

THE GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION
FOUNDATION HOUSE / OXFORD

THE PROPER CHANTS OF THE PASCHAL TRIDUUM
IN THE GRADUALE ROMANUM:
A STUDY IN LITURGICAL THEOLOGY

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION
FOUNDATION HOUSE / OXFORD
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

BY

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AUGUST 2002

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With profound gratitude, I wish to acknowledge the many persons and monastic communities who, in various ways, have supported this work, and made it possible.

In the first place, I thank my Father Abbot, Dom André, O.Cist., Father Guy, O.Cist., abbatial librarian, and the monks of the Abbaye Notre-Dame-de-Nazareth in Rougemont, Québec, for providing a context in which I experienced the splendour of the Paschal Triduum and, in particular, the richness of the chants of the *Graduale Romanum* studied in these pages. I am equally indebted to Mother Abbess Mary Colette, P.C.C., and the nuns of the Monastery of Bethlehem in Newport News, Virginia, with whom I have deepened the “sung theology” of the Paschal Mystery for the past eight years.

Monsignor Kevin W. Irwin of The Catholic University of America directed my thesis for the licentiate degree and has, since that time, affirmed and challenged me in the work of liturgical theology. Canon Vincent Strudwick of The Graduate Theological Foundation welcomed me to Foundation House/Oxford in 2000,

making it possible for me to set this dissertation on its course. My Ordinarius, Dr. Paul F. Ford of St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, California, generously undertook the critical reading of this study, bringing to it his own long experience of "sung theology." Dr. Ford's scholarly attention to the text and encouragement were invaluable.

The affectionate support of my parents, Daniel and Emma Kirby, has never been wanting. My gratitude to them is immense. I am thankful as well for the wisdom of my friend, Father Gabriel Myers, O.S.B., and for the material and spiritual assistance that, in times of need, came to me from the Monastery of the Holy Name of Jesus in Denmark, Wisconsin, from the Monastery of the Glorious Cross in Branford, Connecticut, and from friends near and far. Oblate Jan Frew, O.S.B. assisted me in reading early drafts of the text.

I am especially indebted to Father John Cook and Father Richard Okiria who, when I needed time off to devote to the final revisions and to travel to Oxford, bore a share of my pastoral responsibilities at the Monastery of the Glorious Cross. Finally, I acknowledge the determining influence of the late Dom Adrien Nocent, O.S.B. at a decisive moment of my intellectual and spiritual development.

This modest contribution to liturgical theology began in "the font of

liturgical experience.” I offer it, hoping that, in some way, my readers will find in its pages a compelling invitation to plunge into the same waters.

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August 6, 2002
In Transfiguratione Domini

ABBREVIATIONS

AM	<i>Antiphonale Monasticum</i>
DOL	<i>Documents on the Liturgy 1963–1979</i>
DV	<i>Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Dei Verbum</i>
GR	<i>Graduale Romanum</i>
GrS	<i>Graduale Simplex</i>
GS	<i>Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Gaudium et Spes</i>
IGMR	<i>Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani 2002</i>
MR	<i>Missale Romanum, Editio Typica Tertia</i>
MS	<i>Instruction of the Sacred Congregation of Rites on Music in the Liturgy, Musicam Sacram</i>
PL	<i>J.P. Migne, Patrologia Latina</i>
RB	<i>Regula Benedicti</i>
SC	<i>The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Sacrosanctum Concilium</i>

Note regarding Translations and the Numbering of Psalms

The *Revised Standard Version* of the Bible is used throughout this work, except where exceptions are noted in the text. Latin Scriptural texts, other than those given in liturgical books, are taken from the *Nova Vulgata*. The psalms are numbered according to the Vulgate, following the traditional Catholic usage in liturgical books. Translations of the Proper Chants and liturgical texts from the Latin are my own, as are those of French and Italian sources.

CHAPTER ONE

AN INTRODUCTION TO LITURGICAL THEOLOGY

What is Liturgical Theology?

From the beginning, the Church has been engaged in liturgical theology without necessarily labeling it as such. In recent years, the identification and definition of liturgical theology has become the subject of a burgeoning theological discussion.¹ Kevin Irwin cites a 1963 essay of Alexander Schmemann, *Theology and Liturgical Tradition*, as having sown the seeds of a theological reflection which, since that time, has generated a whole body of theological literature.² Schmemann distinguishes between “liturgical theology” and the “theology of liturgy.”³ The former, with roots in the traditions of patristic and monastic theology, perceives the act of the liturgy as “the living source and ultimate criterion of all Christian

1. See G. Lukken, “La liturgie comme lieu théologique irremplaçable,” *Questions liturgiques* 56 (1975), 97-112. Also see Achille Triacca, “Liturgia, *locus theologicus*, o Theologia, *locus liturgicus*? Da un dilemma verso una sintesi,” in Paschale Mysterium, *Studi in Memoria dell’Abate Prof. Salvatore Marsili*, Analecta Liturgica 10, ed. Giustino Farnedi (Roma: Pontificio Ateneo S. Anselmo, 1986) 193-233.

2. Kevin W. Irwin, *Liturgical Theology, A Primer* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990).

3. Alexander Schmemann, “Theology and Liturgical Tradition,” in *Liturgy and Tradition*, ed. Thomas Fisch (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1990), 11-12.

thought.”⁴ The latter, with ties to scholastic theology, perceives the liturgy as an object of theological investigation and inquiry, treated within the categories of a systematized theological universe, itself elaborated independently of the act of the liturgy.

More fundamentally, the question may be approached by means of a definition of terms.⁵ Is theology a word *from* God, a word addressed *to* God, or a word *about* God? Is liturgical theology a word received from God by the Church engaged in worship? Is it a word of praise addressed to God by the Church engaged in worship? Or is it a word about God addressed to the world and emanating from the experience of the Church in worship?

As a word *from* God, liturgical theology is understood in terms of God’s manifestation and revelation of himself and of his will for the salvation of mankind in Christ Jesus, who is “himself both the mediator and the sum total of revelation.”⁶ The mystery of God’s self-communication in the historical events of the Incarnation and Paschal Mystery becomes, in the liturgy, an ongoing reality.

4. Ibid., 12.

5. Cf. Kevin Irwin’s discussion of the work of Anselm Stolz on the meaning of *theologia*, in *Context and Text, Method in Liturgical Theology* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1994), 266.

6. “Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation,” *Dei Verbum in Vatican Council II, The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery (Northport: Costello Publishing Company, 1988), n. 2, 751.

The liturgical celebration, founded primarily on the word of God and sustained by it, becomes a new event, and enriches the word itself with new meaning and power. . . . In the celebration of the Liturgy the word of God is not announced in only one way nor does it always stir the hearts of the hearers with the same efficacy. Always, however, Christ is present in his word, as he carries out the mystery of salvation, he sanctifies humanity and offers the Father perfect worship. . . . The liturgical celebration becomes therefore the continuing, complete, and effective presentation of God's word.⁷

In the act of the liturgy, the saving Word of God is dynamically present and active. John Breck articulates this, writing from the Orthodox perspective:

In authentic Orthodox experience, the Word comes to its fullest expression within a sacramental context. Whether proclaimed through Scripture reading and preaching, or sung in the form of antiphons (psalms) and dogmatic hymns (festal troparia, the Mongenê and Credo), the Word of God is primarily communicated — expressed and received by — the ecclesial act of *celebration*, and in particular, celebration of the eucharistic mystery.⁸

From this standpoint, the principal agent of liturgical theology is God, revealing himself in Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, within the act of the liturgy. Such a “liturgical theology from above” is Trinitarian.

As a word *to* God, theology is understood in terms of the human response to

7. “Introduction” in the *Lectionary for Mass for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America, Second Typical Edition*, vol. I (Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 2001), nn. 3–4, xiii–xiv.

8. John Breck, *The Power of the Word in the Worshiping Church* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1986), 17.

God's self-revelation in the saving deeds of the Incarnation and Paschal Mystery. Springing out of the communal remembrance of God's wondrous deeds, such a response is necessarily doxological and eucharistic. That this articulation of praise and thanksgiving by a liturgical assembly is itself intrinsically theological may be verified as much by a reading of the *Anaphora of Saint Basil* as by a perusal of the Prefaces of the *Roman Missal*. Insofar as the liturgy "is rightly seen as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ" and "an action of Christ the Priest and of his Body, which is the Church," the agent of liturgical theology, the *liturgical theologian*, is none other than the total Christ himself, Head and members united in the Holy Spirit.⁹ Liturgical theology, considered in this way, is Christological and ecclesiological.

As a word *about* God, liturgical theology is understood in terms of the experiential knowledge of the economic Trinity derived from "that full, conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy."¹⁰ While the act of liturgy is primarily doxological and not didactic, the didactic dimension of the liturgy cannot be ignored nor can it be

9. "The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," *Sacrosanctum Concilium* in Vatican II, *The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery (Northport: Costello Publishing Company, 1988), n. 7, 5.

10. SC, n.14.

disassociated from the specifically educative action of the Holy Spirit within the Church, according to the words of Christ: “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (Jn 16:13).¹¹

The working of the Holy Spirit precedes, accompanies and brings to completion the whole celebration of the Liturgy. But the Spirit also brings home to each person individually everything that in the proclamation of the word of God is spoken for the good of the whole gathering of the faithful.¹²

The liturgy is, in fact, the Church’s “word about God” addressed to her children as well as to the world, a word inspired by the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, and bears witness to Christ.¹³ “God makes use of the congregation of the faithful that celebrates the Liturgy in order that his word may speed on and be glorified and that his name be exalted among the nations.”¹⁴ In this instance, the liturgical theologian is the *Ecclesia Orans*, the Church, “guided by

11. “Although the sacred liturgy is above all things the worship of the Divine Majesty, it likewise contains much instruction for the faithful. . . . Not only when things are read ‘which were written for our instruction’ (Rom 15:4), but also when the Church prays or sings or acts, the faith of those taking part is nourished and their minds are raised to God, so that they may offer Him their rational service and more abundantly receive his grace.” SC, n. 33.

12. “Introduction” in the *Lectionary for Mass*, n. 9, xvi.

13. Cf. Jn 15:26-27.

14. “Introduction” in the *Lectionary for Mass*, n. 7, xv.

the Holy Spirit into all truth" (Jn 16:13), even as she engages in the work of worship. From this point of view, liturgical theology is at once Pneumatological and ecclesiological.

Liturgical theology cannot, however, be identified with only one of the three approaches presented above, for the liturgy itself is, organically and simultaneously, a word *from* God, a word *to* God and a word *about* God. Priority is necessarily given to the word *from* God, for it is God's self-revelation and self-communication, by means of a complexus of sacred signs operative within the liturgy, that generates the word *to* God. It is the word *to* God that unfolds experientially as a word *about* God. Understood in this way, the enactment of the liturgy is intrinsically theological. The liturgical event itself is the source, the matrix, and the expression of theology. Theology "emerges from the font of liturgical experience."¹⁵

15. Vasilieios, Archimandrite, *Hymn of Entry, Liturgy and Life in The Orthodox Church*, trans. Elizabeth Briere (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984), 11.

Lex orandi, lex credendi

Much of the contemporary discussion of liturgical theology is articulated around the phrase of Prosper of Aquitaine, *ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi* (“the law of prayer grounds the law of belief”).¹⁶ The same principle is expressed by Saint Irenaeus who, writing before Prosper of Aquitaine, said, “Our opinion is in accordance with the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn establishes our opinion.”¹⁷ More frequently encountered in contemporary theological literature is the succinct formulation, *Lex orandi, lex credendi* (“the law of prayer is the law of belief”). For Schmemann, this means that “the liturgical tradition, the liturgical life, is a natural milieu for theology, its self-evident term of reference.”¹⁸

All three phrases converge in attributing theological primacy to the liturgical event itself. “The liturgy is quite properly the first source and norm of faith from which correct teaching is derived.”¹⁹ Theological discourse or “extra-liturgical theology” is validated and legitimized by the liturgy which gives it birth. Gerard

16. J.P. Migne, ed. *Patrologia Latina* (Paris 1844-1890), vol. 50, *Indiculus de gratia Dei*: col. 555. See Irwin’s discussion of the phrase in *Context and Text*, 3–6.

17. Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses*, ed. Adelin Rousseau, Sources Chrétiennes (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1965), vol. 100, t. 2, 610, line 114. “*Nostra autem consonans est sententia Eucharistiae, et Eucharistia rursus confirmat sententiam nostram.*”

18. Alexander Schmemann, “Theology and Liturgical Tradition,” in *Liturgy and Tradition*, ed. Thomas Fisch, 12.

19. Irwin, *Context and Text*, 45.

Lukken expresses this in terms of *theologia prima* and *theologia secunda*, *orthodoxia prima* and *orthodoxia secunda*.²⁰ Don Saliers, using the terminology of Joseph Sittler, speaks of the same realities as *dogma* and *doxa*.²¹

Kevin Irwin, in his historical exposition of the origin of Prosper of Aquitaine's famous phrase, emphasizes that Prosper refers not to a specific prayer, but rather to the actual practice of the Church in which the form and content of eucharistic texts function as interlocking components within the broader context of liturgical rites and other non-verbal symbols.²² Thus, "it is not only prayers with dogmatic content but the whole liturgical action and life of the Church that constitutes a unique theological witness and grace."²³

Liturgical texts are aesthetically structured and crafted in the language of poetry and symbol. Their deepest theological meaning is unlocked only within the ritual context for which they were composed and outside of which they are not fully intelligible. Prosper of Aquitaine's axiom, interpreted in the light of its

20. See Gerard Lukken, "The Unique Expression of Faith in the Liturgy," *Liturgical Expression of Faith*, Concilium 82, eds. H. Schmidt and D. Power, trans. David Smith (New York: Herder and Herder, 1973), 16.

21. Don E. Saliers, *Worship As Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 39–48.

22. Irwin, *Context and Text*, 5.

23. Vasileios, *Hymn of Entry*, 19.

original use in the semi-Pelagian controversy as an argument for the necessity of grace, means that the whole enactment of the liturgy grounds and reveals the faith of the Church.

Prosper of Aquitaine's recourse to the liturgy as a theological source is by no means an isolated case in the age of the Fathers. To a large extent, patristic literature may be classified in terms of its relationship to the liturgy, beginning with the patristic content of the liturgy itself: the vast treasury of hymns and euchological texts composed by the Fathers and incorporated by the Church into her living worship.²⁴ Certain patristic writings are directly related to the liturgy, either as a preparation for sacramental rites or as a mystagogia for the instruction of neophytes.²⁵ Other writings are classified as liturgical homilies.²⁶ Still others

24. See Cyprian Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, trans. Leonard J. Doyle and W. A. Jurgens (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1976), 590–625. Also see Irwin, *Context and Text*, 6–10.

25. The principal representatives of this genre are Ambrose of Milan, Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom, and Theodore of Mopsuestia. See Enrico Mazza, *Mystagoggy*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1989), 1–13.

26. The homilies of Augustine, Leo the Great, Gregory the Great, and other Fathers, read at the monastic Office of Vigils and at the Roman Office of Readings, are examples of this particular genre. Long after the mystagogical genre had ceased being practiced, the liturgical homily perdured, notably in the writings of the twelfth century Cistercian Fathers.

On preaching as a liturgical action, see the article of Alexandre Olivar, O.S.B., "Quelques remarques historiques sur la prédication comme action liturgique dans l'Eglise ancienne" in *Mélanges liturgiques offerts au R. P. Dom Bernard Botte, o.s.b.* (Louvain: Abbaye du Mont César, 1972), 429–443.

are theological reflections drawing upon and referring to liturgical practice.²⁷ It may be said that the theological writings of the Fathers are an approach to the enactment of the liturgy; an integral part of the celebration of the liturgy, as in the case of homilies and hymns; or an echo of the liturgical experience.²⁸

Toward the Liturgical Movement

of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.

The centuries intervening between the last glimmers of the patristic era and the genesis of the liturgical movement in nineteenth century Europe witnessed the decline of liturgical theology in the West. Following the golden age of monastic liturgical theology in the twelfth century²⁹ and the luminous liturgico-mystical theology of the Cistercian-Benedictine Abbey of Helfta in the thirteenth,³⁰ the

27. For examples of this third genre, see Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions*, 595–596.

28. “The Fathers are not interested in the liturgy either from a developmental historical point of view or from the rubricist point of view, as the moderns are, but from the point of view of its spiritual or theological value. . . . The method of presentation pursued by the Fathers in treating the liturgy is predominantly expositive, irenic, and even contemplative.” *Ibid.*, 596–597.

29. The liturgical homilies of twelfth century Cistercians such as Bernard, Aelred, Guerri of Igny, and Isaac of Stella, testify to the survival of the patristic approach to the liturgy in medieval cloisters. This survival may be attributed, to a large extent, to the authority of the Rule of Saint Benedict and the assiduous frequentation of the Fathers in the monastic milieu.

30. On Saint Gertrude the Great and the monastery of Helfta, see Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions*, 740–803.

forces of liturgical allegorism,³¹ scholasticism,³² and the *devotio moderna*³³ nearly extinguished the lamp of authentic liturgical theology.

Even after the birth of the mendicant Orders, the liturgy had constituted the *milieu de vie* in which and out of which theologians thought, studied, wrote and taught. The minimalization or, in some cases, disappearance of a liturgical framework contributed in no small measure to the alienation of theology from the liturgy. The monastic liturgical theology of the twelfth century had flourished in the context of a daily, weekly and yearly rhythm of liturgical choral prayer.³⁴ The vital relationship between liturgy and theology diminished in proportion to the increasing autonomy of systematized and rational theological methods. Nonetheless, medieval scholastic theology was never completely severed from the

31. On the allegorical *expositiones missae*, see Mary M. Schaefer, "Latin Mass Commentaries from the Ninth through Twelfth Centuries: Chronology and Theology," in *The Fountain of Life*, ed. Gerard Austin, O.P. (Washington: The Pastoral Press, 1991), 35–49.

32. On the position occupied by the liturgy in scholastic theology, see Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions*, 542–589. See also Irwin, *Context and Text*, 10–15.

33. For the repercussions of *devotio moderna* on liturgical theology and piety, see Gabriel M. Braso, O.S.B., *Liturgy and Spirituality*, trans. Leonard J. Doyle (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1960), 44–48.

34. See Dom Jean Leclercq, *L'amour des lettres et le désir de Dieu* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1957). See also P. Th. Camelot, "Théologie monastique et théologie scholastique," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 42 (1958): 241–253.

climate of liturgical prayer, especially among the Dominicans.³⁵ So long as theologians were immersed, by virtue of “actual participation,” in the full cycle of the Church’s liturgy, some form of liturgical theology had a chance of survival.

The suppression of the choral celebration of the Hours in the Society of Jesus in 1550,³⁶ although dictated by a pressing need for increased apostolic mobility and freedom, symbolizes nonetheless the crisis that threatened an already troubled household of three: liturgy, theology and piety.³⁷ Having “hung up their harps” and sharpened their pens against the Protestant reformers, positive-scholastic theologians applied themselves to an autonomous science cut off from its liturgical roots in the “Songs of Zion.”³⁸ The liturgical reforms of the Council

35. “The frequent return to choir prevents study from becoming mere intellectual work, a cold and abstract speculation: it brings about intimate contact with God and maintains the religious in the spirit of contemplation. . . . The liturgy restores the balance between the intellectual and the affective life. Far from hindering study, the Office sustains it, is its complement: it serves to fecundate it, for the truth which the religious searches in books he finds in the liturgical formulas, no longer abstruse but living, clothed with love, more suggestive, more penetrating.” Marie-Vincent Bernadot, O.P., “The Place of the Liturgy in Dominican Spirituality” in *Dominican Spirituality*, trans. Anselm M. Townsend, O.P. (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1934), 92–93.

36. For a nuanced and balanced presentation of this question, see Robert Taft, S.J., *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1986), 301–306.

37. This phenomenon was by no means confined to the West. Schmemann writes: “The tragedy which I denounce and deplore consists not in any particular ‘defect’ of the liturgy — but in something much deeper: the divorce between *liturgy, theology, and piety* which characterizes the post-patristic history of our Church. . . . The real problem then is not that of ‘liturgical reforms’ but, first of all, of the much needed ‘reconciliation’ and mutual reintegration of liturgy, theology and piety.” “Liturgical Theology,” in *Liturgy and Tradition*, 40–42.

38. See Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions*, 542–571.

of Trent, resulting in the promulgation of the Tridentine Breviary (1568) and Missal (1570) of Pius V, of the Pontifical (1596) of Clement VIII, and of the Ritual (1614) of Paul V, standardized the Roman liturgy but did nothing to counter the estrangement of theology from it.³⁹

Louis Bouyer credits the first steps in a *rapprochement* between liturgy and theology to the patristic and liturgical achievements of the Caroline Divines in the Church of England. At the same time, across the channel, seventeenth-century France witnessed, especially among the *sympathisants* of Jansenism, a remarkable patristic and biblical renaissance; while beyond the Alps, the Theatine Cardinal Giuseppe-Maria Tommasi and the Cistercian Cardinal Giovanni Bona devoted themselves to liturgical studies.⁴⁰ Again, in France, the Benedictines of the Congregation of Saint Maur, Dom Mabillon and Dom Martène, applied themselves to the scientific and historical study of the liturgy, leaving behind them a reputation for historical liturgical scholarship later inherited by the Benedictines of the Congregation of Solesmes, in the persons of Cardinal Pitra, Dom Cabrol and

39. On the liturgical activity of the Council of Trent see P. Jounel, "From the Council of Trent to Vatican Council II" in *The Church at Prayer*, ed. A. G. Martimort (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1987), 63–72.

40. Louis Bouyer, *Liturgical Piety* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1955), 45–56. On Cardinal Giovanni Bona and Saint Giuseppe-Maria Tommasi, *ibid.*, see pp. 272–273.

others.⁴¹ Thus was prepared the great thaw that would result in the emergence of a climate favorable to the retrieval of liturgical theology by Dom Guéranger, and other prophets and artisans of the Modern Liturgical Movement.⁴²

Liturgical Theologies of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries:

Dom Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875)

In his history of the Liturgical Movement, Dom Olivier Rousseau argues that “the Liturgical Movement, with all its directives, ideals and accomplishments, goes back to the Benedictine Abbot Prosper Guéranger.”⁴³ Readers of Guéranger’s monumental *Année liturgique* included Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, Lambert Beauduin, Odo Casel and Bernard Botte.⁴⁴ Prosper Guéranger was a man to provoke diverse and impassioned reactions. The Abbot of Solesmes made disciples as easily as he did foes, eliciting devotion from some and criticism from others.

41. Concerning Mabillon and Martène, Pitra and Cabrol, see Bouyer, *ibid.*, 273–274, 276. See also Nathan Mitchell, “Monks and the Future of Worship,” *Worship* 50 (1976): 3–5.

42. See André Haquin, *Dom Lambert Beauduin et le renouveau liturgique* (Gembloix: Duculot, 1970), 1–3. Also see Olivier Rousseau, *The Progress of the Liturgy*, trans. the Benedictines of Westminster Priory (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1951), 3–20.

43. Rousseau, *ibid.*, 3.

44. Cuthbert Johnson, *Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875): A Liturgical Theologian*, *Analecta Liturgica* 9 (Rome: Pontificio Ateneo S. Anselmo, 1984), 347.

Significantly, it is Guéranger's most formidable critic,⁴⁵ Louis Bouyer, who writes that,

He brought the liturgy back to life as something to be lived and loved for its own sake. . . . His love of the liturgy, like so many passionate loves, embraced something that often was more chimerical than real, but nevertheless this love was on fire with a burning passion, and so was capable of communicating itself to others.⁴⁶

The 1975 centenary of Dom Guéranger's death sparked a renewal of interest in the man and in his achievements, and prepared the way to a more serene and objective appreciation of his stature as a liturgical theologian.⁴⁷ Was Prosper Guéranger a theologian of the liturgy or a liturgical theologian? The theologian of the liturgy focuses on the liturgy as an object of systematic theological inquiry; for the liturgical theologian, the work of worship is itself, not an object of theological inquiry, but the primary theological source, vivified by God who, through the unfolding of the liturgical action, reveals himself and communicates his life. Without, for his own part, stopping to make a distinction between them, Abbot Guéranger was heartily engaged in both approaches. It is, however, as a liturgical

45. See Bouyer, *Liturgical Piety*, 5, 11–15, 53–58.

46. Ibid., 57.

47. Abbot Cuthbert Johnson's work, *Prosper Guéranger (1805–1875): A Liturgical Theologian*, is indispensable in this regard. See also four articles on Dom Guéranger by R. W. Franklin in *Worship*, 49 (1975), 318–328; 50 (1976) 146–162; 51 (1977), 378–399; 53 (1979) 12–39. For a complete bibliography of works related to the life of Dom Guéranger, see Johnson, *Prosper Guéranger*, 435–444.

theologian, elucidating the mysteries of the Incarnation and the Church, especially in the *Année Liturgique*, that Prosper Guéranger merits attention today.

Guéranger's writings reveal a singularly synthetic theology, a theology woven on the loom of the liturgical year. Prosper Guéranger, the theologian, cannot be separated from Prosper Guéranger, the monk. For the Abbot of Solesmes, liturgical theology happened at the altar and in the choirstall, before being processed, distilled, articulated, and written. This explains Dom Guéranger's contagious enthusiasm, his zeal in communicating an experiential knowledge and love of the Church's liturgy. Dom Guépin, a close disciple of the Abbot, struck the right note in saying, "Perhaps others have had more technical learning, but no one has understood and explained as he the ever-living, ever-active mystery of the liturgy."⁴⁸

Dom Lambert Beauduin (1873-1960)

Among the Benedictine monasteries marked by the liturgical spirit of Dom Guéranger and of Solesmes, was the Belgian abbey of Mont-César, founded at Louvain in 1899.⁴⁹ Lambert Beauduin came to the community of Mont-César in

48. Dom Guépin quoted in Rousseau, *The Progress of the Liturgy*, 9.

49. "Guéranger would not have become the beginning of the revival of the liturgical spirit in the Church if he had remained a seminary professor. Instead, he did the one thing which alone could save the liturgy from the hands of the intellectuals and the archaeologists and the reformers: he revived the Rule of St. Benedict and founded a monastic community. He realized that before all else the liturgy had to be lived, and that the Rule of St. Benedict was a practical way of life, of which

1906, after nine years of pastoral activity as a diocesan priest. There, under the aegis of Dom Columba Marmion,⁵⁰ he was initiated into liturgical theology.

Beauduin later described Marmion as “a classical theologian who rediscovered and contemplated in the liturgy all the riches of theological science and of the priestly function of the Church.”⁵¹ Lambert Beauduin writes:

Dom Marmion revealed to us the soul of the liturgy: I mean by that, all the elements of doctrine and life that it keeps in reserve under the visible cloak of its rites and symbols. Dom Marmion is the theologian of the liturgy.⁵²

This text is important not only because of what it reveals concerning Columba Marmion in particular, but because of what it reveals of Beauduin’s own understanding of liturgical theology in general. The liturgical theologian is, first of

the liturgy was the foundation. . . . Without Dom Guéranger, no Solesmes; without Solesmes, no Beuron; without Beuron, no Maredsous; without Maredsous, no Mont-César; and without these two, no Abbot Marmion and no Dom Lambert Beauduin.” Damasus Winzen, “Guéranger and the Liturgical Movement—Comments on Bouyer’s *Liturgical Piety*,” *The American Benedictine Review* 6 (Winter 1955-56), 424-426.

50. Joseph Marmion (1858-1923), born in Dublin, Ireland, entered the Belgian Abbey of Maredsous in 1886, after his ordination to the priesthood in Rome in 1881. From 1900 to 1906 he was prior and professor of theology at Mont-César. Elected Abbot of Maredsous in 1909, he published, in succession, *Christ the Life of the Soul*, *Christ in His Mysteries*, and *Christ the Ideal of the Monk*, spiritual works that were to imbue generations of monastics, clergy, and lay Christians with a living, spiritual approach to the liturgy. Marmion was beatified by John Paul II September 3, 2000.

51. Lambert Beauduin, “Abbot Marmion and the Liturgy,” *Orate Fratres* XXII (May 1948): 303.

52. Ibid., 311-312.

all, a person in vital contact with the “soul” of the liturgy. This contact comes about through actual participation in the enacted liturgy, the *lex agendi*.⁵³ Secondly, the liturgical theologian reflects on the liturgical experience of a theology cloaked in rites and symbols, and there discovers “all the elements of doctrine and of life,” that is, of the *lex credendi* and the *lex vivendi*.⁵⁴ He or she then reinvests the insights generated by reflection on the *lex agendi* in the regular, cyclical celebration of the Church’s worship. Enriched by the insights of a more clearly articulated *lex credendi*, and challenged by the ascetical and ethical exigencies of the *lex vivendi*, the individual worshiper returns, again and again, to corporate engagement in the *lex agendi* and, in the repetition of this cycle, experiences the doxological fecundity of liturgical theology.

Dom Beauduin’s *Piété de l’Eglise* can be situated within the dynamic cycle just elaborated. Written in 1914, eight years after his own “discovery” of the liturgy as a novice at Mont-César, *Piété de l’Eglise* represents the first fruits of the Benedictine’s daily, preferential commitment to the *lex agendi*.⁵⁵ The elements of doctrine and of life (*lex credendi* and *lex vivendi*) derived from Beauduin’s experience

53. Irwin defines *lex agendi* as “enacted rites as theological source.” See *Context and Text*, 55.

54. On the notion of *lex vivendi*, see Irwin, *ibid.*, 331.

55. On Beauduin’s “conversion” to the liturgy as a Benedictine novice, see Sonya Quitslund, *A Prophet Vindicated* (New York: Newman Press, 1973), 9–13.

of the liturgy include: the priesthood of Jesus Christ as the source of all supernatural life and holiness, and the liturgy as the Church's participation in that priesthood;⁵⁶ the ecclesiological and eschatological implications of liturgical piety;⁵⁷ the social and ethical consequences of liturgical piety: *le sens social du catholicisme*;⁵⁸ and finally, the didactic, apologetic and missionary value of the liturgy.⁵⁹

For Beauduin, inspired by and building upon the 1903 *Motu Proprio* of Pius X,⁶⁰ the elements of doctrine and life derived from the liturgy are ordered to "active participation in the sacrosanct mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church."⁶¹ The liturgical theology of Dom Lambert Beauduin, as well as the practical, pastoral initiatives which he undertook and inspired, flow back to their source in a movement of doxological finality, but only after having irrigated

56. Lambert Beauduin, "La Piété de l'Eglise" in *Mélanges liturgiques* (Louvain: Centre Liturgique - Abbaye du Mont César, 1954), 11–23.

57. Ibid., 24–29.

58. Ibid., 29, 33–34.

59. Ibid., 30–35.

60. See Pius X, Motu Proprio of November 22, 1903, "Tra le sollecitudine" in *Papal Teachings, The Liturgy*, ed. The Benedictine Monks of Solesmes; trans. The Daughters of St. Paul (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1962), 177–193.

61. Pius X quoted by Beauduin, "La Piété de l'Eglise" in *Mélanges liturgiques*, 14.

life itself, and effected personal and social change.⁶²

Was Lambert Beauduin a liturgical theologian? André Haquin writes that, “While Dom Beauduin affirms that the liturgy is a theological locus of primary importance, he does not seem to draw out all of the consequences of this in his writings.”⁶³ The essential thrust of Dom Lambert Beauduin’s engagement in the Liturgical Movement was pastoral in nature. His commitment to the popular liturgical apostolate precluded the elaboration of a systematized and finely-tuned liturgical theology. If, however, the contribution of Lambert Beauduin is evaluated in terms of his own evaluation of his monastic mentor, Dom Columba Marmion, there remains no doubt as to his right to the title of liturgical theologian.

Dom Odo Casel (1886-1948)

Like Lambert Beauduin, Dom Odo Casel belonged to a Benedictine monastery of the Solesmes-Beuron lineage, the Abbey of Maria Laach. Like Beauduin and Guéranger before him, Odo Casel’s liturgical theology is rooted in the yearly, weekly and daily round of the enacted liturgy, of the *lex agendi*.⁶⁴

62. Cf. SC, nn. 9 and 10.

63. Haquin, *Dom Lambert Beauduin*, 230.

64. On Casel’s understanding of the liturgical year, see his introduction to Dame Aemiliana Löhr’s *The Year of Our Lord*, trans. a monk of Saint Benedict (New York: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, 1937), xxi–xxvii. See also “The Church’s Sacred Year,” and “The Church’s Sacred Day,” in Odo Casel, *The*

For Odo Casel, the liturgy is the dynamic presence of the mystery.⁶⁵ The mystery is threefold. Firstly, the mystery is God, hidden in Himself, wholly other, “infinitely distant, holy and unapproachable.”⁶⁶ Secondly, the mystery is Christ, the incarnate *Logos*, “the mystery of God . . . made known and revealed to the ecclesia, the body of those whom he has called.”⁶⁷ Thirdly, the mystery is the presence and action of Christ in the liturgy of the Church, according to the word of Saint Ambrose, “I find You in your mysteries.”⁶⁸

This is the Mystery the liturgy celebrates, the Mystery the Church cherishes as its source and center. In the true celebration of the Mystery there is nothing that is anthropocentric, rationalistic, subjective, or sentimental; rather, it finds expression in a rigorous theocentrism, objective contemplation, and a splendid transcendentalism. The Mystery is, after all, divine at its source.⁶⁹

Mystery of Christian Worship, ed. Burkhard Neunhauser, O.S.B., with an Introduction by Aidan Kavanagh, O.S.B. (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1999), 63–93.

65. For a more developed presentation of Dom Casel’s “Mystery theory” see Louis Bouyer, *Liturgical Piety*, 86–98. See also Peter E. Fink, ed. *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990), s.v. “Mystery Theology,” by Theresa Koernke, 883–891, and “Theologians Modern, and Liturgical Renewal,” by Michael Skelley, 1248–1249.

66. Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, 5.

67. Ibid., 6.

68. Ambroise de Milan, *Apologie de David*, Sources Chrétiennes, ed. Pierre Hadot, no. 239 (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1977), 156. Quoted by Casel, ibid., 7.

69. Aidan Kavanagh in his Introduction to Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, xi.

Just as the divine mystery is revealed in Christ and opened to the Church by means of the liturgy, so too, by means of the liturgy, does the Church, united to Christ, ascend with him to the Father.⁷⁰

The core of Casel's teaching is that in the liturgy, as in the Church more generally, Christ is present not just as the object of our pious memory but present in his saving acts — he dies not again but *still*, rises not again but *still* — in us, by us, and through us for the life of the world. Christ does not pass out graces to those who follow him if they behave themselves. He gathers them lovingly into himself as he conquers from the Cross and rises from the grave, in the liturgy as in the Church.⁷¹

Gathered to Christ and united to Him in the *Pneuma*, the worshiping Church passes with Christ, in the *Pneuma*, to the Father, and brings the *Pneuma* of Christ "into every sphere and relationship of living."⁷² The *kultmysterium* is the ritual actualization of the Mystery of Christ—his Pasch, or *Transitus* to the Father, in the Holy Spirit—extended to the baptized, the members of His mystical Body, especially in the sacrificial banquet of the Eucharist. For Odo Casel, this is

70. See Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions*, 191–206.

71. Aidan Kavanagh in his Introduction to Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, xi.

72. Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, 27.

. . . the highest living activity of the mystical Body of Christ: head and members are one in the sacrifice to the Father, to whom all honour goes up through the Son in the Holy Spirit, and from whom all grace and blessing come down through the same Word and Spirit.⁷³

By reason of his theology of the *kultmysterium*, Odo Casel surpasses both Guéranger and Beauduin in terms of a theology of the liturgy. The Paschal Mystery of Christ, the *Kyrios*, occupies the central place, drawing all things to itself and ordering Dom Casel's integral theological vision around it. Thus does he present a more focused, structured, and synthetic theology of the liturgy than that which may be gleaned from the writings of Abbot Guéranger. Does Dom Casel have a liturgical theology as well as a theology of the liturgy? Odo Casel, without a doubt, offers a comprehensive theology of the liturgy. Nonetheless, his theology of the liturgy is such that it overflows its banks and comes to fruition in a complete liturgical theology, articulated around the presence of the Risen Christ in the midst of the Church at prayer.

Dom Odo Casel's vision of the Church was even more "monastically conditioned" than that of Guéranger and Beauduin. In the abbatial churches of Maria Laach and Herstelle, Casel participated daily in a meticulous and aesthetically polished enactment of the liturgy. He was more removed from the

73. Ibid., 49.

pastoral and social aspects of the Liturgical Movement than was Lambert Beauduin.⁷⁴ To his critics, the ecclesiological content of Casel's theology of the liturgy appears remote and idealized when compared with Lambert Beauduin's commitment to grass-roots liturgical renewal, or with the historical research of Josef Jungmann.⁷⁵

Casel's liturgical theology is not easily separated from his theology of the liturgy. *Theologia prima* and *theologia secunda* are bound up with each other in a tightly woven synthesis. He treats of the Trinity, of the incarnation, of redemption, of the Holy Spirit, of the Church, of the sacraments, and of eschatology, but always in the context of the liturgical "mystery." With Dom Odo Casel, one is never far from the altar.⁷⁶ It is not surprising then that his insights into the *lex credendi* and the *lex vivendi* remain so closely bound to the *lex agendi*, and are more immediately ordered to it than those of Guéranger and Beauduin. They

74. Odo Casel writes: "Is it necessary to turn all texts into the vernacular, make every detail of every rite visible? Does this not take away something irreplaceable, the glow of veneration which means more to people than understanding every detail? The obviously praiseworthy intention of bringing people back to active participation in the liturgy should not fall into the democratic heresy." *Ibid.*, 49.

75. Charles Davis in his preface to the 1962 English edition of *The Mystery of Christian Worship* (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1962), contends that Casel was "out of touch with the pastoral problems of the liturgical revival and further, that there is a definite tinge of romanticism in his approach to the liturgy." Davis then compares the contribution of Casel to that of Jungmann. *Ibid.*, xi-xii.

76. See Burkhard Neunhauser's remarks on Dom Odo Casel's death during the Paschal Vigil of 1948. *La Maison-Dieu* 13-16 (Cahier 14, 1948), 11-14.

were to prove no less fruitful however, especially in the liturgical theology of his disciple, the Benedictine nun, Aemiliana Löhr.

Dame Aemiliana Löhr (1896-1972)

Aemiliana Löhr is one of the best kept secrets in the field of liturgical theology. The Benedictine of the Abbey of Herstelle exemplifies Alexander Schmemann's portrait of the liturgical theologian.

He has mastered to perfection the necessary asceticism of intellectual discipline and integrity, the humility proper to all genuine rational effort. He now has to learn how to immerse himself in the joy of the Church, that great joy with which the disciples returned to Jerusalem to be continually in the temple blessing God" (Lk 23:52–53). He has to rediscover the oldest of all languages of the Church: that of her rites, the rhythm and the ordo of her leitourgia in which she concealed from the eyes of "this world" her most precious treasure: the knowledge of that "which no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love Him" (1 Cor:29). He has to become again, not only the student of the Church's faith but, above all, its witness.⁷⁷

Having interiorized Odo Casel's theology of the liturgy, Aemiliana Löhr was able to build upon it and draw out of it an authentically liturgical theology. She does this principally in her commentary on the Sundays and major feasts of the

77. Schmemann, "Liturgy and Theology," in *Liturgy and Tradition*, 65.

liturgical year: *The Year of the Lord: The Mystery of Christ in the Church's Year.*⁷⁸ In 1957, Aemiliana Löhr published *The Great Week*, a theological commentary on the *Ordo Instauratus* of Holy Week.⁷⁹ This was followed by *Abend und Morgen ein Tag*, a theological commentary on the hymns of the ferial Office.⁸⁰

To some degree, Aemiliana's liturgical theology is based on the teaching of Herstelle's learned chaplain, Odo Casel. Its "primary spring and ignition,"⁸¹ however, is her actual experience of the texts, melodies and rites of the liturgical books in use in her monastery: the Roman Missal, Gradual and Pontifical, and the Monastic Antiphonal and Hymnal. The singing of these texts and the enactment of these rites, in the framework of the liturgical year, are the *lex agendi* out of which, with an astonishing artistry, she weaves her own distinctive liturgical theology.

Aemiliana Löhr's theological language is one of poetry and symbol. It is the

78. Aemiliana Löhr, *The Year of the Lord: The Mystery of Christ in the Church's Year*, trans. a monk of Saint Benedict (New York: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, 1937).

79. Aemiliana Löhr, *The Great Week*, trans. D. T. H. Bridgehouse (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1957).

80. *Morgen und Abend ein Tag* is not yet available in an integral English translation. Father M. Chrysogonus, O.C.S.O. offered an English translation of Aemiliana Löhr's commentary on the hymns of Terce, Sext and None in *Liturgy* 15 (October 1981), 5–68.

81. Schmemann, "Liturgy and Theology," 64.

language of the liturgy.⁸² Her liturgical theology knows no systematization apart from that suggested by the rhythm of the liturgy itself. Her particular theological method obliges the theologian to become personally engaged in the full cycle of sacramental life and worship. Löhr's gift is a unique ability to see and hear the connections, resonances, and consonances of the liturgy's texts and rites. She allows the various elements of the Church's worship to illuminate each other in such a way as to reveal the underlying unity of the whole. The value of Dame Aemiliana Löhr's liturgical theology "lies not in its rational consistency, but in the fact that it points beyond itself,"⁸³ to the experience and reality of the Paschal Christ realizing the resurrection in us and anticipating "the parousia when the resurrection will be writ large."⁸⁴

Dom Cyprian Vagaggini (1909-1999)

The work of the Benedictine monk, Cyprian Vagaggini, begins in the context of the European theological renewal after World War II; it bridges the years of the

82. "Her poetic powers had grown thanks to the images provided by the Scriptures and the liturgy. She had discovered the world of symbols." The Abbey of Herstelle (Obituary Notice) "Sister Aemiliana Löhr," *Liturgy* 15 (October 1981), 77.

83. Schmemann, "Liturgy and Theology," 63.

84. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 190.

Second Vatican Council, and constitutes an important contribution to the contemporary discussion of liturgical theology.⁸⁵ At the time of his death in 1999, Vagaggini's confrères, the monks of Camaldoli, wrote that he,

. . . significantly contributed to Catholic thought by articulating a wonderful synthesis of Biblical, patristic, medieval, and modern theology, from the perspective of worship. He saw the living worship of the Church as one of the chief sources both for theological reflection and for pastoral action. At the heart of his thought was a transcendent, mystical vision of salvation history and all of creation as caught up, through Christ, in the Spirit, to the Father, in the very dynamic of the life of the Holy Trinity.⁸⁶

Vagaggini is, at one and the same time, a theologian of the liturgy, and a liturgical theologian. He elaborates his theology of the liturgy within the panoramic context of sacred history.⁸⁷ The theological meaning of history is the mystery of the divine economy, revealed in Christ, and continued in the post-Pentecostal, sacramental life of the Church, until the return of Christ in glory.⁸⁸

85. For a complete bibliography of Dom Vagaggini, see *Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi — Miscellanea in onore di P. Cipriano Vagaggini*, *Studia Anselmiana* 79, ed. Gerardo Békés and Giustino Farnedi (Roma: Editrice Anselmiana, 1980), 49–54.

86. Press Release from the Camaldolesse Congregation of the Order of Saint Benedict, January 18, 1999.

87. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions*, 3–16.

88. Ibid., 16–18.

Vagaggini interprets sacred history in terms of a circular movement having God the Father as its point of origin and its point of completion. He describes the circle of the divine economy in terms of the *exitus a Deo* and the *reditus ad Deum*: the Word, taking flesh, by the power of the Holy Spirit, comes forth from the Father to espouse humanity; then, having espoused humanity and redeemed it, the Incarnate Word, now inseparable from his Body and Bride, the Church, returns to the Father, in the Holy Spirit.⁸⁹ To describe the Trinitarian dynamic of the economy of salvation (*from* the Father, *through* his Son, Jesus Christ, *in* the Holy Spirit, *to* the Father), Vagaggini refers to the *a, per, in, ad* schema, a recapitulatory formula derived from the New Testament.⁹⁰ His theology of history is, therefore, Trinitarian and Christocentric.

Dom Vagaggini sees the liturgy as “a complexus of efficacious, sensible signs,”⁹¹ prolonging the redemptive work of the Incarnate Word.⁹² Through the liturgy, Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, exercises his priesthood in the Church, and thus orients all of history to the Father in a cosmic movement of

89. Ibid., 191–246.

90. Ibid., 198.

91. Ibid., 27.

92. Ibid., 305–307.

return, and of oblation.⁹³ The soteriological aspect of Vagaggini's theology of the liturgy is ordered to its doxological finality. The Word's *exitus a Deo* is in function of the *reditus ad Deum* of the total Christ, Head and members.

Into this theology of the liturgy, Vagaggini integrates a liturgical theology that treats of the Trinity, the lordship of Christ, the centrality of the Paschal Mystery, the Incarnation and the sacraments, the Angels, the struggle against Satan, and the role of the saints.⁹⁴ His study of "the liturgy and the struggle against Satan" is a classic example of method in liturgical theology⁹⁵; after examining the relevant biblical and patristic background of the question, he systematically mines the liturgy of the seven sacraments, of the principal sacramentals,⁹⁶ of the temporal and sanctoral cycles, and of the ferial office.

Vagaggini's method is exemplary insofar as he makes use of the full spectrum of liturgical resources, including sacramentals and the Hours. It is, nonetheless, altogether different from that of Aemiliana Löhr. The Benedictine of Herstelle allows the liturgy itself to dictate the subject and direction of her theological

93. Ibid., 254–271.

94. Ibid., 191–451.

95. Ibid., 396–451.

96. Vagaggini studies the blessing of water, the entreaties against storms, the consecration of virgins, the rite of monastic profession, and the liturgy for the dead. See ibid., 428–437.

inquiry; she receives her theology from the liturgy, following the rhythm of the Church year. In *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, Dom Vagaggini approaches the *lex orandi* with the “rational consistency” of a pre-formulated theological agenda. In the case of Aemiliana Löhr, the *lex agendi* itself engenders a theological reflection which is then “doxologically articulated” within the framework of the *lex credendi*.

