lectionary to be revised. Given the success of this aspect of the reform, perhaps the observers should have been consulted more often!

PUTTING PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE

The first task in implementing the desire to give scripture a more prominent role in the celebration of liturgy was the compilation of a new Lectionary for Mass.

The Constitution had called for a 'richer fare' (# 51) of God's Word but specified only "in the course of a prescribed number of years". A four-year cycle was considered but rejected in favour of a three-year cycle. This was a major shift away from the one-year lectionary with a thousand-year history.

The other major decision to be made concerned the number of readings to be included. The experts argued passionately for three obligatory readings on Sundays. They believed that this would promote knowledge of the Bible among the faithful and implement the Council's goal of opening up the treasures of Scripture. Some Fathers feared that three readings would make the Mass unduly long, others that problems would arise because clergy and faithful were unprepared for this greater emphasis on scripture. In the end, the Fathers voted to accept the three readings as obligatory.

Some 800 scholars were consulted during the process of choosing the pericopes for the Lectionary. It was the most thorough study and revision of a lectionary in all Christian history and greatly expanded the number of texts appointed to be read. The basis adopted for each year was the semi-continuous reading of one of the synoptics. Each Sunday (except in Easter) has an Old Testament reading related to the gospel of the day. The second reading from the Epistles and Revelation are read in course, except on major feasts. In keeping with tradition, it was decided that some books would continue to be read at specific times of the liturgical year, for example, the Acts of the Apostles during the Easter Season.

The Lectionary for Weekdays was based on a different set of principles. Two readings were to be used with the second one always from one of the gospels. In Ordinary Time, the gospel was arranged according to an annual cycle while the first reading followed a two-year cycle, with alternating weeks of Old Testament and New Testament passages. For the other seasons, a one-year cycle was adopted for both readings.

The new Lectionary was promulgated on May 25 1969 by decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship. On July 15 it issued guidelines to assist Episcopal conferences in using this monumental new liturgical book. Use became obligatory when the vernacular Lectionary was available in each country.

In the apostolic constitution *Missale Romanum*, Paul VI said of the new Lectionary:

“We are fully confident that under this arrangement both priest and faithful will prepare their minds and hearts more devoutly for the Lord's Supper and will be nourished more each day by the words of the Lord”. (DOL 202 #1362)

THE CURRENT SITUATION

There is no doubt that great progress has been made in the last 40 years in developing among the general Catholic population a greater understanding and appreciation of the importance of scripture for individual nourishment and in communal worship. No rites are celebrated now in the Church without readings from scripture forming a significant part of the ritual. Bible study groups, especially during the season of Lent, have become increasingly popular.

A major obstacle to people developing the “warm and living love for scripture” hoped for by the Council is a misunderstanding of the nature of the Liturgy of the Word at Mass.

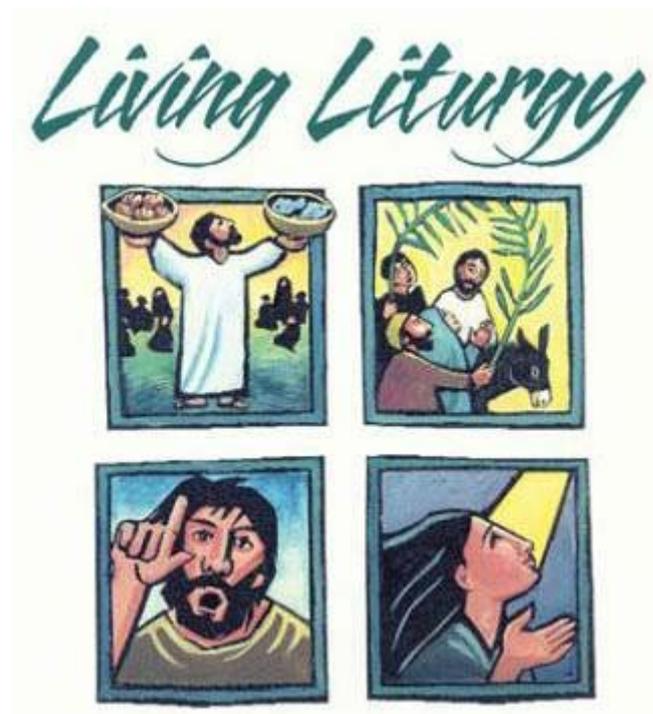
Because the Liturgy of the Word comes before the celebration of the sacrament, it is still viewed by many as introductory and of lesser importance.

Some seem to view the Liturgy of the Word as a time of instruction rather than as an act of worship in its own right. For this reason, the Church has been slow to take up the Constitution's urging to make greater use of scripture services.