At first glance it would appear that Cyprian Vagaggini applies himself to two liturgical theologies, one academic, and one experiential, each having its corresponding method and goal. The first theology might be termed “gnostico-sapiential,”⁹⁷ the second, systematic and conceptual. The first is a theology ordered to the spiritual transformation of its subject by immersion in the worship of the Church; the second is a theology ordered to the apprehension of its object by reflection and conceptualization. The challenge of contemporary liturgical theology is to integrate both approaches so that the transformation of the subject and the apprehension of the object come to term in a synthesis that is ultimately doxological.

Magnus Löhrer has traced the evolution of Vagaggini’s thought in precisely this direction.⁹⁸ In his later writings and homilies, Vagaggini develops a gnostico-

97. See Vagaggini, “Teologia” in *Nuovo Dizionario di Teologia* (Roma, 1977), 1597–1711.

98. Magnus Löhrer, “Il modello gnostico-sapienziale della teologia,” in *Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi*, 19–47.

sapiential model of theology in which liturgical contemplation and intellectual reflection are organically integrated. Both Gerardo Békés⁹⁹ and Magnus Löhrer¹⁰⁰ see in Dom Vagaggini's withdrawal to the monastic solitude of Camaldoli upon his retirement from teaching the most eloquent attestation to his personal realization of just such a synthesis.

Alexander Schmemann (1921-1983)

The Orthodox priest Alexander Schmemann is, without any doubt, the name most closely tied to modern liturgical theology. Father Schmemann is a bridge between the Orthodox East and the Roman Catholic West, as well as between the European theological renewal of the post-war years and the work of numerous Orthodox and Catholic theologians in the United States. Thomas Fisch points to Schmemann's indebtedness to the European Liturgical Movement launched by Lambert Beauduin in 1909, and illustrated by such names as Bouyer and Dalmais.¹⁰¹ It is no less true to say that Schmemann has left his own mark upon

99. G. Békés, "Presentazione," in *Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi*, 6.

100. Löhrer, *ibid.*, 46.

101. Thomas Fisch, "Schmemann's Theological Contribution to the Liturgical Renewal of the Churches," in *Liturgy and Tradition*, 1–6.

the writings of such American theologians as Aidan Kavanagh¹⁰² and Kevin Irwin.¹⁰³

Schmemann's principal contribution consists in the distinction he draws between "theology of the liturgy" and "liturgical theology." By "theology of the liturgy," Schmemann designates

. . . all study of the Church's cult in which this cult is analyzed, understood and defined in its "essence" as well as in its "forms" with the help of and in terms of theological categories and concepts which are exterior to the cult itself, that is, to its *liturgical* specificity. In this case, in other words, the liturgy is "subordinated" to, if not subject to, theology because it receives from theology its "meaning" as well as the definition of its place and function within the church.¹⁰⁴

Schmemann's description of "liturgical theology," distinguishes it from "theology of the liturgy":

Liturgical theology. . . is based upon the recognition that the liturgy in its totality is not only an "object" of theology, but above all its *source*, and this by virtue of the liturgy's essential ecclesial function: i.e., that of revealing by the means which are proper to it (and which belong only to it) the faith of the church; in other words, of

102. Aidan Kavanagh's *On Liturgical Theology* is dedicated "In memory of Alexander Schmemann." (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1984).

103. Irwin, *Liturgical Theology, A Primer*, 7–8, 40–44.

104. Schmemann, "Liturgical Theology: Remarks on Method," in *Liturgy and Tradition*, 138–139.

being that *lex orandi* in which the *lex credendi* finds its principal criterion and standard.¹⁰⁵

Schmemann attributes the “immense confusion, a veritable liturgical crisis” currently afflicting the West, to the fact that *liturgical theology* was to a large extent circumvented in the rush of the “aggiornamento generation” to pass directly, and hastily, from the theology of the liturgy to liturgical reform.¹⁰⁶ The circumvention of an authentic liturgical theology,¹⁰⁷ in the interests of pressing and legitimate pastoral concerns, caused the liturgy itself to become the pawn of diverse and discordant ideologies. The resultant situation has, according to Schmemann, obscured “the *specificity* of the liturgy which makes it the source of a *sui generis* theology, a theology of which the liturgy is both the unique source and the unique revelation.”¹⁰⁸

For Schmemann, the specificity of the liturgy is nothing less than the

105. Ibid., 138.

106. Ibid., 138–139.

107. “Liturgical theology, whose necessity and also whose possibility were revealed by the liturgical movement, has not been, until now, the object of any methodological reflection. The liturgical movement, though it was an event and movement of primary importance, did not result in any ‘seizure’ of doctrinal or theological consciousness.” Ibid., 138.

108. Ibid., 142.

revelation of the Church as the inbreaking and foretaste of the Kingdom of God.¹⁰⁹

The liturgy in its fullness, as in each of its component parts, is wholly eschatological. Therefore, “liturgical theology has as its proper domain or ‘object’ eschatology itself, which is revealed in its fullness through the liturgy.”¹¹⁰

In *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*,¹¹¹ Schmemann offers an example of just such liturgical theology.¹¹² By uncovering the eschatological core of the liturgy, liturgical theology has the potential to effect “a return to that vision and experience that from the beginning constituted the very life of the Church.”¹¹³

109. Schmemann’s published journal addresses the eschatological specificity of the liturgy in his lucid critique of a papal Mass witnessed in New York in 1979: “First of all, the Mass itself! The first impression is how liturgically impoverished the Catholic Church has become. In 1965, I watched the service performed by Pope Paul VI in the same Yankee Stadium. Despite everything, it was the presence, the appearance on earth of the eternal, the ‘super earthly.’ Whereas yesterday, I had the feeling that the main thing was the ‘message.’ An opportunity was given, a fantastic chance to tell millions and millions of people about God, to reveal to them that more than anything else they need God! But here, on the contrary, the whole goal, it seemed, consisted in proving that the Church *also* can speak the jargon of the United Nations. . . . Shouldn’t the Mass be, so to say, ‘super earthly,’ separated from the secular world, in order to show *in the world*—the Kingdom of God?” Alexander Schmemann, *The Journals of Father Alexander Schmemann 1973-1983*, trans. Julianna Schmemann (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2000), 229–230.

110. Ibid., 143.

111. Alexander Schmemann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, trans. Paul Kachur (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1988).

112. For a complete bibliography of Father Schmemann, see Paul Garrett, “Fr. Alexander Schmemann: A Chronological Bibliography,” *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 28 (1984), 11–26.

113. Ibid., 10.

Aidan Kavanagh (1929–)

The American Benedictine monk Aidan Kavanagh writes of liturgical theology provocatively. He is, in his own words, “the creature of a deeply sacramental tradition of orthodoxy, which means first ‘right worship’ and only secondarily doctrinal accuracy.”¹¹⁴ His theological prose is sublime and sensual, lucid and bewildering, timidly suggestive and wildly blatant, all at the same time. For all his originality of style, it is clear that Kavanagh is imbued with a deeply personal and assiduous commitment to the practice of the liturgy, not unlike that of an Odo Casel, an Aemiliana Löhr or a Cyprian Vagaggini. The intensity of Kavanagh’s underlying experience of the liturgy cannot be concealed; it invests his written works with an aura of undeniable earnestness and authenticity.

For Kavanagh, “the liturgy is not something separate from the church, but simply the church caught in the act of being most overtly itself as it stands faithfully in the presence of the One who is both object and source of that faith.”¹¹⁵ The enactment of the liturgy is a fleeting apprehension of the mystery by means of the *sacramenta*. For the eyes of faith, the *sacramenta* become an epiphany

114. Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 3.

115. Ibid., 75.

of the mystery, revealing faith's object.¹¹⁶ At the same time, the *sacramenta* act upon the subject of the liturgy, transforming and elevating the subject in such a way as to effect a real communion between the object of the liturgy and its subject.

The Church, "caught" in this act of communion, is most truly herself. It is when the Church is most truly herself that she most clearly partakes of the Kingdom of God and reveals it to the world.

The worshipping assembly never comes away from such an experienced unchanged, and the assembly's continuing adjustment to that change is not merely theoloigical datum but theology itself. Theology on this primordial level is thus a sustained dialectic. Its thesis is the assembly as it enters into the liturgical act; its antithesis is the assembly's changed condition as it comes away from its liturgical encounter with the living God in Word and sacrament; its synthesis is the assembly's adjustment in faith and works to that encounter. . . . The adjustment which the assembly undertakes in response to the God-induced change it suffers in its liturgical events is a dynamic, critical, reflective, and sustained act of theology in the first instance, of *theologia prima*.¹¹⁷

Understood in this way, liturgical theology is not an option on the *à la carte* menu of academe; it pertains to the very essence of Church.

To justify his description of liturgical theology, Kavanagh, in true monastic

116. Kavanagh quotes Saint Leo: "Those things which were conspicuous in the life of our Redeemer here pass over into the *sacramenta*, into the worship of the Church." Ibid., 76.

117. Ibid., 76–77.

fashion, appeals to experience: “These perceptions can perhaps be confirmed by anyone who is an experienced and astute participant in Christian liturgical worship.”¹¹⁸ As a monk of the twelfth century put it: *Expertus potest credere.*¹¹⁹

In circling around liturgical theology (admittedly an elusive prey), Kavanagh makes three assertions by which it is possible to arrive at a certain degree of focus.¹²⁰ The first pertains to the distinction between *theologia prima* (liturgical theology *à l'état pur*) and *theologia secunda* (the by-product of the former). The second assertion holds the enactment of the liturgy to be fundamentally constitutive of theology. Kavanagh qualifies liturgical theology as proletarian, communitarian¹²¹ and quotidian: it is not the domain of an elite but is the work of an assembly; it is not an occasional pursuit but involves an ongoing engagement in its own yearly, weekly and daily rhythm. The third assertion develops the maxim *legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*. For Kavanagh, the predicate *statuat* is the hinge of a one way door. The door of the *lex orandi* gives access to the *lex credendi*. The *lex*

118. Ibid., 76.

119. From the hymn *Iesu dulcis memoria*, attributed to a twelfth century English Cistercian.

120. Ibid., 88–93.

121. The “proletarian” and “communitarian” aspects of the question were clearly articulated by Dom Lambert Beauduin in *La Piété de l’Eglise*. One senses Beauduin’s influence on this facet of Kavanagh’s thought.

credendi is determined by, and is therefore subordinate to, the *lex orandi*.

Aidan Kavanagh's fundamental thesis is that "the liturgical act of Christians is the primary and irreducible theological act of Christians; that the two acts are in reality one and the same act."¹²² Far from being revolutionary in his thesis, Kavanagh echoes, however unconventionally, the monastic wisdom of an earlier age: "If you are a theologian you truly pray. If you truly pray you are a theologian."¹²³

Kevin W. Irwin (1946-)

"In essence, liturgy is an *act of theology*. . ."¹²⁴ With these words, the American theologian Kevin Irwin articulates the conviction that grounds his presentation of liturgical theology. In distinguishing between "theology of the liturgy" and "theology drawn from the liturgy," Irwin deepens the furrows traced by Alexander Schmemann, and dispels much of the ambiguity surrounding "liturgical theology." For Irwin, "liturgical theology" opens onto three avenues: (1)

122. Ibid., 177.

123. Evagrius Ponticus, *The Chapters on Prayer*, trans. John Eudes Bamberger (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1981), 65. Kavanagh comments on the text: "The *theologos* in this Eastern dictum is not the scholar in his study but the ascetic in his cell, and the *theologia* implied is not secondary theological reasoning but contemplation on the highest level, the roots of which are sunk deep in the ascetic's own fasting and prayer, particularly in the recitation of the psalter. The "theologian" in this Eastern view is a contemplative whose life is suffused with the *leitourgia* of a cosmos restored to communion in its trinitarian Source" (*Liturgical Theology*, 124).

124. Irwin, *Context and Text*, 44.

the theology of liturgy; (2) theology drawn from the liturgy; and (3) doxological theology.

Irwin weaves his theology of the liturgy around three principles: first, that the liturgy is *anamnetic*, recalling the past and anticipating the future into the sacramental present;¹²⁵ second, that the liturgy is *epicletic*, provoked and sustained by the action of the Holy Spirit;¹²⁶ and third, that the liturgy is *ecclesiological*, mediating salvation within the Church, and fashioning the unity of the Church in her diversity by drawing her into the communion of the Three Divine Persons.¹²⁷

“Theology drawn from the liturgy” is “intrinsically connected to the act of worship.”¹²⁸ Here the theologian mines the symbols, gestures and rites of the liturgy with a view to extracting from them a theological discourse rooted in the ecclesial experience of worship.

This would mean that concepts in systematic theology can be fruitfully explored from data found in liturgical rites. Examples of this include how the reformed rites (including General Instructions) image the very being of God (literally “theology,” speech about God) how they describe the being and redemptive work of Christ

125. Ibid., 47.

126. Ibid., 48.

127. Ibid., 49.

128. Ibid., 51.

(Christology, soteriology), how they describe the being and work of the Holy Spirit (pneumatology), how they image the Church (ecclesiology) and how they describe and reflect on our need for grace (Christian anthropology) especially as grace is experienced and mediated through liturgy. One of the desired results of the kind of liturgical study called for in the Liturgy Constitution (no. 16) would be met if the liturgy is thus mined for the way it deals with these central aspects of Christian faith and theology.¹²⁹

“Doxological theology” is a confession of praise addressed to God by the subject of the liturgical action. Irwin discloses his affinity for the monastic tradition in which the subject of the liturgical action yields to its transforming power, and allows his theological discourse to be shaped by it.¹³⁰ The enactment of the liturgy calls to ongoing conversion and effects it. It is precisely the subject’s regular engagement in the worship of the Church that unearths the wellspring of “right praise” which is, by its very nature, theological.¹³¹

According to Irwin, contemporary liturgical theology demands a method adapted to the reality of the present reformed liturgy. The legitimate “variety and options” which characterize the revised rites must be taken into account. Irwin’s method investigates more than liturgical texts, and considers the whole ritual

129. Ibid., 50.

130. Ibid., 52.

131. See ibid., 266–267.

repertoire brought into play by the enactment of the liturgy.

Irwin's thesis requires a comprehensive examination of the various elements of the liturgical context —word, symbol, eucharoly, and the arts— in the light of liturgical tradition, of contemporary liturgical reform, and of critical liturgical theology.¹³²

When context is understood to comprise the three aspects of historical evolution, reformed rites and contemporary critical function, then context becomes the text in the sense of the primary source for developing liturgical theology.¹³³

The theologian uncovers the *lex agendi* by relating the elements of the liturgical context to each other and to the subject of the liturgical action in a given place and at a given time.¹³⁴ It is precisely in the context of the *lex agendi* that the axiom *lex orandi, lex credendi* is dynamically operative.

By examining the *lex agendi*, Irwin adjusts the focus in liturgical theology “from a philological-theological study of liturgical texts (e.g., sacramentaries, pontificals, ordos) to discussing these sources in light of their celebration, both

132. Ibid., 57–74.

133. Ibid., 55.

134. “*Lex agendi* means enacted rites as theological source.” Ibid., 55.

past (to the extent possible) and present.¹³⁵ Texts in context thus provide “the source—text—for developing liturgical theology.”¹³⁶ The liturgical theology thus developed flows back into its source; reinvested in ensuing liturgical celebrations and in the life of the Church, it comes to bear upon the *lex vivendi*.¹³⁷ In this way, *text* reshapes *context*.

More than anything else, Kevin Irwin’s contribution to liturgical theology addresses the integration of liturgy with life and the configuration of life to the Kingdom of God which the liturgy reveals, for it is, as he says, “all of a piece.”¹³⁸

A Critical Definition of Liturgical Theology

The above rehearsal of liturgical theologies, stretching from Prosper of Aquitaine to Kevin Irwin, aims at the articulation of a critical definition of liturgical theology out of which it will be possible to approach the Proper Chants of the Paschal Triduum in the *Graduale Romanum* as a primary theological source.

135. Ibid., 55.

136. Ibid., 54.

137. The “Introduction to the Lectionary” complements Irwin’s reflection on the *lex vivendi*: “They (the faithful) . . . endeavor to conform their way of life to what they celebrate in the Liturgy, and then in turn to bring to the celebration of the Liturgy all that they do in life.” “Introduction” in the *Lectionary for Mass*, n. 6, xiv.

138. Ibid., 346.

To arrive at the desired critical definition of liturgical theology, it will be useful to reflect firstly on the “who” of the liturgical action, its subject; secondly, on the “where” of the liturgical action, its environment; thirdly, on the “when,” or the particular moment of the liturgical action; and lastly, on the “how” of the liturgical action, its “ordo.” This multi-faceted contextualization will situate the analysis of the Proper Chants of the Paschal Triduum of the *Graduale Romanum* in Chapter Three as a study in liturgical theology.

Who

Is there but a single subject of the liturgical action? The subject of the liturgy shifts; it is defined differently according to the particular “theology of the liturgy” in use. If the liturgy is understood in terms of the word *from* God, the subject of the liturgy is, as shown above, the triune God: the Father uttering his mystery, and communicating his life by means of his Word, Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. From this theological standpoint, the liturgy is something done by God, the Church being the beneficiary of the work of God on her behalf. The *leitourgia* is a divine initiative, the saving and divinizing work that God, working through Christ, in the Spirit, accomplishes for humankind in the communion of the Church.

By responding to this “divine liturgy,” sacramentally mediated, the Church is drawn into the communion of the Three Divine Persons. The Trinity, acting as subject of the liturgy, apprehends the Church, as object of the liturgy, and draws the Church, here and now, into the “today” of the Kingdom. Considered in this light, the liturgy is the Church’s assumption into heaven or, as Father Schmemann terms it, “her ascent to the heavenly sanctuary, to the table of Christ.”¹³⁹ A liturgical theology which does not admit of God himself as the proto-subject of the liturgy will be flawed, principally because, in the absence of this premise, the eschatological character of Christian worship is inadequately perceived and expressed.

The liturgy is Trinitarian, heavenly, and eschatological. Its Trinitarian nature is epiphanied in the *koinonia* of the Church assembled for worship. The liturgy’s heavenly nature is mirrored in the ordered, created beauty — music, iconography and architecture — which manifests human wisdom, intelligence, and creativity.¹⁴⁰ Its eschatological nature is revealed in the uniqueness of the liturgical “today,” unrepeatable and yet repeated, again and again, in the various rhythms of the

139. Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 27.

140. The arts which declare the glory of the human person created in the image of God must be understood as the earthly counterpart of the “heavens which declare the glory of God and the firmament which shows forth the work of his hands” (cf. Ps 18:2).

Church year.

If the liturgy is understood as a word *to* God, its subject is none other than the only-begotten Son, the eternal *leitourgós*. As word to God, the liturgy originates “in the beginning” (Jn 1:1) where the very life of the Word is “to be towards” the Father. The Word is begotten by the Father facing the Father’s glory; the Christian liturgy cannot be celebrated from any other position, precisely because it is celebrated “in Christ” (cf. Eph 1:3-12). In addressing his Word to the world, and in sending the Holy Spirit, the Father opens the intra-Trinitarian liturgy to the the Body of Christ, the Church.¹⁴¹

The Church has a word *for* the Father, a word *to* the Father, because the Father has first given his Word *for* the Church, and continues to speak the Word in the midst of the Church for the life of the world. Christ, the given Word, approaches the Church as bridegroom; the Church, receiving the Word as bride, becomes one with him. Out of this covenant in which “two become one flesh” (Gen 2:24) emerges the total Christ — Head and members, Bridegroom and bride — as the one subject of the liturgical action. Christ and the Church together form a single *leitourgós*.

A liturgical theology which minimizes this truth runs at least three risks.

¹⁴¹. For a development of this, see Jean Corbon, *The Wellspring of Worship*, trans. Matthew F. O’Connell (New York: Paulist Press, 1988).

The first is the reduction of the liturgy to the action of a single hierarch (bishop or priest): an image of the head without the body. The second risk is the perception of the liturgy solely in terms of the initiative of a particular assembly: a body without a head. The third is the minimalization of the role of the flesh and of the senses. It reduces the liturgy to a purely spiritual participation in the divine and, in so doing, deprecates its worldly, sensual, and sacramental components in what amounts to a practical denial of the Incarnation.

If the liturgy is understood as a word *about* God, the subject of the liturgical action is the Church herself, in the grace of her continuing Pentecost, “speaking as the Spirit gives her utterance” (Ac 2:4). The Church celebrates the liturgy “facing God”; at the same time, the Church celebrates the liturgy in the world, “among the nations,” and “among all the peoples” (Ps 95:3). The Church directs her confession and doxology to God, but sings to God “within earshot” of the world.

Paradoxically, even as the Church sings, she listens. The Church’s word *to* God resounds within her as a word *about* God.¹⁴² Thus is the liturgy the starting point of theology and its point of arrival. The liturgy is the *locus theologicus* out of which the Church faces the world with a hymn to God, and faces God with the voice of the world. The liturgy is the crucial juncture between Church and world,

142. This is imaged rather effectively in certain monastic choirs where, in an alternated psalmody, half of the assembly sings while the other half listens.

or what Aidan Kavanagh calls “an endeavor both worldly and ecclesial.”¹⁴³

From this theological perspective, the subject of the liturgical action is the Spirit and the Bride, the Church.¹⁴⁴ An inadequate integration of pneumatology and of ecclesiology into liturgical theology comports at least three risks. The first, an imbalanced emphasis on Spirit with minimal attention to Church, opens the door to the misapprehension of Christian worship as something disembodied, esoteric and other-worldly. The mission of the Church, in contrast, is to translate the eschatological vision of the Kingdom, given her so often as the liturgy is celebrated, into language intelligible to every generation.¹⁴⁵ Concretely, this is the *lex vivendi* which Kevin Irwin rightly emphasizes.¹⁴⁶

The second risk, an exaggerated stress on Church with minimal attention to Spirit, weakens worshipers’ awareness of the ongoing presence and activity of the Holy Spirit and, in so doing, creates a situation that generates one of two dilemmas: liturgical formalism itself or a reaction to it. In the first instance, the remedy to liturgical formalism is, more often than not, sought in the introduction

143. Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 22.

144. See Rev 22:17.

145. Cf. GS, n. 4.

146. Irwin, *Context and Text*, 345–346.

into the liturgy of elements foreign to its authentic spirit, and not organically related to its development. In the instance of the reaction to cultural formalism, the remedy to it is typically sought in legalism, rubricism, liturgical minimalism, and an “over-institutionalized ecclesiasticism.”¹⁴⁷

The third risk threatens when Christians fail to understand the liturgy as the Spirit and the Bride engaged in singing the song of heaven on earth. Their worship suffers distortion, easily becoming a hymn that people sing to themselves for their own security, edification, or amusement. This, in turn, opens the door to the domination of the liturgy by “various ideologies which remain deluded about its true nature and its essential function in the church.”¹⁴⁸

Where

The subject of the liturgical action, the *leitourgós*, actualizes the liturgy in a given place.¹⁴⁹ From the eschatological point of view, it is possible to say that all liturgy happens “within” the Trinity. While true, the assertion is incomplete.

The Church, as the ongoing mystery of the Incarnation, manifests herself in

147. John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1974), 178.

148. Schmemann, “Liturgical Theology: Remarks on Method,” 139.

149. For another treatment of this question, see Corbon, *The Wellspring of Worship*, 129–134.

specific “eucharistic organisms” or local assemblies. Any reading of the *Acts of the Apostles* or the letters of Saint Paul attests to the fact that these local assemblies are located in geographically identifiable places. Thus, from an ecclesiological point of view, it is possible to affirm that the local Church is the place where the liturgy happens. Again, the statement is true, but incomplete.

The assembled Body of Christ, in any locality, rejoices in the erection of an altar, in the construction of a church, in the reservation and configuration of a sacred space for the enactment of the liturgy.¹⁵⁰ From a material and aesthetical point of view, it is not untrue to describe the liturgy as taking place “in church.”

If it is true that local assemblies fashion their places of worship, it is equally true that places of worship fashion their assemblies. A complete liturgical theology is, therefore, obliged to address the question of “where” at the three levels described above: the eschatological, the ecclesiological, and the material. Ignorance of the first level empties the liturgical action of its essential function which is to reveal, in the world, the *leitourgía* of the Three Divine Persons in the glory of the Kingdom of God. Neglect of the second level relegates that *leitourgía* to realms unattainable, while failing to see it actualized in human communities of flesh and blood, assembled by the Holy Spirit, and forming the Body of Christ. Insufficient

150. Nowhere is this more beautifully expressed than in the liturgy for the Dedication of a Church.

attention to the third level minimizes the irreplaceable roles of creation, of the environment, and of the creative and artistic contributions of men and women in an endeavour at once wholly human and wholly divine: the liturgy.

When

Not only does the liturgy happen in a place; the liturgy unfolds in time. With regard to time no less than with regard to space, the liturgy must obey the laws of the economy of the Incarnation. The Christmas Martyrology of the Roman Rite sings precisely this, that time is crucial to the divine economy. “The mystery hidden for ages and generations” (Col 1:26) was made known to the saints “when the time had fully come” (Gal 4:4). Liturgical theology must therefore concern itself with the question of time. To dismiss the question of time is, once again, to flirt with denial of the Incarnation and of its consequences for the whole sacramental economy.¹⁵¹

The liturgy originates in the eternal “today” of God. There the Son, eternally begotten of the Father, eternally returns to the Father as living doxology in the Holy Spirit. Every enactment of the liturgy in time derives from, and points

151. “In matters of liturgy we must fall back on the principles of the Incarnation, of the hypostatic union and all the rules laid down by Ephesus and Chalcedon concerning Christ’s Personality; the conclusions of Catholic theology with regard to the nature of Christ’s operations are most appropriate to an understanding of liturgy.” Dom Anscar Vonier, O.S.B. in the Foreword to Löhr, *The Year of Our Lord*, xvi-xvii.

to, the *leitourgía* of the Three Divine Persons in eternity.

The Incarnation of the Word brought the eternal *leitourgía* of the Trinity into chronological time. “Jesus Christ, High Priest of the New and Eternal Covenant, taking human nature, introduced into this earthly exile that hymn which is sung throughout all the ages in the halls of heaven.”¹⁵² In Christ, not only is the eternal introduced into the temporal, and the divine *kairós* into the human *chrónos*; the temporal is also assumed into the eternal, and the theandric actions of the Incarnate Word, accomplished once in time, are eternally present and efficacious in the Spirit.¹⁵³

Christ came not to destroy time but to redeem it by entering fully into it. Christ redeems those held captive by time. He pierces the crepuscular confines of *chrónos* by the power of his resurrection, bringing Adam into the bright *kairós* of his eternal “today.” Before the descent of the Word into time, and his victory over the grave, time marked out inexorably every human being’s progress towards death. Christ, having passed through time to death, and through death to resurrection, has inaugurated “the eighth day, the first day of the new creation, the day on which the Church not only remembers the past but also remembers, indeed enters

152. SC, n.83.

153. See Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, 142–144.

into the future, the last and great day.”¹⁵⁴

By means of the yearly, weekly and daily liturgical cycles, time is not eliminated; it is consecrated, made holy, and restored. In the beginning “God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day” (Gen 1:5). Like all of creation, like water and oil, bread and wine, fire, incense and light, in the new economy of redemption, time is sacramental.

The Church, by celebrating the Paschal Mystery of Christ within the framework of time, obeys the kenotic logic of the Incarnation. The liturgy of the Church is not an escape from the dark night of time; it is a deliberate entry into time, a going forth with lighted lamps to meet the Bridegroom on the way.¹⁵⁵ By the power of his resurrection, Christ has claimed time for himself, subdued it to the power of the Holy Spirit, and given it back to his bride the Church for the sanctification of the world and the glorification of the Father.

A complete liturgical theology must, therefore, address the “when” of the liturgical action. Insufficient attention to the sacramental value of time contributes to at least three theological misapprehensions. Firstly, when the

154. Schmemann, “Liturgy and Eschatology,” in *Liturgy and Tradition*, 97.

155. Cf. Mt 25:6.

beginning and end of every earthly and time-bound celebration of the liturgy by the Church is not seen in the heavenly and eternal *leitourgía* of the Trinity, sacraments and worship are excised from the very context that gives them meaning. The “now” of every liturgical action occurs between the “in the beginning” and the “world without end” of the doxology.¹⁵⁶ Secondly, when the historical contingencies of the Incarnation — the entry of the Word into *chrónos* — are downplayed, it becomes easy for worshipers to misconstrue the liturgy as an exercise in flight from time, and as an escape from what is. Underlying this sort of thinking is a refusal of the historical economy of the Incarnation that blights the liturgy with a delusive “otherworldliness.” Thirdly, when time is not perceived as a gift of Christ to the Church, and as the context of the Holy Spirit’s operation, the yearly, weekly and daily cycles of the liturgy, and the calendar of its seasons, feasts, and fasts, become, at best, a matter of pious convention and, at worst, a matter for bemused indifference, open to a narrow and whimsical subjectivity.

How

The fourth and last element to be considered in this articulation of a critical definition of liturgical theology is the “how” of the liturgy, or the question of

156. “Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.”

liturgical order. The eternal *leitourgía* of the three divine persons functions as the source and paradigm of the enactment of the liturgy by the Church.¹⁵⁷ The subject of the liturgical action that is the very life of the immanent Trinity is the one God in three hypostases. Were the Trinitarian *leitourgía* celebrated by or directed towards a contingent being with a beginning in time, that *leitourgía* would itself be contingent, having had a beginning in time. The leítourgia of the Trinity is inextricably bound up with the eternal existence of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is eternal because they are eternal, being, as Jean Corbon so aptly terms it, the *liturgie de source*.¹⁵⁸

There is but one subject of the Trinitarian *leitourgía*: the liturgizing Godhead in the three divine hypostases. So too, in the liturgy of a local assembly, the whole Church functions as a single subject of the liturgical action, liturgizing in hierarchically ordered and diverse roles.¹⁵⁹ The *leitourgía* within the Trinity is ordered and admits of no confusion among the Father, the Son and the Holy

157. See Edward J. Kilmartin, *Christian Liturgy: Theology and Practice, I Systematic Theology of Liturgy* (Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1980), 100–110.

158. The original French title of Corbon, *The Wellspring of Worship*.

159. “Pure divine subjectivity is experienced in the perfect communion of certain ‘I’s’ united in a unique subjectivity. Thus we speak of one God (a unique subject) and of three ‘I’s’ (three subjects.)” Dumitru Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, trans. Robert Barringer (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1980), 76.

Spirit.¹⁶⁰ The *leitourgía* of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is the expression and the principle of their *koinonía*, the mystery by which the self of each Divine Person gives way to the self of the other Divine Persons. “The Trinity is the culmination of the humility and sacrifice of love.”¹⁶¹ Similarly, the liturgy of the Church is the expression and the principle of the *koinonía* of her members, the “culmination of the humility and sacrifice of love.”

The Holy Spirit illustrates the “how” of the heavenly and Trinitarian liturgy in the ordered worship of the Church. There is no knowledge of the mystery of the immanent Trinity apart from what is revealed by the economic Trinity: the Father sending the Son; the Son revealing the Father; the Holy Spirit uniting human beings to the Son and drawing them, through the Son, into the Father’s embrace.¹⁶² Every liturgical action offers the experience of this Trinitarian economy. Liturgical theology proceeds from what is revealed and ascends to what is concealed. The concealed mystery of the immanent Trinity celebrating an eternal *leitourgía* is shown forth sacramentally in the “how” of the Church’s liturgy.

160. See the *Quicumque vult*, commonly called *The Creed of Saint Athanasius*. Formerly recited in the Roman Office at Prime on most Sundays, it has been retained in some revised monastic Offices at Terce on Trinity Sunday.

161. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, 89.

162. See Kilmartin, *Christian Liturgy*, 109.

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161. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, 89.

162. See Kilmartin, *Christian Liturgy*, 109.

The “ordo” of the Church’s worship is a sacrament of the “ordo” of Trinitarian life.

Edward Kilmartin writes:

A comprehensive explanation of the meaning of the liturgy must take the path that leads back to the life work of the Triune God. It must be shown how Christian liturgy in general, and the chief liturgical-sacramental celebrations of the Church, derive from and are ordered to the deepest and proper mystery of Christian faith: the self-communication of the Triune God in a history of salvation that is the first fruits of the Trinitarian-heavenly liturgy . . .¹⁶³

This reflection on the “how” of the liturgy invites further development.

Three benefits of this theological approach are, nonetheless, immediately evident.

Firstly, a Trinitarian theology of liturgical “order” establishes the overwhelming seriousness of what Christians do when they assemble for worship.¹⁶⁴ There are no insignificant details in liturgical praxis.

Secondly, a Trinitarian theology of liturgical “order” is the ground and model of an orthodox understanding of the subject of the liturgical action. Just as the heavenly *leitourgía* is celebrated in each of the Divine Persons and in the unity of the Godhead, the Church’s liturgy “is celebrated in each of the faithful, in the

163. In his Foreword to Corbon, *The Wellspring of Worship*, v.

164. The objection may be raised that such a “serious” understanding of the liturgy is incompatible with the model of the liturgy as “play.” It has been remarked that nowhere are children as serious as when they are engaged in play. In the authentic spirit of liturgical worship, joy and gravity, jubilation and compunction are perfectly harmonized.

whole of the liturgical community.”¹⁶⁵ There are no mere spectators.

Thirdly, the Trinitarian model of liturgical order provokes a critical evaluation of actual liturgical practice. The norms provided by the *Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani* (IGRM) have pastoral value because they are theologically significant. Ecclesial organization and liturgical order mirror the mystery of the Trinity:

The eucharistic celebration is an action of Christ and the Church, that is, a holy people made one and ordered under the Bishop. For this reason, the eucharistic celebration belongs to the whole Body of the Church, manifests it, and affects it. As to the individual members of the Body, the eucharistic celebration touches them in different ways, according to their rank, office, and actual participation. In this way, the Christian people, “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people set apart,” manifests its cohesion and hierarchical ordering. Therefore, all, whether ordained ministers or lay faithful of Christ, should do all and only those parts that belong to them, according to their rank or to the function of their office.¹⁶⁶

The liturgy is choreographed hierarchically. Liturgical “congregationalism” and liturgical “clericalism” are equally foreign to the essentially theological nature of the Church’s worship.

165. Vasileios, *Hymn of Entry*, 76.

166. IGRM, n. 91. The translation is my own.

Conclusion

We have endeavoured to show that liturgical theology articulates a word *from* God, a word *to* God and a word *about* God. In all three instances, liturgical theology is inseparable from liturgical experience. The enactment of the liturgy is constitutive of liturgical theology.

In the three models discussed, liturgical theology tends to “the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God” (Col 3:1). The eschatological *leitourgia* of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is the wellspring and the summit of liturgical theology. Exclusive focus on what can be experienced, critiqued, and measured in the actual doing of the liturgical action can so moor worshipers to the “here and now” that it fails to open them to the eschatological “there and then.”

On the other hand, a liturgical theology that never grapples with the concrete realities of worship, and with the real lives of those engaged in it, fails to grasp that, in this particular discipline more than in any other, rigorous adhesion to the logic of the Incarnation is crucial. Paradoxically, the more the quotidian practice of the liturgy engages the theologian bodily, the more does he or she perceive, and become capable of expressing, its eschatological reality. The *leitourgia* of the Trinity is contemplated now “in a mirror dimly,” (1 Cor 13:12), and it is

that obscure contemplation of the Trinity in the very enactment of the liturgy that yields the richest liturgical theology.

The experiential exigencies of liturgical theology make it authentic. The writings of Prosper Guéranger, of Lambert Beauduin, of Odo Casel, of Aemiliana Löhr, and of other more recent authors offer the taste of something more than mere scholarship. This can only be attributed to their personal commitment to the daily and ongoing work of the liturgy as the exercise of the baptismal priesthood. For more than a few, this commitment to the worship of the Church was structured and supported by a monastic context of life.

While other sciences require distance and detachment from the object of study, liturgical theology requires total immersion in it. Anything less makes the liturgical theologian like a musician who, while consecrating his or her life to the analysis of magnificent pieces of music, never sings, plays, or hears them. The conceptual knowledge proper to liturgical theology is rooted in experience and grows out of it organically.¹⁶⁷ Dom Vagaggini writes that, “always, and at all levels, experience is the ultimate humus out of which new ideas emerge and come to

167. The present author would never have embarked on a study of the Proper Chants of the Paschal Triduum, had he not sung them, year after year, from the *Graduale Romanum*, in the unique context of worship that a monastery provides.

birth.”¹⁶⁸

Aidan Kavanagh alludes to “the monks, nuns, and other ascetics littering Christian history who are simply too involved in every aspect of the phenomenon of rite to be ignored.”¹⁶⁹ The preponderant presence of monastics in the development of liturgical theology is too significant a fact to be overlooked. Magnus Löhner addresses the question in his study of the theology of Cyprian Vagaggini:

With regard to experiential humus, an allusion to the monastic experience that nourishes theological reflection seems necessary to me. Theological reflection in the context of monastic experience means, above all, the integration of reflection into the wider context of a life in which God is sought and praised; it means the integration of a theological reading of Scripture in the form of *lectio divina*, with an eye to the unity of the two Testaments, and with a dimension of actualization in the mystery of the Church and in liturgical celebration; it looks to the fulfillment of history in the heavenly Jerusalem. It means unity between theology and liturgy, theology and spirituality. In this experiential context, those constants of theological thought that are oriented towards the gnostico-sapiential model of theology are

168. “L’esperienza a tutti i livelli è sempre l’humus ultimo da cui emergono e nascono nuovi concetti.” C. Vagaggini, “Teologia,” 1664, quoted in Löhner, *Il modello gnostico-sapienziale della teologia*, 31.

169. Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 162.

thrown into a greater light.¹⁷⁰

A critical understanding of the monastic contribution to the development of liturgical theology supposes some familiarity with the gnostico-sapiential model of theology and with its context. It is precisely in monastic churches that the enactment of the liturgy is, as Aidan Kavanagh so congenially terms it, “proletarian, communitarian and quotidian.”¹⁷¹

In attempting to formulate a critical definition of liturgical theology, any number of templates could have been chosen. The choice of the “who,” “where,” “when” and “how” approach had the advantage of grounding the theological construct in the actual enactment of the liturgy. At the same time, the theological construct was stretched to its eschatological realization in the *leitourgía* of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The challenge of liturgical theology is, as Edward Kilmartin wrote, to “take the path that leads back to the life work of the

170. “Quanto all’humus esperienziale mi sembra necessario accennare all’esperienza monastica che alimenta la riflessione teologica. Riflessione teologica in un contesto di esperienza monastica vuol dire anzitutto: integrazione della riflessione in un contesto più ampio di vita, di ricerca di Dio, di lode; integrazione della lettura teologica della Scrittura nella forma della *lectio divina* secondo l’unità dei due testamenti e con una dimensione di attualizzazione nel mistero della Chiesa e nella celebrazione liturgica, con un riferimento al compimento della storia nella Gerusalemme celeste; unità tra teologia et liturgia, teologia e spiritualità. In questo contesto esperienziale alcune costanti del pensiero teologico, che orientano verso il modello gnostico-sapienziale della teologia, ricevono una luce maggiore.” Löhrer, “Il modello gnostico-sapienziale della teologia,” 31.

171. Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 93.

Triune God.”¹⁷² That path begins in the enactment of the liturgy here and now.

172. Kilmartin, in his foreward to Corbon, *The Wellspring of Worship*, v.

CHAPTER TWO

TOWARD A DEFINITION OF LITURGICAL CHANT

Sung Theology

The preceding chapter presented, by way of introduction, the contributions of an array of individuals to the ongoing conversation about liturgical theology. In varying degrees, but in every case, the experience of the liturgical theologians presented was linked to the experience of a sung theology: the liturgical chant of the Church. Liturgical theology, insofar as it springs from the “proletarian, communitarian and quotidian”¹ enactment of the liturgy, is indissociable from sacred song.²

It is only natural that the worship of God is to be expressed in song. Inasmuch as the Christian by his baptism is a “transformed” being, so his praise of God in the worship of the Church should reflect this transformation. His praise cannot be reduced to the “language of this world,” stripped of all balance, rhythm,

1. Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 93.

2. Maxime Kovalevsky speaks of “la force sacralisante et pédagogique du chant qui, dans toute la tradition liturgique authentique, est le support de la parole et non son ornement.” This is, he argues, the tradition respected in the Orthodox Church where one knows not religious music but only liturgical chant. Chant is an integral part of the Orthodox liturgy; a liturgy stripped of chant is inconceivable. See Maxime Kovalevsky, *Retrouver la source oubliée* (Paris: Editions Présence Orthodoxe, 1984) 190. Annibale Bugnini, speaking from the vantage point of one intimately involved in the post-Vatican II reform of the Roman Rite, says pointedly that, “The sung form of the liturgy is the normal form.” Annibale Bugnini, *The Reform of the Liturgy 1948–1975* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 911.

and harmony. The word of God and man's response to it certainly is not just the reflection of an "ordinary" conversation. Rather it is a word charged with emotion and filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. As soon as the word becomes identified with the contents of its message, it calls for order (rhythm) and melos (arrangement of pitch), i.e., a musical form. In this way, the perfect word, the fully developed word, most always has the nature of song.³

Liturgical theology, being "the perfect word, the fully developed word"⁴ — *from God, to God, and about God* — finds, in some way, its truest voice in sacred song. *Theologia prima* is sung theology.

Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs

"Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs" (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16) have constituted an integral part of Christian worship from apostolic times. Kevin Irwin argues that the liturgical arts, including music, are "intrinsic to the liturgy and that their use is required for the integrity of the act of worship."⁵ John Meyendorff qualifies sacred art as "inseparable from theology," deeming it intrinsic to *theologia prima*, the enactment of the liturgy itself, for the liturgy "involves the whole man, without

3. David Drillock, "Music in the Worship of the Church," *Orthodox Church Music* 1 (1983): 12.

4. Ibid.

5. Irwin, *Context and Text*, 219.

despising any functions of the soul or of the body, and without leaving any of them to the realm of the secular.”⁶ Maxime Kovalevsky, for his part, holds that within the general domaine of art, liturgical art occupies a particular place; it mediates communication between the faithful and the Divine Transcendent, being, at the same time, a vehicle by which the Divine Transcendent intervenes in the life of the faithful.⁷ Nicolas Ozoline emphasizes the eschatological vocation of the arts: “Without any doubt, the liturgy represents for us the ultimate vocation of the arts, because the meaning of their common effort — their function — is to suggest the anticipation of the Kingdom.”⁸

The root of these affirmations is anthropological as well as theological. Human nature, the very nature assumed by the Word of God, is a “substantial unity of matter and spirit, with mysterious but real reciprocal influence of one part on the other.”⁹ The Incarnation reveals the face of God in human form and the

6. John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1979), 52.

7. Maxime Kovalevsky, “Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne: perennité de ses principes dans la diversité de ses manifestations,” in *Liturgies de l’Eglise particulière et liturgie de l’Eglise universelle* (Rome: Edizioni Liturgiche, 1976), 183–184.

8. “Sans aucun doute, la liturgie représente pour nous l’ultime vocation des arts, car le sens de leur commun effort — leur fonction — consiste à suggérer l’anticipation du Royaume.” Nicolas Ozoline, “L’icône, analogie et complémentarité de l’image par rapport au geste et à la parole liturgique,” in *Gestes et paroles dans les diverses familles liturgiques*, ed. Constantin Andronikof (Rome, 1978), 170.

9. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 55.

voice of God in human language. “No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known” (Jn 1:18). Liturgical iconography and liturgical chant, in their Eastern and Western forms, proceed from the same theological principle. Analogies between eye and ear, face and voice, image and chant, are useful insofar as they invite one to seek and to discover their origin in a common source: the Incarnation as the spring of the whole sacramental economy.

Rooted in the Incarnation and in the law of sacramentality established by it, “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs” (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16) participate in the “descending” and “ascending” mediation of the God-Man, the High Priest Jesus Christ.

The liturgy . . . is rightly seen as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. It involves the presentation of man’s sanctification under the guise of signs perceptible by the senses and its accomplishment in ways appropriate to each of these signs. In it full public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and his members.¹⁰

The teleology of Christ’s eternal priesthood is at once soteriological and doxological. The sacred signs used by the Church serve this double end. Sacred song, harmoniously and rightly integrated into the wider “complexus of sacred

10. SC, n. 7.

signs”¹¹ constitutive of the liturgy, is a sacramental embodiment of the mediation of Christ’s priesthood. Functioning in concert with other signs perceptible to the senses, sacred music and, in particular, the art of liturgical chant, carries the saving initiative of God into the worshiping assembly; at the same time, it mediates the assembly’s glorification of the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit. For Cyprian Vagaggini,

The end of art is at the service of a higher end, the liturgy’s own end: the Church’s sanctification and worship in Christ. Art, in its own way, must help the liturgy’s end to be better expressed and better realized, by disposing souls to that sanctification and worship.¹²

Among the art forms appropriated by the liturgy for the sanctification of the faithful and the praise of God, liturgical chant holds a place of theological pre-eminence. This chapter proposes to explore the theological pre-eminence of liturgical chant by pursuing the conversation opened in *The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. There, sacred music is accorded its own chapter, distinct from, and preceding, the chapter that treats of sacred art and furnishings.¹³ Its opening sentences are seminal.

11. See Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 43-69.

12. Ibid., 51.

13. SC, ch. 6, “De Musica Sacra,” nn. 112-121.

The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as a combination of sacred music and words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy.¹⁴

Sacred song is, therefore, “intrinsic to the liturgy”¹⁵; it belongs to the very fabric of the *lex orandi* and offers the liturgical theologian one of the Church’s richest sources of *theologia prima*.

From Sacred Music to Liturgical Chant

Igor Stravinsky makes a distinction between music and song:

It is customary to distinguish instrumental forms from vocal forms. The instrumental element enjoys an autonomy that the vocal element does not enjoy, the latter being bound to words. . . . From the moment song assumes as its calling the expression of the meaning of discourse, it leaves the realm of music and has nothing more in common with it.¹⁶

Stravinsky intimates that the tie binding the vocal form to words, is a musical liability. The vocation of liturgical chant, however, is precisely “the expression of the meaning of discourse.” The liturgy invests the words of human

14. SC, n. 112.

15. Irwin, *Context and Text*, 219.

16. Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, trans. Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl (New York: Vintage Books, 1956), 45.

discourse with a certain sacramentality, and this, by reason of their referral to the Word “that was in the beginning with God,” and “through whom all things were made” (Jn 1:2-3).

As this study focuses, not on instrumental music, nor on song extraneous to the texts of the liturgy itself, the term *liturgical chant* will henceforth be used to describe any monodic treatment of liturgical texts, executed by the human voice, and not requiring instrumental accompaniment.¹⁷ Of all the sacred signs constitutive of the liturgy, chant is the one most closely bound to the symbolic Word:

The saving Word of God is communicated to men by word of mouth and by symbolic action or sacramental rite. And both fall under the category of Word of God, or conversely in patristic thought, both fall under the category of sacrament.¹⁸

17. Recent English translations of documents on the liturgy have used *song* rather than *chant* to translate the Latin *cantus*. This may reflect a systematic preference for Anglo-Saxon words as opposed to words of Latin derivation. It may also evidence a desire to avoid certain “sacral” connotations of the word *chant*. The word *song*, on the other hand, has secular connotations. For the purposes of this work, *chant* has been judged the more adequate translation of *cantus*.

Jorge A. Cardinal Medina Estévez, Prefect of the Roman Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, in a letter dated 16 March 2002 to the presidents of the Conferences of Bishops in whose territories the liturgy is habitually celebrated in English, made the following related observation: "Opening Song" does not translate 'Cantus ad introitum' or 'Antiphona ad introitum' as intended by the rites. The Latin is able to express the musical processional beginning of the Liturgy that accompanies the entrance of the priest and ministers, while 'Opening Song' could just as well designate the beginning number of a secular musical performance."

18. Anscar Chupungco, “Symbolism and Liturgical Celebration,” in *Symbolisme et théologie* (Rome: Editrice Anselmiana, 1974), 180.

Together, the two realities of word and symbolic action comprise the *lex orandi*. Liturgical chant, therefore, has a direct bearing upon the *lex credendi*. The word, in the context of the enactment of the liturgy, is always a sacramental word, an efficacious sign of the presence of Christ, and of the operations of the Holy Spirit, within the Church. The same sacramental word is the means by which the Church unites herself to Christ's glorification of the Father, in the Holy Spirit.

Theologia prima inheres, not only in the sacramental word proclaimed, repeated, and prayed in the assembly, but also in the musical elaboration of that word. The intonation by which the word strikes the ears, penetrates the heart, and comes to flower on worshipers' lips is a constitutive element of liturgical theology.

The true sense of Scripture always lies beyond, beyond the words, the concepts, and the events which are but signs in which faith detects the presence of the Only Son. For this very reason, the sacred texts invite the musical development which will make all that is unutterable in them an audible undertone.¹⁹

The “expression of the meaning of discourse” by the musical development of the liturgical text suggests and, often, unlocks its fuller theological, and spiritual, meaning.

19. Maurice Zundel, *The Splendour of the Liturgy* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1939), 284-285.

For the purposes of this study, *liturgical chant* must be distinguished from other forms of sacred music, notably from *religious music* and *popular religious song*. Liturgical chant admits of a vast variety of forms, languages, and particular historical inculurations and developments. Of these, the Latin chants of the current *Graduale Romanum*, *Graduale Simplex*, *Ordo Missae in Cantu*, *Liber Hymnarius*, and other liturgical books offer a choice, drawn principally from the Gregorian, Ambrosian, and Mozarabic traditions.

The beleaguered 1967 Roman Instruction on Music in the Liturgy, *Musicam Sacram*,²⁰ offers a broad, tentative, and hardly satisfactory definition of sacred music by identifying it with “that which, being created for the celebration of divine worship, is endowed with a certain sincerity of form,” but also with “Gregorian chant, sacred polyphony in its various forms both ancient and modern, sacred music for the organ and other approved instruments, and sacred popular music, be it liturgical or simply religious.”²¹ This definition reflects a compromise between two opposing factions: those who, holding to the “ministerial function”²²

20. See Bugnini’s account of what he calls, “the instruction’s Way of the Cross,” in *The Reform of the Liturgy 1948–1975*, 900–911.

21. “*Musicam Sacram*, On Music in the Liturgy, 5 March 1967,” in *Documents on the Liturgy*, trans. Thomas C. O’Brien of the secretariat of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1982), 1294, n. 4.

22. SC, n. 112.

of sacred music advanced in the *The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, sought to foster the collective participation of the assembly in the sung liturgy; and those who, defending sacred music as “art,” feared, above all, the loss of the treasured repertoire of the Roman *Cappelle*.²³ Marked by this fundamental divergence, *Musicam Sacram* retreated, in some points, from the more pastoral vision put forward in *The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*:

Sacred music is to be considered the more holy, the more closely connected it is with the liturgical action, whether making the prayer more pleasing, promoting unity of minds, or conferring greater solemnity upon the sacred rites. The Church, indeed, approves of all forms of true art which have the requisite qualities, and admits them into divine worship.²⁴

The conciliar text stresses the intimate connection between sacred music and the liturgical action, and states that the “sacredness” of the former derives precisely from the liturgical action. *Musicam Sacram*’s inclusion of the “simply religious” signals a post-conciliar discomfiture.

Joseph Gélineau, writing in 1962, used *sacred music* as a generic term; he applied it to all music which, by its inspiration, object, destination or use has a

23. The *Cappelle* were prestigious Roman choirs dedicated, in a special way, to the preservation and performance of ancient and modern polyphony.

24. SC, n. 112.

connection with faith.²⁵ Gélineau's neutral definition lacks any explicit reference to liturgical worship. It does, nonetheless, provide a stable platform, and so lends itself to further elaboration.

Sacred music includes *religious music*: compositions for instruments or voice inspired by religious sentiment, and evoking the same in its hearers. One can perform religious music in the concert hall. Although religious music sometimes draws its inspiration from liturgical texts, it is not essentially related to the liturgical action, nor is it destined for use in, and by, the liturgical assembly.

Religious music may serve as a commentary on the liturgy; it may lead to the liturgical action, or flow out of it. At times, religious music may be performed at the liturgy or in conjunction with it. It is not, however, intrinsically ordered to the enactment of the liturgy itself, and can be performed independently of any sacred rite.

Popular religious song is a component of every culture. It is a wide term, embracing the treasures of Lutheran and Anglican hymnody, the Negro Spiritual, and the more recent collections of devotional hymnody and contemporary compositions. Popular religious song rarely borrow its words and inspiration from the liturgy itself. It arises outside of the liturgy, and favors subjective content over

25. J. Gélineau, *Chant et musique dans le culte chrétien* (Paris: Editions Fleurus, 1962), 73.

objective biblical and liturgical texts. Liturgical chants reveal their full meaning only within their proper ritual context. Popular religious songs, in contrast, can be sung independently of the liturgical action, and outside the ritual context, without suffering a diminishment of their essential meaning.

Elements of popular religious song, especially hymns, are sometimes adopted as a temporary or even permanent replacement for the chants of the liturgy itself. This practice, a departure from Roman Catholic tradition, needs to be critically evaluated and remedied.²⁶ While, in some instances, popular religious song may complement or embellish the celebration of the liturgy, it remains, at least, something added to the liturgical chants proper to the ritual action and, in many instances, substituted for them. Hymns and other elements of popular religious song should not compete with, or replace, the proper chants native to the liturgy itself.²⁷

Liturgical chant is a genre of sacred music distinct from the categories of religious music and popular religious song discussed above. Liturgical chant is indigenous to the earliest enactments of Christian rites. Allusions to such singing are found in the writings of Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch and Justin

26. See Irwin's discussion of the problem in *Context and Text*, 235-246.

27. It is not a question of singing at the liturgy but, rather, of singing the liturgy. See Sacred Congregation of Rites, "Cantare la Messa e non cantare durante la Messa," *Notitiae* 5 (1969): 406.

Martyr.²⁸ In attempting to trace the origins of Christian liturgical chant, scholars have argued the plausibility of a certain dependence of both Byzantine and Gregorian chants on a common source.²⁹ Wellesz points to the chants of the Churches of Antioch and Jerusalem, themselves derived from the chants of Jewish synagogal worship, as that common source.³⁰

It was from the Synagogue that the Christian communities took over the tradition of reciting, chanting, and singing, as more fitting for their simple service than the elaborate rite of the Temple, with its great choirs and instrumental music.³¹

By the fourth century, liturgical chant had become pervasive in Christian

28. See James McKinnon, *Music in Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge: University Press, 1987), 18-21.

29. See Carl H. Kraeling and Lucetta Mowry, "Music in the Bible," and Eric Werner, "The Music of Post-Biblical Judaism," in Egon Wellesz, ed., *Ancient and Oriental Music*, vol. 1, *The New Oxford History of Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), 283-335. For a point of view reflecting more recent scholarship, see David Hiley, *Western Plainchant* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 484-487.

30. Wellesz, *A History of Byzantine Music*, 43.

31. Egon Wellesz, *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1961), 34. David Hiley contests the assumption that there existed an effective continuity between Jewish and early Christian worship. See his *Western Plainchant*, 484-487. Margot Fasler and Peter Jeffery differ from Wellesz in holding that the earliest Christian musical tradition developed not so much from the synagogue as from the practice of ritual singing at communal meals. See Margot Fasler and Peter Jeffery, "Christian Liturgical Music from the Bible to the Renaissance," in *Sacred Sound and Social Change*, ed. Lawrence A. Hofman and Janet Walton (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 84-86.

worship. Every word pronounced in church had a “singing quality.”³² “In using the term ‘chant’ ancient ordos had reference to the entire service, which was thought of in all its parts as a singing of praise to God.”³³

Cantillation, a form of heightened speech or *ekphonesis*, half-way between recitation and singing, became in the Christian liturgy, as in Jewish worship, the normal vehicle of biblical readings, psalms, prayers and litanies.³⁴ In contrast to the simpler forms of cantillation, more elaborate forms of chant also evolved, ranging from the syllabic and semi-ornate style to the melismatic.

By the fourth century, the fully sung liturgy, with its roots in Semitic chant, had become normative in both East and West. Simeon of Thessalonika bears witness to this tradition. “All catholic Churches in the whole world have observed it (the Sung Service) from the beginning and have uttered nothing in worship except in song.”³⁵

32. Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 165.

33. Ibid., 165.

34. The tones provided for the orations, lessons, gospel and Eucharistic Prayers in the revised *Graduale* and in the *Ordo Missae in Cantu* are examples of liturgical cantillation. See *Graduale Romanum* (Solesmes: Abbaye Saint-Pierre de Solesmes, 1974), 798-821; and *Ordo Missae in Cantu* (Solesmes: Abbaye Saint Pierre de Solesmes, 1975).

Corresponding tones for the liturgy in English are given in Paul F. Ford, *By Flowing Waters, Chant for the Liturgy, A Collection of Unaccompanied Song for Assemblies, Cantors, and Choirs* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 329-416.

35. Simeon of Thessalonika quoted in Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 168.

Without dwelling on the controversies concerning the origins of Christian liturgical chant, it is both possible and useful to formulate a negative description of it.³⁶ Liturgical chant does not “accompany” the liturgical action; it is an integral part of it. It is not an embellishment of the celebration, superimposed on a rite deemed complete, adequate, and sufficient without it.

Music is not a adjunct to worship. It is the way the Church worships. Music is neither supplementary to, nor an enrichment of worship. It is the expression of worship itself. It is not an accompaniment, a background, a preparation, a moodsetter, a filler, or any such thing, and it is certainly not a *divertimento*.³⁷

Unlike religious music and popular religious song, liturgical chant cannot stand independently of the total liturgical action without its meaning becoming obscured. The meaning of a *Sanctus*, for example, is essentially theological and liturgical, not musical. Its theological and liturgical meaning is revealed in the wider context of the whole Eucharistic Prayer. A *Gradual* chant is related to the hearing of the Word of God to which it responds. The *Alleluia* refers to the Holy Gospel which it welcomes and announces.

36. For a full discussion of the origins of liturgical chant, see James McKinnon, *The Advent Project, The Later-Seventh Century Creation of the Roman Mass Proper* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2000), 19–34.

37. Sergei Glagolev, “An Introduction to the Interpretation of Liturgical Music,” *Orthodox Church Music* 1 (1983): 25.

Described positively, chant is purely vocal. It arises from the words of the liturgical texts and cannot be separated from them. “The origin of the melody is found in the word.”³⁸ Lossky writes that, “In the Orthodox tradition, both Eastern and Western, the music is provided by chant. Consequently, it is closely linked to the word; it is at the service of the word; it is the vehicle of the word.”³⁹

One . . . would then, of course, have to add that “word” in the biblical sense (and also the Greek sense) is more than language and speech, namely, creative reality. It is also certainly more than mere thought and mere spirit. It is self-interpreting, self-communicating spirit. At all times the word-orientation, the rationality, the intelligibility, and the sobriety of the Christian liturgy have been derived from this spirit and given to liturgical music as its basic law. It would, however, be a narrow and false interpretation if one understood by this that all liturgical music should be referred to the text in a strict way For “word” in the sense of the Bible is more than “text,” and understanding reaches further than the banal understanding of what is immediately clear to everyone.⁴⁰

38. Marie Pierik, *Dramatic and Symbolic Elements in Gregorian Chant* (New York: Desclée Company, 1963), 13. Pierik’s use of the word *melody* is technically inexact. Stravinsky writes: “The term *melody* in the scientific meaning of the word, is applied to the top voice in polyphony, thus differentiating melody from the unaccompanied cantilena that is called *monody*” (Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, 41). That being said for the sake of technical precision, in this work *melody* and *melodic* will occasionally be used as Pierik has used them: to refer to the unaccompanied cantilena that characterizes chant.

39. Lossky, “Some Thoughts on Liturgical Music,” 5.

40. Joseph Ratzinger, *A New Song for the Lord*, trans. Martha M. Matesich (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997), 120-121.

Chant effectively refers the words of liturgical rites to the Word from whom they flow and to whom they return, and, in so doing, irrigates all of life with the mystery that the liturgy makes present. The identifying function of liturgical chant is, then, to dilate the sacred text and render it more penetrating “until we make contact with the presence with which the texts are filled.”⁴¹ The analysis of liturgical chant as music *tout court* will fall sort of the mark, for “. . . while a chant may be discussed and dissected . . . as an object of study in itself, it must not be forgotten that it was composed in the creation of a complete way of life, the performance of the *opus Dei*, the work of God.”⁴²

Religious music and popular religious song open a window into the soul of individual composers, often focusing on the composer’s personal experience, or subjective insights. In contrast, James McKinnon, evokes,

. . . the context in which the Roman Mass Proper came into being was the daily Office psalmody of the monks attached to the principal basilicas. Resident monastic choirs were active for more than a century before the schola cantorum came into existence; their “continuous” psalmody was heard for hours each day in the churches, frequently in the presence of pope and clergy.⁴³

41. Zundel, *The Splendour of the Liturgy*, 78.

42. David Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 7.

43. McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 83.

This suggests that the Proper Chants of the Roman Mass, for example, were conceived and elaborated in a context of pre-existing liturgical chant and, notably, of psalmody; they emerged from within a tradition and developed in organic continuity with it.⁴⁴ Liturgical chant hands on, not the isolated compositional efforts experience of any one *schola cantorum* but, rather, the cumulative contemplative experience of worshiping Christians received and variously reinterpreted in function of the liturgy's organic evolution through the ages . As "sung theology," liturgical chant, in the diversity of its forms, celebrates and actualizes the Paschal Mystery of Christ from one generation to the next, enriching each successive singing of the unchanging Mystery with new resonances.

44. "However one might assess the role of monasticism in the phenomenon, it cannot be denied that the closing decades of the fourth century were a time of unprecedented popularity for the singing of psalms. There is no evidence that anything so pervasive and intense existed before this time, nor that anything quite like it would be witnessed again in the history of Christianity. Its literary manifestation was an extraordinary series of extended encomiums of psalmody from the pen of authors including Athanasius, Basil, John Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Niceta of Remesiana. . . . The general popularity of psalmody in the later fourth century provides the necessary background to understand better the establishment of psalmody in the contemporary Mass. . . . For centuries to come the celebration of Mass without the singing of psalms would be somehow incomplete." McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 39.

Three Attributes of Liturgical Chant

In an article that appeared in 1976, Maxime Kovalevsky⁴⁵ argued that, beneath the many varieties of liturgical expression, determined by differences in culture and language, subsists a certain unity.⁴⁶ Kovalesky located this underlying unity at the level of musical structures common to the most primitive liturgical traditions of Christianity.⁴⁷ Ultimately, Kovalesky's theory of an underlying unity emerges at the level of the three articulated theological principles discussed below: breath, interiority, and freedom.

Music is an analogical art. Unlike the plastic arts which, by their very nature, imply an imitation of natural forms and colors, music translates sensible

45. Maxime Kovalevsky (1903-1988) was born in St-Petersburg and arrived in France in 1920. Mathematician, theologian, liturgist, iconographer, musicologist, composer, choir master, and professor of the history of the liturgy, of sacred art, and of comparative liturgics, he left behind a considerable body of original polyphonic compositions characterized by a faithful and humble respect for the living liturgical tradition of the Church in East and West.

46. See Kovalevsky, "Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne," 183.

47. "En effet l'apparence hétéroclite des rites chrétiens présents à l'oreille et à l'oeil de l'observateur extérieur recouvre des structures indéniablement communes remontant aux sources mêmes du christianisme. . . . L'art liturgique garde, dans l'ensemble, une allure de simplicité relative, et un caractère pédagogique qui favorise l'assimilation progressive et la conservation fidèle des affirmations de la religion donnée. Techniquement — c'est là non une certitude théorique, mais une constatation historique — cet art se servira, pour parvenir à ses fins, d'un certain 'formulism': des formules plastiques ou sonores, ciselées et portées au cours des siècles à leur perfection dernière, combinées entre elles avec une variété infinie, circuleront à travers toutes les formes de l'art liturgique en lui assurant un caractère de pérennité, d'universalité et de variété dans la cohérence. Ces formules créent l'armature de la trame qui fait le lien entre les générations." Kovalevsky, "Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne," 183-194.

perceptions and experiences into sound. Of all the arts, music is the one most capable of manifesting the interior dimension of human experience; it wields a formidable evocative power and is capable of stirring and calling forth the whole spectrum of human emotions.

The evanescence of music distinguishes it from the other arts. Architecture, sculpture, and painting are characterized by a relative permanence; music is a succession of fugitive sounds, each one organically linked to the next by means of memory. Unlike the painting and the sculpture which subsist materially after their creation, of music there remains only what the memory has garnered. Stravinsky writes:

The plastic arts are presented to us in space: we receive an over-all impression before we discover details little by little and at our leisure. But music is based on temporal succession and requires alertness of memory.

Consequently music is a chronologic art, as painting is a spatial art. Music presupposes before all else a certain organization in time, a chrononomy.⁴⁸

For discourse to have meaning, memory must assume the task of linking together the succession of words. Liturgical chant, being heightened discourse, engages the memory of both singer and hearer, becoming a disclosure, in time, of

48. Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, 29.

the timeless mystery, a contemplative unfolding of the Word. “The unfolding of your Word gives light, and teaches the simple” (Ps 118:130).

The intimate connection between music and memory links both the performance and the audition of music to the spiritual dimension of human nature. Impregnating the consciousness by means of the memory, music reaches into the depths of the psyche, and rouses the most diverse human potentialities. Music is always an act of co-creation achieved by the composer, the performer and the auditor. For this reason, chant is among the most important means of the “full, conscious and actual participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy.”⁴⁹

The specific form of ritual music is determined by the metaphysical system of the religion it serves. Kovalevsky observes that a religion worshiping the forces of nature will prefer wind or percussion instruments to the human voice, and primitive rhythms to oratorical ones. The ancient Greeks preferred a sung poetry accompanied by isolated notes on stringed instruments as expressive of the harmony between human reason, and the ordered forces of the universe.⁵⁰ The oral

49. SC, n. 14.

50. Kovalevsky, “Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne,” 186. For a technical exposition of the musical theory of the ancient Greeks, see Isabel Henderson, “Ancient Greek Music,” in *Ancient and Oriental Music*, ed. E. Wellesz (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), 336-403. See also E. Wellesz, *Byzantine Music and Hymnography*, 46-122.

preaching of the Gospel, rooted in the Semitic understanding of the word as creative presence and event (*dâbâr*), contributed to the emergence of a specifically Christian liturgical chant marked by three attributes: breath, interiority, and freedom.⁵¹

Breath

The breath of God is the very transmission of life. “The Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being” (Gen 2:7). The breath of God is indissociable from the word of God, and the word of God cannot be uttered save in a communication of the breath of God.

By breathing and by speaking, the human person, fully alive, expresses likeness to God. Breath, life, and word constitute an inseparable triad in the divine economy of creation and redemption. “The words that I have spoken to you, says Jesus, are spirit and life” (Jn 6:63).

51. “La révolution chrétienne, en effet, ouvre à l’ensemble des peuples méditerranéens, et ensuite à toute l’humanité, une vision rénovée du monde. C’est la vision biblique avec toute sa profondeur sémitique traditionnelle, rajeunie et transformée par la prédication orale de la Bonne Nouvelle de libération et de résurrection.” Kovalevsky, “Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne,” 186.

The Christian tradition invests breath and word with a Trinitarian significance.⁵² Human breath and human utterance, especially within the liturgical assembly, become symbolic of the Spirit and Word of God. For Saint Irenaeus, “the Spirit manifests the Word, but the Word articulates the Spirit.”⁵³ By means of the Spirit and the Word, the Father reveals himself. Again, by means of the Spirit and the Word, the Father draws his human creature into the circle of divine life. Similarly, by means of breath and word, the Christian “confesses with his lips” (Rom 10:10), “calls upon the name of the Lord” (Rom 10:13), and “sings psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” (Col 3:16). The Spirit and the Word together constitute liturgical chant’s divine archetype. Breath and word, then, are the indispensable human components of liturgical chant.⁵⁴

Interiority

Liturgical chant originates in the Word, but germinates in silence, and in the secret of the heart. The psalmist prays, “teach me wisdom in my secret heart” (Ps

52. “By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth” (Ps 32:6). In this verse Eusebius, Basil, Athanasius, and Jerome, among others, see an image of the Trinity. See Claude Jean-Nesmy, *La tradition médite le psautier chrétien* (Paris: Editions Téqui, 1973), 137.

53. Irenaeus of Lyons, *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, trans. Joseph P. Smith (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1952), 51.

54. “L’homme est créé de la terre, mais animé par le *souffle* de Dieu et, grâce à ce souffle, il est l’image de Dieu. D'où l'extrême importance du souffle, synonyme d'esprit, et son rôle de véhiculer des paroles sacrées.” Kovalevsky, “Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne,” 186.

50:6), before asking, “O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth your praise” (Ps 50:15). Paul F. Ford writes that, “the movement is first from the Word outside to the Word inside, from ears to heart.”⁵⁵ The Word, descending from above, is received, held, and hidden within, before taking flight heavenward in “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” (Col 3:16).

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not thither but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it (Is 55:10-11).

Liturgical chant, quickened by the descending Word, erupts from within, like “a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (Jn 4:14). Its vital principle is interior; its origin in the “sighs too deep for words” (Rom 8:26) of the Spirit’s intercession for the saints. Robert Hugh Benson writes that,

Music and its relation to man’s inner nature, has not yet been adequately considered. All other arts are imitative or descriptive: music is creative. Painting imitates colours: not so music, a bird’s song, or thunder. Music, it may well be, rises from a spring within man himself, and if imitative at all is imitative of something beyond the world of sense.⁵⁶

55. Ford, *By Flowing Waters*, xvi.

56. Quoted by C. C. Martindale in *The Life of Monsignor Robert Hugh Benson*, vol. II (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1916), 344.

Unlike the music of the ancient Greeks which sought to harmonize itself with the external forces of the universe, Christian liturgical chant begins in “the hidden part,”⁵⁷ in the secret place where the Word attunes the human spirit to the Spirit of God.⁵⁸

Freedom

The preaching of the Gospel links freedom to truth. “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free” (Jn 8:31-32). In the Christian dispensation, knowledge of the truth is a gift freely given by God in Christ, and assimilated progressively by the believer under the influence of the Holy Spirit. The place of this progressive assimilation by “continuing in the word,” is the cyclical and repetitive enactment of the liturgy.

The word, says Abraham Joshua Heschel, is dark. This is the task of him who prays: to kindle a light in the word. Humbly we must approach both the word and the chant. We must never forget that the word is deeper than our thought, that the song is more sublime than our voice.⁵⁹

57. “In occulto sapientiam manifestasti mihi.” (Ps 50:6)

58. “Le royaume des cieux n'est ni un lieu ni une loi extérieure, il est à l'intérieur de nous. Aucune forme extérieure ne peut donc entièrement déterminer notre vie interieure.” Kovalevsky, “Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne,” 186.

59. Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom: Essays on Human Existence* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1966), 251.

Singing the liturgy, the heart feeds upon truth, and so grows in freedom.⁶⁰

The spiritual resonance of Christian liturgical chant is proportionate to the subject's inner adhesion to the truth it proclaims. "A word has a soul, and we must learn how to gain insights into its life. Words are commitments, not only the subject matter for aesthetic reflection."⁶¹ Liturgical chant, by inviting commitment to the word, becomes a transforming encounter with Christ, sent to proclaim release to captives and to set at liberty those who are oppressed (cf. Lk 4:18). At the same time, by confronting both singers and hearers with the Word of truth, liturgical chant is an agent of ongoing spiritual liberation or conversion of life.⁶²

Breath, interiority, and freedom emanate from the heart of the Gospel, and resonate in every enactment of the liturgy. To sustain and communicate these realities in the midst of the Christian people, a new ministerial art was born, an

60. Freedom here corresponds to Cassian's *purity of heart*. See John Cassian, *Conferences*, I, 6-7, trans. Colm Luibheid (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 39. By associating growth in inner freedom to the work of liturgical chant, the ascetical and aesthetical aspects of the liturgy, often seen in antinomy, are synthesized in the liturgy, the primary locus of personal and corporate conversion.

61. Heschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 249.

62. La vérité (justesse) nous rend *libres*. Cette vérité n'est ni naturelle ni intellectuelle. C'est un don accordé d'en-haut et assimilé vitalement, progressivement, comme une nourriture par l'être total. Le centre vital de l'homme n'est pas le cerveau mais le "coeur," l'être global." Kovalevsky, "Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne," 186.

indispensable complement of apostolic preaching: Christian liturgical chant.⁶³ In response to the exigencies of the developing liturgy, Christian liturgical chant, in both form and performance, came to be associated with a certain number of identifying characteristics: (1) the human voice as instrument, (2) chant as sung speech, (3) the objective delivery of the sacred text, (4) chant as holy and hallowing, and, finally, (5) chant as a means to “that full, conscious, and actual participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy.”⁶⁴

63. “Les documents historiques et les témoignages des Pères des premiers siècles sont concordants pour affirmer que, sans hésitation, l’Eglise est amenée à assigner des buts précis à sa musique: *exprimer* des démarches intérieures de l’homme sans intermédiaire mécanique; *soutenir*, *préciser*, et *sanctifier* la parole; *libérer* les participants au culte des contingences du monde extérieur pour les rendre *disponibles* à l’action de grâce; favoriser *l’assimilation* et la *remémoration* de l’enseignement. Ces buts imposeront tout naturellement le choix des matériaux mis en oeuvre dans l’élaboration de la musique liturgique chrétienne.” Ibid., 186–187.

64. “Valde cupid Mater Ecclesia ut fideles universi ad plenam illam, consiam atque actuosam liturgicarum celebrationum participationem ducantur, quae ad ipsius Liturgiae natura postulatur et ad quam populus christianus ‘genus electum, regale sacerdotium, gens sancta, populus adquisitionis’ (I Petr. 2, 9; cf. 2, 4-5), vi Baptismatis ius habet et officium.” SC, n. 14.

Five Identifying Characteristics of Liturgical Chant

The Human Voice

In the liturgy, the human voice is irreplaceable.⁶⁵ “In no other way does man reveal himself so completely as in the way he sings. For the voice of a person, particularly when in song, is the soul in its full nakedness.”⁶⁶ Only the human voice, a coincidence of breath and word, can express directly the inner movements of the heart.⁶⁷ Clement of Alexandria offers a profoundly theological justification for the absolute primacy accorded the human voice in Christian worship:

The Word of God, scorning the lyre and cithara as lifeless instruments, and having rendered harmonious by the Holy Spirit both this cosmos and even man the microcosm, made up of body and soul—he sings to God on his many-voiced instrument and he sings to man, himself an instrument: “You are my cithara, my aulos and my temple,” a cithara because of harmony, and aulos because of spirit, and a temple because of the word, so that the first might strum, the second might breathe, and the third might encompass the Lord. . . . The Lord made man a beautiful breathing instrument after his own image; certainly he is himself an all harmonious

65. “Seule la voix humaine (le souffle-esprit) est jugée capable d’exprimer directement l’être intérieur, la ‘pensée du cœur.’ La musique sera donc purement vocale.” Kovalevsky, “Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne,” 187.

66. Heschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 251–252.

67. Paul F. Ford intuits this in speaking of “song supported by wonderfully resonant buildings, so that even and perhaps especially when it was unaccompanied, its simplicity conveyed the words right down into the heart.” Ford, *By Flowing Waters*, xix.

instrument of God, well-tuned and holy, the transcendental wisdom, the heavenly Word.⁶⁸

The human person, created in the image and likeness of the Word, is, like the Word, “a beautiful breathing instrument,” destined by the Father “to the praise of his glorious grace” (Eph 1:6).⁶⁹

Voces, rather than instruments, ought to be heard in the church: the voices of the clergy, the choir, and the congregation. Nor should it be deemed that the Church, in preferring the human voice to any musical instrument, is obstructing the progress of music; for no instrument, however perfect, however excellent, can surpass the human voice in expressing human thought, especially

68 Clement of Alexandria, “Protrepticus,” in *Music in Early Christian Literature*, ed. McKinnon, 30.

69. This same theological anthropology is implicit in more recent liturgical law’s defense of the irreplaceable value of human breath and human word in worship: “The use of mechanical instruments and devices—such as the “player” organ, phonograph, radio, tape recorder or wire recorder, and other similar devices—is absolutely forbidden in liturgical services. . . even if their use is limited to transmitting sermons or sacred music, or substituting for the singing of the faithful or even supporting it.” “Instruction of the S. C. of Rites on Sacred Music and the Sacred Liturgy,” September 3, 1958, in *The Liturgy, Papal Teachings*, ed. Benedictine Monks (Boston: Saint Paul Editions, 1962), 603-604.

The same position was reiterated after the Second Vatican Council: “The Church wishes at all costs to maintain fidelity to that ‘worship in spirit and in truth’ that the Lord Jesus has initiated. That brings in human beings, in their complete person, body and soul; their participation in the mystery of salvation, present sacramentally and at work, engages their whole being. Neither the celebrant, the people in the body of the church, nor the organist can be reduced to the status of a machine, a robot, a tape recorder. Theirs must be the presence of the holy people of God, praying, singing, playing music in a single-minded faith, a vital hope, and a burning charity.” Editorial, “Mécanique et liturgie” in *Notitiae* 3 (1967), 3-4. See also Richard J. Schuler, “Taped Music” in *Sacred Music* 112 (Spring 1985), 3-4.

when it is used by the mind to offer up prayer and praise to God.⁷⁰

The prohibition of musical instruments in favor of the unaccompanied human voice was universally observed in the West until the ninth century; in the East it is observed to this day.⁷¹ Historically, the exclusion of musical instruments from the liturgy proceeds not only from the Church's desire to banish from her cult anything redolent of worldly entertainment, but also from a lofty theological anthropology.⁷² "The notes previously observed as issuing from musical instruments are now seen to emanate from the rational bodies of men."⁷³

Sung Speech

Liturgical chant is sung speech, and not the application of a pre-established music, composed of independently determined notes and rhythms, to a text.

70. Pius XI, Apostolic Constitution of 20 December 1928, "Divini Cultus," in *Papal Teachings, The Liturgy*, ed. The Benedictine Monks of Solesmes; trans. The Daughters of St. Paul (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1962), 251.

71. See Kovalevsky, "Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne," 187.

72. As late as 1749, Pope Benedict XIV was able to write: "The use of the organ and musical instruments is not yet admitted by all the Christian world. . . . Our Pontifical Chapel, although allowing musical chant on condition that it be serious, decent and devout, has never allowed the organ. . . . No use is made of organ music; only vocal music, of grave rhythm, is allowed with plainchant." Benedict XIV, Encyclical *Annus Qui*, February 19, 1749 in *The Liturgy, Papal Teachings*, 53.

73. Cassiodorus, *Explanation of the Psalms*, vol. I, trans. P.G. Walsh (New York: Paulist Press, 1990), 25.

Language is an art. In church music this becomes crucial, because this art form must be most perfectly blended with music which gives it utterance. Having the musical skills is basic only in as much as it is the voice by which the art of language is expressed in all its poetic power and beauty. But the words themselves have their own music, in motion and pause, as they pulse like life itself forming intricate connections through flowing nuance and inflection, rhythm and phrase, carrying within them the vision and revelation of life being given to be celebrated as worship.⁷⁴

Liturgical chant is not a question of “words for the music” but, rather, of “music for the words” or of “music *in* the words.” The cantilena is born of the text itself; it surges and falls with the contours of the spoken discourse and brings its “cantus obscurior”⁷⁵ to the surface by lifting into formulaic patterns the musicality inherent in the flow of speech.

Music is the soul of language. A good sentence is more than a series of words grouped together. A sentence without a tone, without a musical quality, is like a body without a soul. The secret of a good sentence lies in the creation of a tonal quality to correspond to the meaning of the words. There has to be a harmony of the right tone and the right words.⁷⁶

74. Glagolev, “An Introduction to the Interpretation of Liturgical Music,” 24.

75. Cicero *Orator* 57: “In dicendo quidam cantus obscurior.”

76. Heschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 248.

Liturgical chant requires a melody — a tonal quality to correspond to the meaning of the words — that, arising organically from the sacred text, espouses what Dom Cardines called, “the natural plasticity of the word.”⁷⁷ Its mission is fulfilled when the song buried in the sacred text rises on the wings of the cantilena.

Objectivity

The precise and intelligible communication of liturgical texts within the worshiping assembly requires an accurate and objective delivery. In the simplest cantillations, as in its more ornate forms, liturgical chant remains a technique of oral communication “at the service of the word and of the community, whose free access to the word must be respected to the uttermost degree.”⁷⁸ Objectivity pertains not only to the naked text but to its theological meaning as well. The fullness of tradition is the transmission not only of the sacred text, but of its theological meaning as well. Of this fullness, ordinary speech is an inadequate vehicle.

Words die of routine. The Cantor’s task is to bring them to life. A Cantor is a person who knows the secret of the resurrection of the words. The art of giving life to the words of our liturgy requires not only the personal involvement of the Cantor but also the power contained

77. Eugène Cardine, O.S.B., *Beginning Studies in Gregorian Chant*, trans. William Tortolano (Chicago: G.I.A. Publications, 1988), I.

78. Lossky, “Some Thoughts on Liturgical Music,” 8.

in the piety of the ages. Our liturgy contains incomparably more than what our hearts are ready to feel. . . . There is a written and an unwritten liturgy. There is the liturgy but there is also an inner approach and response to it, a way of giving life to the words, a style in which the words become a personal and unique utterance.⁷⁹

The liturgical cantilena follows a fixed cursus of accents and emphases; it delivers the text itself — and more than the text — in an objective manner. At some level, the liturgical cantilena suggests that the meaning of words lies beyond the mere delivery of a text; the cantilena preserves and transmits meaning.⁸⁰ Kovalesky argues that objectivity requires the cantillation of all sacred texts and the elimination of ordinary conversational discourse from the liturgy.⁸¹ It invites to a real communion with generations of singers and hearers who, in the past, filled their mouths and ears, their minds and hearts, with the same words.

79. Herschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 251.

80. It is, for example, one thing to read the text of the Lamentations appointed for *Tenebrae*, the Night Offices of the last days of Holy Week. It is quite another thing to sing or to hear them clothed in one or another of the ancient chant melodies that, while they deliver the text, express more than the text. The cantilena faithfully and objectively transmits the meaning of the text as received, repeated, and prayed by the Church through the ages.

81. “Seule une cantilène fixant traditionnellement les accents logiques et emphatiques de la phrase, assure la transmission rigoureuse d'une pensée orale à travers les siècles. D'où l'obligation de cantiler les textes sacrés en éliminant des offices le parler courant. . . . Toute parole émise au cours de l'office doit être chantée ou cantillée. Le verbe ‘parlé’ n'est réservé qu'à la prédication. Kovalevsky, “Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne,” 187, 192.

Holy and Hallowing

Traditional chant formulae may be described as both holy and hallowing.

Liturgical chant clothes the language of the *theologia prima* with dignity and reverence. Its sacred character accommodates the word *from* God, the word *to* God, and the word *about* God in the most suitable way.

Chant is holy by reason of its origin in the Word. It is to be considered the more holy, the more closely connected it is with the Word of God, and with the liturgical action in “the assembly of the saints” (Ps 149:1).⁸² Kept alive in the collective memory of the Church, liturgical chant hallows both singer and hearer by fostering the contemplative assimilation of the sacred texts, and by serving as a sign and bond of communion with a long line of singing forbears. As a sacramental expression of ecclesial prayer, liturgical chant mediates and expresses the encounter with the Holy.

In the enactment of the liturgy, chant is a sacred doorway to the numinous. The creative reconfiguration of formulaic musical patterns, adapted to the form and theological meaning of the word, creates within the memory of the subject a store of associations with previously assimilated experiences of the Holy. The simplest melodic formula has strong evocative power capable of “opening a door

82. Cf. SC, n. 112.

through which Mystery approaches the creature, and the creature moves out in response.”⁸³ The first few notes of the *Exultet* intoned at the Paschal Vigil suffice to evoke the glory of the Paschal Mystery in the hearts of the hearers.⁸⁴ The same may be said of other chants repeated year after year at fixed moments in the liturgical cycle and, most notably, of those that, in the *Graduale Romanum*, mark the celebration of the Paschal Triduum. Each repetition of the symbolic word contextualizes and re-contextualizes it in an ever-deepening perception of the *theologia prima* that reaches from one generation of saints to the next.

Active and Conscious Participation

Already in 1903, in terms that would be taken up and amplified by the Second Vatican Council, Pius X called “active participation in the most sacred mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church . . . the first and

83. Evelyn Underhill, *Worship* (New York: Harper and Row, Torchbook Edition, 1957), 21. Illustrating this, Saint John Cassian writes: “Once when I was singing the psalms a verse of it put me in the way of the prayer of fire. Or sometimes the musical expression of a brother’s voice has moved sluggish minds to the most intense prayer.” *Conferences*, IX, 26, trans. Colm Luibheid, 117. The experiences described are not of the aesthetic order but rather illustrate the potential of liturgical chant to dispose the worshiper to a transforming encounter with the Holy.

84. Concerning the *Exultet*, R.H. Benson writes: “It was a song such as none but a Christian could ever sing. It soared, dropped, quavered, leapt again, laughed, danced, rippled, sank, leapt once more, on and on, untiring and undismayed, like a stream running clear to the sea. Angels, earth, trumpets, Mother Church, all nations, and all peoples sang in its singing. And I, in my stiff pew, smiled all over my face with sheer joy and love.” Quoted by C.C. Martindale, *The Life of Monsignor Robert High Benson*, vol. I, 293.

indispensable source of the Christian spirit.”⁸⁵ Twenty-five years later, his successor Pius XI enjoined the Catholic faithful “once more to sing the Gregorian Chant, so far as it belongs to them to take part in it. . . . Filled with a deep sense of the beauty of the liturgy, they should sing alternately with the clergy or the choir, as it is prescribed.”⁸⁶ The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, promulgated on 4 December 1963, identified “full and active participation by all the people” as the “aim to be considered above all else in the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy.”⁸⁷ It is clear that chant fosters “full, conscious, and active participation”⁸⁸ in the liturgy by engaging the assembly in both listening and singing. Abraham Joshua Heschel offers a reflection that is as refreshing as it is realistic: “People may not be able to pray; they are all able to chant. And chant leads to prayer.”⁸⁹

The attribution of various forms of liturgical chant to the presider, deacon, psalmist or cantor, schola, and assembly is neither arbitrary nor optional; it pertains to the essential nature of the liturgy as a corporate action of the whole

85. Pius X, “Tra le sollecitudini,” 178.

86. Pius XI, “Divini Cultus,” 252.

87. “Quae totius populi plena et actuosa participatio, in instauranda et fovenda sacra Liturgia, summopere est attendenda.” SC, n. 14.

88. Ibid.

89. Heschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 247.

worshiping Church.⁹⁰ The cantillation of eucharistic texts, of readings and of psalmody invites the assembly to listen actively. Simple and adaptable musical formulas of cantillation have withstood the test of time in diverse liturgical traditions, not only because of their intrinsic artistic value, but also because of their proven ritual functionality. They effectively stimulate active and intentional listening.⁹¹

The chants of the assembly, for their part, require a cantilena that springs from the liturgical texts themselves and expresses their natural verbal inflections by means of simple musical formulae adapted to the specific liturgical function of each piece.⁹² A composition that does not belong to the liturgy and lead more deeply into the mystery celebrated, even though it be sung with full-voiced enthusiasm by all, cannot be qualified a true expression of conscious and active participation in the liturgical action.⁹³ Active participation implies that the

90. The liturgy is the “*actio Christi et populi Dei hierarchice ordinati.*” See IGRM, n. 16.

91. On recitation formulae for readings, see D. Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 54-58.

92. Examples from the Roman liturgy abound: the various dialogues and acclamations, the simple tone of the *Te Deum*, the brief responsories of Lauds and Vespers, *Gloria XV*, *Credo I*, and *Sanctus XVIII*. *By Flowing Waters* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1999), Paul F. Ford’s English presentation of the *Graduale Simplex*, is a recent work, illustrating the same timeless principle.

93. “È la Messa, Ordinario et Proprio, che si deve cantare, en non ‘qualcosa’, anche se *plane congruit*, che si sovrappone alla Messa. Perché l’*azione* è unica, ha un solo volto, un solo accento, una sola voce: la voce della Chiesa. Continuare a cantare mottetti, sia pure devoti e pii (come il *Lauda Sion* all’offertorio nella festa di un santo), ma estranei alla Messa, in luogo dei testi della Messa che si

assembly is singing the liturgy itself, beginning with the dialogical chants, acclamations and refrains.⁹⁴

Unlike standard hymn singing, the performance of which is relatively uniform and congregational, liturgical chant privileges the responsorial, dialogical, antiphonal and acclamatory modes of performance. These, being among the most effective forms of active sung participation, manifest more adequately the mystery of the Church as a eucharistic organism of different members, characterized by “the order of symphony, an order in liberty and in love.”⁹⁵

celebra, significa continuare un’ambiguità inammissibile: dare crusca invece di buon frumento, vinello annacquato invece di vino generoso. Perché non solo la melodia che interessa nel canto liturgico, ma le parole, il testo, il pensiero, i sentimenti rivestiti di poesia et di melodia. Ora, questi testi devono essere quelli della Messa, non altri. Cantare *la Messe*, dunque, e non solo cantare *durante* la Messa.” Sacred Congregation of Rites, “Cantare la Messa e non cantare durante la Messa,” 406. See a rather laconic English translation of the same text in DOL, 1299.

94. The most comprehensive document of the post-conciliar period on singing the liturgy is the instruction of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, *Musicam Sacram*, issued 5 March 1967. (For the Latin text, see *Notitiae* 3 (1967): 81-108, and for the English translation, see DOL, 1293-1306.) *Musicam Sacram* presents the sung celebration as normative. Contrary to a widely-held misconception, the fully sung celebration is not a solemnization of the spoken form of the liturgy; on the contrary, the spoken form is derived from the fully sung celebration which is normative. See the (untitled) introduction to *Musicam Sacram* by L. Agustoni in *Notitiae* 3 (1967), 82.

95. Staniloae, *Theology and the Church*, 71.

Liturgical Chant in Context

Silence

The context of liturgical chant is, before and after anything else, silence. It originates, with the word, in silence. Like the Word, it “springs from the silence.”⁹⁶

It is the task of man to reveal what is concealed; to be the voice of the glory, to sing its silence, to utter, so to speak, what is in the heart of all things. The glory is here — invisible and silent. Man is the voice; his task is to be the song. The cosmos is a congregation in need of a Cantor. . . . Wherever there is life, there is silent worship.⁹⁷

Silence precedes liturgical chant; rhythms it, and prolongs it. Even after the singing has ceased, the word continues to resonate. Liturgical chant leaves singers and listeners alike in a heightened awareness of the divine presence, drawing them into a silence that, according to the psalmist, is itself praise: “Tibi silens laus” (Ps 64:2). John Breck writes that “ultimately, proclamation and celebration of the Word must resolve into silence.”⁹⁸ The silence generated by liturgical chant is

96. Ignatius of Antioch, *Lettres*, ed. Pierre Thomas Camelot, Sources Chrétiennes (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1988), vol. 10, 102.

97. Herschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 245.

98. Breck, *The Power of the Word*, 21.

charged with the resonance of the Word. It transforms the place of worship into an “awesome place,” into “the house of God and the gate of heaven” (Gen 28:17).

The Ministerial Function of Chant

Chant springs from silence in the liturgy in order to fulfill a “ministerial function in the service of the Lord.”⁹⁹

As a combination of sacred music and words, the musical tradition of the universal Church forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy. . . . It makes prayer more pleasing, promotes unity of minds, and confers greater solemnity upon the sacred rites. . . . Liturgical worship is given a more noble form when the divine offices are celebrated solemnly in song with the assistance of sacred ministers and the active participation of the people.¹⁰⁰

In his “Introduction to the Interpretation of Liturgical Music,” Father Sergei Glagolev, writing from an Eastern Orthodox perspective, complements the teachings of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* and brings them into clearer focus. Glagolev unfolds the ministerial function of liturgical chant along the following lines: (1) *synactic* — to assemble the Church, the people of God “hierarchically arrayed” for celebration; (2) *rubrical* — to order time, place, space, and dimension; (3) *ritual* — to give voice to the dialogues, acclamations, proclamations, readings,

99. SC, n. 112.

100. Ibid.

psalmody, and eucological texts of the liturgy; (4) *ceremonial* — to clothe the sacred action in solemnity and beauty; (5) *synoptic* — to hold together the whole experience of the liturgical action as something more than the sum of its component parts.¹⁰¹

Synactic

Chant assembles in unity those who come together to perform a common work, the liturgy. Liturgical chant's synactic function pertains to the question of ordered corporate participation in the *actio*. “Each person, minister or layman, who has an office to perform, should do all of, but only, those parts which pertain to his office by the nature of the rite and the principles of liturgy.”¹⁰² The cumulation of diverse and complementary liturgical roles by one individual entails a loss of active participation and of order. Even the smallest liturgical *synaxis* can express the mystery of the Church as the Body of Christ and the earthly reflection of the heavenly and Trinitarian *leitourgia* by maintaining the diversification of roles which, while functional in practice, is profoundly theological in meaning. Sung liturgy assures the proper distinction of roles while promoting the unity of the worshiping body.