If people understand the Liturgy of the Word as catechetical, they see their role in it as that of learners who must fully absorb the information being conveyed by the “lesson”.

The purpose of the Liturgy of the Word is not education so much as formation. We gather to encounter God, not to learn about God. We listen to the readings to hear Christ speaking to us, not to learn about Christ.

Only when Catholics have the same emotional attachment and devotion to the scriptures as previous generations had for Benediction and the Rosary can we claim to have succeeded in really promoting “that warm and living love for Scripture” that will achieve the reform of the liturgy which was the vision, work and goal of the Council.



3. Day and Night: Made Holy by the Praises of God

Ursula O'Rourke sgs

SC #83-101

By tradition going back to early Christian times, divine office is so arranged that the whole course of the day and night is made holy by the praises of God. Therefore, when this wonderful song of praise is rightly performed by priests and others who are deputed for this purpose by the Church's ordinances or by the faithful praying together with the priest in the approved

form, then it is truly the voice of the bride addressing the bridegroom; it is the very prayer that Christ himself, together with his Body, address to the Father. [CSL 84]

The liturgical reform and renewal sparked by the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* promoted a revival of the *Divine Office*. For many centuries, the Church had almost lost sight of the Divine Office or Liturgy of the Hours, as a public act of worship of the whole Christian Community. It had become commonly known as the 'breviary' or the priest's daily prayer book, and in a sense, the exclusive, private prerogative of the clergy and religious.

The liturgical reform of the second Vatican Council directed that the Divine Office be once again restored to its original purpose, namely, as the prayer of the entire community of the faithful. Archbishop Bugnini summed this up well when he said:

The awareness of the Liturgy of the Hours, as something belonging essentially to the whole church had, regrettably, hardly been in evidence for many centuries. It had come to be considered as the preserve of the clergy and religious. Liturgical services however are not private functions, or reserved to groups of elites; they are celebrations of the Church which is the sacrament of unity. They pertain to the whole body of the Church in different ways according to the diversity of holy orders, functions, and degrees of participation. As can be seen from the very structure of the Hours, with their psalms, readings, hymns, responsories and prayers, they are designed for celebration in common. Individual recitation came only when this communal celebration was not possible. (The Reform of the Liturgy:1948-1975)

Sacrosanctum Concilium affirms that the priestly work of Jesus Christ is carried on through the Church in the continuous offering of praise and worship to God, and interceding for all humanity. The course of the entire day and night is thereby consecrated. Consequently *the traditional sequence of the hours is to be restored so that once again they may be genuinely related to the hour of the day when they are prayed (SC88)*.

The Council set down four principles that were to govern the revision:

- fidelity to the past is to be balanced with sensitivity to *the modern conditions in which daily life has to be lived, especially by those who are called to labour in apostolic works* (SC 88)
- the person praying should be able to draw spiritual life from the texts of the Office;
- the faithful should be able to participate fruitfully in the recitation of the Office;
- the Hours of the Office are to be prayed at their “true” and appropriate times [cf. Bugnini p. 492]

Fr Frederick McManus, writing in 1977, raised other challenging issues...

Is prayer ecclesial or liturgical because it is so declared by the holders of Church authority? Or is it such because it is uttered by the praying Church?

Is the mandate or deputation of some members of the Church to pray of primary importance or even necessary for this kind of ecclesial prayer?

Should the reform of the canonical hours respect the tradition of communal prayer or should it create the personal prayer book of the priest and religious?

Should the ideal of sanctification of the several hours of the day be pursued or should morning and evening prayer be THE ecclesial prayer?

The revision that followed was comprehensive and in some ways radical. It can be summarized as follows: (SC 89-94)

[1] Priority was given to Lauds [morning prayer] and Vespers [evening prayer] as the two most important offices of the day. *They are the two hinges on which the daily office turns; hence they are to be considered as the chief hours and celebrated as such...*(SC 89)

[2] ‘The hour known as ‘Matins’ became the Office of Readings and adapted so that it can be prayed at any time of the day; the psalms are to be fewer in number and the readings longer; it seems that it is meant primarily for clergy and for religious congregations... this office is to include two readings, one from scripture, and the other from the patristic sources or other church writers;

[3] Prime is to be suppressed, and of the other lesser hours [Terce, Sext, and None] - only one need be said;

[4] Compline is the prayer at the end of the day and is to be revised accordingly;

[5] The psalter is to be distributed over a longer period than a week; it is distributed over a four week period, but during the greater seasons [Christmas and Easter], and on greater feast days, psalms appropriate to the occasion are allocated;

[6] The scripture lectionary is to be improved, and the passages to be read are to be longer. There is to be a better selection of patristic readings, and the acts of the martyrs and the lives of the saints are to be in accord with historical truth;

[7] The hymns are to be restored to their original [non-classical] form and the selection extended; they were put at the beginning of every office, since the hymn sums up the meaning of the season, feast or hour; hymns from old sources were added and as well, each region or country was permitted to use its own authorized collection.