101. See Glagolev, “An Introduction to the Interpretation of Liturgical Music,” 25.

102. SC, n. 28.

Euchological texts receive a musical treatment not unlike that of the readings. Joseph Gélineau describes the cantillation of the priest:

The pre-eminence of the celebrant's song finds expression in the music which is the vehicle of his prayer. . . . He makes no pretensions to be a virtuoso. Just a few notes, a few melodic formulas which are restrained in character and fixed by law serve him in his prayer or thanksgiving. Here is no exercise of the fine arts, but only the perfection of practical art in the mouth of the "sacrificer," that is, the "artisan of the sacred."¹⁰³

The priest celebrant, the *artisan of the sacred*, serves most effectively when he makes use of his voice as the human means by which the prayer and thanksgiving of the total Christ, Head and members, ascends to the Father, in the Holy Spirit.¹⁰⁴ By obliging the presider to engage in dialogue with the assembly, to pray in the plural *we*, and to solicit repeatedly the assent of the people, expressed by *Amen*, the liturgy strikes at the root of individualistic piety and subjective interpretation. The simple, hieratic cantillations of the various liturgical traditions invite the presider to humble service of the mysteries and to iconic transparency.

103. Gélineau, *Chant et musique dans le culte chrétien*, 74.

104. Heschel's reflection on the ministry of the Jewish Cantor, while valuable for all called to sing in the liturgical assembly, is poignantly applicable to the ministry of the priest celebrant invited by the rubrics to lift his voice in song, particularly in the anaphora. "A Cantor who faces holiness in the Ark rather than the curiosity of man will realize that his audience is God. He will learn to realize that his task is not to entertain but to represent the people Israel. He will be carried away into moments in which he will forget the world, ignore the congregation, and be overcome by the awareness of Him in whose presence he stands. The congregation will hear and sense that the Cantor is not giving a recital but worshiping God, that to pray does not mean to listen to a singer but to identify oneself with what is being proclaimed in their name." Heschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom*, 247.

The dialogical and responsorial nature of liturgical chant allows even the smallest *synaxis* to celebrate a sung liturgy. While much of the repertoire of religious music and even of popular religious song is often beyond the musical capabilities of small liturgical assemblies, simple ritual cantillations lend themselves to assemblies of modest dimensions as well as to larger ones. The implementation of the dialogical and responsorial chants of the liturgy demonstrates that the liturgical action engages the whole Church in call and response; in listening and in speaking; in praise, supplication and thanksgiving.

Rubrical

Glagolev qualifies the ministerial function of chant as rubrical when it orders “time, place, space, dimension and relation by giving substance to the movement and material of worship.”¹⁰⁵ Within its liturgical context, chant effects and manifests order. It marks the beginning of the *actio*, as well as its progressive unfolding. The chants of the ministers and of the assembly link the various moments of ritual time and space and sing the theology proper to each moment and place.

Processional chants accompany passage from one place to another and reveal the theological significance of ritual movement. Other chants illustrate the

105. Glagolev, “An Introduction to the Interpretation of Liturgical Music,” 25.

architectural spaces which they, in some measure, define: the narthex, nave, ambo, choir, and altar. Conversely, the organization of ritual space, in some way, offers a hermeneutical key to the various chants of the liturgy. For instance, in commenting on the significance of the ambo from which, a reader or psalmist, delivers the word, Paul De Clerck notes that,

This arrangement of space constitutes a proclamation: it expresses that someone is speaking to us, that a word is coming to us; this word does not come from the assembly, but is intended for the assembly, from a place that is not its own. . . . The failure to differentiate liturgical settings causes a blurring of the functions, and leads to their becoming banal.¹⁰⁶

Chants intoned from the narthex and continued in procession contextualize movement to the altar and articulate a theology of the Church in progress towards the Kingdom.¹⁰⁷ For Joseph Jungmann, the entrance procession ought “to be distinguished as a movement to prayer, as an approach to God’s majesty.”¹⁰⁸ Schmemann maintains that “the idea of *entrance* has a truly decisive significance for

106. Paul De Clerck, “In the beginning was the Word”: Presidential Address,” *Studia Liturgica* 22 (1992): 2.

107. In characteristically poetic language, Zundel describes the eschatological significance of the entrance chant: “The Introit greets us at the entrance of the Mass. It is like a triumphal arch at the head of a Roman road, a porch through which we approach the Mystery, a hand outstretched to a crying child, a beloved companion in the sorrow of exile. The Liturgy is not a formula. It is One who comes to meet us.” *The Splendour of the Liturgy*, 44.

108. Joseph A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite, Its Origins and Development*, Volume One, trans. Francis A. Brunner (Westminster: Christian Classics, Inc., 1992), 266.

the understanding of the eucharist.”¹⁰⁹ While the specific ritual function of different processional chants varies,¹¹⁰ by their very nature they suggest one theological reality: “the ascent and entry of the Church into the heavenly sanctuary.”¹¹¹

A chant intoned from the ambo is word *from* God addressed to the assembly. Its particular musical form is commanded by the need for an objective, intelligible delivery of the message. In both Jewish and Christian tradition, chant is the normal medium for the liturgical proclamation of Holy Scripture.¹¹² By means of simple melodic formulae, adapted to the punctuation, accents, and cadences of the text, the word is presented audibly, intelligibly, and objectively.¹¹³ Not only does the ritual cantillation of the sacred text reduce the need for artificial amplification

109. Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 50.

110. The Mass of the revised Roman Rite includes processions at the entrance, Gospel, offertory, and communion, each with a corresponding chant. In addition, there are processions peculiar to certain days and rites, each with proper chants. The procession of the *adoratio crucis* on Good Friday, the procession with the Paschal Candle, and the procession to the baptismal font at the Paschal Vigil belong to the latter category. The current, revised Roman Liturgy of the Hours proposes a procession to the font at Baptismal Vespers on Easter.

111. Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 50.

112. “In the words of Rabbi Yohanan, ‘If one reads Scripture without a melody or repeats the Mishnah without a tune, of him Scripture says, *Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good* (Ezekiel 20:25). . . . Torah without a tune is devoid of spirit.’” Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man, A Philosophy of Judaism* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1983), 355.

113. See J. Gélineau, *Chant et musique dans le culte chrétien*, 77.

of the voice; it resurrects words, lifting them above the personal, the subjective, and the informative. The cantillation of the gospel, in particular, disposes the hearers to experience its mysterious power: the presence of Christ and the action of the Holy Spirit.¹¹⁴

Chant from the ambo, be it the cantillation of readings, or the psalmody that follows the reading, elicits a response from the assembly. The sung response of the assembly can be a short acclamation after the readings,¹¹⁵ or the repetition of a simple refrain after the verses of the psalm.¹¹⁶

114. “The working of the Holy Spirit is needed if the word of God is to make what we hear outwardly have its effect inwardly. Because of the Holy Spirit’s inspiration and support, the word of God becomes the foundation of the liturgical celebration and the rule and support of all our life. The working of the Holy Spirit precedes, accompanies, and brings to completion the whole celebration of the Liturgy.” “Introduction to the Lectionary,” n. 9, xvi.

115. “Even if the Gospel itself is not sung, it is appropriate for the greeting *The Lord be with you*, and *A reading from the holy Gospel according to . . .*, and at the end *The Gospel of the Lord* to be sung, in order that the congregation may also sing its acclamations. . . . At the conclusion of the other readings, *The word of the Lord* may be sung, even by someone other than the reader; all respond with the acclamation. In this way the assembled congregation pays reverence to the word of God it has listened to in faith and gratitude.” “Introduction” in the *Lectionary for Mass*, nn. 17–18, xviii.

116. “As a rule the responsorial psalm should be sung. There are two ways of singing the psalm after the first reading: responsorially and directly. In responsorial singing, which, as far as possible, is to be given preference, the psalmist, or cantor of the psalm, sings the psalm verse and the whole congregation joins in by singing the response. In direct singing of the psalm there is no intervening response by the community; either the psalmist, or cantor of the psalm, sings the psalm alone as the community listens or else all sing it together.

The singing of the psalm, or even of the response alone, is a great help toward understanding and meditating on the psalm’s spiritual meaning.” “Introduction” in the *Lectionary for Mass*, nn. 20–21, xix.

Chants “from the nave” — that is, belonging to the people — are characteristically brief enough to be sung from memory. They are, almost without exception, dialogical, acclamatory, or responsorial in nature. The dialogical character of certain chants, alternated between the altar and the nave, in particular those of the anaphora, suggests the essentially corporate ordering of the *actio*, in which a diversity of roles call forth and express the unity of the Church.¹¹⁷ Chant alternated between two facing choirs, especially the psalmody of the Hours, evokes yet another ecclesiology: the ministry of the members of Christ one to another, proffering and receiving the word of life.

Chant intoned from the altar is word *to* God, primarily eucharistic or doxological in nature. Its musical form must allow for the intelligibility of the eucharistic text and have, at the same time, a certain lyrical quality. The tones given in the *Missale Romanum* for the anaphora and, in particular, for the Preface, exemplify this sober lyricism.¹¹⁸

The rubrical function of liturgical chant orders the relations between God and his people; between Christ and the Church; among members of the worshiping assembly; among human beings and angels. It orders exchanges between heaven

117. See MR, 516.

118. Ibid., 516-517 and 623-662.

and earth, and between the Kingdom of God sacramentally anticipated and the whole creation “groaning in travail” (Rom 8:22). Chant is communication. The specifically theological value of a chanted text derives, then, not only from what is sung, but by whom it is sung and to whom it is addressed.

Ritual

Glagolev defines the ministerial function of chant as ritual when it takes “the rubrical substance of what is being ‘said’ in the dialogue, didache,¹¹⁹ kerygma¹²⁰ and the prophecy¹²¹ of sacred worship” and gives it voice in sacred worship.”¹²² In addition to Glagolev’s four categories of liturgical word, another — euchology — may be useful.

Dialogue in the liturgy is not the casual exchange of social convention; chant, by ritualizing both greeting and reply, breathes grace through them, and gives them liturgical idoneity. The *Ordo Missae* prescribes a greeting and reply at the introductory rites, before the proclamation of the gospel, at the beginning of the

119. Teaching or instruction.

120. Proclamation or announcement.

121. Inspired utterance in the name of God.

122. Glagolev, “An Introduction,” 25.

anaphora, at the sign of peace, and at the dismissal. Foremost among the sung dialogic elements of the liturgy is the sublime exchange of the *Sursum corda*.¹²³

Didache pertains to the “word *about* God.” “Although the sacred liturgy is principally the worship of the divine majesty it likewise contains much instruction for the faithful. For in the liturgy God speaks to his people and Christ is still proclaiming his gospel.”¹²⁴ The didache of the liturgy is not addressed to reason alone; chant allows the “word *about* God” to penetrate the heart, facilitating its assimilation and remembrance.

The liturgy appears as the principal means of the Church for causing her view of the world to penetrate vitally into the minds of the faithful. . . . It is the principal means in the sense that it is more vitally effective, more continual, more intuitive and penetrating, more popular and universal.¹²⁵

Kerygma is the announcement of the mystery of Christ. Liturgical kerygma is not the mere recounting of a story; the sung anamnetic proclamation is an actualization of the mystery, and the unleashing of its power for the life of Church

123. See MR, 516.

124. SC, n. 33.

125. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions*, 518.

and of the world.¹²⁶ The liturgical kerygma is not limited to the proclamation of readings from the lectionary; it also encompasses psalmody and eucharist.

Psalmody is integral to the liturgical kerygma. The praying Church finds her voice principally in the psalter. The psalter has a voice for every human situation, and for every experience of God; voices for the joy of his presence and the anguish of his absence.

Within the Old Testament the Psalter is a bridge, as it were, between the Law and the Prophets. It has grown out of the requirements of the temple cult, of the law, but by appropriating the law in prayer and song it has uncovered its prophetic essence more and more. It has led beyond the ritual and its ordinances into the “offering of praise,” the “wordly offering” with which people open themselves to the Logos and thus become worship with him. In this way the Psalter has also become a bridge connecting the two Testaments. In the Old Testament its hymns had been considered to be the songs of David; this meant for Christians that these hymns had risen from the heart of the real David, Christ. In the early church the psalms are prayed and sung as hymns to Christ. Christ himself thus becomes the choir director who teaches us the new song and gives the Church the tone and the way in which she can praise God appropriately and blend into the heavenly liturgy.¹²⁷

126. See Robert Taft, “Toward a Theology of the Christian Feast” in *Beyond East and West: Problems in Liturgical Understanding* (Washington: Pastoral Press, 1984), 7-9.

127. Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *A New Song for the Lord, Faith in Christ and Liturgy Today*, trans. Martha M. Matesich (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1997), 96-97.

The Church holds her ear to the psalter to learn from the psalms not only her own song, but the song of Christ as well. In the antiphons and psalmody of the *Graduale Romanum*, the *Graduale Simplex*, the antiphonal of the Hours, and other liturgical books, Christ is present as the one addressing the Father, as the one addressing the Church, or as the one to whom the Church addresses her supplications and her praise.¹²⁸ In the first case, Christ sings with the Church, facing the Father. In the second, as the revelation of the Father's glory, he sings to the Church, facing her. In the third, it is Christ who receives the song of the Church, as the object of her love and desire.¹²⁹ In hearing the psalms, the Church recognizes the voice of Christ; in singing the psalms, she finds her own voice.

The liturgical kerygma is ordered to, and includes, the proclamation of the gospel and its sacramental fulfillment in the Eucharist: the Church's experience of the risen and ascended Christ in her midst, the "source and summit"¹³⁰ of her life

128. "He is present when the Church prays or sings, for he has promised 'where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them' (Mt 18:20)." SC, art 7.

129. The use of titles, orations and antiphons in conjunction with the psalter attest to the Christological illumination of the psalms traditional in the Church's liturgical prayer and authorized by the Risen Christ himself in Lk 24: 44: "Everything written *about me* in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled." See Balthasar Fischer, "Le Christ dans les psaumes," *La Maison-Dieu* 27 (1951), 86-113; Claude Jean-Nesmy, *La Tradition médite le Psautier chrétien* (Paris: Editions Téqui, 1973); A. Rose, *Les psaumes, voix du Christ et de l'Eglise* (Paris: Lethielleux, 1981).

130. Cf. SC, n. 9.

and mission.¹³¹ The Church sings the kerygma because, “knowing Christ face to face in his mysteries,”¹³² she has passed over into the never-ending Day in which “nothing is read, but everything is sung.”¹³³ The liturgical kerygma is, therefore, both *anamnetic proclamation* and *eucharistic acclamation*: anamnetic proclamation of the *mirabilia Dei* culminating in the Paschal Mystery of Christ and pointing to his return in glory, and eucharistic acclamation of the Father, in the Holy Spirit.

While simple speech suffices for the recounting of a story, the merely spoken word is insufficient for the anamnetic proclamation of a “power unleashed” and for the eucharistic acclamation of God, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit. This is why the Church, the witness of Christ’s resurrection, has always sung, continues to sing, and will sing until the end of time.

We have seen the resurrection of Christ, and this
memory remains with us once and for all. This is what

131. On the dynamic relationship between *mysterium*, *actio* and *vita*, see Achille M. Triacca, “*La spiritualité liturgique est-elle possible?*” in *Liturgie, spiritualité, cultures*, Conférences Saint-Serge, XXIXe semaine d’études liturgiques, Paris, 29 juin–2 juillet 1982, ed. A.M. Triacca and A. Pistoia (Rome: Edizioni Liturgiche, 1983), 333.

132. “Facie ad faciem te mihi, Christe, demonstrasti; in tuis te invenio sacramentis.” Ambrose of Milan, *Apologie de David*, 156.

133. In the Byzantine usage, after the intonation of the troparion “Christ is risen” at Easter Matins, the rubric specifies that “nothing further is read; everything is sung.” The fully sung liturgy expresses the mystery of the Eighth Day; it signals the presence of the Kingdom and anticipates the liturgy of the heavenly Jerusalem. “This is a key to an understanding of what music in church is all about. This Paschal Ideal already has its roots in the Old Testament — no one simply ‘said’ Scriptures or ‘read’ prayers in the presence of God.” Glagolev, “An Introduction,” 25.

liturgical singing can be said to be: a glorious confirmation of the Resurrection. . . . We, the musicians of the Church, discover with amazement, beyond ourselves, through the ordinary practice of ceaseless singing: the abiding presence and return of the Risen Lord which is consistent with His own promise to the disciples to be with us, wherever we may be, to the end of time. We anticipate this blessed end, at every recurrence of the daily, weekly and yearly cycle, whenever song resounds in the Holy Temple of God.¹³⁴

Prophecy in the liturgy is the voice of God speaking today: a word addressed to the assembly, characteristically in the first person singular. The prophetic word is found throughout the liturgy, particularly in antiphons and responsories from the Prophets and the psalms. The introit *Dum sanctificatus* for the Vigil of Pentecost, taken from the book of the Prophet Ezekiel, is one example.¹³⁵ The liturgy of the Paschal Triduum offers another example of the prophetic genre: the verses of the *Improperia* on Good Friday.¹³⁶ In both examples it is God who speaks. Chant is the most adequate vehicle of the liturgical prophetic word.

134. Michael Fortounatto in a lecture delivered at the 1984 Liturgical Institute at Saint Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, New York: "Church Music and Spiritual Life," *Orthodox Church Music* 2 (1985), 15.

135. "When I shall be sanctified in you, I will gather you out of all the earth, and I will pour upon you clean water, and you shall be cleansed from all your filth, and I shall give you a new spirit." (Ez 36: 23-26). See GR, 249.

136. The *Improperia* are treated below in Chapter Three; the full text is given there.

In contrast to prophecy — God speaking to his people — euchology is the Church speaking to God. Euchological texts are prayers offered by the celebrant in the name of all; they are, as a rule, “sealed” by the *Amen* of the assembly. “The prayers addressed to God by the priest who, in the name of Christ, presides over the assembly, are said in the name of the entire holy people and of all present.”¹³⁷ Euchology is best served by the kind of cantilena that frees the celebrant from his own individuality by binding him to the use of simple and flexible formulas.¹³⁸

Ceremonial

For Glagolev, the ministerial function of chant may be called ceremonial when it gives to “what is being ‘done’ the eternal pulse of worship in movement and in sound.”¹³⁹ While the ritual function discussed above relates chant to what is “said” — dialogue, didache, kerygma, prophecy, and euchology — the ceremonial function of chant relates it to what is “done.” It has been argued that liturgical chant in its varied forms — syllabic, semi-ornate, and melismatic — is a

137. SC, n. 33.

138. “Quant au célébrant, seul un certain type d’exécution de la cantilation lui permet de se libérer de sa propre individualité, d’utiliser des formules simples mais souples, et sévèrement sélectionnées, et de ne pas s’en écarter.” Kovalevsky, “Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne,” 188.

139. Glagolev, “An Introduction,” 25.

solemnization of words, communicating a higher sense of the verbal discourse.¹⁴⁰

Chant is also a solemnization of ritual action, imparting a fullness of meaning.

Chant relates dynamically to sacred action; it amplifies what is done and, in a certain sense, magnifies its meaning. The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* describes this in terms of “conferring greater solemnity upon the sacred rites.”¹⁴¹

Instances of this abound. The Eucharist is the action “done” by the Church in obedience to the command of Christ, “Do this in memory of me” (1 Cor 11:24). When the Eucharistic Prayer is fully sung, with priest and people taking their proper parts, the action of the Eucharist is, in some way, amplified; its meaning is magnified. When the rite of the *fractio* is done to the chant of the *Agnus Dei*, the breaking of the bread is invested with a fullness that it would not otherwise have. Among the examples found in the liturgy of the Paschal Triduum are the antiphons of the *Mandatum*, the *Improperia* that accompany the *adoratio crucis*, and the acclamations of the *Lumen Christi* after the blessing of the new fire.

Glagolev’s categorization does not distinguish between the chant that solemnizes a sacred action and the chant that, by itself, constitutes a sacred action

140. See David Hiley’s masterful and exhaustive presentation of chant genres in *Western Plainchant*, 47-286. For a simpler introduction to the syllabic, semi-ornate and melismatic forms, see Eugène Cardine, *An Overview of Gregorian Chant*, trans. Gregory Casprini (Orleans: Paraclete Press, 1992), 6-7.

141. SC, n. 112.

in its own right. This is the case of the acclamation before the reading of the Gospel:

The Alleluia or, as the liturgical season requires, the verse before the Gospel, is also a “rite or act standing by itself.” It serves as the greeting of welcome of the assembled faithful to the Lord who is about to speak to them and as an expression of their faith through song.¹⁴²

Synoptic

Finally, liturgical chant has a *synoptic* ministerial function. Glagolev defines this as “holding all elements together contextually in worship.”¹⁴³ Words, when clothed in appropriate melodic vesture, function more harmoniously and more organically with the other sacred signs constitutive of the liturgy. The fully sung liturgy has about it a quality of integrity and internal coherence. This is “the way we do what we are doing in church and the way we say what we are saying.”¹⁴⁴

Chant functions synoptically by mediating the presence of Christ “in whom all things hold together” (Col 1:17). From the beginning of the celebration to the end, the ministerial function of chant is to turn the assembly to the sacramentally mediated presence of Christ. The Church uses chant as a way of pointing to the

142. “Introduction” in the *Lectionary for Mass*, n. 23, xix.

143. Glagolev, “An Introduction,” 25.

144. Ibid.

risen Christ, of mediating his presence, and of responding to him in faith. Christ himself — Word of the Father to the Church, Word of the Church to the Father, and Word of the Church to the world — is the synopsis of the *actio*. As an integral and pervasive part of worship, liturgical chant is one means by which the Church passes from the language of symbol to the experience of the realities of the Kingdom of God where “Christ is all, and in all” (Col 3:11).

The Theological Value of Liturgical Chant

Liturgical chant is intimately tied to the threefold definition of liturgical theology developed in Chapter One. It is the voice of the *theologia prima*. In the enactment of the liturgy, chant is a vehicle of the word *from* God, the word *to* God, and the word *about* God. Understood in this way, the ministerial function of chant is intrinsically theological. Chant is sung theology and, as such, it is (1) epiphanic, (2) doxological and eucharistic, and (3) sapiential and mystagogical.

Epiphanic: the Word *from* God

Liturgical chant is at the service of the word *from* God, that is, the saving revelation of the Father, in Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. The various formulaic tones developed for the cantillation of readings illustrate this. So too do the tones set forth for psalmody. Whether sung by a cantor, a group of cantors, or

by the assembly itself, the psalmody of the Mass and of the Hours is word *from* God, before becoming in the hearts of the hearers, word *to* God, and in their minds, word *about* God. Liturgical chant is *epiphanic*, when, in the context of the Church's worship, it actualizes the divine Revelation by which "God wished to manifest and communicate both himself and the eternal decrees of his will concerning the salvation of mankind."¹⁴⁵

Doxological and Eucharistic: the Word to God

Liturgical chant is equally at the service of the word *to* God, that is, the action by which Christ the Priest and his Body, the Church, gathered in the unity of the Holy Spirit, praise the glory of the Father, thank him for his steadfast love, and confess his wonderful deeds on behalf of humankind.¹⁴⁶ The *Praeconium* of the Paschal Vigil,¹⁴⁷ and the admirable Prefaces of the *Missale Romanum*¹⁴⁸ illustrate

145. DV, 6.

146. A succinct theology of praise is given in the Praefatio Communis IV: "Quia, cum nostra laude non egeas, tuum tamen est donum quod tibi grates rependamus, nam te non augent nostra praeconia, sed nobis proficiunt ad salutem, per Christum Dominum nostrum." MR, 560.

147. The *Exsultet*. See MR, 342–347.

148. Ibid., 518–567.

this, as do the ancient hymns, *Gloria in Excelsis*,¹⁴⁹ *Te Deum*,¹⁵⁰ and *Te Decet Laus*.¹⁵¹

Similarly, the word *to* God is expressed in the Alleluias, and in the other acclamations and litanies that punctuate the Mass and the Hours with praise, thanksgiving, and intercession. When liturgical chant functions in this capacity, it is *doxological* and *eucharistic*.

Sapiential and Mystagogical: the Word about God

The ministerial function of chant does not exclude the word *about* God, that is, all those things by which the Holy Spirit forms, teaches, and builds up the Church engaged in worship.¹⁵²

Thus not only when things are read “which were written for our instruction” (Rom 15:4), but also when the

149. Ibid., 510.

150. AM, 1250.

151. Ibid., 1260.

152. “The first concern of a parish is the community of believers who are conscious of their faith, want to deepen within themselves the life given them in baptism and labor to show in deeds their fidelity to Christ the Lord. But a parish also contains catechumens, people weak in faith, and Christians in name only — in short, classes that need a catechetical initiation into the mysteries of Christ and the liturgical mysteries of the Church. Finally, there are the non-believers who have not as yet accepted the Gospel message. These people form the missionary sector of the parish community. Sacred music has a special message for each of these categories of individuals. . . . The experience of music, after all, does not consist simply in learning new melodies. Sacred songs are also a catechesis which helps the faithful grasp better the meaning of texts and the spiritual content of the mysteries in whose celebration these songs are used.” “Letter of Cardinal Villot sent, on behalf of Pope Paul VI, to the Twenty-second Congress of the Italian Association of St. Cecilia, September 22, 1976,” in Robert F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music, 95 A.D. To 1977 A.D.* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1979), 576.

Church prays, or sings or acts, the faith of those taking part is nourished, and their minds are raised to God so that they may offer him their spiritual homage¹⁵³ and receive his grace more abundantly.¹⁵⁴

Psalmody, readings, and euchological texts, but also antiphons, responsories, and acclamations, proclaim the mysteries of the faith, and facilitate their contemplative assimilation by the faithful.¹⁵⁵ “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,” says the Apostle, “teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God” (Col 3:15). Saint Benedict enjoins his monks to taste what they sing: “*Psallite sapienter.*”¹⁵⁶ Sung in this way, liturgical chant is *sapiential* and *mystagogical*.

An Ear for Theology

The liturgical traditions of both East and West privilege the “mysterious combination of verbal-linguistic expression and non-verbal vocalization” that is

153. The Latin has *rationabile obsequium*, better translated perhaps as “rational service” or “reasonable service.”

154. SC, n. 33.

155. “Un enseignement oral, tel qu'il est donné par la liturgie, ne peut être facilement assimilé, mémorisé et transmis que s'il est élaboré en un nombre limité de formules agencables en combinaisons nombreuses et variées. La rencontre dans une nouvelle combinaison, d'une formule déjà connue et aimée, entraîne des associations intérieures qui assurent la cohérence générale de la doctrine et sa plus profonde compréhension.” Kovalevsky, “Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne,” 188.

156. RB 19:3.

chant.¹⁵⁷ Chant is to the ear what a sacred image is to the eye: a sensible mediation of a spiritual reality. The analogy is suggested by Saint John Damascene.

The apostles saw Christ in the flesh: they witnessed his sufferings and his miracles, and heard his words. We too desire to see, and to hear, and so be filled with gladness. They saw him face to face, since he was physically present. Since he is no longer physically present, we hear his words read from books and *by hearing our souls are sanctified and filled with blessing, and so we worship*, honoring the books from which we hear his words.¹⁵⁸

Chant prepares, accompanies, and expresses the Church's experience of Christ in the liturgy, an experience mediated by images, words, and other sacred signs. Aemiliana Löhr rightly speaks of, "the imaginative language of Holy Scripture from which the liturgical texts in great part are derived. God has made known his deep things in visible images and symbols."¹⁵⁹ The sung word resonates more harmoniously with the other symbolic actions of the liturgy — washing, anointing, preparing the holy table, breaking bread, kissing, eating, drinking, bowing, walking, and burning incense. Chant quickens the senses without exciting

157. Phillip Harnoncourt, "Te Deum Laudamus," in *The Meaning of the Liturgy*, ed. Angelus A. Häussling, trans. Linda M. Mahoney (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1994), 96.

158. Saint John of Damascus. *On The Divine Images*, trans. David Anderson (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1980), 72. The italicization is my own. Note that in ancient liturgical sources, "to read" refers to chanted declamation, better termed "cantillation." See J. Gélineau, *Chant et musique dans le culte chrétien*, 77.

159. Aemiliana Löhr, *The Mass Through the Year*, vol. I, trans. I. T. Hale (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1958), ix.

them to excess or unrestraint.¹⁶⁰ It contributes to a climate of restful vigilance in which the senses become more receptive to the theological and eschatological significance of the actions that make up a given rite.

Irwin remarks that the proper interpretation of liturgical texts requires understanding the kind of chant melodies assigned to these texts, not just the words of the texts.¹⁶¹ This requires that the chant melodies be sung in the form proper to them, and heard in their native liturgical context. It is precisely in this sense that one can say that to have an “ear for chant” is to have an “ear for theology.” By hearing *in this way*, “our souls are sanctified and filled with blessing, and so, we worship.”¹⁶² Kilmartin calls this, “a twofold movement, a back and forth play, in which the Father communicates self through Christ in the Spirit (*katabatic*) so that the ‘many’ may freely give themselves back (*anabatic*) in love to

160. “Ce chant, tout en évitant les associations de pensée avec le monde extérieur, ne doit en aucun cas avoir de caractère envoûtant, voire magique. Il ne doit ni exciter ni bercer, mais tenir en éveil. D'où le choix d'un rythme libre, ni syncopé ni régulier, et de modes ne contenant pas d'attractions contraignantes.” Kovalevsky, “Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne,” 188.

161. Irwin, *Context and Text*, 59.

162. *On the Divine Images*, 72.

receive God's gift.”¹⁶³ Chant, in its various forms, sustains and illustrates this “back and forth play,” this “sacred action surpassing all others.”¹⁶⁴

Liturgical Chant: Ecclesiological, Sacramental, and Eschatological

One who has an “ear for theology” will recognize that liturgical chant is at once ecclesiological, sacramental, and eschatological. It is *ecclesiological* insofar as it serves the unity of the Church at “the summit” toward which her activity is directed, and at “the wellspring” from which all her power flows, by binding its members to one another and to their Head, Christ the Priest.¹⁶⁵

Every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the Priest and of his Body, which is the Church, is a sacred action surpassing all others. No other action of the Church can equal its efficacy by the same title and to the same degree.¹⁶⁶

In an age when many deem books the indispensable apanage of liturgical celebration, chant rescues words from the privacy of the printed page, and frees them to be sung and heard in the register proper to shared ritual action. Liturgical

163. Kilmartin, *Culture and the Praying Church*, 90.

164. SC, n. 7.

165. Cf. SC, n. 10.

166. Ibid., n. 7.

chant allows the many to pray together with one breath, that of the Holy Spirit, and with one voice, that of the total Christ.¹⁶⁷

When the body of the Son prays, it does not separate its head from itself: it is the one Saviour of his body, our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, who prays for us, and prays in us, and is prayed to by us.

He prays for us as our priest; he prays in us as our head; he is prayed to by us as our God. So, we must recognize our voices in him, and his voice in us.¹⁶⁸

Christ himself, in whom “all things hold together” (Col 1:17), is the perfect realization of the ecclesial synaxis. Even as it fosters and expresses the relationship of worshipers to each other here below, chant becomes a means of communion with the risen and ascended Christ “who has entered . . . into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf” (Heb 9:24). “In its origin and in its goal, liturgy is a participation in the economic Trinity.”¹⁶⁹ The ecclesiological dimension of chant is, therefore, fully realized when, through Christ, it unites the synaxis of worshipers to the Father, in the communion of the Holy Spirit.

167. “Liturgical worship is given a more noble form when it is celebrated in song, with the ministers of each degree fulfilling their ministry and the people participating in it. Indeed, through this form . . . the mystery of the liturgy, with its hierarchical and community nature, is more openly shown, (and) the unity of hearts is more profoundly achieved by the union of voices.” MS, art. 5.

168. Saint Augustine, “In psalmum LXXXV,” 6-12 in *Ennarationes in Psalmos*, Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina XXXIX (Tournai: Brépolis, 1956), 1176. Translation from *The Divine Office*, vol. II (London: Collins, 1974), 224.

169. Edward Kilmartin, *Culture and the Praying Church*, ed. Mary M. Schaefer (Ottawa: Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1990), 92.

Liturgical chant is *sacramental* in that it serves the actualization of Christ's mysteric presence in the midst of the assembly. "He is present when the Church prays and sings, for he has promised 'where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them.'"¹⁷⁰ The Church perceives the mystery of the Word expressed in the human words of Scripture as analogous to the mystery of the Incarnation in which the same Word assumed the flesh of human weakness.¹⁷¹ Pursuing the analogy, one can see in the cantilenas of the liturgy a kind of vesture for the Word. The vesture has no movement of itself; it is animated from within by the "one perfect body of the Word"¹⁷² that it reveals, conceals, adorns and prolongs. "It was a natural development, writes Maurice Zundel, when in the liturgy the sacred texts put on the garb of song, and music sought to render the Divine atmosphere with which the words are invested."¹⁷³

Chant is, then, a *sacrament* of Christ's presence in the midst of the Church, and of his prayer to the Father, in the Holy Spirit.

170. SC, n. 7.

171. DV, art. 13.

172. Origen, "Fragment of a Homily on Jeremiah" (PG 17, 289). Quoted in Olivier Clément, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism* (New York: New City Press, 1995), 98.

173. Zundel, *The Splendour of the Liturgy*, 285.

Jesus Christ, High Priest of the New and Eternal Covenant, taking human nature, introduced into this earthly exile that hymn which is sung throughout all ages in the halls of heaven. He attaches to himself the entire community of mankind and has them join him in singing this divine song of praise.¹⁷⁴

Finally, because “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,” liturgical chant is *eschatological*.¹⁷⁵ Appropriated by the liturgy, the chanted word is ritually adapted to “what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived” (1 Cor 2:9). The fully sung celebration “more clearly prefigures that heavenly liturgy which is enacted in the holy city of Jerusalem.”¹⁷⁶ The experience of sung liturgy, as the normative form of worship, invites the Church to “incline the ear of her heart” (Ps 44:11) to the “voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters” (Rev 19:6).

The earthly liturgy can be described as a foretaste of the heavenly liturgy. It is the expression of an anticipated reality. It is the enactment of the desire or hope for something that already exists elsewhere. But it is also a real participation in the heavenly liturgy. . . . The earthly

174. Ibid., art. 83.

175. Ibid., art. 8.

176. MS, n. 5.

liturgy is directed to the heavenly liturgy, and obtains its basic orientation from it.¹⁷⁷

Liturgical chant is ecclesiological, sacramental, and eschatological because it illustrates the law set in motion by the Incarnation. By virtue of this law, all things are restored to their doxological finality, and re-ordered to the kingdom, by way of the sacraments, through the Church. Saint John Damascene alludes explicitly to the “perceptible words” of the Church’s prayer and *psalmody* in this regard:

Just as we physically listen to *perceptible words* in order to understand spiritual things, so also by using bodily sight we reach spiritual contemplation. For this reason Christ assumed both soul and body, since man is fashioned from both. Likewise baptism is both of water and of Spirit. It is the same with communion, prayer, *psalmody*, candles or incense; they all have a double significance, physical and spiritual.¹⁷⁸

Created matter is foundational to the whole sacramental economy because, in the words of Saint John Damascene, “the Creator of matter became matter for my sake, willed to take his abode in matter, and worked out my salvation through matter.”¹⁷⁹ The incarnation of the Word is not, however, the end of the song; it is

177. Kilmartin, *Culture and the Praying Church*, 91.

178. Saint John Damascene, *On the Divine Images*, 72-73 (my emphasis).

179. Ibid., 23.

the beginning in time of “that hymn which is sung throughout all ages in the halls of heaven.”¹⁸⁰ Ratzinger points out that,

The incarnation is only the first part of the movement. It becomes meaningful and definitive only in the cross and resurrection. From the cross the Lord draws everything to himself and carried the flesh — that is, humanity, and the entire created world — into God’s eternity. Liturgy is ordered to this line of movement, and this line of movement is the fundamental text, so to speak, to which all liturgical music refers. . . . Liturgical music is a result of the claim and the dynamics of the Word’s incarnation. For incarnation means that also among us the Word cannot be just speech. . . . Faith becoming music is a part of the process of the Word becoming flesh.”¹⁸¹

Sometimes described as immaterial, liturgical chant is, on the contrary, material, insofar as it is inseparable from the ordered sound of speech. Chant is a heightened form of language. Its raw material, vocal sound, “is readily at hand from the beginnings of human life, and is supple and adaptable for the elaboration of symbols expressing all nuances of human insight and conception.”¹⁸² Apparently evanescent, chant, in fact, perdures in the memory long after being heard or sung.

180. SC, n. 83.

181. Ratzinger, *A New Song for the Lord*, 121–122.

182. William A. Van Roo, “Symbol in Art and Sacraments,” in *Symbolisme et théologie*, 154.

The ecclesiological, sacramental, and eschatological import of liturgical chant is, in some way, proportionate to its transcendent quality. Chant induces a certain estrangement from what is familiar, a straining of the ear to catch, even in exile, the sound of Zion's songs.¹⁸³ This is achieved by means of creative obedience to an ensemble of pre-established melodic formulas, developed over the course of time by the diverse liturgical traditions of the Church, and tested by a long experience of liturgical practice.¹⁸⁴ The conventional eight modes of Gregorian chant, offering "familiarity with variety," are but one example of this.¹⁸⁵

The canons of liturgical chant — normative, flexible structural forms — foster and protect its specifically theological value.¹⁸⁶ They discern between

183. "For it was there that they asked us, our captors, for songs, our oppressors for joy. 'Sing to us, they said, 'one of Zion's songs'" (Ps 136:3).

184. "Les chants 'byzantin,' 'grégorien' et 'russe' (ancien et actuel) conservent fidèlement la classification des formules mélodiques en 8 Tons (4 Modes comportant chacun un ton authente et un ton plagal). Pour saisir plus concrètement le sens de cette classification nullement arbitraire, il est utile de ramener le chant à sa forme la plus élémentaire. Pour le 'grégorien,' c'est la psalmodie simple: dans chaque ton les 4 formules (cellules) musicales (l'intonation, la flexe, la médiane et la terminaison, soit $4 \times 8 = 32$ formules) et leurs rapports avec la note de récitation déterminent presque entièrement les bases de cette psalmodie. Le grand édifice des chants 'ornés' se construit à partir de cette-ci par amplification, variation." Kovalevsky, "Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne," 190.

185. See Ford, *By Flowing Waters*, xxi.

186. Fidelity to the ecclesiological, sacramental, and eschatological vocation of liturgical chant obliges its artisans to obey what one author has called the *psaltic canon*. See Marcel Pirard-Angistriou, "Le chant liturgique orthodoxe entre la polyphonie et la monophonie," *Contact* (1995), 193.

authentic artistic creativity and the tyranny of subjective fantasy, all the while offering the artist — composer or singer — a certain number of musical formulas to be used in various combinations, thereby assuring what Kovalevsky calls “a character of coherent continuity, universality and variety.”¹⁸⁷

Composers should have as their motive the continuation of the tradition that provided the Church a genuine treasury of music for use in divine worship. They should thoroughly study the works of the past, their styles and characteristics; at the same time they should reflect on the new laws and requirements of the liturgy. The objective is that “any new form adopted should in some way grow organically from forms already existing.”¹⁸⁸

Liturgical chant grows organically out of two sources: the articulation of the word, and the interiorization of musical prototypes within a given liturgical tradition. The hieratic quality of liturgical chant is an anthropological expression of the transcendent common to many cultures.¹⁸⁹ Liturgical chant cannot be a naturalistic echo of “the form of this world which is passing away” (1 Cor 7:31).

187. “... un caractère de pérennité, d’universalité et de variété dans la cohérence.” Kovalevsky, “Le chant de la liturgie chrétienne,” 184.

188. MS, n. 59.

189. See Peter Jeffery, “Chant East and West: Toward a Renewal of the Tradition,” in *Music and the Experience of God*, ed. David Power, Mary Collins and Mellonee Burnim (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd., 1989), 28.

Its essential function is not to cause aesthetic pleasure, nor to entertain, but to show forth symbolically, by anticipation, the eternal realities of the Kingdom.¹⁹⁰

The Church, even as she is sent by Christ into the world, “has already begun to mutate by fits and starts into the City-of-God-in-the-making, the focal point of a World made new in Christ Jesus.”¹⁹¹ The Church’s liturgy, enacted by men and women of flesh and blood, in space and time, realizes, nonetheless, a new order of things in which “the human is directed toward and subordinated to the divine, the visible to the invisible, action to contemplation, and this present world to that city yet to come, the object of our quest.”¹⁹² Among the sacramental portents of this new order of things, liturgical chant holds a unique and privileged place.

While the Church draws her means of liturgical expression from the various resources of human culture, these means are, nonetheless, subjected to purification and refinement — to transfiguration in the fire of the Holy Spirit — in view of the proper end of the liturgy itself: the manifestation of the Kingdom of God.¹⁹³ The chant of the Church is sacramental because it is, in a very real sense, worldly; it is

190. On the liturgy as the symbolic epiphany of the Kingdom, see A. Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 27-48.

191. Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 42.

192. SC, art. 1.

193. See Zundel, *The Splendour of the Liturgy*, 283.

eschatological because it is, in just as real a sense, other-worldly.¹⁹⁴ “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. . . . As thou didst send me into the world, so I have sent them into the world” (Jn 17:16, 18). The intelligibility of all liturgical signs is contingent upon their worldliness; their *iconicity* is contingent upon their other-worldliness.¹⁹⁵

The liturgizing Church, “both human and divine, visible yet endowed with invisible resources, eager to act yet intent upon contemplation, present in this world yet not at home in it,”¹⁹⁶ reveals the kingdom of God in the world. Christ and the Church, acting synergetically in the Holy Spirit, are the sacrament of the Father’s saving love for the world and the voice of the world raised “to the praise of his glorious grace” (Eph 1:6). These soteriological and doxological dimensions of the liturgy — Kilmartin’s “twofold movement, a back and forth play”¹⁹⁷ — are best perceived when the sacramental means employed by the Church, chant being among them, are seen as proceeding from what is divine in her as well as from

194. See Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 3-69. See also Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, 11-22.

195. On the quality of liturgical *iconicity*, see Giancarlo Carminati, “Una teoria semiologica del linguaggio liturgico,” in *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 3 (May-June 1988): 184-207.

196. SC, n. 2.

197. Kilmartin, *Culture and the Praying Church*, 90.

what is human, from her heavenly, and from her earthly nature. Finally, chant is a complete sung theology — ecclesiological, sacramental, and eschatological in its scope — only when its audible parts are subordinated to its silence.

Conclusion

Can liturgical chant, in fact, be studied as “sung theology”? Undeniably, it plays a role in generating liturgical theology. Among the theologians presented in Chapter One, Prosper Guéranger, Lambert Beauduin, Aemiliana Löhr, Alexander Schmemann, and others, give evidence of the theological significance of liturgical chant in their lives and in their writings. More fundamentally however, because chant is integral to the complexus of sacred signs called into play by the *actio*, when it is sung and heard by believers within the liturgical context, it resonates with other signs to become a privileged expression of *theologia prima*: word *from* God, word *to* God, and word *about* God.

When chant functions, according to Glagolev’s analysis, synactically, rubrically, ritually, ceremonially, and synoptically, its theological value becomes evident. As sung theology, liturgical chant is epiphanic; doxological and eucharistic; sapiential and mystagogical. Understood and, even more importantly, practiced in this way, liturgical chant contributes to the edification of the Church, to the knowledge of the “unsearchable riches” of Christ (Eph 3:8), and to the experience of things unseen, “the things that are eternal” (2 Cor 4:18).

The Church prays with human breath and human words. In the liturgy, these are joined to the Holy Spirit and to the Word of God. More however is

required than the mere vocalization of a sacred text. Chant demands of the subject a capacity for silence and for listening. “In the articulation of the text . . . the singer must be intensely active, and in the silence between the phrases or verses, attentive in silence, in a sense contemplative.”¹⁹⁸ Sung theology is, necessarily, *apophatic* in its silences and *cataphatic* in its delivery of the word.¹⁹⁹

Rather than thinking of the chant as a “schola cantorum,” or “school of singers,” we might think of it as a school, so to speak, of “sacred speaking,” designed to guide us into a way of “saying” the texts directed by a deeper intelligence within us, an intelligence capable of being aware of the divine source of what we are saying. This sacred speaking arises out of a delicate relationship within us between silence and the word. It is, in a sense “contemplative speech.”²⁰⁰

To say that chant is a school of *sacred speaking* is to recognize it as a primary theological source.²⁰¹ For chant to be experienced effectively as a primary

198. Rembert Herbert, “Gregorian Chant in Context,” in *Monastic Studies*, XIX (1991), 131.

199. The author’s personal experience as a choirmaster is that it is far more difficult to teach people the worth of silence in the chant than to achieve a satisfactory vocal sound. What the chant leaves unsung is ultimately more important than what it sings. The quality of singing increases in proportion to the singer’s awareness of the unsung mystery.

200. Rembert Herbert, “Gregorian Chant in Context,” 130.

201. “Musical skills. Language skills. One must learn to pray with both. . . . Father Meyendorff once said that theology is the search for words adequate to God. Perhaps sacred song is the search for the adequate utterance of these words, as the music of the heart.” Sergei Glagolev, “Some Personal Thoughts on the Composition of Liturgical Music,” *Jacob’s Well* (Newspaper of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey of the Orthodox Church in America), Spring/Summer 1997, 1.

theological source it, for it to be assimilated in the *lex credendi*, and bear fruit in the *lex vivendi*,²⁰² it must be practiced consistently and repeatedly as the normal form of communitarian worship, as something proletarian, communitarian and quotidian.²⁰³ When chant is perceived as a means of “solemnization” and not as the habitual and normative way of doing what we do in church, the full impact of its theological value is weakened.²⁰⁴

The sturdy simplicity of chant withstands continual and repeated performance without losing its freshness. It eschews musical accompaniment; the only instrument necessary is the human voice. Its fundamental principle of interpretation is the primacy of word over music. As a “necessary or integral part

202. “*Lex vivendi* . . . is meant to articulate both what has traditionally been implied as the ethical consequence of liturgical participation and as a way of giving this aspect of the liturgy its proper place lest the liturgy become divorced from real life and the actual needs of persons here and now.” Irwin, *Context and Text*, 331.

203. See Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 88-93.

204. “It is too obvious to be denied that a celebration sung in the Gregorian manner is more solemn than a celebration which is merely recited; but this statement is especially true in the modern perspective of a celebration which is habitually recited. The ancients had provided melodies for the most modest celebrations of the liturgical year, and these melodies were no less carefully worked out than those of the great feasts. For them the chant was, before all else, a means of giving to liturgical prayer a fullness of religious and contemplative value whatever might be the solemnity of the day. Such should also be our sole preoccupation in singing. As long as people look upon Gregorian chant solely as a means of solemnizing the celebration, there will be the danger of making it deviate from its true path, which is more interior.” Dominique Delalande, O.P., “Le chant grégorien,” in *Initiation théologique, Tome I, Les sources de la théologie* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1950), 255-256.

of the solemn liturgy,"²⁰⁵ chant carries the Word of God, the prayer of Christ, and the thanksgiving of the Church on its breath. It is, therefore, both holy and hallowing.

Finally, sung theology is participatory theology. Chant, by its simplicity, as well as by the diversity of its forms, draws all the members of a worshiping assembly — *cantantes, legentes* and *audientes* — into the *actio*, and by means of the *actio*, into the heart of the liturgy, that is, the Paschal Mystery.

205. SC, n. 112.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PROPER CHANTS OF THE PASCHAL TRIDUUM

IN THE GRADUALE ROMANUM: A THEOLOGICAL SOURCE

The Pasch of the Lord: Heart of the Liturgy

Hermann Schmidt opens the introduction to his *Hebdomada Sancta* with the lapidary phrase: “*Pascha est cor liturgiae.*”¹ The heart of the liturgy is the Paschal Mystery of Christ’s death, Resurrection and Ascension, accomplished once and for all in Christ the head and extended by means of the liturgy to all his members throughout history. “It will never be possible for the Church in her liturgy to make anything else present or anything else the subject of her celebration than the Pasch of Christ.”²

All Christian worship is but a continuous celebration of the Pasch: the sun, dawning each day, draws in its course an uninterrupted train of eucharists; every celebration of Mass prolongs the Pasch. Each day of the liturgical year, and within each day, every instant of the Church’s sleepless vigil, continues and renews the Pasch.³

1. Hermanus A.P. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, vol. I (Rome: Herder, 1956), vii.

2. A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 7.

3. “Tout le culte chrétien n’est qu’une célébration continue de la Pâque: le soleil qui ne cesse de se lever sur la terre traîne après lui un sillage d’eucharisties qui ne s’interrompt pas un seul instant, et chaque messe célébrée, c’est la Pâque qui se prolonge. Chaque jour de l’année liturgique, et dans chaque jour chaque instant de la vie de l’Eglise qui ne dort jamais, continue et renouvelle

Considered theologically, the Paschal Mystery is the ultimate and unrepeatable word *from* God, *to* God and *about* God. The Paschal Mystery, actualized in the liturgy, is the substance and expression of *theologia prima*, the ground and reference of *theologia secunda*. The complement of Schmidt's aphorism *Pascha est cor liturgiae* is that the Pasch of Christ, sacramentally mediated in the liturgy, is the wellspring of a living, doxological theology.

In repeating the enactment of the liturgy, the Church has access to the "unique, unrepeatable mystery of Christ";⁴ day after day, week after week and year after year, the Church is caught up in the transforming glory of the Paschal Mystery.⁵ Through the *actio*, the Paschal Mystery irrigates and transforms all of human life, healing those who partake of the sacraments and drawing the Church, already here and now, into the communion of the risen and ascended Christ with the Father in the Holy Spirit.⁶ Because it is the heart of the liturgy, the Pasch of the Lord is the heart of theology, and the heart of

cette Pâque." Louis Bouyer, *Le Mystère Pascal* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1947), 9.

4. Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, x.

5. The *actio*, as an expression of the whole sacramental economy, prolongs the mystery of the Incarnate Word. What is sung of the Incarnation in the *Praefatio de Nativitate Domini I* applies to the liturgy as well: ". . . ut, dum visibiliter Deum cognoscimus, per hunc in invisibilium amorem rapiamur." MR, 520.

6. See Achille M. Triacca's helpful exposition of liturgical spirituality in terms of *actio*, *mysterium* and *vita*. "La spiritualité liturgique, est-elle possible?" in *Liturgie, spiritualité, cultures*, 333.

Christian piety as well.⁷

The annual celebration of “the most sacred triduum of the crucified, buried and risen Lord”⁸ is the liturgical, theological and spiritual center of the Church’s life and “the culmination of the entire liturgical year.”⁹

Christ redeemed us all and gave perfect glory to God principally through his paschal mystery: dying he destroyed our death and rising he restored our life. . . . These days are therefore unique in the liturgical year and their celebration is of the utmost importance in the spiritual and pastoral life of the Church.¹⁰

The Paschal Triduum begins with the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, continues through the Friday of the Lord’s Passion, reaches its summit in the Solemn Paschal Vigil, and comes to a close with Sunday Vespers of the Lord’s Resurrection.¹¹

7. “The real problem then is not that of ‘liturgical reforms’ but, first of all, of the much need ‘reconciliation’ and mutual reintegration of liturgy, theology and piety.” Schmemann, “Liturgical Reform: A Debate,” in *Liturgy and Tradition*, 42.

8. St. Augustine, *Letter 55, 14*: PL 33, 215.

9. “Thus the solemnity of Easter has the same kind of preeminence in the liturgical year that Sunday has in the week.” *Ceremonial of Bishops*, trans. International Commission on English in the Liturgy, Inc. [ICEL] (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1989), n. 295, 102.

10. Ibid.

11. “The greatest mysteries of the redemption are celebrated yearly by the Church, beginning with the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday and ending with Vespers of Easter Sunday.” Congregation for Divine Worship, *Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts*, 16 January 1988 (Washington: United States Catholic Conference, 1988), n. 38, 10-11.

As an integral element of the *actio* of the Sacred Triduum, liturgical chant takes its place in the complexus of sacred signs by which the Paschal Mystery is rendered present to the Church and the Church drawn into the Paschal Mystery.¹² Liturgical chant is thus essentially related to the Paschal Mystery and to the new life which it imparts. The transcendent value of liturgical chant, especially during the annual celebration of the Paschal Triduum, is properly theological and spiritual. The chants of the Paschal Triduum constitute therefore a point of reconciliation and unity “between theology and liturgy, liturgy and spirituality.”¹³ What Schmemann writes concerning the Paschal Triduum of the Byzantine liturgy and its hymnography is also true, *mutatis mutandis*, of the present reformed liturgy of the Roman Rite and of its proper chants.¹⁴

12. “The chants of the people, and also of the ministers and the celebrating priest, are of special importance in the celebration of Holy Week and particularly of the Paschal Triduum because they add to the solemnity of these days and also because the texts are more effective when sung.” Congregation for Divine Worship, *Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts*, January 16, 1988 (Washington: United States Catholic Conference, 1988), n. 42, 10-11.

13. Magnus Löhrer, “Il modello gnostico-sapienziale della teologia,” 31.

14. The proper chants of the present reformed liturgy of the Roman Rite for the priest celebrant and deacon are contained in the MR. The chants of the assembly and schola are found in the *Graduale Romanum* (Solesmes 1974) and in subsequent editions of the same. The *Graduale Simplex*, Editio Typica Altera (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis 1975) contains simpler chants, often with shorter texts, for use in smaller churches. The present study focuses on the chants of the *Graduale Romanum* with complementary references and comparisons to these other books.

The liturgy of the Paschal *Triduum* — Holy Friday, Great and Holy Saturday and Sunday — reveals more about the “doctrines” of Creation, Fall, Redemption, Death and Resurrection than all the other *loci theologici* together; and, let me stress it, not merely in the texts, in the magnificent Byzantine hymnography, but precisely by the very “experience”— ineffable yet illuminating — given during these days in their inner interdependence, in their nature; indeed as epiphany and revelation. Truly if the word *mystery* can still have any meaning today, be experienced and not merely “explained,” it is here, in this unique celebration which reveals and communicates before it “explains”; which makes us witnesses and participants of one all-embracing Event from which stems everything else: understanding and power, knowledge and joy, contemplation and communion.¹⁵

Participation in the *actio* makes “witnesses and participants” of those who thus experience the Paschal Mystery as something revealed and communicated, men and women capable of saying, “We have seen the Lord” (Jn 20:24). The language of this revelation is the language of sacramental epiphany: word and symbol.¹⁶ Irwin speaks in terms of *sharing* in the accomplishment of salvation, of *participating* in Christ’s redeeming actions, of being *brought into* the Paschal Mystery.¹⁷

15. A. Schmemann, “Liturgy and Theology,” 63.

16. “Symbol is the appropriate specification of and complement to the announcement in the symbolic Word with the two realities of Word and symbol together comprising the liturgical enactment and experience of the paschal mystery.” Irwin, *Context and Text*, 129.

17. Kevin W. Irwin, *Easter, A Guide to the Eucharist and Hours* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 13-14.

Paradoxically, while each worshiper must enter *personally* into the Paschal Mystery, making a personal profession of faith at Baptism, and uttering a personal *Amen* to the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist, the effect of such a personal engagement is participation in the Body of Christ and the unity of the Holy Spirit.¹⁸ The saving mystery of Christ's death and Resurrection embraces and sanctifies the integral human person within the communion of the Church. The symbolic language of the liturgy therefore engages the human person bodily, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually.

A Holy Week entry from the 1910 diary of Pieter van der Meer de Walcheren,¹⁹ written while the author was yet an unbeliever, attests to the experiential impact of the Paschal liturgy as epiphany and revelation, and to one

18. Irwin writes: "We want to assert the importance of understanding liturgy as a unique way for the worshiping assembly to experience Christ's mediation of salvation and the Spirit's power to sanctify and unify the Church. . . . There is a significant difference theologically between experiencing the paschal mystery in liturgy and personal meditation on Christ's passion, death, and resurrection. The former enacts these saving events; the latter derives from them and, in comparison, only reflects on them. The former experience always gives birth again and again to the Church. The latter is open to the defect of leading to a privatized appreciation of these sacred events which the liturgy by its nature cannot endorse." Irwin, *Context and Text*, 49–50.

19. Born in 1880 to a Protestant family in Utrecht; influenced by Jacques Maritain and profoundly affected by the experience of Gregorian chant, he converted to Catholicism in 1902 and married Christine Verbrugghe with whom he had two children, both of whom later became Benedictines. In 1933 Pieter and Christine separated to enter the abbeys of Oosterhout; after little more than a year, they resumed married life. After the death of his wife, Pieter returned to Oosterhout where he died in 1970. See Albert Helman, *Vriend Pieter, Het levonsavontuur Pieter van der Meer de Walcheren* (Brugge: Orion, 1980).

person's passage out of isolation into the communion of faith in the Church.²⁰

The liturgy is a holy magnificence. I am well aware that it is absurd to speak words of admiration. All too evident is the beauty of this worship that expresses the inexpressible and causes the pure splendor of a flame to burn upright and bright in life's blackness. Art is so superficial and poor; it appears so empty next to these sublime chants, next to these biblical words chanted, next to these holy texts, next to these prayers of mourning, these poems of extreme joy! I still hear the chant of the end of Lauds: *Christus factus est pro nobis obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis;* to which is added on the third night; *propter quod et Deus exaltavit illum et dedit illi nomen quod est super omne nomen.* The music of it, the slow plaintive, desperate music laden with every sorrow and with every mystery! How shall I ever forget the Lamentations of Jeremiah at the first Nocturn of *Tenebrae*? And the *Ecce lignum crucis* of Friday . . . ? And the Reproaches, divine reproaches of a crucified God to his people?

On Holy Saturday the new fire is kindled. The priest, advancing slowly towards the altar, sings the thrice-repeated words at equal intervals: *Lumen Christi*, each time on a higher tone; and the light increases until it becomes an immense interior fire. One senses in one's soul a tangible deliverance. Where can one find a thing more lovely, more sublime than the chant of the *Exultet jam angelica turba caelorum*, in which, by the words and by the music, the desire of an incommensurable joy lifts itself up and erects a kind of rainbow stretching from earth to heaven? And the Preface that follows, with its sublime cries: *O certe necessarium Adae peccatum! . . . O felix culpa! . . .* Oh, to

20. For other examples of this, see Ivan Merz, «L'influence de la liturgie sur les écrivains français, de Chateaubriand à nos jours,” (Ph.D. diss., Université de Zagreb, 1923), ed., Faculté de philosophie de l'Université de Zagreb, et Postulation de la cause pour la canonisation d'Ivan Merz (Zagreb, 1996).

be able to believe, to be unshakably certain that this is not an empty spectacle, not a beautiful dream, but signs and symbols which are but the reflection of an inexpressible divine reality. I am shaken in the very depths of my soul. Illusion and appearance could never make me weep like this. I sense that behind all that I see and hear are luminous roads leading towards God.²¹

Such is the power of the liturgy of the Paschal Triduum over the human heart. Among others, Schmemann and Löhr indicate that the various liturgical chants of the Paschal Triduum need to be experienced “in their inner interdependence.”²² One of the tasks of liturgical theology, and specifically of

21. “La liturgie est une sainte magnificence. C'est absurde, je le sens bien, de dire des paroles d'admiration. La beauté est trop évidente de ce culte qui exprime l'inexprimable, la Divinité, et qui fait flamber dans la vie noire, la splendeur pure d'une flamme blanche et droite. Que l'art est superficiel et pauvre et qu'il paraît vain auprès de ces chants sublimes, auprès de ces paroles bibliques chantées, auprès de ces saints textes, auprès de ces prières de deuil et de ces poèmes d'extrême joie! J'entends toujours le chant de la fin des Laudes: *Christus factus est pro nobis obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis;* à quoi on ajoute, la troisième nuit: *propter quod et Deus exaltavit illum et dedit illi nomen quod est super omne nomen.* La musique de cela, la lente, plaintive, désespérée musique chargée de toutes les tristesses et de tous les mystères! Pourrais-je jamais oublier les Lamentations de Jérémie, au premier Nocturne de l'office des Ténèbres? Et le *Ecce lignum crucis* du Vendredi matin, lorsqu'on ôte solennellement le voile de deuil de la Croix? Et les Impropères, ces divins reproches du Dieu crucifié, à son peuple?

Le Samedi-Saint le feu nouveau est allumé. Le prêtre, s'avancant lentement vers l'autel, chante les paroles trois fois répétées à intervalles égaux: *Lumen Christi*, chaque fois sur un ton plus haut; et la lumière s'accroît ainsi jusqu'à devenir un immense feu intérieur. On sent dans son âme la délivrance tangible. Où trouver une chose plus belle, plus sublime que le chant de l'*Exultet jam angelica turba caelorum*, dans lequel par les mots et par la musique, le désir de l'incommensurable joie s'exalte et bâtit comme un arc-en-ciel de la terre aux cieux? Et la Préface suivante, avec ces cris sublimes: *O certe necessarium Adae peccatum! . . . O felix culpa! . . .* Oh! pouvoir penser, être inébranlablement sûr que cela n'est pas un vain spectacle, un beau songe, mais des signes, des symboles qui ne sont que le reflet de l'inexprimable réalité divine. Je suis bouleversé jusqu'au plus profond de mon âme. L'illusion, l'apparence ne pourrait me faire pleurer ainsi. Je sens que derrière tout ce que vois et entends, des routes lumineuses vont vers Dieu.” Pierre van der Meer de Walcheren, *Journal d'un converti* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1962), 185-187.

22. See Schmemann, “Liturgy and Theology,” in *Liturgy and Tradition*, 63.

this study, is to shed light on this “inner interdependence” in such a way as to show the chants of the Paschal Triduum in connection to each other and to the underlying unity of the whole Mystery.²³ The chants of the Paschal Triduum do not disclose their theological significance as isolated fragments, separately analyzed and removed from their context. The Mystery is one, and its radiance suffuses the Paschal liturgy in all its parts.

Beginning on the evening of Holy Thursday, the liturgy sings of the glorious Cross of Christ and of the effects of Christ’s priestly sacrifice, mediated by the sacraments of the Church, and translated into lives of sacrificial love and humble service. The chants sing of ancient types and shadows, fulfilled in the Pasch of Christ, preparing the mystery of the Eucharist, and pointing already to the eschatological “marriage supper of the Lamb” (Rev 19:9).

In the chants of Good Friday, Christ, the immolated Lamb and the Bridegroom of the Church, prays and offers himself to the Father, drawing the Church into his prayer, into his sacrifice and into his glorious exaltation. The chants of the *adoratio Crucis* reveal the Cross as the locus of Christ’s glorification

23. In 1957, commenting on the restoration of the Holy Week liturgy decreed in 1955, Dame Aemiliiana Löhr wrote: “It is one of the chief aims of the present restoration of the Paschal liturgy to enable the faithful to grasp the oneness of the Easter action in the multiplicity of rites developed in the course of time. Holy Week is once again to become a single celebration in which the individual rites, restored to their proper place, make the whole visible both in its parts and as a whole, and at the same time assure to each of the faithful the lively participation of the whole Church in the *Pascha Domini*, the Lord’s passage to life.” *The Great Week*, 10.

and the throne of mercy towards which the Church addresses bold supplication for her own needs and for those of all people. The Cross is the Tree of Life planted in the midst of the Church, the abiding sign of the Father's mercy, of the Son's crucified love, and of the Holy Spirit's lifegiving action.

In the celebration of the Paschal Vigil, the *cantica*, or intervenient chants of the Liturgy of the Word, interact with the readings and orations, evoking a vast array of figures and types that in the Pasch of Christ and the sacraments of the Church find their ultimate theological meaning and fulfillment. Readings, chants and orations function together as a final preparation for the *sacra menta paschalia*. With the *Alleluia* and the intonation of Psalm 117 emerges a current of joy that overflows into the Mass of Easter Day.

On Easter Day, the Church's liturgy is contemplative. The risen Christ introduces into his ineffable conversation with the Father all those who, by means of the sacraments, share in his death and Resurrection. The shadowy images of Exodus 12, introduced at the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, are brought into the morning light of Christ's Paschal sacrifice in the *Alleluia Pascha nostrum* and in the Communion antiphon. The circle is thus completed, demonstrating that the Paschal Mystery is indeed "a single celebration in which the individual parts . . . make the whole visible both in its parts and as a

whole.”²⁴

The purpose of this chapter is to study the proper chants of the Sacred Triduum in such a way as to elucidate their significance as a primary source of a liturgical theology and spirituality of the Paschal Mystery.²⁵ The text of each chant will be given in the Latin of the *Graduale Romanum* and in English translation.²⁶ The present use of each chant will be compared with past liturgical uses of the same chant, making reference, when appropriate, to Dom Hesbert’s *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*.²⁷ The biblical sources of each text will be studied in relationship to the other biblical texts and to their liturgical context.²⁸ The melody of each chant will then be analyzed to determine the theological hermeneutic it suggests.²⁹ Finally, the “sung theology” offered by

24. A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 10.

25. See *Graduale Romanum* (Solesmes, 1974), 162-200.

26. Unless otherwise indicated, the translations of the proper chant texts are the author’s.

27. René-Jean Hesbert, ed., *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex* (Bruxelles: Vromant & Co., 1935).

28. The Revised Standard Version of the Bible is used, unless otherwise noted. The psalms, however, will be numbered, not according to the Hebrew, but according to the Vulgate, following the traditional Catholic usage in liturgical books.

29. “A proper interpretation of the introit and communion antiphons at the Eucharist requires understanding the kind of melodies assigned to these texts (e.g., chant), not just the words of the texts, lest the study of what were experienced as sung texts be confined to a study of words only. Not to investigate melody as well as text would be to change the nature of one of the genres of communication that constitute the liturgy.” Irwin, *Context and Text*, 59.

each chant will be discussed and, again, related to the liturgical context.

The Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper

The Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper,³⁰ the beginning of the Paschal Triduum, belongs not to the day that is already spent but to the morrow. The Eucharist and the Cross are a single oblation; the sacramental action makes present the unique sacrifice of the Lamb. In enacting the successive phases of the Paschal Mystery, the Church "remains conscious of the whole saving work, does not see the part except in the whole, celebrates and brings the whole drama to completion in company with Christ."³¹ The Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper commemorates the institution of the Eucharist, the institution of the priesthood, and the new commandment of love.

Antiphon at the Introit, *Nos autem*³²

*Nos autem * gloriari opportet
in Cruce Domini nostri Iesu Christi;
in quo est salus, vita
et resurrectio nostra:
per quem salvati,
et liberati sumus.*

It is for us to glory
in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ
in whom is our health, life
and Resurrection:
though whom we have been saved
and set free (cf. Gal 6:14).

30. *Missa Vespertina in Cena Domini*, GR, 162.

31. A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 9.

32. GR, 162. The GR gives the title, *Antiphona ad Introitum*. This particular designation is given only to the more important introits of the Temporal and Sanctoral cycles.

*Ps. Deus misereatur nostri,
et benedicat nobis:
illuminet vultum super nos,
et misereatur nostri.*

*2. Ut cognoscamus in terra
viam tuam:
in omnibus gentibus
salutare tuum.*

*3. Confiteantur tibi populi, Deus:
confiteantur tibi populi omnes.*

*Ps. May God have mercy on us
and bless us;
may he cause his face to shine upon us
and may he have mercy on us.*

*2. Let your ways be known
upon earth,
your saving health
among all the nations.*

*3. Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you (Ps 66:1-3).*

The introit, composed of an antiphon with psalmody, is intoned at the entrance of the priest, deacon, and other ministers.³³ The introit opens the Mass; it draws the assembly into unity, and introduces the mystery of the particular day or season. It may be sung in one of several ways: alternately between the schola and the people; between a cantor and the assembly; or, even, entirely by the schola or by the people.

33. See IGMR 2000, nn. 47-48. On the origins of the introit, see McKinnon, *The Advent Project* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 195-198. For a musicological introduction to the introit, see Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 109-116. For a liturgical treatment of the introit, see Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, vol. 1, 320-333.

The earliest evidence of the use of the introit antiphon *Nos autem* with the *incipit* of Psalm 95³⁴ at the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper is found in the eighth century antiphonary of Rheinau under the heading *Feria V, Cena Domini*.³⁵ It is also found in the ninth century antiphonaries of Mont Blandin, Compiègne, Corbie, and Senlis.³⁶ In all six manuscripts *Nos autem* with the *incipit* of Psalm 66³⁷ is also found on the Tuesday of Holy Week from which it was borrowed for use on Holy Thursday.³⁸ The *Corbiensis* uses it with Psalm 66 on May 3 for the the Finding of the Holy Cross. The *Corbiensis* and the *Silvanectensis* use it with Psalm 92³⁹ on September 14 for the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

The text of the antiphon is a liturgical adaptation of Galatians 6:4, “But

34. *Cantate Domino canticum novum* (Ps 95:1).

35. Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 92-93.

36. Ibid.

37. *Deus misereatur nostri et benedicat nobis* (Ps 66:1).

38. “We have noted . . . the surprising tendency of this solemn occasion to borrow chants, surely an indication of a very late adoption of its Mass Proper (something I remain unable to explain). There is, in any event, no other explanation for the borrowing of *Nos autem*, the only instance of borrowing in the entire introit temporale, than that the cycle was already completed at the time Holy Thursday was provided with a sung Mass Proper.” McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 366. “The Holy Thursday gradual . . . shares with the Holy Thursday introit, *Nos autem*, the only shared introit in Lent [sic], an indication of its being a particularly late chant.” Ibid., 432.

39. *Dominus regnavit; decorum indutus est* (Ps 92:1).

far be it from me to glory except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”⁴⁰ In Galatians 1:3 Saint Paul affirms that Christ Jesus, by giving himself over for our sins, has delivered us from the present evil age, according to the will of the Father. The Paschal Mystery of Christ’s death and Resurrection is more than deliverance *from*; it is also a deliverance *into*, and a deliverance *for*: deliverance *from* the Law which, until Christ’s coming, functioned as a “custodian” (Gal 3:24); deliverance *into* the “peace and mercy” (Gal 6:16) of the Gospel; deliverance *for* the glory of the Father (cf. Gal 1:5).⁴¹ The Cross and Resurrection of Christ therefore constitute a break with the past and the beginning of “a new creation” (Gal 6:15) in which “neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love” (Gal 5:6). Whereas formerly the Law was exalted as the glory of Israel, “those who belong to Christ Jesus” (Gal 5:24) exalt the Cross alone and glory in it (cf. Gal 6:14).

The liturgical text adapts Paul’s use of the singular in Galatians 6:13, replacing it with a plural. Similarly, the personal tone of 6:13b, “by which the world is crucified to me, and I to the world,” is eliminated in favor of a

40. On the question of “textual adjustment,” see McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 102-104.

41. While the Paschal Mystery is soteriological in its effect, its finality is doxological. The salvation of humankind by the death and Resurrection of Christ redounds to the glory of the Father in the Holy Spirit.

confession of the principal benefits flowing from the Cross: health, life, Resurrection, salvation, and deliverance. These are to be compared with the benefits that flow from observance of the Law in Deuteronomy 7:12: steadfast love, blessing, fruitfulness and abundance.

And because you hearken to these ordinances, and keep and do them, the Lord your God will keep with you the covenant and the steadfast love which he swore to your fathers to keep; he will love you, bless you, and multiply you; he will also bless the fruit of your body and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your wine and your oil, the increase of your cattle and the young of your flock, in the land which he swore to your fathers to give you. You shall be blessed above all peoples. . . .

Whereas Israel boasted of the Law and gloried in the promises attached to its observance, the “Israel of God” (Gal 6:16) — those Israelites who have put their faith in the crucified Jesus and who, together with believing Gentiles, constitute God’s own people — boast of the Cross of Jesus Christ and the promises of eternal life flowing from his redemptive death and Resurrection.

The second half of the antiphon, while not directly scriptural, bears a strong resemblance to 1 Corinthians 1:28-31 and is easily linked to it by the recurrence of the verb *gloriari* (to boast) in both Latin texts.

God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might *boast* in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in

Christ Jesus, whom God has made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption; therefore as it is written, “Let him who *boasts*, *boast* of the Lord.”⁴²

The recurrence of *gloriari* in both Galatians 6:14 and 1 Corinthians 1:27-31, and the similarity of structure between the second half of the antiphon and 1 Corinthians 1:30 suggests that the text may have been composed as a kind of centonization,⁴³ both texts being modified and adapted in the process.⁴⁴

In the manuscripts cited above, the verses accompanying the antiphon *Nos autem* on Holy Thursday are taken from Psalm 95.⁴⁵ The *Graduale Romanum*, accomodating a more solemn entrance procession, gives the first three verses of

42. “Sed, quae stulti sunt mundi, elegit Deus, ut confundat sapientes, et infirma mundi elegit Deus, ut confundat fortia, et ignobilia mundi et contemptibilia elegit Deus, quae non sunt, ut ea, quae sunt, destrueret, ut non glorietur omnis caro in conspectu Dei. Ex ipso autem vos estis in Christo Iesu, qui factus est sapientia nobis a Deo et iustitia et sanctificatio et redemptio, ut quemadmodum scriptum est: *Qui gloriatur, in Domino glorietur*” (1 Cor 1:27-31).

43. Literary centonization is the process by which liturgical texts were composed by the juxtaposition and adaptation of bits and pieces of existing biblical texts in such a way as to suggest multivalent levels of theological meaning. The study of such centonizations is useful in acquiring some understanding of the specifically liturgical hermeneutic of Scripture. See Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 74-75, and R. Herbert, “Gregorian Chant in Context,” 134-135.

44. “A Mass Proper text is frequently not just a literal segment of Scripture but rather the product of adjustments to the original wording that are undertaken with a view to providing a suitable vehicle for an independent musical creation.” James McKinnon, *The Advent Project* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 215.

45. Psalm 95 is frequently used in connection with the mystery of the Cross, partly because of a reading of v. 10, found in the so-called Italic version: *Dicite in gentibus quia Dominus regnavit a ligno*. The last two words are, in fact, a Christian gloss. See the Alleluia verse for the Friday within the Octave of Easter, *Graduale Romanum*, 212, and the fourth strophe of the hymn *Vexilla regis*, sung at Vespers during Holy Week and on September 14. See also Bernard Capelle, “Regnavit a ligno” in *Travaux liturgiques de doctrine et d’histoire*, v. III (Louvain: Abbaye du Mont César, 1967), 211-214.

Psalm 66.⁴⁶ The tenor of Psalm 66, a harvest song of thanksgiving, is universal and doxological.

The antiphon *Nos autem* suggests a Christological hermeneutic of the psalm. Verse 1b may be interpreted in the “light of the knowledge of the glory of God” (2 Cor 4:6), revealed in the face of the crucified and risen Christ. In the pasch of Christ the “way of God” (v. 2a) has been made known on earth: “a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glorification” (1 Cor 2:7). In the body of the psalm, verse 3 recurs as a refrain three times, a pressing invitation to praise, echoing in Christian ears as a universal summons to the Eucharist and to the eschatological supper of the Lamb: “Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you” (Ps 66:3).

The melody of *Nos autem* interprets the text, serves its specific liturgical function, and reveals its theological content. Like *Resurrexi*, the introit of the Mass of Easter Day, *Nos autem* is in the fourth mode, subtly suggesting that the Cross and the Resurrection are two facets of a single mystery. The melody of *Nos autem* is humble, devoid of sentimentality, and wholly adequate to its liturgical and theological function. Dom Baron hears “a solemn and resolute

46. The GR similarly provides more than one verse at the introits for Christmas at the Mass *In nocte* (*Dominus dixit*, GR, 41), for Epiphany (*Ecce advenit*, GR, 56), for the Third Saturday of Lent (*Exsurge, Domine*, GR, 106), and for the solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (*Cibavit*, GR, 377).

affirmation” on *gloriari opportet*.⁴⁷ The word *nostri* in the phrase, *in cruce Domini nostri Iesu Christi*, rises boldly to a summit, becoming a confession of the Lordship of Christ over those who believe in him. The same musical pattern is used for *in quo est salus, vita, et resurrectio nostra*, the accent being placed on *vita*. The melody lingers over *nostra*; the impressive sol-re interval suggests that full sacramental participation in the resurrection of Christ lies ahead; it will be complete in the mysteries of the Paschal Vigil, in the night of salvation and liberation. The musical treatment of the text effectively symbolizes the liturgical identification of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ with health, life and Resurrection.

The *Graduale Romanum* uses *Nos autem* on the Tuesday of Holy Week⁴⁸ (its original liturgical assignation), on September 14, feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, and in votive Masses of the Holy Cross.⁴⁹ It is also used on

47. Baron, Ludovic. *L'Expression du chant grégorien* (Plouharnel: Abbaye Sainte-Anne de Kergonan, 1947), 326.

48. In the Old Gelasian Sacramentary, the evening Mass in *coena Domini* follows the Mass for the reconciliation of Penitents, and the Mass of Chrism. The third Mass of the day was celebrated without a Liturgy of the Word and began directly with the offertory. According to Righetti, the Mass in *coena Domini* was furnished with a Liturgy of the Word for use in non-cathedral or monastic churches, under Pope Gregory II (715-731) or possibly under Pope Sergius I (687-701). At that time, the introit *Nos autem* was borrowed from the more ancient Mass formulary for the Tuesday of Holy Week. See Righetti, *Storia Liturgica*, v. 2, 206.

49. *Graduale Romanum* (GR), 162. Cf. the corresponding entrance antiphons of the *Missale Romanum* (MR), 243 and of the *Graduale Simplex* (GS), 129. The antiphon of the MR is identical to that given in the GR. The GS gives an abbreviated version of the text for the antiphon: “*Nos autem gloriari opportet in cruce Domini nostri Iesu Christi*.” Psalm 66 is given in its entirety. Significantly, the

October 4, memorial of Saint Francis of Assisi, with Psalm 141 in place of Psalm 66, and on October 17, memorial of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, with Psalm 131.⁵⁰

On the threshold of the Sacred Triduum, *Nos autem* imparts “the secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glorification” (1 Cor 2:7): the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no trace of dolorism, but rather an intuitive grasp of the whole Paschal mystery, synthesized in the melodic treatment of *vita, et resurrection nostra*. Already, Jesus is sung as the crucified Lord of glory (cf. 1 Cor 2:8), the *Kyrios* of Philippians 2:11. Already the Cross appears as the Tree of Life, the “beautiful and radiant Tree, clothed in the purple of the King,” of the Holy Week Vespers hymn.⁵¹

The introit resonates together with the collect which asks “that we may draw the fullness of love and of life”⁵² from the great mystery of the

GS retains the fundamental elements of glory in the Cross of Christ and of the universal call to salvation through the Paschal Mystery.

37. Psalm 141 is used because it was the psalm prayed by Saint Francis of Assisi at the hour of his death. Psalm 131, often used in the liturgy of pastors, is especially suitable for Saint Ignatius of Antioch who “endured many hardships” (cf. Ps 131:1) in his configuration to the paschal Christ by martyrdom.

51. “*Arbor decora et fulgida, ornata regis purpura,*” Venantius Fortunatus, hymn: *Vexilla Regis*. See *Liber Hymnarius* (Solesmes, 1988), 51.

52. *Collecta: Sacratissimum, Deus, frequentibus Cenam, in qua unigenitus tuus, morti se traditurus, novum in saecula sacrificium dilectionesque suae convivium Ecclesiae commendavit, da nobis, quae sumus, ut ex tanto mysterio plenitudinem caritatis hauriamus et vitae.* (O God, as we celebrate that most sacred supper at which your only-begotten Son, about to hand himself over to death, left to his Church a new and

Eucharist. The mystery of the Cross is thus related to the Eucharist. For the Church, the Eucharist is the unchanging locus of the glorious Cross and the actualization of Christ's paschal sacrifice, the wellspring of life and of love. *Nos autem* sings of the ongoing work of our redemption; the Prayer Over the Offerings declares that so often as the Eucharist is celebrated the work of our redemption is carried out.⁵³ The Preface develops the idea of the Eucharist as the actualization of the Paschal Mystery by which the Church is strengthened and purified; this may be related to the *per quem salvati et liberati sumus* of the introit.⁵⁴

The theological significance of *Nos autem* is multivalent, applicable to the particular situation of those singing it: catechumens, penitents, and faithful. Catechumens will hear in it a celebration of the graces of Christ's Paschal Sacrifice, graces that will be theirs in their Resurrection/birth from the tomb/womb of the baptismal font during the Paschal Vigil: salvation, life, and

lasting sacrifice and a banquet of love, grant, we beseech you, that we may draw from so great a mystery the fullness of love and of life.) MR, 303.

53. *Oratio super oblata: Concede nobis, quae sumus, Domine, haec digne frequentare mysteria, quia, quoties huius hostiae commemoratio celebratur, opus nostrae redemptio nis exercetur.* (Grant, we beseech you, Lord, that we may worthily enact these mysteries, for so often as the commemoration of this victim is celebrated, the work of our redemption is accomplished.) MR, 303.

54. *Praefatio de Ssma. Eucharistia I:* "Cuius carnem pro nobis immolatam dum sumimus, roboramur, et fusam pro nobis sanguinem dum potamus, ablui m ur." "As we eat his flesh, immolated for us, we are strengthened; as we drink his blood, outpoured for our sakes, we are washed clean." MR, 595.

Resurrection. For the penitents it is an echo of their own sacramental experience of reconciliation, healing and deliverance, and the anticipation of their full participation in the Eucharist.⁵⁵ For all the faithful, *Nos autem* is an invitation to see the local Church in the wider context of a universal soteriology, and a confession of the benefits that ever flow from the glorious and glorifying Cross of Christ.

The Gradual, *Oculi omnium*⁵⁶

*Oculi * omnium
in te sperant, Domine:
et tu das illis escam
in tempore opportuno.*

*V. Aperis tu manum tuam:
et implet omne animal benedictione.*

*Oculi omnium
in te sperant, Domine:
et tu das illis escam
in tempore opportuno.*

The eyes of all creatures look to you in hope, Lord, and you give their food in due season.

V. You open your hand and fill every living thing with blessing.

The eyes of all creatures look to you in hope, Lord, and you give their food in due season (Ps 144:15-16).

The reformed *Ordo Lectionum Missae*, promulgated on May 25, 1969,

55. "In the Roman Church down to the seventh century, Holy Thursday was simply the day for the reconciliation of penitents; there was no trace of a commemoration of the Last Supper. The Eucharist to which the penitents were readmitted was the paschal Eucharist that was celebrated during the Easter Vigil as the climax of the whole liturgical year." Adrien Nocent, *The Liturgical Year*, vol. 3, *The Paschal Triduum, The Easter Season*, trans. Matthew O'Connell (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1977), 30. See also Aemiliana Löhr, *The Great Week*, 110–112.

56. GR, 343.

necessitated the selection of appropriate chants for the Liturgy of the Word of the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper. The *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae Instauratus* of 1955 contained only one reading (1 Cor 11:20-32), followed by the gradual, *Christus, factus est pro nobis* (Ph 2:8-9) and the Gospel (Jn 13:1-15). The present reformed lectionary contains three readings: Exodus 12:1-8. 11-14; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; and John 13:1-15. According to the General Instruction on the Roman Missal,⁵⁷ the first reading is followed by one of three chants:⁵⁸ (1) the gradual *Oculi omnium* from the *Graduale Romanum*; (2) the responsorial psalm of the lectionary, Psalm 115:12-13. 15-18 with its refrain taken from 1 Cor 10:16;⁵⁹ or (3) the responsorial psalm of the *Graduale Simplex*, Psalm 22 with its refrain taken from the psalm.⁶⁰ In all three forms, the sung response to the reading is an echo of the Word of God, related to the reading that preceded it.

The gradual or responsorial psalm is the privileged form of the assembly's response to the Word of God; the Word of God, proclaimed in the reading,

57. "Post primam lectionem sequitur psalmus responsorius qui est pars integralis liturgiae verbi. . . . Loco psalmi in Lectionario assignati cani potest etiam vel responsorium graduale, vel psalmus responsorius aut alleluiaiticus e Graduali simplici, sicut in his libris describuntur." IGMR 2000, 61.

58. On the history and significance of the intervenient chants, see Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, vol. 1, 421-442 and McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 222-279.

59. R. *Calix benedictionis communicatio Sanguinis Christi est* (cf. 1 Cor 10:16).

60. R. *In loco pascuae ibi me collocavit* (Ps 22:1b).

returns to God laden with the faith and prayer of the assembly.⁶¹ “So shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it” (Is 55:11). For Jungmann, “in the chant which is linked with the readings we have the most ancient song of the Christian liturgy, and in particular of the Roman liturgy.”⁶²

The gradual *Oculi omnium* is not native to the liturgy of the Paschal Triduum. In the eighth century *Rhenaugiensis* it is found on the Saturday of Ember Week in Lent.⁶³ The seventh century *Modoetiensis*⁶⁴ and four later manuscripts assign *Oculi omnium* to the Thursday of the Third Week of Lent.

61. On the origins of the responsorial psalm, see McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 45-59.

62. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, vol. 1, 421. McKinnon critiques Jungmann’s assertion, arguing that the communion psalm represents the most ancient element of the Mass Proper: “The central point is that the recitation of psalms in the pre-eucharistic service of the second and third centuries was essentially a biblical reading rather than a discrete and independent act of liturgical song. And whatever singing of psalms might have taken place was probably occasional rather than regular. . . . Another event in the celebration of the Eucharist . . . might very well have been particularly hospitable to psalmody. This is the distribution of communion. . . . The singing of a psalm at communion time became a regular event in the Eucharist of the later fourth century. It seems quite possible that such psalmody might also have taken place with some frequency in at least certain congregations of the second and third centuries. Continuity between the custom of singing at earlier eucharistic meals and of singing at the morning distribution of communion is an entirely plausible sequence of events.” McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 34.

63. Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 237.

64. The cantatorium of Monza, or *Modoetiensis*, is “the oldest surviving witness to the Roman Gradual.” See Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy, An Introduction to the Sources*, rev. and trans. W. G. Storey and N. K. Rasmussen (Washington: The Pastoral Press, 1986), 359.

The same manuscripts indicate that *Oculi omnium* was also sung on the Twentieth and Twenty-First Sundays after Pentecost.⁶⁵ With the institution of the feast of *Corpus Christi* in the thirteenth century, *Oculi omnium* found its place after the epistle, 1 Corinthians 11:23-29. The *Corpus Christi* epistle was itself borrowed from the Evening Mass of Holy Thursday where, in the present reformed lectionary, with the exception of the three final verses, it remains as the second reading. *Oculi omnium* comes into the present reformed rite from its diverse assignations in ancient manuscripts by way of the later liturgy of *Corpus Christi* where it was first associated with Saint Paul's account of the institution of the Eucharist in 1 Corinthians 11:23-29.

The text of *Oculi omnium* is Psalm 144, 15-16. Psalm 144 is a hymn of praise and thanksgiving, a response to the mighty deeds of the Lord and to his wonderful works (vv. 1-7). The psalm insists on the abundant goodness of the Lord, on the compassion and steadfast love that characterize his reign (vv. 8-13). More specifically, verses 15 and 16 praise God for the food provided by his hand. God is described as opening wide his hand, as giving with largesse, and as feeding every creature to its heart's content. The gift of food is remembered in the wider context of God's mighty action on behalf of all generations. The God who gives food in due season is also the God who supports all who fall and

65. Ibid.

raises up all who are bowed down (vv. 13c-14).

A liturgical hermeneutic of Psalm 144, 15-16 will, first of all, relate the text to its proper context within the Liturgy of the Word. The Word of God, “broken and given” (Lk 24: 30) in the liturgical assembly, is “living bread come down from heaven” (Jn 6:51).⁶⁶

A liturgical hermeneutic of *Oculi omnium* will also relate the text to the foods of the first reading, “the paschal lamb, the unleavened bread and the bitter herbs” (Ex 12:8), but even more to the manna of the Exodus (Ex 16:11-16) and to the “milk and honey of the promised land” (Ex 13:5). In the light of Matthew 6:11 and Luke 11:3, “Give us this day our daily bread,” *Oculi omnium* points to the very prayer which opens the Communion Rite in every Eucharist. The gradual receives an even greater eucharistic significance from John 6:31-51: The food received from the Father’s hand is the “living bread which came down from heaven,” the bread given “for the life of world” (Jn 6:51).⁶⁷

66. The teaching of Jesus that “man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Mt 4:4) was solemnly proclaimed on the First Sunday of Lent. The liturgy nourishes the faithful from the table of the Word of God. On the “Essential Bond Between the Word of God and the Mystery of the Eucharist,” see the “Introduction” in the *Lectionary for Mass*, n. 10, xvi.

67. The corresponding chants of the lectionary (Ps 115) and the of the GS (Ps 22) are equally eucharistic in tenor: e.g., “*Quid retribuam Domino pro omnibus quae retribuit mihi? Calicem salutaris accipiam, et nomen Domini invocabo*” (Ps 115: 12-13), and “*Parasti in conspectu meo mensam . . . et calix meus redundat*” (Ps 22:6-7).

The seventh mode melody⁶⁸ interprets the text by carrying the phrase, *in te sperant, Domine*, to the summit of confident expectation. The melodic treatment of *Aperis tu manum tuam*, in the verse, balances the element of human dependence on God with a vivid impression of the divine hand open and extended towards all creatures, emphasized in the melismatic development of *animal*. The verse leads back into the repetition of the refrain.⁶⁹ The second rendition of the refrain will be characterized, even musically, by the certitude that comes from experience. It should be sung as an affirmation and a confession of the God who “gives food in due season” (Ps 144:15).⁷⁰

Within the context of the Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord’s supper, *Oculi omnium* leads into the second reading (1 Cor 11:23-26) as much as it responds to the first.⁷¹ In principle, any particular connection between the gradual and the second reading is a fortuitous occurrence. Saint Paul’s account of the institution of the Eucharist, following upon *Oculi omnium*, will nonetheless be

68. On the division of graduals into “families” based on their musical characteristics, see Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 76-81.

69. In the present reformed liturgy, the responsorial nature of the gradual has been recovered by the repetition of the refrain by all after the singing of the verse by one or more cantors. “Quando autem opportunum videtur, licet repetere primam partem Responsorii usque ad versum.” *Praenotanda* 4, GR, 11.

70. See Baron, *L’expression du chant grégorien*, 143-145.

71. In the Missal of Pius V, *Oculi omnium* is, in fact, the gradual following the same epistle, 1 Cor 11:23-29.

heard, in this context, as the fulfillment of the psalmist's words, "You open your hand and fill every living thing with blessing" (Ps 144:16).

In the present, reformed liturgy, *Oculi omnium* recurs in Years B and C on the Twenty-Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time, on the solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, and in votive celebrations of the Most Holy Eucharist. Religious and monastic communities that celebrate the traditional conventional blessing before meals will recognize the text of *Oculi omnium* as the psalmody before dinner in Ordinary Time.⁷² The text thus constitutes a link between the eucharistic liturgy of the altar and that of the common table.

The theological significance of *Oculi omnium* is first of all related to its liturgical function as a gradual. It is a response to the Word of God, a sign that the worshiping assembly has welcomed the saving initiative of God by hearing the Word and by taking it to heart. Quickened by the visitation of the Word, the prayer of the assembly ascends in the Holy Spirit to the Word's place of

72. Dom Cabrol comments on the *Oculi omnium* of the table prayers: "*The eyes of all hope in thee, O Lord, and thou givest them meat in due season. Thou openest thy hand and fillest with blessing every living creature.*" These words (from Psalm cxliv.) are admirably adapted to the occasion. All creatures expect their food from God, and that Divine hand which at the beginning of the world fashioned every plant and every animal has never failed to renew the fruitfulness of the earth; it gives to every creature the nourishment it needs, making the grass of the field to grow up every year and all kinds of plants to put forth their leaves, causing the fruit-trees to bring forth fruit, and multiplying on the earth, in the air, and in the waters, the animals which constitute man's food." Fernand Cabrol, *Liturgical Prayer, Its History and Spirit* (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, Ltd., 1922), 238-239.

The traditional text has been maintained in the *Book of Blessings*, trans. I.C.E.L. (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 378.

origin in the bosom of the Father (Jn 1:18).⁷³ Without the response of faith that the gradual chant symbolizes, the actualization of the mission of the Word in the liturgy would be inadequately expressed. The gradual or responsorial psalm manifests the Church's assumption into the economy of the Three Divine Persons by means of the sacrament of the salvific Word. *Oculi omnium*, by virtue of its function within the *actio*, has Trinitarian, soteriological and ecclesiological levels of meaning.