[8] Offices are to be said at the right time of the day... Laud in the morning and Vespers in the evening, and the parish clergy are exhorted to see that Vespers is celebrated on Sundays with the people - this was one of the future challenges for implementation.

As to who should be praying this prayer, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* admitted the possibility of lay people using the Liturgy of the Hours. *Pastors should see to it that the chief hours, especially vespers, are celebrated in common in church on Sundays and the more solemn feasts. The laity, too, are encouraged to recite the divine office either with the priests, or among themselves, or even individually* [CSL 100].

Although the laity are here encouraged to pray the Divine Office not only with the clergy but also among themselves, some commentators suggest that, without the leadership of the cleric, the authentic participation of the laity in the official prayer of the church would be questionable. It would seem that without the presence of the cleric, the prayer of a group of lay people would seem to be considered as not being an authentic part of the

official prayer of the Church. (see SC 84 cited at the beginning). This is certainly inconsistent, as it denies the dignity of the laity by virtue of their baptism to participate fully in the liturgical life of the church.

This prayer had long been understood to be the privileged prayer of priests and those members of religious orders bound by their constitutions to pray it. The Council's recommendation was a very positive step toward the achievement of a fuller and more meaningful integration of the laity into the public prayer life of the Church. However, some 40 years later, how close are we to implementing the ancient tradition of daily praying?

Some of the stumbling blocks are a lack of understanding that this prayer is the prayer of the whole church, that it is part of the liturgical life of the church, and that it is the duty of the whole community to continue Christ's prayer. The revision undertaken was mainly for the 'professionals' - the clerics and religious - and continued to be mainly for private recitation. The communal dimension of the prayer was certainly experienced in religious orders, but gradually as those communities became smaller and the communal dimension has waned.

The complexity of the prayer often daunted those who may have had the desire to pray the Office. Historically this prayer developed into two 'ways of praying'. In the 'cathedral office', the people gathered around their bishop and, using light and incense, sang set psalms (Ps 63 in the morning and Ps 141 in the evening) led by the cantor. On the other hand, those who wished to live the Christian life in a more intense way adopted the 'monastic office' of prayer. They often moved into desert monasteries where they prayed all 150 psalms (the whole psalter) every day, without additional rituals accompanying the prayer. These two distinct 'styles' of prayer remained in place, but gradually as the Liturgy of the Hours became clericalised, the 'cathedral office' all but disappeared. Over the course of centuries whenever it underwent revision or revival, it was generally based on the 'monastic' model. Perhaps the simpler 'cathedral office' provides a way of carrying forward what the Council began.

How can this prayer part of the prayer life of the parish? When is the best time to begin? How are the people prepared?

Currently, in some pastoral situations Eucharist is not celebrated daily. There is a growing interest in introducing the Liturgy of the Hours in place of Celebrations of the Word and Communion at the time when Eucharist would have been celebrated, either in the morning or the evening.

Parish ministers could begin slowly:

- there is need to provide some catechesis [maybe through the parish bulletin] for the people to become familiar with the Rite;
 - to choose a liturgical season, Advent or Lent;
- to choose a time of the day, morning or evening, maybe Sunday evening;
- to prepare a text that is simple for use throughout the particular season;
- to prepare the various ministers to exercise their respective roles

One strategy could be combining evening prayer with other evening events [eg. parish meetings or educational programs] to familiarize people with this liturgy and to emphasize that this prayer is the daily prayer of the church. Or could morning prayer be a special prayer before people go to work or school?

The implementation of morning and evening prayer in the parish setting requires a strong commitment by the pastoral leaders and those responsible for the preparation of the liturgy in the parish.

Whatever the situation, the call is to participate in the official prayer of the church, the prayer that 'makes time holy' It enables all who share the experience to be shaped by the prayer, and to be nourished and strengthened in their faith.

The revision of Vatican II called for a restoration of this prayer so that it could again truly be liturgy, the work of the people!

The renewal of this prayer has begun, but much pastoral work remains to be done!



4. "Full, Conscious and Active Participation"

Formation in the Sacramental Imagination

Orm Rush

Forty years on, one vital dimension of the liturgical reform envisaged by *Sacrosanctum Concilium* is still to be fully received: the need for formation of a *sacramental imagination* as a necessary complement to well-performed liturgical ritual.