As a sung text, interpreted by the liturgy and contextualized by the other symbolic elements of the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, *Oculi omnium* is a theological source. The literal meaning of the text is a confession of God the Creator as the provider of sustenance for all living creatures. At the Paschal Vigil, the first reading (Gn 1:1—2:2) will harken back to the theology already implicit in *Oculi omnium*: “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food” (Gn 1:29). On the threshold of the Paschal Triduum,

73. This simplest of units in the liturgical complexus — reading and response — contains and renders present the sweeping Christological and Trinitarian schema familiar to readers of Dom Vagaggini. He speaks of “the grand biblical and liturgical perspective of the salvation history that is to be identified with the mystery of Christ, with the mystery of the Church, with the mystery in which all things come *from* the Father, *through* Christ, *in* the Holy Spirit, all returning *to* the Father: the mystery that constitutes the connatural perspective outside of which the Bible is not understood and the liturgy is not lived.” *Theological Dimensions*, 245.

the liturgy recalls the importance of creation, thus rooting the whole sacramental economy of salvation in the economy of creation.⁷⁴

The place of food in the economy of creation serves as a symbol of God's life-giving and sustaining word in the economy of salvation. The text of *Oculi omnium*, itself an integral part of the Liturgy of the Word, recalls that the Word of God has been variously imaged as bread, water, milk and honey. *Oculi omnium* responds to the account of the Paschal meal in the first reading (Ex 12:1-8, 11-14) thereby developing the symbolic association between food and the Word of God; both protect from the forces of death and sustain life. The shared meal is a sign of the word exchanged, not only among human beings, but also between God and the people chosen by him. By partaking of the sacramental Word, the Church, like Christ, is nourished by the Father (cf. Jn 4:32-34) as she hastens towards the paschal exodus of death, burial and Resurrection.

In the context of the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, the text of *Oculi omnium* becomes transparent, allowing yet another level of meaning to shine through it. The food given in due season by the Father's hand, the food that fills every living thing with blessing (cf. Ps 144:15-16), is the Body and Blood of Christ, offered and received in the Eucharist. For the Church, this food is the

74. This is also achieved by the liturgy of the Chrism Mass which is outside of the scope of the present study.

means by which she enters sacramentally into the *transitus* of Christ, passing over with Him, in the Holy Spirit, to the Father. The Eucharist is therefore a pledge and foretaste of the kingdom of heaven.⁷⁵

Ultimately, *Oculi omnium* points through the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper to the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:9). This is the "marriage supper" (Rev 19:9) to which the whole sacramental economy is ordered and towards which every celebration of the Eucharist points.⁷⁶ The food of "the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev 19:9) will be given "in due season" (Ps 144:16). Until that time, the Church eats the bread and drinks the cup, proclaiming the death of the Lord until he comes (1 Cor 11:26).⁷⁷

75. See A. Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 47-48; 168-169.

76. The invitation to communion in the *Missale Romanum* expresses the eschatological dimension of the Eucharist: "*Ecce Agnus Dei, ecce qui tollit peccata mundi. Beati qui ad cenam Agni vocati sunt.*" MR, 601.

77. Cf. the second memorial acclamation: "*Quotiescumque manducamus panem hunc et calicem bibimus, mortem tuam annuntiamus, Domine, donec venias.*" MR, 576.

The Tract, *Ab solis ortu*⁷⁸

*Ab solis * ortu usque ad occasum,
magnum est nomen meum
in gentibus.* From the rising of the sun to its setting
my name is great
among the nations.

*V. Et in omni loco sacrificatur
et offertur nomini meo
oblatio munda:
quia magnum est nomen meum
in gentibus.*

V. And in every place a sacrifice
is offered to my name:
a pure oblation:
for my name is great
among the nations (Mal 1:11).

*V. Venite, comedite panem meum:
et bibite vinum quod miscui
vobis.*

V. Come and eat of my bread,
And drink of the wine I have
prepared for you (Pr 9:5).

A tract is a responsorial chant sung without a refrain by a single soloist,

or sung by two soloists (or two halves of the assembly) alternating verses.⁷⁹

Unlike the Alleluia with its verse, or the Lenten acclamations given in the Lectionary, the tract does not accompany the gospel procession; like the gradual or responsorial psalm, the tract responds to the reading that precedes it. The reformed lectionary, with two readings before the gospel at the Mass of the Lord's Supper, necessitated the introduction of a tract after the second reading.⁸⁰

78. GR, 163.

79. On the origins of the tract, see McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 280-283. See also Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 82-85, and Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, vol. 1, 430-431.

80. In the revised GR a tract follows the second reading during Lent. The GrS gives a second responsorial psalm in the same place. The *Ordo Lectionum Missae* provides a *Versus ante evangelium* which may be sung with or without a short acclamation.

The tract, *Ab solis ortu*, is a modern composition borrowed from the votive Mass of the Most Holy Eucharist.⁸¹ The votive Mass of the Most Holy Eucharist⁸² consists of the eucharology and proper chants of the solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ. From the time of its institution by Urban IV in 1264, the feast of *Corpus Christi* was understood to be “a sort of obverse of Maundy Thursday, celebrating the day of the institution of the eucharist not in sorrow in the Passion week, but on another, joyful, occasion.”⁸³ By a curious twist of liturgical history similar to that of *Oculi omnium* (above), *Ab solis ortu*, has travelled from its place in the votive Mass of the Most Holy Eucharist — a devotional echo of *Corpus Christi* — to the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper.

The revised *Graduale Romanum* contains twenty-five tracts; of these, nineteen are taken from the Psalms; four are taken from the sapiential books or from the Prophets; two are taken from the Pentateuch; and two are non-biblical.⁸⁴ *Ab solis ortu* is unusual in that it juxtaposes two texts from different

81. In the chants of the votive Mass, it replaces the Alleluia, *Caro mea*, during Lent.

82. MR, 1162–1163; GR, 658. The MR of Paul VI contains three formularies for the Votive Mass of the Most Holy Eucharist: (1) *Ianuas caeli*, (2) *Iuravit Dominus*, and (3) *Cibavit*.

83. Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi, The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 180.

84. GR, 898-899.

sources;⁸⁵ the first and second verses are from Malachi 1, 11; the third verse is taken from Proverbs 9,5. The oracle of Malachi is appropriate here. Malachi condemns the corruption of the old priesthood and the unworthy use of the altars of sacrifice (1:6-10); he points to a liturgy that will be universal, celebrated even among the Gentiles, a liturgy worthy of the name of the Lord, a pure oblation from the rising of the sun to its setting (1:11).⁸⁶

The themes of the priesthood, altar, and offering are thus introduced into the celebration; they will occur repeatedly throughout the paschal liturgy, notably in Preface I of the Most Holy Eucharist,⁸⁷ available for use at the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, and in Preface V of Paschaltide.⁸⁸ Malachy's focus on priesthood, altar and sacrifice resonates with the Letter to the Hebrews, read at the Liturgy of the Hours during the Paschal Triduum:

85. This procedure, while common to Office responsories, is an indication of the late composition of *Ab solis ortu*. The tract of the votive Mass of the Holy Spirit, *Emitte Spiritum tuum* (GR 661), is also composed of two passages from different biblical sources. On the “patchwork” construction of chant texts, see R. Herbert, “Gregorian Chant in Context,” 132-133.

86. Images from Malachi 1:11 recur in the post-Sanctus of the Third Eucharistic Prayer: “*Et populum tibi congregare non desinis, ut a solis ortu usque ad occasum oblatio munda offeratur nomini tuo*” (MR, 461). The same text is used as the reading for Lauds on the solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Liturgy of the Hours.

87. “*Qui, verus aeternusque Sacerdos, formam sacrificii perennis instituens, hostiam tibi se primus obtulit salutarem, et nos, in sui memoriam, paecepit offerre*” (MR, 420).

88. “*Qui, oblatione corporis sui, antiqua sacrificia in crucis veritate perfectit, et, seipsum tibi pro nostra salute commendans, idem sacerdos, altare et agnus exhibuit.*” MR, 534.

“Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf” (Heb 9:24).⁸⁹

Significantly, the book of Malachi ends on an eschatological note: the promise that the “sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings” (4:2).⁹⁰ Malachi is the last of the series of prophetic books; the liturgical use of Malachi in this specific context announces the “worship in spirit and in truth” (Jn 4:23-24) revealed at Jacob’s well, the liturgy of the New Covenant inaugurated by Christ in the mystery of the Eucharist and of the Cross. “Types and shadows have their ending, for the newer rite is here.”⁹¹

The third verse of *Ab solis ortu*, Proverbs 9:5, depicts Lady Wisdom as a gracious hostess (9:1), inviting even the little, the simple and the poor (cf. 9:4) into her house. The Eucharist is the sacramental opening of the kingdom of

89. Hebrews 9, 11-28 is read on Good Friday, and 4, 1-13 on Holy Saturday at the Office of Readings.

90. One wonders if Aemiliana Löhr was not inspired by this image in her reflection on the paschal Alleluia: “It rises above the grave of Adam, and it has the blood of Christ on its wings.” *The Great Week*, 187.

91. From the hymn, *Pange lingua gloriosi*, sung at the conclusion of the procession to the repository where the Sacred Species will be reserved for Holy Communion the next day. “*Tantum ergo sacramentum veneremur cernui, et antiquum documentum novo cedat ritui.*” *Hortus Conclusus, A Series of Mediaeval Latin Hymns With Selected English Renderings, Part Ten: The Eucharistic Hymns of St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Stephen A. Hurlbut (Washington: Saint Alban’s Press, 1934), 14-15.

heaven to the poor in spirit (cf. Mt 5:3).⁹² The images of Matthew's account of the Last Supper are strikingly similar to those of Proverbs 9:1-6: "I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom." (Mt 22:29). Wisdom's seven-pillared house, while closed to the learned and the clever, is open to the little ones, for such is the Father's gracious will (cf. Mt 11:25-28 and Lk 10:21). There Wisdom has prepared a table (Pr 9:2) set with bread and wine (9:5). Those who eat and drink at Wisdom's banquet forsake folly; they receive life and begin to walk in the way of understanding (Pr 9:6).⁹³ *Ab solis ortu* thus presents the Eucharist as a sacramental participation in the word of the Cross (1 Cor 1:18). The Cross of Christ, already exalted in the introit, *Nos autem*, is "folly to those who are perishing," but to those who eat Wisdom's bread and drink of her cup, the Cross is "the power of God" (1 Cor 1:18).

Musically, *Ab solis ortu* is an artful adaptation of the melody of the eighth mode tract *Ad te levavi*. Hiley describes this procedure as "a mode of delivery flexible enough for the performance of multiple biblical texts, but musically characteristic enough of a particular liturgical moment to be recognizable for

92. See A. Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 27; 47-48.

93. This should be related to conversion of heart and to the ethical implications of participation in the Eucharist. See Irwin, *Context and Text*, 346.

what it is and fulfill its proper liturgical function.”⁹⁴ In the case of *Ab solis ortu*, the adaptation of the existing melody, serves the text well and calls it into life. The ample melismatic development of *gentibus* seems to open immensely universal horizons. The treatment of the three consecutive verbs in the third verse, *venite, comedite, and bibite* resounds as a compelling invitation to Wisdom’s banquet, rising to its summit on *bibite*. The melody lingers over *panem meum* and *vinum quod miscui vobis*, as if to insist on a eucharistic hermeneutic of the text. The same eighth mode tract melody, fitted to seven different texts, will be sung at the Paschal Vigil.⁹⁵ It will then have rendered an eightfold service in the liturgy of the Paschal Triduum.

Unlike *Nos autem* and *Oculi omnium*, the first of which is the Church’s paschal confession of the glory of the Cross, and the second a prayer of the assembly addressing God, *Ab solis ortu* is a prophetic oracle placed by the liturgy in the mouth of Christ. It is the voice of Christ addressing the assembly. This affects the spirit in which it is sung and heard. A liturgical hermeneutic of *Ab solis ortu* will necessarily take this into consideration. According to Cassian’s doctrine of purity of heart, the objective meaning of a biblical text expands so

94. Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 85.

95. See GR, 185-191.

as to accomodate the faith, receptivity and desire of the hearers.⁹⁶ Fully initiated Christians, penitents, and catechumens receive the text according to the capacity proper to their degree of participation in the *actio*, their intelligence of the *mysterium*, and their progress in the Christian life.

Ab solis ortu is a response to Paul's account of the institution of the Eucharist in the second reading (1 Cor 11:23-26), and a development of it. The second reading passes from Paul's brief words of introduction (1 Cor 11:23-24a) to the words of the Lord himself (1 Cor 11:24b-25):

I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me" (1 Cor 11:23-25).

After relating the words of Jesus, Paul presents a concise liturgical theology of the institution narrative: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor 11:26).⁹⁷ For Paul, and for the Church after him, the eucharistic *actio* (i.e. eating the bread and drinking the cup) actualizes the *mysterium* until its eschatological

96. See John Cassian, *Conferences* I, 6-7, trans. Colm Luibhead, 39.

97. Cf. the third acclamation after the consecration: "*Quotiescumque manducamus panem hunc et calicem bibimus, mortem tuam annuntiamus, Domine, donec venias*" (MR, 492).

fulfillment in the glorious advent of the risen and ascended Lord. With the intonation of the tract, another change of voice occurs: the Lord himself addresses the Church through the prophetic oracle, revealing himself to her now as universal priest and spotless oblation (Mal 1:11). In this way, the first two verses of the tract shed their own light on the Pauline text. In the third verse of the tract the Lord who handed over the mysteries of his Body and Blood in 1 Corinthians 11:24-25 appears as Wisdom inviting the poor to partake of bread and wine at her table (Pr 9:5).⁹⁸ The chant of the tract thus places a seal on Paul's account of the institution of the Eucharist and on the Church's enactment of the Eucharist, interacting with them and disclosing their theological meaning.

The theological value of *Ab solis ortu* derives principally from its interaction with the second reading and from the connections it weaves between sacrament, sacrifice and communion. The sacrifice of Christ is rendered dynamically present by his sacrament; the sacrament makes communion possible, a communion that is the inclusion of Christ's ever-expanding Mystical Body in the saving mystery of his Paschal sacrifice, offered to the Father in the Holy Spirit. The institution of the Eucharist as memorial

98. This is an example of the liturgical use of the Old Testament to draw fuller theological meaning out of New Testament texts. See Alexis Kniazeff, "Quand le Christ fait disparaître le voile" in *Studia Anselmiana* 68 (Rome: Editrice Anselmiana, 1979), 189-202.

sacrament is recounted in the second reading (1 Cor 11:23-26). *Ab solis ortu* responds to the Pauline text and amplifies it. As the tract is sung, the second reading resonates with the images of Malachy's prophetic oracle. The Eucharistic *actio* is the universal sacrifice around which Jews and Gentiles assemble; it fills the whole earth, "from the rising of the sun to its setting" (Mal 1:11) with the praise of the Father's name. It is the pure and spotless sacrifice⁹⁹ offered on earth as it is heaven,¹⁰⁰ offered successively in time as it is once and for all in eternity. The one, abiding sacrifice of Christ, while already accomplished in history and fully sufficient in itself, remains accessible in the succession of time to all who enter into the Pasch of the Lord by means of sacramental communion.

The third verse of the tract (Pr 9:5) is perhaps best understood in terms of communion; it is Wisdom's pressing invitation to enter fully into the great Paschal *mysterium* of sacrificial love by means of the *actio*. The transformation wrought by such a communion will be sacramentally epiphanied in the gospel

99. Cf. "Offerimus praeclarae maiestati tuae de tuis donis ac datis hostiam puram, hostiam sanctam, hostiam immaculatam. . ." Eucharistic Prayer I, MR, 576.

100. The theology of the concomitance of the heavenly and earthly liturgies relies principally upon the Letter to the Hebrews and the book of Revelation; it is reflected in Eucharistic Prayer I: "Supplices te rogamus, omnipotens Deus: iube haec perferri per manus sancti Angeli tui in sublime altare tuum, in conspectu divinae maiestatis tuae; ut, quotquot ex hac altaris participatione sacrosanctum Filii tui Corpus et Sanguinem sumpserimus, omni benedictione caelesti et gratia repleamur." MR, 577.

and in the rite of the *Mandatum*.

The Antiphons of the *Mandatum*¹⁰¹

Although the rite of the *Mandatum*¹⁰² predates its appearance in the Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century (950-962), it was not, properly speaking, part of Roman liturgical usage before that time.¹⁰³ Basing his opinion on a rubric in the Pontifical of Egbert,¹⁰⁴ Schmidt suggests that at the time of Pope Saint Gregory's English mission the *Mandatum* was practiced by the episcopal household as a domestic rite separate from the public celebration of the liturgy. This, according to Schmidt, would reflect Roman practice at the same time.¹⁰⁵

101. GR, 164–167.

102. The name *Mandatum* is derived from one of the antiphons sung during the rite of foot washing: “*Mandatum novum do vobis*” (Jn 13:34).

103. On the history and theological significance of the *Mandatum*, see Père Gy's summary of Dom Schaefer's study, “Les origines liturgiques du lavement des pieds,” *La Maison-Dieu*, 49 (1957), 50–53; Peter Jeffery, “Mandatum Novum Do Vobis: Toward a Renewal of the Holy Thursday Footwashing Rite,” *Worship*, 64 (1990), 107–141; and Keith Graber-Miller, “Mennonite Footwashing: Identity Reflections and Altered Meanings,” *Worship*, 66 (1992), 148–170.

104. The Pontifical of Egbert, first archbishop of York, dates from 732–766. Schmidt holds that the Pontifical contains the Roman liturgy brought to England by Saint Augustine in 596. The rubric reads: “*Pontifex suis cubiculariis pedes lavat, et unusquisque clericorum in domo sua.*” See Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 554.

105. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 2, 766.

The rite of the *Mandatum* developed out of the foot washing prevalent in ancient Mediterranean cultures where it was usually linked to a communal meal or to the domestic rites of hospitality. Abraham washed the feet of three mysterious guests by the oak of Mamre (Gn 18:4), and the feet of Jacob's sons were washed upon their arrival in the house of Joseph (Gn 43:24). Jesus' own reproach to Simon the Pharisee points to a lack of hospitality and love: "I entered your house, you gave me no water for my feet" (Lk 7:44).¹⁰⁶ Saint Paul, in treating of the duties of a Christian widow, speaks of washing the feet of the

106. The account of the "woman of the city who was a sinner" (Lk 7:37-50) and Saint John's account of the anointing of Jesus by Mary of Bethany (Jn 12:3) are recalled in two *Mandatum* antiphons of the Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century (Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 585) where they give evidence of the multivalent theological symbolism associated with the *Mandatum*. When, in the 1570 Missal, the number of antiphons was severely reduced, these antiphons were omitted. They were however kept in both the Cistercian and Dominican rites. These antiphons suggest another liturgical hermeneutic of the *Mandatum*. See *Processionale Cisterciense* (Westmalle, 1950), 19-20, and *Triduo Ante Pascha* (Rome: Santa Sabina, 1949), 116-117.

*Ant. In diebus illis,
mulier quae erat in civitate peccatrix,
ut cognovit quod Iesus
accubuisset in domo Simonis leprosi,
attulit alabastrum unguenti,
et stans retro secus pedes Domini Iesu,
lacrymis coepit rigare pedes eius,
et capillis capitum sui tergebat,
et osculabatur pedes eius,
et unguento ungebatur.
V. Maria optimam partem elegit,
quae non auferatur ab ea.*

*Ant. Maria ergo unxit pedes Iesu,
et extersit capillis suis,
et domus impleta est
ex odore unguenti.
V. Dimissa sunt ei peccata multa,
quoniam dilexit multum.*

And behold in those days,
a woman of the city who was a sinner
when she learned that Jesus
was at table in the house of Simon the leper
brought an alabaster flask of ointment and standing
behind him, at the feet of the Lord Jesus,
she began to wash his feet with her tears
and wiped them with the hair of her head,
and kissed his feet,
and anointed them with the ointment (Lk 7:37-38).
V. Mary has chosen the better portion,
which shall not be taken away from her (Lk 10:42).

Mary then anointed the feet of Jesus,
and wiped his feet with her hair;
and the house was filled
with the fragrance of the ointment (Jn 12:3).
V. Her sins, which are many, are forgiven
for she loved much (Lk 7:47).

saints (1 Tim 5:10).

Christ's example at the Last Supper (Jn 13:1-20) was sufficient reason for Christian communities to confer a sacred significance upon this essentially practical and homely custom. The Rule of Saint Benedict thus prescribes that the feet of guests should be washed by the Abbot and the whole community;¹⁰⁷ moreover, the monks charged with table service wash the feet of their brethren on Saturday evening: the *Mandatum Fratrum*.¹⁰⁸ In the ninth century the traditional foot washing of guests evolved into a daily foot washing of the poor, probably linked to the distribution of alms: the *Mandatum Pauperum*. Not surprisingly, on Holy Thursday the two foot washing ceremonies, that of the poor and that of the monks, were carried out with special solemnity. The Seventeenth Council of Toledo in 694 attests to an episcopal *Mandatum* in *Coena Domini*.¹⁰⁹ In the ninth and tenth centuries, a modified form of this monastic ritual, detailed in the Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century, came to be practiced in Frankish cathedrals.¹¹⁰

107. "Aquam in manibus abbas hospitibus det; pedes hospitibus omnibus tam abbas quam cuncta congregatio lavet" (RB 53:12-13).

108. "Pedes vero tam ipse qui egreditur quam ille qui intraturus est omnibus lavent" (RB 35:9).

109. See Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 2, 767.

110. Ibid., 768.

The *Mandatum* of the Romano-Germanic Pontifical incorporated material from the *Mandatum Fratrum* of the monastic customaries of Cassino and Aniane. The ritual took place on Holy Thursday after the celebration of Mass and Vespers, before or after supper, outside of the church. The subdeacon carried the gospel book in procession, accompanied with candles and incense. The deacon sang John 13:1-15. The bishop then sang the collect of Vespers,¹¹¹ removed his outer vestments and washed the feet of his presbyters and clerics while antiphons and psalms were sung.¹¹² The Romano-Germanic Pontifical provided twenty-one antiphons, recommending that others be sung as needed. When the last antiphon had been sung, the deacon or a lector resumed the proclamation of the gospel, *quasi lectionem legens*, beginning with Jn 13:16 and continuing through John 17:26, the end of Jesus' priestly prayer.¹¹³ The gospel

111. *Deus cuius coenam sacratissimam veneremur; ut ea digni inveniamur, munda nos quae sumus, a sordibus peccatorum, qui ad insinuandum nobis humilitatem exemplum pedes tuorum dignatus es hodie lavare discipulorum. Qui cum Patre.* (Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 585.) [O God whose most sacred banquet we venerate, that we may be found worthy thereof, cleanse us, we beseech you, of the stains of our sins, you who today, in order to inspire us with humility, deigned to wash the feet of your disciples.] The text suggests a complex hermeneutic of the *Mandatum* rite. It is (1) related to the celebration of the eucharistic banquet, an eschatological image; (2) involves purification from sin now; and (3) recalls Christ's example of humility, a memorial of the past.

112. This is a transposition of the monastic ritual: the bishop assumes the role of abbot and the members of his presbyterium that of the monks.

113. The rubric "*Finitis antiphonis, diaconus aut lector, cui mandatum fuerit, imponat Evangelium secundum Ioannem, quasi lectionem legens. . .*" indicates that the second half of this curiously "split" gospel is not treated as a liturgical proclamation of the gospel, but as a simple reading. The deacon may be replaced by a lector and the text is read in the tone reserved for readings.

was followed by a series of versicles and responses, the first of which, “We have received thy mercy, O God, in the midst of thy temple” (Ps 47:9), is borrowed from the foot washing of guests in the Rule of Saint Benedict.¹¹⁴ The rite concluded with three collects; to these was added a fourth, for those who carried out the *Mandatum*.¹¹⁵

Of the seven *Mandatum* antiphons in the present *Graduale Romanum*, the six derived from John 13 are found in the Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century. While the choice and number of *Mandatum* antiphons have varied widely over the centuries, the singing of antiphons has been integral to the enactment of the *Mandatum* from the time of its introduction into the Roman liturgy.

Antiphon I. Postquam surrexit Dominus¹¹⁶

*Postquam surrexit Dominus *
a cena,
misit aquam in pelvem,
coepit lavare pedes discipulorum:
hoc exemplum reliquit eis.
(Cf. Jn 13:4-5. 15).*

After the Lord had risen from supper,
he put water into a basin
and began to wash the feet of his disciples.
Such is the example that he left them

In Antiphon I the action of the Servant Christ is both an example left to his Servant Church for her life in the present, and a pledge of his own glorious

114. RB 53:14.

115. Texts given in Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 586-587.

116. GR, 164.

service of the Church at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:9) in the kingdom.¹¹⁷ The verb *surrexit* has an eschatological and ecclesiological significance, recalling both Isaiah 30:18¹¹⁸ and Psalm 101:14.¹¹⁹ Christ rises from supper (Jn 13:4) just as in Luke 12:37 the master returns from the marriage feast in order to serve those whom he finds awake and ready to greet him. The Church, in like manner, rises from the table of the Eucharist to “proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes” (1 Cor 11:26) by means of her own humble service in the world. Both *leitourgia* and *diakonia* thus announce the mystery of the Cross and the eschatological supper of the Lamb.

Antiphon I has an original fourth mode melody composed in function of the text.¹²⁰ The rising intonation, *Postquam surrexit Dominus*, leads into an expressive melisma over *a cena*. The melisma over *hoc* draws attention to the humble service of Christ and invites singers and hearers alike to enter into its mystery.

117. “The early Church applied to Christ all forms of ministries that existed. He was the apostle, the prophet, the priest, the bishop, the deacon.” John D. Zizioulas, *Being As Communion* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1993), 163. The *Mandatum* reveals the mystery of Christ as *diakonus*, i.e. servant.

118. “Truly, the Lord is waiting to show you grace, truly he will *rise* to show you mercy. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him” (Is 30:18).

119. “You will *arise* and have mercy on Zion: for this is the time to have mercy, yes, the time appointed has come” (Ps 101:14).

120. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 2, 938.

Antiphon II, Dominus Jesus¹²¹

*Dominus Jesus, **
postquam cenavit
cum discipulis suis,
lavit pedes eorum.
et ait illis:
Scitis quid fecerim vobis, ego
Dominus et Magister?
Exemplum dedi vobis
ut et vos ita faciatis.

The Lord Jesus,
after eating supper
with his disciples
washed their feet
and said to them:
Do you realize what I have done
for you, I who am your Lord and Master
I have given you an example,
so that you may do likewise.
(Jn 13: 12-13. 15)?

Antiphon II bespeaks the monastic origins of the *Mandatum*; the words *Dominus* and *Magister* have a particular resonance in the Benedictine ear. The abbot, believed to hold the place of Christ in the monastery,¹²² must bear in mind that he is called both Lord¹²³ and Master,¹²⁴ “not because he demands these titles, but for the honour and love of Christ.”¹²⁵ With the adoption of the *Mandatum* by cathedrals, the bishop and his local Church assumed the roles of the abbot and his monastic community respectively. The bishop, like the

121. GR, 165.

122. RB 2:2.

123. RB 63:13.

124. RB Pro:1.

125. RB 63:13.

abbot is “believed to act in the place of Christ.”¹²⁶ He “fulfills a noble task” (I Tim 3:1) by overseeing, teaching and serving the Church entrusted to his care. Antiphon II is an invitation to ponder the Christological and ecclesiological significance of the rite being enacted: “*Scitis quid fecerim vobis, ego Dominus et Magister?*”

The antiphon first makes its appearance in the eighth century *Rhenaugiensis* as the Communion Antiphon of the Mass of the Lord’s Supper.¹²⁷ It was sung both during the Communion procession and at the *Mandatum* until the reform of the Missal in 1970.¹²⁸

The melody is a simple recitative in the second mode. McKinnon, finding *Dominus Iesus* particularly beautiful, says: “I think it is not necessary to be a believer (of whatever religious persuasion) to be touched with both the text and melody of this exquisite musical composition.”¹²⁹ He compares its

126. RB 2:2.

127. McKinnon categorizes *Dominus Iesus* as an “antiphon-communion,” that is, an Office antiphon “borrowed, apparently, to fill out the communion repertory as expeditiously as possible at a point in the history of the Advent Project when — whether haste was an important consideration or not — the Office antiphons in question very nicely fulfilled the aesthetic and devotional aims of those members of the schola cantorum responsible for the communion cycle.” McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 338.

128. See Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 94-95. See also Baron, *L’Expression du chant grégorien*, 330.

129. McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 339.

aesthetic impact with that of Bach's St. Matthew Passion.¹³⁰ The words of Christ are introduced by a rising melisma on *Scitis*. The intonation *Dominus Iesus* and *Dominus* and *Magister* in the conclusion of Jesus' question are given similar musical treatment; the melody, by establishing a musical association between the three words, points to the effective presence of Christ within the *actio*.

Antiphon III. *Domine, tu mihi lavas pedes?*¹³¹

*Domine, * tu mihi
lavas pedes?*

*Respondit Iesus, et dixit ei:
Si non lavero tibi pedes,
non habebis partem mecum.*

V. *Venit ergo ad Simonem Petrum,
et dixit ei Petrus:*

R. *Domine, tu mihi
lavas pedes?*

*Respondit Iesus, et dixit ei:
Si non lavero tibi pedes,
non habebis partem mecum.*

V. *Quod ego facio,
tu nescis modo:
scies autem postea.*

R. *Domine, tu mihi
lavas pedes?*

"Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus answered him:

"If I do not wash your feet,
you shall have no part with me."

V. He then came to Simon Peter,
and Peter said to him:

"Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus answered him:

"If I do not wash your feet
you shall have no part with me."

V. "At the moment, you do not know what I am doing,
but afterwards
you will understand."

"Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

130. Ibid.

131. GR, 165.

*Respondit Iesus, et dixit ei:
Si non lavero tibi pedes,
non habebis partem mecum.*

Jesus answered him:
“If I do not wash your feet
you shall have no part with me”
(Jn 13:6-8).

The musical interplay between Antiphon III and its two verses¹³² brings to life the dialogue between Jesus and Peter. By means of Peter's interrogation, the evangelist suggests that Jesus, in washing his apostle's feet, is doing more than a merely material task. In the action of Christ, Isaiah's prophecy concerning the Lord who “washes away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleanses the bloodstains of Jerusalem” (Is 4:4) finds a mysterious fulfillment. By allowing himself to be served by Jesus, Peter, and with him the Church, are already drawn into the new exodus accomplished in Christ's death and Resurrection. In the Paschal Mystery, as in the first exodus, God descends (cf. Ph 2: 7-8) to reveal himself as the liberator and Resurrection of his people. Jesus' lowering of himself to wash the feet of Peter, in anticipation of his death on the Cross and descent into the tomb, thus fulfills the words of Lord to Moses: “I have seen the affliction of my people, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians” (Ex 3:7-8). The *Mandatum*, while recalling the Lenten reconciliation of penitents, looks toward the Baptism and Eucharist of the great Paschal Vigil in which the

132. The St. Gall 390-391 and Laon 239 manuscripts give a third verse, “*Domine, non tantum pedes, sed et manus et caput.*” See Hesbert, *Corpus Antiphonarium Officii* (Rome: Herder, 1968), 170.

Church “has part” (cf. Jn 13:8) in Christ’s glorious Resurrection and Ascension.

Antiphon III has a proper fifth mode melody characterized by a simple recitative of the text. Only on the words, *Si non lavero tibi pedes*, does the melody rise to an expressive and almost urgent lyricism, as if to solicit Peter’s consent — and that of the Church — to Jesus’s saving action. For Helmut Hucke, this antiphon is an outstanding example of the musical artistry of medieval cantors.¹³³

Antiphon IV, *Si ego Dominus*¹³⁴

*Si ego Dominus * et Magister vester
lavi vobis pedes:
quando magis vos debetis
alter alterius lavare pedes?*

If I, your Lord and Master.
have washed your feet
then surely, all the more
ought you to wash one another’s
feet
(Jn 13:14).

Antiphon IV develops the motifs of spiritual purification and of the forgiveness of sins contained in Antiphon III. The footwashing as a sign of the forgiveness of sins becomes an invitation to mutual pardon and hospitality. The text of the antiphon (Jn 13:14) expresses symbolically the imperatives of Luke 6:37: “Condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be

133. H. Hucke, “Cantus Gregorianus,” in Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 2, 938.

134. GR, 166.

forgiven.” The liturgical moment at which the *Mandatum* occurs, within the celebration of the Eucharist and before the presentation of the offerings, reminds the assembly that the “new commandment” (Jn 13:34) includes mutual reconciliation: “If you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (Mt 5:23-24). As expressions of the divine hospitality revealed in Christ, the footwashing and the Eucharist engage the disciples of Christ to a similar hospitality towards each other, and especially towards the “poor man in shabby clothing” (Jas 2:2) who comes into the eucharistic assembly.

The fourth mode melody delivers the text simply; the melodic treatment of *Magister vester* and of *quanto magis* balances the ascending and descending musical phrases that compose the antiphon.

Antiphon V, In hoc cognoscent omnes¹³⁵

*In hoc cognoscent omnes, **
quia mei estis discipulis,
si dilectionem habueris ad invicem.

By this everyone will know
 that you are my disciples,
 if you have love for one another.

V. *Dixit Jesus discipulis suis.*

V. Jesus said to his disciples.

135. GR, 166.

R. *In hoc cognoscent omnes,
quia mei estis discipulis,
si dilectionem habueris ad invicem.*

R. By this everyone will know
that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another
(Jn 13:35).

Antiphon V affirms that mutual forgiveness and hospitality express the charity by which one recognizes the disciples of Christ, the unselfish love hymned by Saint Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:3-8.¹³⁶ With its single verse, the antiphon points beyond itself, through the *Mandatum*, to the mystery of the Cross in which the disciples of Christ discover his long-suffering love. It points also to the mystery of the Eucharist by which that love becomes the abiding source of the Church's unity.

The seventh mode syllabic melody is an example of the artful adaptation of a text to a melodic formula.¹³⁷ The antiphon *Ecce sacerdos magnus* may have served as its model.¹³⁸ The intonation re-re-si-re-mi-re-re emphasizes *hoc*: "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13:35). Love is the mark by which the Church is identified as

136. "Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends" (1 Cor 13:4-8a).

137. See Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 2, 938.

138. Cf. *Antiphonale Monasticum* (Paris: Desclée et Socii, 1934), 657.

belonging to Christ as body to head (Eph 5:23), and as a pure bride to her one husband (2 Cor 11:2).

Antiphon VI. *Mandatum novum*¹³⁹

*Mandatum novum do vobis: *
ut diligatis invicem
sicut dilexi vos, dicit Dominus.*

I give you a new commandment:
that you are to love one another
just as I have loved you, says the
Lord
(Jn 13:34).

Antiphon VI (Jn 13:34) is placed first in the series of the Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century;¹⁴⁰ its first word, *Mandatum*, became synonymous with the liturgical rite of footwashing, and its English derivative, Maundy, came to denote the Thursday of Holy Week. The commandment of Christ is a new mandate to love, a better commandment, but not because the commandment to love one's neighbor is new. The Law and the prophets enjoined as much.¹⁴¹ Christ's commandment is new because it is promulgated by one greater than Moses (cf. Heb 3:2-6) and by the last Adam who "became a life-giving spirit" (1 Cor 15:45) so that as he was "raised from the dead by the

139. GR, 167.

140. See Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 585.

141. See Lev 18:18; Sir 4:10 and 27:18.

glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom 6:4). The *mandatum novum* is new both in its source and in its effects. It is new because Christ commands his disciples to love *as much as*, and *in the same way as* he himself loves them.

Christ's own way of loving his disciples is revealed in the opening verse of the gospel (Jn 13:1-5), the solemn proclamation of which precedes the *Mandatum*: "Having loved those who were his own in the world, he loved them to the end" (Jn 13:1). Christ's sacrificial love "to the end" (Jn 13:1) is epiphanied and communicated in the bloody oblation of the Cross and in the sacramental oblation of the Eucharist. Those who enter into the Paschal mystery of oblative love by means of the Eucharist participate in the Father's love for the Son and in the Son's love for the Father: the unity of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴² The Holy Spirit, descending upon the Church in every Eucharist, establishes her in the "unity from above," the unity of the Father and the Son.¹⁴³ As a eucharistic organism, the Church already shares in the unity of the three Divine Persons; this is her essential and unfading newness. The eucharistic unity of the Church is thus a fruit of the Holy Spirit and a pledge of

142. Alluded to in the solemn conclusion of the collect and in the doxology of the Eucharistic Prayer: *in unitate Spiritus Sancti*.

143. On the question of "unity from above" and "unity from below," see A. Schmemann, *The Eucharist*, 154-56.

the perfect unity to which Christ's new commandment (Jn 13:34) is ordered.

The melody of *Mandatum novum* is unornamented and forthright. It is not an original composition but follows a musical pattern found in other antiphons of the third mode.¹⁴⁴

Antiphon VII. *Maneant in vobis*¹⁴⁵

*Maneant in vobis **

*fides, spes, caritas, tria haec:
maior autem horum est caritas.*

Let these three abide in you:

faith, hope and charity;
but of these the greatest is charity.

V. *Nunc autem*

manent

*fides, spes, caritas, tria haec:
maior autem horum est caritas.*

V. Now faith, hope and charity

remain, all three,
but of these the greatest
is charity.

R. *Maneant in vobis*

*fides, spes, caritas, tria haec:
maior autem horum est caritas.*

R. Let these three abide in you:

faith, hope and charity;
but the greatest of these is charity
(cf. 1 Cor 13:13).

Antiphon VII is the only one of the series not drawn from John 13 and the only one not found in the Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century. It first appears as an antiphon for the Greater Litanies in the ninth

144. Cf. *Antiphonale Monasticum*, *Hic est discipulis meus*, 256; *Accipiens Simeon*, 802; and *Herodes enim tenuit*, 1026.

145. GR, 167.

century antiphonary of Compiègne,¹⁴⁶ it occurs last in the series of *Mandatum* antiphons given in the twelfth century antiphonary of Saint-Maur-les-Fossés.¹⁴⁷ The antiphon is a modification of the last verse of Saint Paul's hymn to charity (1 Cor 13:1-13). Whereas the Pauline text, found untouched in the verse, uses the indicative form of the verb (*manent*) to declare that "faith, hope and love abide, these three," (1 Cor 13:13), the antiphon uses the subjunctive form of the verb (*maneant*) adding the words, *in vobis*, and in so doing subtly transforms not only the form of the text but its theological significance as well.

Contextualized by the first six antiphons, all of which come from the mouth of Christ, Antiphon VII is liturgically re-interpreted, becoming a word not of Paul, but of Christ living in the midst of the assembly. The antiphon is thus the voice of Christ inviting those who sing it and hear it to become the abode of faith, hope and charity. Works of faith, hope and charity are but the outward manifestation of an inner principle, the hidden wellspring of divine life promised by Christ when he said to those who believe in him: "Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water" (Jn 7:38). The transformation of the Pauline text for liturgical use suggests that prior to their expression in works, faith, hope and charity abide within the disciples of Christ as immanent realities,

146. See Hesbert, *Corpus Antiphonarium Officii*, vol. 1, (Rome: Herbder, 1968), 206.

147. See Hesbert, *Corpus Antiphonarium Officii*, vol. 3, 326; and vol. 2, 783.

freely and graciously given by God to all the baptized. Antiphon VII points beyond the purifying water of the *Mandatum* to the regenerative water of Baptism and to the infusion of new life by sacramental participation in the Paschal Mystery.

Antiphon VII has its own seventh mode melody, adapted to the verbal rhythm of the text and divided into four musical incises. Hucke remarks the influence of the hymnic style on this particular antiphon.¹⁴⁸ The verse is sung to the corresponding psalmodic formula, generally associated with introits.

In closing the series with an antiphon and verse not drawn from John 13, the reformed liturgy opportunely presents a corrective to the notion that the *Mandatum* is an historical re-enactment or dramatic visualization of Christ washing the feet of his disciples. The *Mandatum* is a multivalent rite, bringing into play several levels of reference to its foundational text: John 13:1-15. The rite is carried out in obedience to the evangelical mandate of Christ. It is therefore, in some way, a sacramental sequel to the proclamation of the Word. The antiphons are an integral part of the *Mandatum*. Their symbolic content and form interact with the gesture of footwashing, relate it to other symbolic elements of the Paschal liturgy, and effectively interpret it. The *Mandatum* antiphons function within the *actio* as a port of entry into the *Mysterium* of the

148. H. Hucke, "Cantus Gregorianus" in *Hebdomada Sancta* II, vol. 2, 938.

Suffering and Glorious Servant who, in the servant Church, sees “the fruit of the travail of his soul and is satisfied” (cf. Is 53:11).

The Offertory, *Ubi caritas est vera*¹⁴⁹

Ubi caritas est vera, Deus ibi est.

Where love is found true, there is God.

*Congregavit nos in unum
Christi amor.
Exultemus et in ipso
iucundemur.
Timeamus et amemus
Deum vivum.
Et ex corde diligamus
nos sincero.*

The love of Christ has gathered us into one.
Let us rejoice and in him be glad.
Let us fear and love the living God.
And love each other sincerely and from the heart.

Ubi caritas est vera, Deus ibi est.

Where love is found true, there is God.

*Simul ergo cum in unum
congregamur,
Ne nos mente dividamur,
caveamus.
Cessent iurgia maligna,
cessent lites.
Et in medio nostri sit
Christus Deus.*

Therefore when we are gathered as one
Let us take heed not to be in mind divided.
Let bitterness and quarrels cease,
And in our midst be Christ God.

Ubi caritas est vera, Deus ibi est.

Where love is found true, there is God.

*Simul quoque cum beatis
videamus
Glorianter vultum tuum,
Christe Deus:*

And together with the blessed may we behold Your face in glory, Christ God:

149. GR, 168.

*Gaudium quod est immensum,
atque probum,
Saecula per infinita saeculorum.*

Joy immense
and boundless
Throughout the endless ages.

Ubi caritas est vera, Deus ibi est.

Where love is found true, there is God.

The Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper is the only celebration for which the reformed *Missale Romanum* provides an offertory processional chant.¹⁵⁰ Long associated with the *Mandatum*, in the present reformed liturgy the hymn *Ubi caritas est vera*, rather than the usual antiphon and psalmody, accompanies this offertory procession.¹⁵¹

In the missal of 1570 *Ubi caritas* is sung at the end of the *Mandatum* as an antiphon with three strophes of four verses. In the missal of 1474 it is found in the same place but with nine strophes. In eleventh and twelfth century Italy, *Ubi caritas*, with ten strophes, is already a feature of the solemn Holy Thursday *Mandatum*, notably at Monte Cassino.¹⁵² Before then, it appears in various

150. Whereas the MR contains antiphons for the entrance and communion processions only, every Mass formulary in the GR includes an offertory chant. The only offertory chant in the MR is the hymn *Ubi caritas* at the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. (The hymn *O Redemptor*, prescribed for the offertory of the Chrism Mass, is given in the GR and GrS, but is not given in the MR.) The offertory chant accompanies the procession in which bread, wine and gifts for the poor are carried to the altar. “*Expedit ut fideles participationem suam oblatione manifestent, afferendo sive panum et vinum ad Eucharistiae celebrationem, sive alia dona, quibus necessitatibus Ecclesiae et pauperum subveniatur.*” MR, 303.

151. On the origins of the Offertory Antiphon and verses, see McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 298-304.

152. André Wilmart, “L'hymne de la charité pour le Jeudi-Saint,” *Auteurs spirituels et textes dévots du Moyen Age Latin* (Paris: Librairie Bloud et Gay, 1932), 28.

anonymous collections originating in northern Italy where it has twelve strophes, each of which end with the fifth verse, *Ubi caritas est vera, Deus ibi est.*¹⁵³

The eighth strophe contains a verse clearly inspired by the Rule of Saint Benedict: "Let us prefer nothing to the love of Christ."¹⁵⁴ This, according to Dom André Wilmart, is sufficient evidence of the hymn's monastic origin. Wilmart dismisses the supposition that *Ubi caritas* was composed for the solemn *Mandatum* of Holy Thursday.¹⁵⁵ Nowhere does the text advert explicitly to Christ washing his disciples' feet. Dom Wilmart concludes that *Ubi caritas* was composed in a ninth century monastery of northern Italy to exalt the duties and joys of fraternal charity and to grace with beauty and dignity the weekly *Mandatum fratrum* prescribed by the Benedictine Rule.¹⁵⁶

Ubi caritas is a tissue of biblical phrases and of allusions to the Rule of Saint Benedict that would have been easily recognized in a medieval monastic

153. The primitive version, *Ubi caritas est vera*, has replaced the later *Ubi caritas et amor* in the books of the present reformed Roman liturgy.

154. RB 4:23.

155. Wilmart, "L'hymne de la charité," 30.

156. Ibid., 31-33.

milieu.¹⁵⁷ The sixth mode melody with its repetition of the same musical phrases remains fresh, alert and peaceful throughout. Liturgically, *Ubi caritas* links the gospel, the *Mandatum*, and the Prayer of the Faithful to the presentation of bread and wine for the Church's eucharistic oblation, and of gifts for her oblation to the poor.¹⁵⁸ The proximity of things homely and comforting, such as food and clothing, to the circle of light and incense surrounding the altar, signifies that the warm and festive fellowship expressed by the hymn is not closed and self-sufficient.

The theological significance of *Ubi caritas est vera* is to be sought not in the text and music alone, but in its ritual position within the *actio*. Sung at its proper liturgical place and moment, it expresses the tension between liturgy and

157. The italicized references provide some indications of the hymn's sources.

R. Where love is found true, there is God. *I Jn 4:12. 16*

The love of Christ has gathered us *RB 4:21*
into one. *Col 3:11.14; RB 2:20*

Let us rejoice and in him *Ps 104:4*
be glad. *Phil 4:4*

Let us fear and love *RB 7:10*
the living God. *RB 4:1; 72:3-9*

And love each other *Rom 12:9. 16*
sincerely and from the heart. *RB 4:24-26*

And together with the blessed *RB 72:12*
may we behold *Rev 19:1; 22:4*

Your face in glory, *Ps 16:15; 2 Cor 4:6*
Christ God: *I P 1:8*

Joy immense *Ps 15:11*
and boundless *Jn 15:11*

Throughout the endless ages.

Therefore when we are

gathered as one *RB 4:22-26*

Let us take heed not to be
in mind divided. *I P 2:1*

Let bitterness and quarrels *RB 4:73*
cease, *Col 3:13*

And in our midst be
Christ God. *Jn 20:19*

158. See Irwin, *Easter, A Guide to the Eucharist and Hours*, 24.

life, Church and world. *Ubi caritas est vera* invites to “the integration of all facets of life in Christ.”¹⁵⁹

The Communion Antiphon, *Hoc corpus*¹⁶⁰

*Hoc corpus, quod pro vobis
tradetur:
hic calix novi testamenti
est in meo sanguine,
dicit Dominus:
hoc facite,
quotiescumque sumitis,
in meam commemorationem.*

This is my body which for you
is given;
this cup is the new covenant
in my blood,
says the Lord.
Do this
as often as you partake thereof
in remembrance of me
(cf. 1 Cor 11:24-25).

The communion antiphon is intoned when the priest receives the Body of Christ; it is sung throughout the communion procession of the faithful, giving expression to the unity of the Body of the Christ.¹⁶¹ Normally, the assembly repeats the antiphon while the schola or cantor sings the designated verses from the psalter.¹⁶²

159. Irwin, *Context and Text*, 346.

160. GR, 170.

161. On the origins of the Communion Antiphon, see McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 326-329.

162. See IGMR 2000, nn. 86-87.

As early as the eighth or ninth century, the communion antiphon *Hoc corpus* is assigned to the fifth Sunday of Lent, referred to by the ancient antiphonaries as the *Dominica ad Sanctum Petrum*, after its Roman stational church.¹⁶³ In its original liturgical context *Hoc corpus* was closely related to the epistle (Heb 9:11-15) which speaks of “the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God” (Heb 9:14). In the present reformed liturgy *Hoc corpus* has been reassigned to the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper where it repeats the heart of the second reading (1 Cor 11:23-26).¹⁶⁴

The scriptural context of the antiphon pertains to Paul’s teaching on tradition. “Be imitators of me, he says, as I am of Christ” (1 Cor 11:1). Paul presents himself as a living and trustworthy link between the teaching of Christ and the practice of the Church. For Paul, the function of the apostle is to deliver or “hand over” all that was delivered over to him by Christ. He writes to Timothy: “Guard what has been entrusted to you” (1 Tm 6:20) and, “what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tm 2:2). He commends the Corinthians

163. The first evidence of the antiphon is in the *Rhenaugiensis*. See Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 82-83.

164. *Hoc corpus* is also sung on the solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ (Year C) and in votive Masses of the Most Holy Eucharist.

for holding fast to what they have received: “You remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I have delivered them to you” (1 Cor 11:2). Paul’s account of the institution of the Eucharist, the source of the antiphon *Hoc corpus*, occurs within the context of this teaching: “For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you” (1 Cor 11:23).

Aemiliana Löhr characterizes Holy Thursday as the day par excellence of the handing on, the day of *Traditio*.¹⁶⁵

Today the Church . . . celebrates “the day of the tradition,” the consecrated day on which our Lord was handed over, and on which he handed on the mystery rite of his body and blood. The words *tradere* and *traditio* glide back and forth between the light and darkness of their two meanings when the liturgy is being celebrated.

In either case the word refers to one “giving.” *Trado* means I give something away wholly, and hand it out of my possession to another. . . .

Such a thing was entrusted to the disciples, given by God himself: Jesus the God-man and in him God bodily present, the good news of the Father’s *agapé*, and through Jesus—this is the burden of today’s *traditio* which is also given to us through the apostles, the first fruits of the Church—the *mysterium* of the eucharistic bread and wine, Christ’s flesh and blood, the sacrifice which reconciles and gives us life, the food which makes us immortal.¹⁶⁶

165. A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 89.

166. Ibid., 89-90.

The antiphon *Hoc corpus* reveals its deepest meaning when an understanding of its context, Paul's teaching on tradition, converges with an appreciation of its liturgical function. The communion antiphon is sung during the procession of the faithful to the altar to receive the Body and Blood of Christ; it is therefore intrinsically related to a corporate action carried out by the assembly. The communion procession is symbolic as well as practical. Practically, it orders the flow of people to and from the altar; symbolically, it says that reception of the Body and Blood of Christ is not an act performed in isolation, but in communion. This communion overflows the dimensions of the community assembled around any given altar; it transcends the limitations of space and time. The communion procession is an image of the Church's movement through history, a movement characterized by the "handing on" of what each generation of believers has received from the generation before it.

The antiphon *Hoc corpus* traces the *traditio* of the Eucharist to its origin in the cenacle, and by linking together word and sacrament, discloses the vehicle and revelation of that *traditio*, the enactment of the liturgy itself. Just as the corporate movement of the faithful to the altar suggests that "we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another" (2 Cor 3:18), the antiphon sings that it is by "this body which is given for you" and "this cup of the new

covenant” (1 Cor 11:24, 25) that the Church is already “sated with the glory” of the risen and ascended Christ (cf. Ps 16:15). The fulness of this mystery will be proclaimed in all its splendor in one of the options for the second reading of the Mass of Easter day: “But when Christ is revealed—and he is your life—you too will be revealed in all your glory with him” (Col 3:4).

The eighth mode melody of the antiphon treats *hoc corpus* and *hic calix* similarly, balancing them with a mixture of reverence and joy. For McKinnon, it “celebrates the sacrament of communion in a melody of impressive dramatic scope, particularly in the soaring notes that set the words of Jesus: *Hoc facite, quotiescumque sumitis in meam commemorationem.*”¹⁶⁷ The music takes flight on *quotiescumque sumitis* and cadences on *commemorationem*. The melody has about it nothing dramatic, nothing tragic; on the contrary it expresses the Church’s awareness in faith of the whole Paschal Mystery, sacramentally remembered, made present, and fulfilled in the Eucharist. The *Graduale Romanum* indicates that the antiphon should accompany Psalms 22 or 115, both chosen for their eucharistic connotations.¹⁶⁸

167. McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 339.

168. I.e., “You have prepared a banquet for me” (Ps 22:5) and “The cup of salvation I will raise” (Ps 115:13). Psalm 33 would also be appropriate: “O taste and see that the Lord is good” (Ps 33:9).

Hymn for the Procession to the Repository, *Pange lingua*¹⁶⁹

*Pange lingua gloriosi
Corporis mysterium,
Sanguinisque pretiosi,
Quem in mundi pretium
Fructus ventris generosi
Rex effudit gentium.*

*Nobis natus, nobis datus
Ex intacta Virgine,
Et in mundo conversatus
Sparsò verbi semine,
Sui moras incolatus
Miro clausit ordine.*

*In supreme nocte cenae
Recumbens cum fratribus,
Observata lege plene
Cibis in legalibus,
Cibum turbæ duodenæ
Se dat suis manibus.*

*Verbum caro,
panem verum,
Verbum carnem efficit:
Fitque sanguis Christi
merum,
Et si sensus deficit,
Ad firmandum cor sincerum
Sola fides sufficit.*

*Tantum ergo sacramentum
Veneremur cernui,
Et antiquum
documentum
Novo cedat ritui,*

Now my tongue the mystery telling,
Of the glorious Body sing,
And the Blood, all price excelling,
Which the Gentiles' Lord and King
In a Virgin's womb once dwelling,
Shed for this world's ransoming.

Given for us, and condescending
To be born for us below,
He, with us in converse blending,
Dwelt the seed of truth to sow,
Till he closed with wondrous ending
His most patient life of woe.

At the last great Supper lying,
Circled by his chosen band,
Jesus, with the law complying,
Keeps the feast its rites demand;
Then immortal Food supplying,
Gives himself with his own hand.

Word made flesh, by word he
maketh
Very bread his flesh to be;
Man in wine Christ's blood
partaketh,
And if senses fail to see,
Faith alone the true heart waketh
To behold the mystery.

Therefore we, before him bending
This great sacrament revere;
Types and shadows have their
ending,
For the newer rite is here;

*Praestet fides
supplementum
Sensuum defectui.*

*Genitori, Genitoque
Laus et iubilatio,
Salus, honor, virtus
quoque
Sit et benedictio:
Procedenti ab utroque
Compar sit laudatio.*

Faith, our outward sense
befriending,
Makes the inward vision clear.

Glory let us give and blessing
To the Father and the Son;
Honour, might, and praise
addressing,
While eternal ages run;
Ever too his love confessing,
Who, from both, with both is one.¹⁷⁰

After the Postcommunion, a procession is formed to the place of reservation prepared for the Blessed Sacrament, in view of the distribution of Holy Communion the next day at the Celebration of the Lord's Passion. To accompany this procession the liturgy borrows the hymn appointed for Vespers of the solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ. Attributed to Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), the hymn borrows its opening line and its meter from the sixth century hymn to the Cross composed by Venantius Fortunatus.¹⁷¹

The first strophe is an invitation to praise the Body and Blood of Christ, the fruit of the Virgin's womb (cf. Is 7:14; Lk 34-35). Christ, the *Rex gentium*,¹⁷²

170. English translation from *Hortus Conclusus, Mediaeval Latin Hymns With Selected English Renderings, Part Ten, The Eucharistic Hymns of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, trans. S. A. Hurlbut, 15, 17.

171. Sung on Good Friday during the *Adoratio Crucis*.

172. *O Rex gentium*, is the *incipit* of the Magnificat antiphon of December 22.

poured out his blood to save Jews and Gentiles alike.¹⁷³ The incarnation and redemption are universally salutary for the flesh of Christ is given “for the life of the world” (Jn 6:51).

In the second strophe, *Nobis natus, nobis datus* echoes the introit of the Day Mass of Christmas: “*Puer natus est nobis, et filius datus est nobis*” (Is 9:6). *Sparso verbi semine* recalls the parable of the sower who went out to sow (cf. Mt 13:3-9); “the sower sows the word” (Mk 4:14). With their images from the Advent and Christmas liturgy, the first two strophes represent, in the overall structure of the hymn, the coming of the fulness of time (cf. Gal 4:4).

The third strophe evokes the room where Jesus “sat at table, and the apostles with him” (Lk 22:14). The allusions to the law and to the ritual foods pertain to that Passover “when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father” (Jn 13:1). Christ, partaking of the ritual food becomes the food of his chosen brethren, the apostles. *Se dat suis manibus* expresses the eucharistic *traditio*; to “those who were his own in the world” (Jn 13:1) Christ hands over the mysteries of his Body and Blood.

The fourth strophe is a doctrinal development of the third. The Word made flesh, by the power of his word, changes bread into his flesh and wine into his blood. Faith is sufficient where the senses fail. The third and fourth

173. On the mystery of Israel and the nations in the plan of God, see Rom 9:1—11:36.

strophes are the poetic and theological center of the hymn which is artfully crafted to form three units, each composed of two strophes.

The role of faith in the fourth strophe carries over into the fifth, but there is a change in tone; in the fifth strophe faith adores. The types and shadows of Abel's offering (Gn 4:4), of Abraham's sacrifice (Gn 22:9) and of the bread and wine offered by Melchisedech (Gn 14:18)¹⁷⁴ give way to the reality of the *Christus passus*.¹⁷⁵ Faith, seeing in a glance the unity of the divine plan, breaks into praise.

The hymn concludes with a sixth strophe of glory to the Trinity; more than a mere hymnological convention, the doxology completes the hymn theologically by pointing to a vision that is eschatological. Taken in its entirety, the hymn is doxological theology. The language of the *Pange lingua* is at once poetic and theological; it "leads to deeper penetration into the mystery of the liturgy, the core of which is the experience of the living God."¹⁷⁶

The *Pange lingua* fulfills its proper liturgical function not only by accompanying the procession to the place of reservation, but also by drawing

174. See Eucharistic Prayer I, MR, 571.

175. Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, III, q. 75, a. 1

176. Irwin, *Context and Text*, 275.

those who sing it into the silence of the night watch before the Blessed Sacrament.

At the last all is joy and thanksgiving; to offer such to the founder of the sacrifice in this night is both allowed and desirable; to drink in the evening feast and give thanks for the sacred ‘tradition’—that is a proper sequel to the Lord’s Supper, and may well go on until midnight.¹⁷⁷

The Good Friday Celebration of the Passion of the Lord

The Celebration of the Passion of the Lord comprises three distinct liturgical moments. First is the *synaxis* of the Word: a collect; two readings, each followed by a responsorial chant; the singing of the Passion according to Saint John; and the solemn Universal Prayer. Second is the *adoratio Crucis*: a showing, and a veneration of the Cross, accompanied by a series of chants. Third is the rite of Holy Communion. By listening to the Word of God, by contemplating the glorious mystery of the Cross, and by partaking of the Body of Christ, the Church is drawn into the Pasch of her Bridegroom, his *transitus* to the Father, in the Holy Spirit.

177. A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 120.

The Liturgy of the WordThe Gradual Responsory, Domine, exaudi¹⁷⁸

*Domine, exaudi orationem meam,
et clamor meus ad te veniat.*

V. *Ne avertas faciem tuam a me:
in quacumque die tribulor,
inclina ad me aurem tuam.*

R. *In quacumque die invocavero
te,
velociter exaudi me.*

V. *Quia defecerunt sicut fumus
dies mei:
et ossa mea sicut in frigorio
confixa sunt.*

R. *In quacumque die invocavero te,
velociter exaudi me.*

V. *Percussus sum sicut fenum,
et aruit cor meum:
quia oblitus sum manducare
panem meum.*

R. *In quacumque die invocavero
te,
velociter exaudi me.*

V. *Tu exsurgens, Domine,
misereberis Sion:
quia venit tempus miserendi eius.*

R. *In quacumque die invocavero te,
velociter exaudi me.*

Lord hear my prayer,
and let my cry come unto you.

V. Do not turn your face away
from me; in the day of my distress,
lend me your ear.

R. On each day that I call upon
you,
quickly hearken unto me.

V. For my days pass away like
smoke,
and my bones burn as if in
a furnace.

R. On each day that I call upon you,
quickly hearken unto me.

V. I am smitten like grass,
and my heart is withered;
I have even forgotten
to eat my bread.

R. On each day that I call upon
you,
quickly hearken unto me.

V. O Lord, you will arise
and have mercy on Sion;
for it is time to have mercy on her

R. On each day that I call upon you,
quickly hearken unto me. (Ps 101:2-5 and 14).

The gradual responsory, *Domine, exaudi orationem meam*, is mentioned in the eighth century *Ordo Romanus XXVII*,¹⁷⁹ and as early as 754 in the *Ordo Romanus XXIV*.¹⁸⁰ The latter indicates that on Wednesday of Holy Week the second reading is followed by the canticle *Domine, exaudi* with its five verses.¹⁸¹ All six ancient antiphonaries edited by Dom Hesbert assign *Domine, exaudi* to Wednesday of Holy Week.¹⁸² In the cantatorium of Monza (*Moedoetiensis*) where it is called not a canticle but a gradual responsory, *Domine, exaudi* includes its five verses given *in extenso*.¹⁸³ The Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century indicates on Wednesday of Holy Week the gradual *Domine exaudi* with its five verses is sung in response to the reading of Isaiah 53.¹⁸⁴ The pairing of

179. The Romano-Gallican *Ordo Romanus XXVII* (750-800) belongs to Andrieu's collection A. Although it is entitled *De officiis in noctibus a caena domini usque in pascha*, it begins with Wednesday of Holy Week. See Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 521.

180. Entitled *De officiis a feria quarta hebdomadae maioris usque in pascha*, *Ordo Romanus XXIV* is a purely Roman text destined for the use of suburban churches. Schmidt suggests that a Gallican or Italian liturgist, working from Roman documents or from personal experience of the Roman liturgy, prepared this adaptation for use by suburban bishops. See Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 513.

181. "Sequitur altera lectio, post quam canticum *Domine, exaudi*, cum versibus suis quinique." See Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 513.

182. Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 92-93.

183. Ibid., 92.

184. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 570.

Isaiah 53 with *Domine, exaudi* will remain a constant in the liturgy of Holy Week up to and including the present reformed rite. When, in the present reform, the reading of Isaiah 53 was moved from Wednesday of Holy Week to the Celebration of the Passion of the Lord on Good Friday, *Domine, exaudi* was moved with it.¹⁸⁵

Curiously, *Domine exaudi* is called by several different names: gradual responsory, tract, gradual, responsory and canticle.¹⁸⁶ The *Consuetudines* of Corbie call *Domine, exaudi* a tract, but describe it as a gradual with five verses, the initial verse being repeated by the entire *conventus monachorum*.¹⁸⁷ One recognizes this form as that of the responsorial psalm in the present reformed lectionary. Apel concludes that “at some time before the tenth century the repeats of the first verse were omitted, a process by which the chant adopted a form similar to that of the real and original tracts,” i.e. a text sung straight

185. The present pericope on Good Friday (Is 52:13—53:12) expands on that formerly read on Wednesday of Holy Week (Is 53:1-12).

186. Musically, *Domine, exaudi*, belongs to the family of second mode tracts. These are identified by a number of typical formulae adapted to the text of the opening verse, intonation, flex, mediant, termination and closing. See Apel, *Gregorian Chant* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958), 323-330, and Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 82-83. McKinnon speculates that *Domine, exaudi* dates “perhaps to the time of the establishment of regular Fore-Mass psalmody at Rome, that is, the early to mid-fifth century.” See McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 295.

187. Willi Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, 184.

through without refrain.¹⁸⁸ In the present *Graduale Romanum*, *Domine exaudi* is identified as a tract; it can however be executed in responsorial fashion exactly as described in the *Consuetudines* of Corbie,¹⁸⁹ or at least with the repetition by the assembly of the second half of the initial verse (*Et clamor meus ad te veniat*) after the five verses sung by one or several cantors. Practically, this suggests that in the present reformed liturgy, *Domine, exaudi* ought to be treated as an authentic responsorial psalm.

Domine, exaudi is composed of six verses of Psalm 101. Verse 1 serves as a refrain; it is followed by verses 2 through 5 in proper order, and by verse 14 clearly chosen for its particular theological significance: “O Lord, you will arise and have mercy on Sion; it is time to have mercy on her.” Psalm 101:1-12 is the lament of one close to death, containing poignant descriptions of loneliness and of a heart withered by utter dejection. With verse 13, the tone of the psalm changes completely; there is a passage from despondency to hope. Verses 14-23 are triumphant, presenting an eschatological vision of a Jerusalem rebuilt in peace and resounding with the praise of the Lord.

The tone and development of Psalm 101 correspond in several points to Isaiah 53:1-12. The man of sorrows from whom people hide their faces, the

188. Ibid.

189. Ibid.

man despised and without beauty, comeliness or form (cf. Is 53:2-3) is not unlike the lonely man of Psalm 101 who in his torment forgets to eat his bread, who feels smitten and scorched. While Isaiah 53:1-9 details the Passion of one wounded and lamb-like in his sufferings, verses 10-12 employ the language of priesthood and of oblation,¹⁹⁰ speak of long life, of prosperity and of peace.¹⁹¹ The pairing of Isaiah 53:1-12 with the gradual responsory *Domine, exaudi* is a striking example of the liturgical use of Scripture. The powerful images contained in the texts call forth and respond to each other in such a way as to reveal the Mystery they conceal: Christ's Passion, death and Resurrection.

As it is sung, the last verse of *Domine, exaudi* becomes transparent to the light: "O Lord, you will arise." In *Resurrexi*, the introit of Easter Sunday, it will hear its response: "I arose and I am always with you" (Ps 138:5). The ending of the gradual responsory *Domine, exaudi* is already the beginning of Easter: *Tu exsurgens, Domine, misereberis Sion, quia venit tempus miserendi eius.* The time of Christ's glorious Pasch is at hand;¹⁹² his death and glorification signal the time

190. "When he makes himself an offering for sin" (Is 53:10).

191. "He shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; he shall see the fruit of the travail of his soul and be satisfied" (Is 53:10d-11).

192. The phrase, *quia venit tempus miserendi eius* needs to be sung (and heard) in the light of: "Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end" (Jn 13:1), and "Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee" (Jn 17:1).

of mercy for the Church, a mercy that will be invoked in the solemn Universal Prayer,¹⁹³ a mercy that will be poured out afresh in the celebration of the Paschal sacraments.¹⁹⁴

The Gradual, *Christus factus est*¹⁹⁵

*Christus factus est
pro nobis
obediens usque ad mortem,
mortem autem crucis.*

Christ became
for us
obedient unto death,
even death on a Cross.

V. *Propter quod et Deus
exaltavit illum
et dedit illi nomen
quod est super omne nomen.*

V. Therefore God
has highly exalted him
and given him the name
which is above every name
(Ph 2:8, v. 9).

The nonpsalmic gradual *Christus factus est* is found in the eighth century cantatorium of Monza, the oldest surviving witness to the *Graduale Romanum*, at the Holy Thursday Mass *in Cena Domini*. The other five oldest Mass

193. See MR, 251-256.

194. Commenting on the same text (*quia venit tempus miserendi eius*), Aemiliana Löhr writes: "The time has come; how often we have heard Jesus repeat 'my time has not yet come.' Now at last it is time. This is the sufferer's reward; he knows that his time has come, the time of mercy. His suffering is to bring mercy to Sion. . . . It is Sion who is in question; the new Sion: the *ecclesia* of God, the assembly of his people. The image of the betrothed set free, saved, purified is before the sufferer's eyes. She is his reward. . . . The wine of God's life flows from the press; his spouse is the chalice which offers itself to catch the flow; and all the ages of men from the world's beginning until its end shall drink, the called and the chosen, the King's guests at his marriage; all say to him full of wonder: 'You have kept the good wine until now.' It is time." *The Great Week*, 78-79.

195. GR, 148.

antiphonaries show *Christus factus est* in the same place.¹⁹⁶ The *Ordo Romanus XXIV* indicates that on Holy Thursday the “*responsorium gradale [sic] Christus factus est*” follows the reading of I Corinthians 11:20-32. The Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century witnesses to *Christus factus est* being sung at the same place where it remained until the publication of the revised *Graduale Romanum* in 1972.¹⁹⁷ The present *Graduale Romanum* assigns *Christus factus est* to Passion Sunday, to the Celebration of the Passion of the Lord on Good Friday, to the Twenty-Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time (Year A), to September 14, feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, and to the votive Masses of the Cross and of the Precious Blood.

The text is a liturgical adaptation of two verses drawn from Philippians 2.¹⁹⁸ By replacing them within their scriptural context, one can better understand their theological significance. In the second chapter of his letter, Paul is instructing the Philippians on the ethical demands of life in Christ. Unity, the sign and the means of a common life “worthy of the gospel of

196. Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 92.

197. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 580.

198. “A comparison of the chant texts with the original scriptural texts shows that in a great number of cases—as much as half of the chants of the Mass Proper — the original is altered in order to provide a suitable chant text. . . . The verbal discrepancies involved are not just a matter of conflicting versions of the biblical text but are clearly deliberate adaptations on the part of those fashioning the chant texts.” McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 103.

Christ" (Ph 1:27) calls for sincere love and shared faith (cf. 2:2). For Paul, the growth of "communion in the Spirit" (2:1) is proportionate to the practice of humility and mutual service (cf. 2:3-4). The Christian ethic of humility and service cannot however be imposed by strictures from without; rather, it is the manifestation of an interior change of mind and heart (2:5).

At precisely this point, Paul introduces a liturgical text, the ancient Christological and doxological hymn from which the Church has quarried the liturgical text of the *Christus factus est*. The hymn (Ph 2:6-11) celebrates the abasement of Christ in the mysteries of the Incarnation and of the Cross (cf. 2:6-7), and the triumph of his Resurrection and Ascension (2:9-10). The Father glorifies the Son by bestowing upon him the divine name of Lord; thus every confession of Jesus as Lord redounds to the glory of the Father. The hymn is followed immediately by a return to Paul's ethical concerns: "Therefore my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now . . . work out your salvation in fear and trembling" (2:12). Irwin's observation that "liturgy derives from the ordinary and returns us to the ordinary, graced in an extraordinary way in Christ"¹⁹⁹ is disclosed here in its seminal application.

The Christological hymn cited by Paul is more than an illustration of his teachings on humble service. Paul invites the Philippians to participate in the

199. Irwin, *Context and Text*, 346.

reality which the hymn celebrates: the abasement and glorification of Christ. The liturgy — and there is reason to suppose that this hymn is a very early liturgical text — is the means by which Christians come to have among themselves “the mind that was in Christ Jesus” (2:5). Participation in the “mind of Christ” is effected in and by participation in the liturgy: the dynamic presence of the salvation wrought by Christ *for us*.²⁰⁰ It is therefore theologically significant that the liturgical adaptation of Philippians 2:8-9 adds two words to the scriptural text: *pro nobis*.²⁰¹ More than mere illustration of the Christian way of life, the liturgy is its source and cause.²⁰²

The scriptural contextualization of the gradual *Christus factus est* is insufficient for our purpose; the chant must be studied in its liturgical context as well. *Christus factus est* is sung after the second reading (Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9)

200. In his *Motu Proprio* of November 22, 1903, Pope Pius X said as much: “The first thing to which we must turn our attention is the holiness and dignity of the temple; there our people assemble for the purpose of acquiring the Christian spirit from its first and indispensable source, namely, active participation in the most sacred mysteries, and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church” (*Tra le sollecitudini*, n. 6).

201. The words *pro nobis* or *nobis* occur frequently in liturgical texts as an expression of the actualization in time of the Mystery which is ever present and efficacious in eternity. E.g., *Christus natus est nobis: venite, adoremus* (Inv. Ant. Christmas); *Christus apparet nobis: venite adoremus* (Inv. Ant. Epiphany); *Christum Dominum, pro nobis tentatum et passum, venite adoremus* (Inv. Ant. Lent); *Christum Dominum pro nobis passum et sepultum, venite adoremus* (Inv. Ant. Holy Saturday).

202. “The liturgy is the axis and chief means to accomplish . . . the integration of all facets of life in Christ. . . . This includes both the enactment of the liturgy and leading a life in conformity with the liturgy. The ultimate goal will be reached when this integration is so harmonious as to be termed congruent.” Irwin, *Context and Text*, 346.

and before the Passion according to Saint John. The ancient antiphonaries refer to *Christus factus est* as a *responsorium graduale*.²⁰³ Clearly this places it in relation to the reading that precedes it; this is its primary liturgical function. It does not however exclude the possibility of a relation to the reading that follows.

Christus factus est should then be studied first in relation to the second reading, Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9. There are striking similarities of vocabulary: the text from Hebrews²⁰⁴ speaks of Christ's humble submission²⁰⁵ and of his learning obedience through suffering, even while remaining the Son.²⁰⁶ The relation to the first part of the *Christus factus est* is evident; both texts reveal the kenosis of the Son, his descent by obedience into the sufferings of the Cross. His exaltation is also portrayed in both texts. In the passage from Hebrews Christ is named the great high priest; he has passed through the heavens; he is

203. See Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 92-93.

204. As the comparison is with the latin text of the *Christus factus est*, the latin text of the reading from Hebrews will also be used.

205. ". . . Et exauditus est pro sua reverentia" (Hb 5:7).

206. ". . . Et quidem cum esset Filius, didicit ex his quae passus est oboedientiam" (Hb 5:8).

the author of eternal salvation.²⁰⁷ In the *Christus factus est* he is highly exalted and given the name which is above all names.²⁰⁸

The function of a liturgical responsory (gradual, tract or responsorial psalm) is not to repeat the text of the reading that precedes it but rather to interact with it, and to converse with its symbols and images. The result is that, through the liturgical responsory, the palate of the soul tastes, in a new way, the theological substance of the reading.²⁰⁹ For this to happen the two texts must be different and yet be possessed of a minimal communality. The relation between the second reading on Good Friday and the *Christus factus est* aptly illustrates this.

The Lenten and Holy Week gospel acclamations of the lectionary incline contemporary worshipers to look for a relation between the *Christus factus est* and the Passion according to Saint John which follows it. Not only is such an expectation legitimate, it corresponds to an intuitive grasp of the inner workings of the liturgy.²¹⁰ The Passion according to Saint John is a mystery of

207. “*Habentes pontificem magnum qui penetravit caelos . . . consummatus, factus est omnibus . . . auctor salutis aeternae*” (Hb 4:14; 5:9).

208. “*Propter quod et Deus exaltavit illum, et dedit illi nomen, quod est super omne nomen*” (Ph 2:9).

209. This is an example of the gnostico-sapiential approach to theology discussed in Chapter One.

210. On the gospel acclamation of Good Friday, see Irwin, *Easter, A Guide to the Eucharist and to the Hours*, 41.

darkness shot through with light; it is the epiphany of glory in the midst of suffering, the triumph of life at the very hour of death. The *Christus factus est* with its movements of abasement and of exaltation not only announces the Passion according to Saint John; during the singing of the Passion it unfolds its meaning and lingers in the heart, coloring it, as if by anticipation, with the radiance of the Resurrection and Ascension.

The *Christus factus est* does not possess an original melody; the same fifth mode melody is found in thegraduals *Ecce sacerdos*²¹¹ and *Exit sermo*.²¹² Nonetheless, the melodic line so perfectly espouses and expresses the text that *Christus factus est* is numbered among the Gregorian repertoire's most moving pieces. The depths of Christ's redemptive obedience find expression in the descending neumatic formation over *crucis*, only to rise out of the depths and ascend on *illum*: "therefore God has highly exalted him" (Ph 2:9). To sing the *Christus factus est* is to engage in the liturgy's *theologia crucis*. The melody dilates the text, amplifies and interprets it for the liturgical context. The whole Paschal Mystery — death, Resurrection, and Ascension — is already there.

211. GR, 486.

212. GR, 636.

The Chants of the *Adoratio Sanctae Crucis**Ecce lignum Crucis*²¹³

*Ecce lignum Crucis,
in quo salus mundi
pependit.
Venite, adoremus.*

Behold the wood of the Cross,
on which hung the Saviour of the
world.
Come, let us adore.

Egeria, writing between 415 and 418, gives a vivid description of the veneration of the wood of the Cross practiced at Jerusalem on Good Friday.²¹⁴ As relics of the wood of the Cross spread from Jerusalem across the Byzantine Empire, so too did the rite of veneration. By 700, the *adoratio Crucis* is incorporated into the Roman liturgy of Good Friday, probably under the influence of the Eastern Pope Sergius I (687-701).²¹⁵

Ordo Romanus XXIII (700-750) describes the rite: while his ministers sing *Beati immaculati in via* (Psalm 118), the pontiff, barefoot, with his left hand in the hand of his archdeacon and his right hand holding a thurible with incense, precedes the deacon bearing the wood of the Cross in its precious

213. GR, 174; MR, 323.

214. "The gilded silver casket containing the sacred wood of the cross is brought in and opened. Both the wood of the cross and the inscription are taken out and placed on the table. . . . It is the practice here for all the people to come forth one by one, the faithful as well as the catechumens, to bow down before the table, kiss the holy wood, and then move on." *Egeria: Diary of a Pilgrimage*, trans. George E. Gingras (New York: Newman Press, 1970), 111.

215. Ildefonso Schuster, *The Sacramentary*, vol. II, trans. Arthur Levelis-Marke (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1925), 215.

reliquary. The procession makes its way from the Lateran to the basilica of Jerusalem. There the reliquary containing the wood of the Cross is placed on the altar and opened by the pontiff for the veneration of the faithful.²¹⁶

According to this text, the most ancient chant associated with the *adoratio Crucis* is Psalm 118. In this liturgical context, the long litany of love for the Law becomes a litany of love for the Tree of Life upon which was “crucified the Lord of glory” (1 Cor 2:8).²¹⁷ In *Ordo Romanus XXIV* (754), the antiphon, *Ecce lignum crucis* has been joined to Psalm 118. The antiphon gives to the psalmody an explicitly Christological and staurological cast; the attributes of the Law—light, promise, treasure, delight, freedom, and justice—are liturgically reinterpreted by the repetition of the popular acclamation *Ecce lignum crucis*.²¹⁸

In *Ordo Romanus XXXI* (850-900), *Ecce lignum crucis* is intoned by the pontiff himself as he unveils the cross. Taken up by the clergy, it is sung with

216. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 511.

217. Implicit in the liturgical use of Psalm 118 in conjunction with the *adoratio Crucis* is Saint Paul’s theology of the Law and the Cross. See Rom 7:4-25; Gal 2:15—3:14. In the Byzantine Matins of Holy Saturday, Psalm 118 is “related to Christ who came to fulfill the Law and bore witness to his love for the Father by obeying him ‘unto death, even death on a cross’ (Phil 2:5-10).” A. Kniazeff, “The Death of a Priest According to the Slavic Trebnik” in *Temple of the Holy Spirit*, [The Twenty-First Liturgical Conference of Saint-Serge], trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (New York: Pueblo Publishing, 1983), 77.

218. See Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 2, 793.

Psalm 118 while the priests and deacons present adore the cross.²¹⁹ In the Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century, *Ecce lignum crucis*, with Psalm 118, is sung following the responsory *Vadis propitiator*²²⁰ while the clergy and people adore the cross.²²¹ In the *Missale Lateranense* (1230), *Ecce lignum crucis* is sung thrice, raising the pitch each time, during the unveiling of the cross; Psalm 118 is not mentioned.²²² In this form, *Ecce lignum crucis* came into the present reformed liturgy.²²³

The Missal of 2002 provides two rites.²²⁴ The first takes place as the cross is unveiled at the altar; *Ecce lignum crucis* is sung three times, raising the pitch each time. All respond *Venite adoremus*. In the alternate rite, a procession with the cross forms from the door of the church; three times the procession

219. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. I, 547.

220. The responsory which the text attributes to Saint Ambrose is a lament sung by the Virgin Mary over the solitude of Christ, abandoned by Peter, Thomas and the other apostles. See PRGerm 276, Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. I, 591-592. The text and music are given in the *Processionale Monasticum* (Solesmes: Abbaye Saint-Pierre, 1983), 188.

221. Ibid., 592.

222. Ibid., 607.

223. The total disappearance of Psalm 118 from the Good Friday liturgy is regrettable. While it is plausible that the *via* of *Beati immaculati in via* (Ps 118:1) may have been applied originally to the route from the Lateran to the basilica of Jerusalem, it is equally plausible that the whole psalm was interpreted in the light of the Cross suggested above.

224. See MR, 323-324.

halts, the unveiled cross is lifted up, the deacon or priest bearing the cross sings *Ecce lignum crucis* as above and all respond *Venite adoremus.*

Now is the time to uncover the cross and show it to the people. “See the wood of the cross upon which hung the world’s salvation.” Whether or not it is the true cross, as at one time in Jerusalem, or as today in many places a particle of it, the Church sees everywhere the same, one cross, and she kneels before the hard wood on which God’s mercy became visible. “Come, let us adore.”²²⁵

Ecce lignum Crucis is an invitation to lift one’s eyes to the wood of the Cross; it recalls the bronze serpent, set on a pole” for the life and health of Israel (cf. Num 21:9) and the prophecy of Zachary, “They shall look on him whom they have pierced” (Zech 12:10). The connection between the Cross of Christ and the healing power of God cannot be overlooked in the liturgical context. A liturgical and sacramental soteriology will take note of the fact that one might translate *in quo salus mundi pependit* as “on which hung the health of the world.” *Venite adoremus* thus becomes the Church’s response of faith to the salutary power of the Cross rendered present here and now in the *actio*.

225. A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 140.

The Antiphon. *Crucem tuam adoramus*²²⁶

*Crucem tuam adoramus, Domine:
et sanctam Resurrectionem tuam
laudamus et glorificamus:
ecce enim propter lignum
venit gaudium in universo mundo.*

V. *Deus misereatur nostri,
et benedicat nobis:
illuminet vultum suum
super nos,
et misereatur nostri.*

Your Cross, Lord, we adore:
and your holy Resurrection
we praise and glorify:
for, behold, by the wood
has joy come into all the world.

V. May God have mercy on us
and bless us:
may he cause his face to shine
upon us
and may he have mercy on us
(Ps 66:1).

*Crucem tuam adoramus, Domine:
et sanctam Resurrectionem tuam
laudamus et glorificamus:
ecce enim propter lignum
venit gaudium in universo mundo.*

Your Cross, Lord, we adore:
and your holy Resurrection
we praise and glorify:
for, behold, by the wood
has joy come into all the world.

The Antiphon *Crucem tuam* with Psalm 66 appears in the ninth century antiphonaries *Compendiensis* and *Silvanectensis*.²²⁷ In the Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century it is sung with Psalm 66 during the adoration

226. GR, 175.

227. Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 97.

of the Cross by the people.²²⁸ Baumstark and others have demonstrated the Byzantine origin of the text.²²⁹

Theologically, *Crucem tuam* resembles *Nos autem*, the introit with which the Church began the Paschal Triduum. The Cross of Christ, the source of health, of life and of Resurrection, fills the Church's gaze with its brightness. She looks towards the wood of the Cross and is made radiant by the Resurrection (cf. Ps 33:6). For the liturgy, the wood by which Adam fell (Gn 3:12) is today the wood by which Adam is saved. The wood by which Noah, "his sons, his wife and his sons' wives" (Gn 6:14) were saved from the flood is today the wood by which joy has flooded the world. The wood by which Moses sweetened the bitter waters of Marah (Ex 15:25) is today the wood by which all the world's bitterness is made sweet.

The antiphon *Crucem tuam* accompanies Psalm 66, a song of thanksgiving for the harvest, and the same psalm that was used in conjunction with the introit *Nos autem*. Psalm 66 contains ten allusions to the nations. Framed by

228. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 593.

229. See Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 795-796. Wellesz, in his study of Greek hymns in the *Adoratio Crucis* gives the text of a bilingual (Greek and Latin) antiphon for Good Friday from an eleventh century Beneventan antiphonary: "Your cross we adore, Lord, and your holy Resurrection we glorify; come, nations, let us adore the Resurrection of Christ." The first part of the text is identical to the *Crucem tuam* of the Roman antiphonaries. See E. Wellesz, *Eastern Elements in Western Chant* (Oxford: The University Press, 1947), 24-29. Also see Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 527.

the antiphon *Crucem tuam*, it discloses a theology of universal salvation through the Cross.²³⁰ With the death and Resurrection of Christ, the fruit of the Cross has been reaped and all nations and peoples are blessed by the great paschal harvest (cf. Ps 66:7).

For a moment Easter seems anticipated. The Church sings of joy and Resurrection. We must hold fast to that: the unforgettable impression of this restrained, sorrowful and yet very deep joy in the hymn we are singing now: ‘Through the Cross joy came into the world.’ This is characteristic of the Church’s deepest attitude, not only in the liturgy but in her whole life as well.²³¹

The fourth mode melody of *Crucem tuam* resembles the *Exultet* melody of the thirteenth century Missal of Saugnac,²³² it can also be compared to the melody of Gloria XV.²³³ Wellesz remarks that the *Nomen Sacrum*, *Kyrios* or *Dominus* is often adorned by a melodic group in Latin chants of Greek origin;

230. “That the Cross means solidarity was something that the ancient Church never ceased to see in its very form: spread out in all the world’s dimensions, its arms thrown open wide, all-embracing.” H. Urs von Balthasar, *Mysterium Paschale*, trans. Aidan Nichols (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), 129.

231. A. Löhr, *The Mass Through the Year*, vol. 1, trans. I. T. Hale (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1959), 39.

232. H. Hucke, “Cantus Gregorianus” in Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 2, 945.

233. See GR, 760. The first two incises of *Crucem tuam* correspond exactly to the melody composed for the memorial acclamation *Mortem tuam* at Mass. See GR, 810 or MR, 918.

here, the quilisma on *Domine* carries the melody to its summit. The neums over *venit* express joy out of sorrow.

The Improperia, Part One²³⁴

1. *Popule meus, quid feci tibi?*
Aut in quo contristavi te?
Responde mihi.
Quia eduxi te de
terra Aegypti:
parasti Crucem Salvatori tuo.

O my people, what have I done to thee?
 Or wherein have I aggrieved thee?
 Answer me.
 Because I led thee out of the
 land of Egypt :
 thou hast prepared a Cross
 for thy Saviour.

2. *Quia eduxi te per desertum*
quadraginta annis,
et manna cibavi te,
et introduxi in terra satis optimam:
parasti Crucem salvatori tuo.

Because I guided thee forth through the
 desert for forty years,
 and fed thee with manna,
 and brought thee into a right good land,
 thou hast prepared a Cross
 for thy Saviour.

3. *Qui ultra debui facere tibi,*
et non feci?
Ego quidem plantavi te
vineam meam speciosissimam:
et tu facta es mihi nimis amara:
aceto namque
sitim meam potasti:
et lancea perforasti
latus Salvatoris tuo.

What more could I have done for thee
 that I have not done?
 I, even I, planted thee to be
 my fairest vineyard:
 and thou hast made thyself exceeding
 bitter to me;
 for thou hast slaked my thirst
 with vinegar,
 and pierced with a lance
 thy Saviour's side.²³⁵

234. GR, 176.

235. English translation from *The Missal in Latin and English* (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1957), 372-373.

The *Improperia* are a composite of three elements, each with its own historical background and characteristics.²³⁶ Part One²³⁷ first appears coupled with the *Trisagion (Agios o Theos)* in the ninth century *Sylvanectensis* under the title *Grecum ad crucem adorandum*.²³⁸ It is also found, again with the *Trisagion*, in the Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century where it occurs after the *orationes solennes [sic]*, as the first chant of the *adoratio Crucis*.²³⁹ There are three distinct texts drawn from Scripture and related by a common structure. The words, placed in the mouth of Christ, contrast the divine compassion manifested in the *mirabilia* of the Exodus with the faithless response of those upon whom God has set his heart.²⁴⁰

236. The text of the *Improperia* was attacked at the General Synod of the Church of England in 1985 by the former (Anglican) Bishop of Birmingham, Dr. Montefiore, as being antisemitic. Refuting the charge, the Anglican liturgists Greenacre and Haselock write: "Properly understood, there is nothing antisemitic about the Reproaches. In this text, as in the *Exultet* . . . an identity is claimed between the People of God of the Old Covenant and the People of God of the New; in the Reproaches our Lord is engaged in a dialogue with us, challenging those present at the liturgy to faith, love and repentance and reproaching us with examples of our infidelity taken from the past history of the People of God." Roger Greenacre and Jeremy Haselock, *The Sacrament of Easter* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 122.

237. Referred to as the *major Improperia* to distinguish it from Part Three, the *minor Improperia*.

238. Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 97.

239. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 591.

240. The underlying theme of the *Improperia*, the tragedy of God's unrequited love, resurfaces throughout the history of Western spirituality. Bernard of Clairvaux in the twelfth century, Francis of Assisi and Angela of Foligno in the thirteenth, and Margaret Mary Alacoque in the seventeenth are representative of a spiritual current that, in proportion to its dissociation from

Of the three texts composing the major *Improperia*, the first contrasts the Exodus as recalled in Micah 6:3-4²⁴¹ with the crucifixion of Jesus.²⁴² Israel is led out of Egypt into freedom; Christ is led captive out of the holy city to be crucified. The second text, derived from Deuteronomy 8:2-3. 7-8, presents types of the *sacramenta paschalia*: forty years in the wilderness, the mysterious manna, and the crossing over into “a land of brooks of water, of fountains and of springs . . . a land of wheat and of vines.” The contrast with the Cross is all the more striking here: the faithless response to the *sacramenta* of the Exodus leads to the Cross; the Cross becomes for the Church the source of the *sacramenta* of faith in which the steadfast and liberating love of God is

the liturgy, will become increasingly private and individualistic, as evidenced in the reparation piety of the nineteenth century often focused on the Eucharist and the Sacred Heart and strongly influenced by private revelations.

241. “O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of bondage; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam” (Mi 6:3-4).

242. Cf. Mark 15:20b. and John 19:16-17. In the Latin texts the verbs *educunt* and *duxerunt* appear, echoing the verb *eduxi* in the liturgical text.

experienced anew.²⁴³ The third text draws upon Isaiah 5:4,²⁴⁴ Jeremiah 2:21,²⁴⁵ and Psalm 68:22²⁴⁶ and contrasts them with images from John 19:28-34, the sponge imbibed with vinegar,²⁴⁷ and the pierced side.²⁴⁸ The allusion to the pierced side of Christ recurs in Part Three of the *Improperia*.²⁴⁹

The *Graduale Romanum* indicates that the three texts should be sung alternately by two cantors standing *in medio chori*.²⁵⁰ Each section is followed by

243. On the *sacramenta paschalia*, see Odo Casel, *La Fête de Pâques dans l'Eglise des Pères* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1963), 99-101.

244. "What more was there to do for my vineyard, that I have not done in it? When I looked for it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes?" (Is 5:4). This text (*Vinea facta est*) is the responsory to the fifth reading of the Paschal Vigil. See GR, 188.

245. "Yet I planted you a choice vine, wholly of pure seed. How then have you turned degenerate and become a wild vine?" (Is 2:21).

246. "I looked for pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they give me vinegar to drink" (Ps 68:20b-21). The text is sung as the offertory chant on Passion Sunday and on the solemnity of the Sacred Heart. See RG, 148 and 386.

247. "After this Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the scripture), 'I thirst.' A bowl full of vinegar stood there; so they put a sponge full of the vinegar on hyssop and held it to his mouth" (Jn 19:28).

248. "But one of the soldier's pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water" (Jn 19:34). The text is the communion antiphon for the solemnity of the Sacred Heart. See GR, 387.

249. The allusions to the pierced side of Christ in the ninth century *Improperia* are among the earliest Western liturgical texts pertaining to a theme that will develop into the liturgical cultus of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. For a study of the wound in Christ's side done from the perspective of liturgical theology, see Joseph Ledit, *La plaie du côté* (Rome: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1970).

250. GR, 176-178.

the singing of the *Trisagion* in Greek and in Latin by alternating choirs. The melody is found in the tenth century *Laonensis* 239.²⁵¹

Part Two: The *Trisagion*²⁵²

<i>Hagios o Theos.</i>	<i>Sanctus Deus.</i>	Holy is God!
<i>Hagios Ischyros.</i>	<i>Sanctus fortis.</i>	Holy and strong!
<i>Hagios</i>	<i>Sanctus</i>	Holy immortal
<i>Athanatos,</i>	<i>immortalis,</i>	one,
<i>eleison hymas.</i>	<i>miserere nobis.</i>	have mercy on us. ²⁵³

This is the only place in the liturgy of the Paschal Triduum where a text is sung in both Greek and Latin. The liturgical use of the *Trisagion* is attested by the Council of Chalcedon in 451; shortly thereafter it was introduced from Constantinople into the Gallican liturgy, certainly no later than 529.²⁵⁴ Wellesz affirms that the melody as well as the text is of Eastern origin.²⁵⁵ The ninth century *Corbiensis* and *Silvanectensis* antiphonaries indicate that the *Trisagion* is sung *ad crucem adorandum*. Both manuscripts couple it with the three texts of

251. See the neums of the Laon manuscript, transcribed by Marie-Claire Billecoq, in the *Graduale Triplex* (Solesmes: Abbaye Saint-Pierre de Solesmes, 1979), 176-178.