SC 14 teaches that "the full and active participation by all the people is the paramount concern". This "full, conscious and active participation... is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy." SC 19 teaches that, as one of their chief duties, "pastors of souls should see to the liturgical instruction of the faithful and their active participation, *internal and external*, in the liturgy, taking into account their age, condition, way of life and standard of religious culture." Perhaps we have been good at the formation for more active external participation but neglectful of formation for full, conscious and active *internal participation*.

Although the council distinguishes external and internal participation, they are interrelated. The effectiveness of the former depends on the latter. The shift to the vernacular was symbolic of the recognition by the council of their necessary interdependence. *External* participation is the structured involvement of the whole congregation in the act of worship through song, frequent sung and said responses,

processions, kneeling, standing, proclamation of the readings, the sign of peace, lay ministers distributing the eucharist, receiving communion in the hand, etc.

Internal participation can be defined as the imaginative engagement with the symbols and rituals of worship by each member of the liturgical assembly. This engagement can give rise to receptions of the sacramental moment as diverse as the number of participants. An essential dimension of such internal participation is what could be called “the sacramental imagination”, or what many may still try to ignore as “distractions during Mass”.

Symbols and rituals do not achieve their fullness “*ex opere operato*”. Each person who enters the church brings emotions still stirring from personal encounters of the previous hour, lingering memories about the unique joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties of their life at that moment. What salvation will mean for them, through encounter with Christ their Saviour in this particular liturgy, is determined by what it is they, as unique individuals, need to be saved from. The Holy Spirit is the go-between who enables sacramental encounter between the saving Christ and the needy individual.

The Holy Spirit ignites and enlightens the sacramental imagination, thereby making sacramental symbol effective. The *epiclesis*, that prayer for the enlightenment and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, can be seen as the significant liturgical moment (albeit within the whole liturgical event) marrying symbol and imagination. Here that Spirit whom Jesus promised would enlighten the community to bring them to full knowledge of the truth, is received by the liturgical assembly, enabling them to participate fully, consciously and actively by igniting their sacramental imaginations.

SC 19 speaks of the importance of recognising this *de facto* diversity in reception: it speaks of taking into account the diversity in age, condition, way of life and standard of religious culture of each participant. We all know of the great diversity of meanings that people make of homilies, beyond the intention of the homilist; prayerful engagement during the Easter vigil with the flickering Easter candle will bring forth Christ's healing presence in ways experienced quite differently by each individual. It is the sacramental imagination of each unique individual, schooled over time by the imaginative world of Scripture, tradition and the liturgy itself, which mediates their encounter, through the liturgical symbols, with the truly present and saving Christ.

SC needs to be interpreted in correlation with the document on revelation promulgated two years later by the council. There, in *Dei Verbum*'s significant shift from Vatican I, revelation is conceived of as God's personal self-communication to humanity, offering salvation through Christ in the power of the Spirit. Faith is the personal reception of that divine outreach in love. Faith's loving response to revelation can be nowhere more intense than in liturgical ritual.

But both liturgy and life are schools of the sacramental imagination. It is the specifically Catholic vision of human life that sees the divine-human encounter being mediated *symbolically* - through people, objects, events. According to what has been called the Catholic principle of sacramentality, there is virtually nothing that cannot mediate the divine presence. For the Catholic imagination, the most ordinary in daily life can be sacramental of the extraordinary, the visible of the invisible, the tangible

of the intangible. The symbolic mediation of revelation, however, requires the full, conscious and active involvement of human imagination. The child's thrill in candles on a birthday cake is the same thrill that will make *Christian* meaning of the Easter candle (just watch their faces during the Easter vigil). It is this Catholic imagination that Catholics bring to the symbols and rituals of liturgy. It is this Catholic imagination that needs re-schooling.

It was the insight of the council Fathers that, in the pre-Vatican II liturgy, with its emphasis on the priest as the sole mediator with God, the Catholic imagination had become ossified. The sense of mystery evoked in the Latin Mass, although deep and profound, was nevertheless confined to what the priest was doing. Furthermore, symbols were seen to mediate automatically, independent of faith's imaginative reception of them. A re-awakening of the active Catholic imagination was required.

It is this re-awakening and re-schooling that is still urgent agenda for the reception of SC, forty years on. Formation in full, conscious and active *internal* participation is needed for the revised liturgy to evoke a deep sense of Mystery. Schooling in a sacramental imagination must include as its primary art the art of mystical attentiveness in daily life, a spirituality of the ordinary, a mysticism of the everyday. Whether in the workplace with its hardships and sense of achievement, or at the family dinner table with its conflicts and its quiet joys, attention to God in the ordinary is a vital preparation for attending to the symbols and rituals of liturgy. In this area, the reception of SC has hardly begun.

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