252. GR, 176.

253. English translation from *The Missal in Latin and English*, 372.

254. McKinnon notes that in the Gallican liturgy described in the *Expositio brevis antiquae liturgiae gallicanae* the *Trisagion* "is sung no less than three times: in Greek immediately after the deacon proclaims the *silentium* before the readings; in Greek before the gospel and in Latin after the gospel." *The Advent Project*, 72. See also, Edmund Bishop, "Kyrie Eleison, A Liturgical Consultation" in *Liturgica Historica* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1918), 132-133.

255. "The melody . . . cannot have had its origin on Western soil, but was introduced into the Latin Church along with the Greek text, which was translated into Latin at a later date." E. Wellesz, *Eastern Elements in Western Chant*, 17.

the *Improperia* Part One.²⁵⁶ In the gallicanized *Ordo Romanus XXXI*, the *Trisagion* is sung while the veiled cross is carried from behind the altar to in front of it. The transfer of the cross is done in three movements; after each one two cantors bow low before the cross and intone the *Trisagion* in Greek to which the choir responds in Latin.²⁵⁷ In the Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century the *Trisagion* is first in the series of chants in praise of the Cross.²⁵⁸

Schmidt distinguishes between the biblical *Trisagion* (Is 6:3) and the liturgical *Trisagion* (*Hagios o Theos*) without treating of the connection between the two. Isaiah 6:3 is used liturgically in the *Sanctus* of the Mass and in the hymn *Te Deum laudamus*. In both cases, the text is used doxologically, as it is in the *Kedūshah* of the Jewish liturgy.²⁵⁹

The Isaian *Trisagion* is an angelic chant, integral to the theophany which the prophet describes as taking place in the Jerusalem Temple. The appearance of the Lord “sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up” (Is 6:1) leaves Isaiah

256. Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 97.

257. “Post orationes praeparatur crux ante altare, interpositio spatio inter ipsam et altare, substantata hinc inde a duobus acolytis, posito ante eam orario. In cuius laudem dicitur, *Hagios*, cum versibus istis: Popule meus.” Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 546-547.

258. Ibid., 591.

259. See William Oesterley, *The Jewish Background of the Christian Liturgy* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1925), 143-147. He concludes: “The *Kedūshah* of the Synagogue Liturgy is the source to which we must look for the origin of the *Trisagion* in the Christian Liturgy,” p. 147.

smitten with awareness of his own sin: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!” (Is 6:5). The points of convergence between the theophany recounted by Isaiah and the theophany enacted liturgically in the unveiling of the cross are too striking to be ignored. Isaiah 6:1, “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up,” is rich in staurological resonances.

‘Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.’ He said this to show by what death he was to die. The crowd answered him, ‘We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?’ (Jn 12:31-34).

The Son of Man “who remains forever” (Jn 12:34) is Christ enthroned upon the Cross as “cosmic *Kyrios*.²⁶⁰ For Christ, the Cross is the throne of his glorification; for the world, it is the throne of its judgment.²⁶¹

The fact that the *Trisagion* occurs first in the ancient series of chants *ad crucem adorandum* and, in particular, its function in *Ordo Romanus XXXI*, suggests

260. Ibid., 124.

261. Borrowing an image from Psalm 95, the Holy Week Vespers hymn *Vexilla Regis* says: “*Regnavit a ligno Deus.*” On the Cross as judgment of the world, see H. Urs von Balthasar, *Mysterium Paschale*, 119-125.

that the unveiling of the cross is a liturgical theophany comparable to that described by Isaiah. The *Trisagion* of the *adoratio Crucis* is then a liturgical permutation of the *Trisagion* of Isaiah 6:3 referring, at least obliquely, to John 6:69: “We have believed and have come to know that you are the Holy One of God.” The doxological tone of the Isaian text remains in the tropes attached to the threefold *Hagios*; these, contextualized by the liturgical rite being enacted, are to be taken in the Christological sense. Christ, enthroned upon the Cross, is God; he is the Mighty One; he is the Immortal One. The petition *eleison hymas* corresponds to Isaiah’s awareness that a sinful mortal cannot stand before the thrice-holy God (cf. Is 6:5) except in an attitude of profound compunction.

The Church bends deeply in the consciousness of human guilt. . . . It is this consciousness which the *improperia*, the accusations of the suffering Christ against his people, express so vividly. So deeply moved is the Church by them that her contrition takes on the form of a staccato invocation of the Holy One, a flight to the merciful God who can give her forgiveness: ‘Holy God, strong holy one, holy immortal one, have mercy on us.’ In two choirs, Greek and Latin, these ancient acclamations answer one another as if the entire Church, East and West together, had joined to give a single confession of God’s holiness and the sinfulness of mankind before the crucified.²⁶²

The *Trisagion* of the *Improperia* exemplifies how a biblical text is reinterpreted and, in some way transfigured, by a liturgical context. The

262. A. Löhr, *The Mass Through the Year*, vol. 1, 38-39.

Graduale Romanum indicates that the *Trisagion* is to be sung by two choirs, alternating the Greek and Latin texts in response to the verses studied above. The melody given in the *Graduale Romanum* is the melody of the Greek text found in the ninth century Codex of St. Martial.²⁶³

The *Improperia*, Part Three²⁶⁴

1. <i>Ego propter te flagellavi Aegyptum cum primogenitis suis: et tu me flagellatum tradidisti.</i>	For thy sake I scourged Egypt with her first-born: and thou didst hand me over to be scourged.
<i>Popule meus, quid feci tibi? aut in quo contristavi te? Responde mihi.</i>	O my people, what have I done to thee? Or wherein have I aggrieved thee? Answer me.
2. <i>Ego eduxi te de Aegypto, demerso Pharaone in mare Rubrum: et tu me tradidisti principibus sacerdotum.</i>	I led thee out of Egypt, drowning Pharao in the Red Sea: and thou didst deliver me to the chief priests.
<i>Popule meus, etc.</i>	O my people, etc.
3. <i>Ego ante te aperui mare: et tu aperuisti lancea latus meum.</i>	I opened the sea before thee: and thou didst open my side with a spear.
<i>Popule meus, etc.</i>	O my people, etc.

263. See H. Hucke, "Cantus Gregorianus," in Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 2, 941; see also Wellesz, *Eastern Elements in Western Chant*, 15-17.

264. GR, 178.

4. *Ego ante te praeivi in columnā
nubis: et tu me duxisti
ad praetorium Pilati.* I went before thee in a column of cloud:
and thou hast led me to the judgment hall
of Pilate.
- Popule meus, etc.* O my people, etc.
5. *Ego te pavi manna per desertum: I fed thee with manna through the desert:
et tu me cecidisti
alapis et flagellis.* and thou didst smite me with
blows and scourges.
- Popule meus, etc.* O my people, etc.
6. *Ego te potavi
aqua salutis de petra:
et tu me potasti felle et aceto.* I gave thee to drink wholesome water
from the rock:
and thou gavest me gall and vinegar.
- Popule meus, etc.* O my people, etc.
7. *Ego propter te
Chanaeorum reges percussi:
et tu percussisti arundine
caput meum.* For thy sake I smote the
kings of the Canaanites:
and thou didst strike
my head with a reed.
- Popule meus, etc.* O my people, etc.
8. *Ego dedi tibi sceptrum regale:
et tu dedisti capiti meo
spineam coronam.* I gave thee a royal sceptre:
and thou didst give put
a crown of thorns upon my head.
- Popule meus, etc.* O my people, etc.
9. *Ego te exaltavi magna virtute:
et tu me suspendisti
in patibulo crucis.* I raised thee up with mighty power:
and thou didst hang me
upon the gibbet of the Cross.²⁶⁵

265. English translation from *The Missal in Latin and English*, 373-374.

Part Three of the *Improperia* is composed of ten verses largely derived from a series of antiphons or *troparia* found in the Georgian version of a *Kanonarion* composed in Jerusalem in the seventh century.²⁶⁶ The *Kanonarion* reveals that, although the relic of the Cross was lost during the Persian War in 614, a liturgy of readings and antiphons continued to be celebrated at the same hour at which the *adoratio Crucis* had been celebrated in the days of Egeria.²⁶⁷ Wellesz concludes:

It may be assumed that the lessons and antiphons were the same as in the days before the holy relic was lost, as they are connected with the moment of the Crucifixion; the acceptance of this supposition would mean that the spiritual act of worship was performed on the same day and hour as before, though the ceremony of the Adoration of the relic no longer took place.²⁶⁸

These antiphons, twelve in number, are found in the 1122 *Typikon* of the Church of Jerusalem²⁶⁹ and are used to this day in the Byzantine liturgy. The eighth antiphon, entitled *antiphona graeca* in several Beneventan antiphonaries of

266. Wellesz, *Eastern Elements in Western Chant*, 21.

267. See *Egeria: Diary of A Pilgrimage*, trans. G. Gingras, chap. 37, 110-113.

268. *Ibid.*, 21-22.

269. *Le Typicon de la grande Eglise*, ed. J. Matéos (Rome, 1962).

the eleventh century,²⁷⁰ is undoubtedly the inspiration of the minor

*Improperia.*²⁷¹

The minor *Improperia* are composed of a simple psalmodic formula with an intonation, a flex when required by the first half of the verse, and an ending.

The verses are sung alternately by two cantors from the first and second choirs.

The whole choir responds *Popule meus* after each verse.

Each of the nine verses begins with *Ego*; it is Christ himself who speaks in the first person. The text of the refrain is Micah 6:3. The nine verses are a

270. Ibid., 68.

271. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 795, gives the Latin text of the antiphon. The English translation is slightly modified from that of Wellesz, *Eastern Elements in Western Chant*, 23; the Greek text may be found in the same place.

*O quando in cruce confixerant iniqui
dominum gloriae, ait ad eos:*

*Quid vobis molestus sum aut
in quo iratus sum?
Ante me quis vos liberavit ex
angustiis?
Et nuncquid mihi redditis, male pro
bonis?
Pro columna ignis, in cruce me
configitis.
Pro nube, sepulcrum mihi foditis.*

Pro manna, fel me potatis.

*Propter aquas, acetum mihi
in poculo porrigitis.
Ergo vocabo gentes
et ipsi me glorificant
una cum Patre et cum Sancto Spiritu.*

When to the cross transgressors
nailed the Lord of Glory, He cried out to
them,

Wherein have I grieved you
or wherein have I provoked your wrath?
Before me, who delivered you from
oppression?

And now, what return do you make to me?
Evil for goodness?

In return for a pillar of fire
you have nailed me to a cross.

In return for a cloud, you have dug me a
tomb.

In return for the manna,
you have offered me gall.

In return for water, you have given me
vinegar to drink.

Therefore I shall call the Gentiles,
and they shall glorify me
with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

tightly woven tissue of biblical allusions and images, drawing from Nehemiah 9:9-15, 24; Psalms 77, 80, 104, 105 and 135; Judith 5:12-13 and, perhaps most directly, from the apocryphal 2 Esdras 1:4-37.²⁷² As in the major *Improperia*, each demonstration of God's power and love, revealed in the events of the Exodus, is countered by an event from the gospel accounts of Christ's Passion and death.

The liturgical text is most profitably sung with a familiar knowledge of its biblical sources in the background, especially 2 Esdras 1. At its center shines the tree, a type of the Cross, and a series of images that signify not so much the bitter reproach as the obstinacy of a crucified love, and the promise of love's triumph.

I pitied your groanings and gave you manna for food; you ate the bread of angels. When you were thirsty, did I not cleave the rock so that waters flowed in abundance? Because of the heat I covered you with the leaves of trees. I divided fertile lands among you; I drove out the Canaanites, the Perrizites, and the Philistines before you. What more can I do for you? says the Lord. Thus says the Lord Almighty: When you were in the wilderness, at the bitter stream, thirsty and blaspheming my name, I did not send fire upon you for your blasphemies, but threw a tree into the water and made the stream sweet (2 Es 1:20-23).

272. Referred to in the Vulgate as the Fourth Book of Esdras.

The tree is a type of the Cross of Christ,²⁷³ the waters of the stream made sweet by the tree evoke the waters of Baptism charged with the power of the Cross. The waters flowing in abundance from the cleft rock point to the “rivers of living water” flowing from the heart of Christ (Jn 7:37-38; 19:34) and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The manna called “bread of angels” is a type of “the living bread which came down from heaven” (Jn 6:51), the Body of Christ given in the Eucharist. The question posed by the Lord, “What more can I do for you?” is answered in the *paschalia sacramenta*. The minor *Improperia* sing of the scourging, the betrayal, the pierced side, the praetorium, the scourging, the vinegar, the reed, the crown of thorns and the gibbet as the sign, the pledge and the cause of abundant mercy and new life.²⁷⁴ The *Improperia*, even as they inflict the salutary wound of compunction, remind the praying Church that “in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who

273. “For me this tree is a plant of eternal health. I feed on it; by its roots I am rooted; by its branches I spread myself; I rejoice in its dew; the rustling of its leaves invigorates me.” “Anonymous Easter Homily inspired by Hippolytus, Treatise on Easter” quoted by Oliver Clément in *The Roots of Christian Mysticism, Text and Commentary*, trans. Theodore Berkeley and Jeremy Humerstone (New York: New City Press, 1995), 48.

274. “Since the merciless battle that Jesus fought was victorious, he was first crowned with thorns in order to banish every curse from the earth, eradicating by his sacred head the thorns born of sin. Then, having exhausted the Dragon’s bitter gall, in exchange he completely opened for us the fountains of sweetness that spring from him . . . He opened his own side whence flowed the sacred blood and water, signs of the spiritual marriage, of adoption and the mystical new birth. Indeed, it is said, ‘He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire’ (Matthew 3.11): the water is the sign of the Spirit, the blood of the fire.” Ibid., 48-49.

loved us" (Rom 8:37). The final note of the *Improperia* sounds the triumph of love.

The Hymn. *Pange lingua gloriosi*²⁷⁵

1. *Pange , lingua, gloriosi
Praeium certaminis,
Et super Crucis trophyaeo
Dic triumphum nobilem;
Qualiter Redemptor orbis
Immolatus vicerit.*

R. *Crux fidelis, inter omnes
Arbor una nobilis;
Nulla talem silva profert,
Fronde, flore, germine. **
*Dulce lignum, dulces clavo,
Dulce pondus sustinens.*

2. *De parentis protoplasti
Fraude factor condolens,
Quando pomi noxialis
Morte morsu corruit:
Ipse lignum tunc notavit,
Damna ligni ut solveret.*

3. *Hoc opus nostrae salutis
Ordo depoposcerat:
Multiformis proditoris
Ars ut artem falleret:
Et medelam ferret inde,*

Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle.
Sing the victor's crown of bay,
To the Cross, our noble trophy,
Here a fitting tribute pay,
Telling how the world's Redeemer,
Slain as victim, won the day.

Faithful Cross, of trees created,
Noblest tree of all art thou
Forest none bears tree as thou art,
Like in leaf, or flower, or bough. *
Dear the nails, and dear the timber:
Dear the load they bear aloft.²⁷⁶

God, our Maker, saw with pity
Our first parents led astray,
When for eating fruit forbidden
Death had claimed them as its prey;
So a second tree he chose, that
Should the first tree's damage pay.

Thus the plan of our salvation
God of old did preordain,
And a subtler art outwitted
All the crafty foe did feign:
Art that sought and found our healing

275. GR, 182.

276. The refrain *Crux fidelis* is repeated after each strophe of the hymn, as far as *Dulce lignum* after the odd numbered strophes, and from *Dulce lignum* after the even numbered ones.

Hostis unde laeserat.

4. *Quando venit ergo sacri
Plenitudo temporis,
Missus est ab arce Patris
Natus, orbis Conditor:
Atque ventre virginali
Carne factus prodiit.*

5. *Vagit infans inter arcta
Conditus praesepia:
Membra pannis involuta
Virgo Mater alligat:
Et manus pedesque et crura
Stricta cingit fascia.*

6. *Lustra sex qui iam peracta
Tempus implens corporis,
Se volente, natus ad hoc,
Passioni deditus,
Agnus in Crucis levatur
Immolandus stipite.*

7. *En acetum, fel, arundo,
Sputi, clavi, lancea;
Mite corpus perforatur,
Sanguis, unde profluit:
Terra, pontus, astra, mundus,
Quo lavantur flumine.*

8. *Flecte ramos, arbor alta,
Tensa laxa viscera,
Et rigor lentescat ille,
Quem dedit nativitas;
Ut superni membra Regis
Miti tendas stipite.*

9. *Sola digna tu fuisti
Ferre saecli pretium,*

In the source of all our bane.

Therefore in the course of ages
Dawned at length that holy morn,
When our Maker, by his Father
Sent from heaven, did not scorn
Taking flesh, to come among us,
Of a lowly maiden born.

Hear the helpless baby crying,
Where the narrow manger stands;
See how she, his Virgin Mother,
Ties his limbs with slender bands,
Swaddling clothes she wraps about him,
And confines God's feet and hands.

Thirty years he dwelt among us,
Till, his term of life fulfilled,
Our Redeemer duly yielded
To the fate he freely willed:
Cross of wood became an altar
And the Paschal Lamb was killed.

Gall his drink, as he lays dying;
Where the thorn and nails and spear
Pierced that tender body, mingled
Blood and water there appear:
Stream to purify creation,
Earth and sea and starry sphere.

Bend, proud tree, thy spreading branches,
Loosen thy rigidity,
All that ruggedness begotten
of thy stern heredity:
Thine to throne the King of heaven;
Hold his body tenderly.

Thou didst carry our Redeemer,
Thou alone wast worthy thought;

*Atque portum praeparare
Nauta mundo naufrago:
Quem sacer crux perunxit,
Fusus Agni corpore.*

10. *Aequa Patri Filioque,
Inclito Paraclito,
Sempitera sit beatae
Trinitati gloria;
Cuius alma nos redemit
Atque servat gratia. Amen.*

Ark of our salvation, thou hast
Shipwrecked souls to haven brought,
Sprinkled with the sacred blood, with
Which the Lamb our pardon bought.

Glory, throughout time unending,
To the Holy Trinity,
Father, Son, in equal measure;
Holy Ghost in like degree
Let all nations join in praising
Him who is both one and three.
Amen.²⁷⁷

The hymn *Pange lingua gloriosi*, like the Holy Week Vespers hymn *Vexilla regis prodeunt*, is the work of Saint Venantius Fortunatus (530-600). Friend and secretary of the Queen Saint Radegonde (518-587), Fortunatus composed the hymns at her request to celebrate the arrival of a relic of the true Cross at the monastery she had founded at Poitiers.²⁷⁸ A gift of Emperor Justin II, the relic was solemnly received by Saint Radegonde on November 19, 569.²⁷⁹

277. English translation from *The Missal in Latin and English*, 374-379.

278. Joseph Connelly, *The Hymns of the Roman Breviary* (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1954), 81.

279. The liturgical cult of the Cross in the West owes much to Saint Radegonde. The reluctant wife of Clotaire, ordained deaconess by Bishop Médard of Soissons, she was a passionate collector of relics, using her political connections to obtain them. See F. Cabrol and H. Leclercq, eds. *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* (Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ané, 1948), s.v. "Radegonde (Sainte)," by H. Leclercq.

The refrain *Crux fidelis* appears for the first time in the seventh century Mozarabic *Libro Ordinum*.²⁸⁰ In the ninth century *Compendiensis* the hymn is given after the antiphon *Crucem tuam*.²⁸¹ The *Ordo Romanus XXXI* prescribes that the refrain *Crux fidelis* and the hymn *Pange lingua* be sung during the communion of the clergy and people.²⁸² In the Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century *Crux fidelis* and *Pange lingua* are the last chants sung during the *adoratio Crucis*;²⁸³ in the present reformed liturgy they occupy the same place. Like *Gloria laus* on Palm Sunday and *Ubi caritas est vera* on Holy Thursday, *Pange lingua* has a refrain between each strophe.²⁸⁴ In the Liturgy of the Hours of Holy Week, *Pange lingua* divided into equal sections, the first being sung at the Office of Readings and the second at Lauds.

In the first strophe Venantius Fortunatus introduces his theme: a combat to the death, a great struggle in which Christ will triumph over death by death. In like manner, *Victimae paschali laudes* will trumpet on Easter Day:

280. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 2, 794.

281. Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 97.

282. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 547.

283. Ibid., 593.

284. The strophes are sung by two or more cantors; the entire assembly sings the refrain. Executed in this way, the hymn is adapted to the ritual action of the procession to the cross.

Then, Life and Death together fought,
 Each to a strange extreme were brought
 Life died but soon revived again,
 And even death by it was slain.²⁸⁵

The Cross is a splendid trophy displayed to the eyes of the world.

Triumph, not defeat, is the tone of the text. The use of *redemptor* is significant recalling 1 Peter 1:18: “You know that you were ransomed (Vg. *redempti estis*) from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as gold and silver, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without spot.” Resonances of this text recur throughout the hymn.

The refrain sung between each strophe is an acclamation of praise. The Cross is the faithful and noble tree around which God plants a new paradise (cf. Gn 2:8). Unlike the unfaithful and treacherous tree of the first paradise, the Cross bears the sweet weight of a life-giving fruit, the Body of Christ.

The second to the sixth strophes are a lyrical account of salvation history beginning with the creation. In the second strophe, the Creator is portrayed as grieving (*condolens*) over the harm done to the work first fashioned (*protoplasti*) by his hands. Genesis 3:1-6 is the biblical source of the text. The tree of the Cross will undo the harm brought about by the tree of the garden. The two trees reappear in the Preface for the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross:

285. Trans. Ronald A. Knox, *Holy Week, The Text of the New Holy Week Offices* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1951), 300.

“You established the tree of the Cross as the salvation of the human race, so that where death first appeared, there life might spring up, and so that he who had conquered by a tree might likewise by a tree be conquered.”²⁸⁶

The third strophe recounts God’s “plan for the fulness of time” (Eph 1:10). The work of salvation will restore unity to all things, things in heaven and things on earth (cf. Eph 1:10). The text also echoes 1 Corinthians 2:7: “But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glorification.” The words *salutis* and *medelam* bespeak healing, a theme closely associated to the tree of the Cross. “The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (Rev 22:2).

The fourth strophe declares that in the Incarnation of the Son the *opus salutis* is realized. “But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons” (Gal 4:4). *Missus est ab arce Patris* echoes the dynamic theology of the Fourth Gospel in which Jesus repeatedly speaks of the Father who sent him and of his return to the Father.²⁸⁷

286. “*Qui salutem humani generis in ligno crucis constituisti, ut unde mors oriebatur, inde vita resurguret; et, qui in ligno vincebat, in ligno quoque vinceretur.*” MR, 827–828.

287. See Jn 3:34; 4:34; 5:24. 36-38; 6:29. 38-39. 44, 57; 7:16-18. 28-33; 8:16-18. 26-29. 42; 9:4; 11:42; 12:44-49; 13:16. 20; 14:24; 15:21; 16:5; 17:3. 8. 18-25; 20:21.

The fourth and fifth strophes are subtly linked by the words *Conditor* and *conditus*, both applied to Christ; although he is the Creator of all, in the manger he is confined and hidden. Here emerges the kenotic theology of Philippians 2:6-7. The manger presages the Cross.²⁸⁸ The last four verses of the fifth strophe are inspired by Luke's infancy narrative: "And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger" (Lk 2:7). The swaddling cloths, binding both hand and feet, and the manger evoke the immobility of crucifixion, the burial cloths and the tomb. "This man . . . asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down and wrapped in a linen shroud, and laid him in a rock-hewn tomb, where no one had ever yet been laid" (Luke 23:52-53).²⁸⁹

The sixth and seventh strophes tell of the Passion and Cross. In the third and fourth verses, the poet expresses the filial freedom with which Jesus goes to his death: "I lay down my life that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord" (Jn 10:17-18). The words, *natus ad hoc*, are dense with theological content. The entire life of Christ, from the instant of

288. Beginning in the twelfth century with Saint Bernard, the association between the manger and the Cross will be a favorite theme of mediaeval devotion to the humanity of Christ, especially in the Franciscan school of spirituality. See Bernard McGinn, *The Growth of Mysticism* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996), 174-177.

289. The parallel between swaddling bands and shroud, manger and tomb is recognized by exegetes as germane to the Christology of Luke. See R. Laurentin, *Les Evangiles de l'Enfance du Christ* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1982), 222.

his conception, is ordered to his sacrifice. The meaning of the Incarnation is disclosed in the death and Resurrection of Christ; the Incarnation being in no way separate from the Paschal Mystery.

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings thou hast not desired, but a body hast thou prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings thou hast taken no pleasure.” Then I said, “Behold, I have come to do thy will, O God, as it is written of me in the roll of the book.” . . . And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (Heb 10:5-7. 10).

The Incarnation is the first step in Christ’s descent into the tomb by death on the Cross; by the same token, it is the first step of his Resurrection and Ascension to the right hand of the Father, of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and of his return in glory. *Natus ad hoc* opens the curtain on the entire *Mysterium*.

The last two lines of the sixth strophe link it to the seventh. *Levatur* and *immolandus* pertain to the biblical and theological vocabulary of sacrifice and of glory. The immolated Lamb lifted up on the Cross, “the true Lamb whose blood hallows the doorposts of the faithful,”²⁹⁰ is an image at once paschal and eschatological. We read in Saint John, “For these things took place that the

290. “Haec sunt enim festa paschalia, in quibus verus ille Agnus occiditur, cuius sanguine postes fidelium consecrantur.” *Praeconium paschale*, MR, 351.

scripture might fulfilled, ‘Not a bone of him shall be broken’” (Jn 19:36), and in the Apocalypse, “I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain” (Rev 5:6).

The seventh strophe reintroduces images from the reading of the Passion and from the *Improperia*: the vinegar, gall, reed, spittle, nails, and lance. A doxological vision of the Passion and Cross does not obliterate the memory of Christ’s cruel sufferings; his glorified, risen body bears forever the marks of his wounds (cf. Jn 20:20, 27). In an ancient homily read at the Office of Readings on Holy Saturday, Christ, visiting the underworld, says to Adam:

Look at the spittle on my face, which I received because of you, in order to restore you to that first divine inbreathing at creation. See the blows of my cheeks, which I accepted in order to refashion your distorted form to my own image. See the scourging of my back, which I accepted in order to disperse the load of your sins which was laid upon my back. See my hands nailed to the tree for a good purpose, for you who stretched out your hand to the tree for an evil one.

I slept on the cross and a sword pierced my side, for you who slept in paradise and brought forth Eve from your side. My side healed the pain of your side; my sleep will release you from sleep in Hades; my sword has checked the sword which was turned against you.²⁹¹

The liturgical contemplation of the sufferings of Christ takes place within the wider theological context of the whole Mystery with its effects upon the

291. “An Ancient Homily for Holy Saturday” in *The Divine Office*, vol. II (London: Collins, 1974), 321-322.

whole created order. Thus, the last two lines of the seventh strophe depict the blood and water flowing from Christ's pierced side as an immense wave cleansing the earth, the seas, the stars and the world. The imagery evokes the great flood in the days of Noah²⁹² and rightly so, for the Passion of Christ is the cause of a cosmic renewal, a new creation.

The last two strophes of the hymn are addressed directly to the Cross. In the eighth strophe the Cross is bidden to transform itself into a bed for the King of heaven. The image of the Cross as the nuptial bed of Christ and the Church derives principally from the convergence of Genesis 2:21-23 and John 19:34. At the Office of Readings on Good Friday, Saint John Chrysostom says: "It was from his side then, that Christ formed the Church, as from the side of Adam he formed Eve. . . . Have you seen how Christ has united his bride to himself?"²⁹³ The bride of the Song of Songs, a figure of the Church, lies in the open air with her beloved and says, "Our couch is green; the beams of our house are cedar" (Ct 1:16). The Church desires union with her Bridegroom on the Cross; her desire will be fulfilled in the communion that follows the *adoratio*

292. Several eighth century capitularies and *comes* include the story of the flood (Gn 5:31—8:21) among the *lectiones de Pascha*. See Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 462-467. Genesis 5:31—8:21 was the second reading of the Paschal Vigil until the appearance of the reformed lectionary in 1969.

293. *The Divine Office*, vol. 2, 298.

Crucis, and joyfully solemnized in the Eucharist of the great and holy night of *Pascha*.

The ninth verse praises the Cross, anointed with the blood of the Lamb, as the world's safe haven from the shipwreck of sin. The hymn closes with a Trinitarian doxology; the Cross reveals the Trinity. In the context of the *adoratio Crucis*, *Pange lingua* sings “all that is christological and soteriological by rooting it in the mystery of the Trinity.”

Only so does the believer match up to the great interpretations of the Cross in Paul and John: the Sons’s Cross is the revelation of the Father’s love (Rm 8:32; Jn 3:16), and the bloody outpouring of that love comes to its inner fulfillment in the shedding abroad of their common Spirit into the hearts of men (Rm 5:5).²⁹⁴

The chants of the *adoratio Crucis* are a sung theology of the Cross and Resurrection, expressing the tragedy of sin, the wonder of redemption, and the mystery of the Church, already straining towards Mount Sion upon which stands the Lamb (Rev 14:1).²⁹⁵

294. H. Urs von Balthasar, *Mysterium Paschale*, 140.

295. After the *Pange Lingua* nothing more is sung, unless perhaps Psalm 21 during the Communion as suggested in the *Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Paschal Feasts*, 18.

The Sunday of Pascha, the Resurrection of the Lord

The Paschal Vigil in the Holy Night

According to a most ancient tradition, this is “a night of watching by the Lord” and “a night of watching kept to the Lord” (Ex 12:42). This Vigil commemorates the night in which the children of Israel came forth from Egypt, the night in which they passed dry-shod through the Red Sea, the night whose darkness is shattered by the pillar of light, the night in which sinners are cleansed and believers are wed to holiness, the night on which Christ burst the bonds of death and rose victorious from the tomb.²⁹⁶ The Church keeps a great and solemn Vigil, waiting for the Resurrection of Christ and celebrating the *sacramenta paschalia*: Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist.²⁹⁷

The Paschal Vigil begins after nightfall and ends before dawn; it is therefore entirely nocturnal in character. The *lucernarium*, the procession into the church and the singing of the *Praeconium paschale*, lead into the Liturgy of the Word. In this Vigil, “the mother of all Vigils,”²⁹⁸ there are nine readings, seven taken from the Old Testament and two from the New. “Beginning with Moses

296. *Praeconium paschale*, MR, 271-272.

297. See Casel, *La Fête de Pâques dans l’Eglise des Pères*, 99-104.

298. “In hac Vigilia, matre omnium Vigiliarium, propununtur novem lectiones.” MR, 275.

and all the prophets” (Lk 24:27), the Church unfolds the things concerning the Paschal Mystery of Christ.

By the reader’s desk the Paschal candle is burning; its light falls upon the pages of the Old Testament. Christ casts his light into the darkness of the past, and shows everywhere the saving design of his agapé, which held man from the beginning in its hands, held him fast, and is today fulfilled.²⁹⁹

In the *Graduale Romanum*, the first seven readings are followed by *cantica*; in the lectionary and in the *Graduale Simplex* they are followed by responsorial psalms.³⁰⁰ After each responsorial chant, the presiding bishop or priest sings an

299. A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 162.

300. GR, 185-191. For purposes of comparison, the references of the *cantica* with, in parallel columns, the references of the responsorial psalms of the lectionary, and the responsorial psalms of the *Graduale Simplex* follow. In all, the present reformed liturgy offers twenty options for the responsorial chants of the Liturgy of the Word. The use of one book does not exclude the use of the others. It is possible, within the same celebration, to select elements from each of the three sources.

Graduale Romanum

- I. Ps 99:2-3
- II. Ps 124:1-2
- III. Ex 15:1-2
- IV. Ps 116
- V. Is 5:1-2
- VI. Dt 32:1-4
- VII. Ps 41:2-4

Lectionary

- I. Ps 103:1-2. 5-6. 10. 12-14. 24. 35
or Ps 32: 4-7. 12-13. 20. 22
- II. Ps 15: 5. 8-11
- III. Ex 15: 1-6. 17-18
- IV. Ps 29: 2. 4-6. 11-13
- V. Is 12:2-6
- VI. Ps 18:8-11
- VII. Ps 41:3. 5; 42: 3-4
or Ps 50:12-15. 18-19

Graduale Simplex

- I.
- II.
- III. Ex 15:1-5. 9-10. 1
- IV.
- V. Is 5: 1-6
- VI. Dt 32:1-2. 4. 8-12
- VII. Ps 41: 1-5

oration.³⁰¹ Thus, “that single Godward drive of heart and mind goes forward; surrounded, supported and expressed by ritual acts and words.”³⁰²

The orations of the Paschal Vigil are formulated in such a way as to relate the Old Testament types to their Christological and sacramental antitypes. A grasp of this typology is fundamental to liturgical theology; it is the key to the liturgical hermeneutic of Scripture. Aemiliana Löhr refers to it as “the pattern-making in the Old Testament which God has willed.”³⁰³ Organically related to both the readings and the responsorial chants, the orations reflect the types and symbols they contain, and redirect them to God in the form of prayer.

The Liturgy of the Word.

Jubilate Domino³⁰⁴

I. After the reading of Genesis 1:1—2:2

*Jubilate Domino
omnis terra:
servite Domino in laetitia.*

Shout with jubilation unto the Lord,
all the earth;
worship the Lord in joy.

*V. Intrate in conspectu eius,
in exultatione.*

Appear before his face
with glad hearts.

301. The ancient rhythm of *lectio*, *meditatio* and *oratio* will be repeated seven times in a dynamic preparation for the great *communio* of the paschal sacraments.

302. E. Underhill, *The Mystery of Sacrifice*, 8.

303. A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 164.

304. GR, 185.

V. *Scitote quod Dominus ipse est Deus.*

Know that the Lord himself is God.

V. *Ipse fecit nos, et non ipsi nos: nos autem populus eius et oves pascuae eius.*

It is he that made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture
(Ps 99:2-3).³⁰⁵

The name *canticum*, originally applied to the ancient Paschal Vigil chants³⁰⁶ from Exodus, Isaiah and Deuteronomy, has come to designate the

305. Oration after *Jubilate Deo*

A.

Almighty and eternal God,
wonderful in the ordering of all your works,
may those whom you have redeemed
come to see
that the creation of the world in the beginning
is surpassed in goodness and beauty
by the sacrifice of Christ our Pasch
at the end of the ages.
He lives and reigns forever and ever.

B.

Almighty and eternal God,
you wonderfully created man,
and still more wonderfully redeemed him;
Grant us, we beseech you,
to resist with unswerving mind
the enticements to sin
and so be found worthy
of everlasting joy.
Through Christ our Lord.

306. These are identified in the Old Gelasian Sacramentary (500-750) as follows: *Cantemus Domino* after Ex 14, *Vinea Domini* after Is 4; *Attende caelum* after Dt 31. *Sicut cervus* (Ps 21:2-4), a psalm not a canticle, was sung during the descent into the font and was followed by a psalmic oration. See Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 364-365. The same four chants are indicated in the eighth century Gelasians and in five manuscripts of Dom Hesbert's *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex* q.v. 96-99. They have remained part of the Paschal Vigil to this day.

seven responsorial chants, including those that in ancient sources are called tracts.³⁰⁷ All seven *cantica*, classified as belonging to the eighth mode, are artful adaptations of a musical frame of reference to different texts.³⁰⁸ As already mentioned, this genre of responsorial chant is sung straight through by a soloist or schola without a refrain.

In the six oldest Roman antiphonaries, *Jubilate Domino*, called a tract, is found on Quinquagesima Sunday³⁰⁹ where it remained until the 1970 reform of the Missal. In its present liturgical context, *Jubilate Domino* responds to the reading of Genesis 1:1—2:2, the story of creation.³¹⁰ The earth with its

307. On the tracts of the eighth mode and on *Jubilate Domino* in particular, see Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, 315-323; 494-496 see also Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 38; 82-85, and McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 289-295.

308. “Because of their procedural consistency several writers have seen similarities with simple psalm tones, pointing to intonations and recitations, flexes and mediants, and so on. Such an analogy should not be pressed too far, for then the temptation arises to strip the music down to some sort of basic tone, and see the tract as the result of historical development out of imagined simple beginnings. These are not ‘variations upon a theme (in G or in D)’ for there is no pre-existing theme, and the level of decoration, the degree of solemnity, might have been an essential part of the tract from the start. The conventions of articulation (starting phrases, terminal melismas) are a natural response to the need to mark off major breaks in the text, found in very many chant genres and not necessarily deriving from simple psalmody. The tonality and range provided a musical frame of reference, and phrases of similar length and balance were sung in similar ways.” Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 85.

309. See Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 48-49.

310. “How is one to make a new beginning, except with first of all beginnings, the origin of the cosmos? In the story of creation in the book of Genesis that world is laid open to us, into which God in his love set man at the start. ‘It was very good,’ says the holy scripture, and the word rings full of meaning in this holy nightt which is to heal everything that sin and death have brought to ruin in God’s once wholly beautiful creation.” A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 165.

vegetation, plants and fruit-bearing trees, the beasts of the earth, cattle and everything that creeps upon the earth, and finally, humankind, male and female (Gn 1:12), all are summoned to make a joyful sound to the Lord who created them. Contextualized by the account of creation, *Jubilate Domino* declares the goodness of all creation and its doxological finality. This is yet another instance of the reinterpretation of biblical texts by liturgical context.

Intrate in conspectu eius, the invitation to appear before the face of God evokes the theology of image and likeness. Humankind, both male and female, created in the image of God (Gn 1:27) and invested with a royal priesthood, appears before his face *in exultatione* to worship him. After the fall, fear causes Adam and Eve to seek hiding among the trees.³¹¹ Whereas before sin, creation was a natural sacrament of communion, after sin, creation becomes opaque. Adam forfeits his natural priesthood and the doxological finality of creation is obscured. Christ by his Incarnation and Pasch allows the baptized to come into the presence of God free from fear (cf. Lk 1:73). By his nakedness on the tree of the Cross, Christ calls the naked Adam out of hiding among the trees of the

311. “And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, ‘Where are you?’ And he said, ‘I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and hid myself’” (Gn 3:8-11).

garden to appear *in exultatione* before the Father's face, thereby restoring the doxological priesthood lost by sin.

The third verse of *Jubilate Domino* sings the transcendence of the Creator. "Know that the Lord himself is God" (Ps 99:3). The account of the creation recalls that humankind depends absolutely upon the goodness of God; at the same time it affirms that the goodness of God, reflected in the goodness of creation, is the expression of his nature. It is therefore immutable, eternal, and utterly dependable. The goodness of God displayed in the sacrament of creation is most wonderfully revealed in the Paschal Mystery.³¹²

"It is he that made us and not we ourselves" (Ps 99:3). Those who belong to God by virtue of their creatureliness, are "his people and the sheep of his pasture" by virtue of sacramental participation in the Paschal Mystery. "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold the new has come" (2 Cor 5:17). *Nos autem populus eius et oves pascuae eius* is the chant of the baptized, nourished by the Eucharist; the catechumens on hearing it sung know that they are very close to the "new creation" (Gal 6:15).

312. Cf. the first collect: *Omnipotens, sempiterne Deus, qui es in omnium operum tuorum dispensatione mirabilis, intellegant redempti tui, non fuisse excellentius, quod initio factus est mundus, quam quod in fine saeculorum Pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus.* MR, 276.

*Qui confidunt*³¹³II. After the reading of Genesis 22:1-8

*Qui confidunt in Domino
sicut mons Sion:
non commovebitur in aeternum
qui habitat in Ierusalem.*

*V. Montes in circuitu eius:
et Dominus in circuitu populi sui,
ex hoc nunc et usque in saeculum.*

Those who trust in the Lord
are like Mount Sion itself.
Unmoved forever
is he who dwells in Jerusalem.

Mountains are round about her,
and the Lord is round about his
people from henceforth and
forevermore (Ps 124:1-2).³¹⁴

Qui confidunt is one of the most stable chants in the Roman liturgy. From the oldest surviving Roman antiphonary, the eighth century *Modoetiensis* to the present edition of the *Graduale Romanum*, *Qui confidunt* has remained in its place on the Fourth Sunday of Lent.³¹⁵ In the present *Graduale Romanum*, *Qui confidunt* is sung at its original place and borrowed for use at the Paschal Vigil.

313. GR, 109.

314. Oration after *Qui Confidunt*

O God, Most High Father of the faithful,
you spread the grace of adoption
throughout the whole world,
and so multiply the children of your promise;
thus do you keep your oath to Abraham, your servant,
making him the father of all nations.
Grant that your people
may enter worthily into
the grace held out by your call.
Through Christ our Lord.

315. See Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 74-75.

Qui confidunt in Domino sicut mons Sion. The chant is readily related to the trial of Abraham, the patriarch of our faith (Gn 22:1-18). The reading “points the finger of prophecy to the real height of the Paschal celebration, the sacrifice of the altar, from which all other mysteries of this holy night derive their power.”³¹⁶ The land of Moriah (Gn 22:2), the place of Abraham’s sacrifice, is identified in 2 Chronicles 3:1 with Mount Sion, the site of Solomon’s temple. The liturgy here makes use of a mysterious and symbolic geography, placing the *mons Sion* of the chant in transparency over the Mount Moriah of the reading.

And Isaac said to his father Abraham, “My father!”
 And he said, “Here am I, my son.” He said, “Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? Abraham said, “God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son” (Gn 22:7-8).³¹⁷

In this liturgical context, *Qui confidunt* compares the unshakeable faith of Abraham to Mount Sion itself, the symbol of God’s permanent and indestructible presence to his people. Because of his faith, Abraham, like

316. A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 167.

317. The wood that figured so prominently in the chants of Good Friday here reappears in connection with the lamb. Isaac’s question, “Where is the lamb?” receives a series of answers in that very place, “beginning with the ram caught in a thicket (Gn: 22:13) and including, at the dedication of the Temple, the sacrifice of “so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered” (2 Chr 5:6). Saint John sets Jesus’ crucifixion on the day of Preparation of the Passover, at about the sixth hour (Jn 19:14), the very hour at which the paschal lambs were immolated in the Temple. By synchronizing the crucifixion of Jesus with the immolation of the paschal lambs, John shows the wondrous fulfillment of Abraham’s words to Isaac, “God will provide himself the lamb” (Gn 22:8). The fulfillment is *pro nobis*, the Lamb once provided is ever present in the eucharistic sacrifice of the Church, true Moriah and true Sion.

Mount Sion, is encircled by God's protection. The faithful, true children of Abraham, are in Baptism surrounded by Christ on all sides, taken into his Paschal Mystery. In singing *Qui confidunt*, Abraham, Mount Moriah, and Mount Sion, Isaac, the ram caught in the thicket, and the holocausts of Solomon's temple, all come into focus in such a way that the paschal sacrament of Christ and the Church is more clearly revealed.³¹⁸

318. The collect says that the paschal sacrament (meaning the whole mystery of Christ's death and Resurrection *and* the liturgical celebration thereof) is the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. *Deus, Pater summe fidelium, qui promissionibus tuae filios diffusa adoptionis gratia in toto terrarum orbe multiplicas, et per paschale sacramentum Abraham puerum tuum universarum, sicut iurasti, gentium efficis patrem, da populis tuis digne ad gratiam tuae vocationis intrare.*

Cantemus Domino³¹⁹III. After the reading of Exodus 14:15—15:1

Cantemus Domino:

*glorioso enim honorificatus est:
equum et ascensorem
proiecit in mare:
adiutor et protector
factus est mihi in salutem.*

Let us sing unto the Lord,
so great is he and so glorious;
horse and rider
hurled into the sea!
He has become my helper and
protector, my salvation.

V. *Hic Deus meus,
et honorabo eum:
Deus patris mei
et exaltabo eum.*

This is my God
and I shall praise him,
my father's God and
I shall exalt him.

V. *Dominus conterens bella:
Dominus nomen est illi.*

The war-destroying Lord:
Lord is his name (Ex 15:1-2).³²⁰

319. GR, 186.

320. Oration after *Cantemus Domino*

A.

O God, whose ancient miracles,
shine brightly even in our own times,
by the power of your right hand,
you liberated one people from persecution under Pharaoh,
and, by a new birth in water,
deliver all nations from bondage.
Grant that the whole world may become children of Abraham
and so pass over into the full dignity of the Israelites.
Through Christ our Lord.

B.

O God, you have revealed, in the light of the New Testament,
the meaning of the miracles you did in former days,
giving us, in the Red Sea, a symbol of holy Baptism,
and in the people set free from servitude,
a figure of the sacraments of the Christian people.
Grant that all the nations who, by faith,
have succeeded to Israel's heritage,

ancient antiphonaries it follows the same *Alleluia*.³³¹ McKinnon suggests that, in this instance, *Laudate Dominum* functioned as the concluding alleluia response.³³²

Laudate dominum formed a fitting conclusion to the presumably ancient alleluia-psalm of the Easter vigil Mass, *Confitemini quoniam bonus*; *Laudate dominum*, Latin for the Hebrew *alleluia*, could stand in for the alleluia response otherwise missing from the end of Psalm 117. The tract *Laudate dominum* . . . is a complete psalm, even if a short one, the only such text in the entire Roman Mass Proper. . . . The joyful nature of *Laudate dominum*'s text (and its quality as a synonym for *alleluia*) makes it explicitly appropriate for the Easter Vigil.³³³

The fourth reading marks a transition from the books of the Pentateuch to those of the prophets. Now the image of the Church as the new Jerusalem, as Christ's cherished bride and as the mother of the faithful comes more clearly into focus.³³⁴ As, listening and singing, she moves towards the climax of the Paschal *actio*, the Church's mysterious eschatological identity is revealed to her. "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb" (Rev 21:9). Praise is her response.

331. See Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 98-99.

332. See McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 272.

333. Ibid., *The Advent Project*, 290.

334. Cf. Rev 21:2-3; 9-21.

There is praise in hymns and wonderful imagery for the election of Israel, for its later return, its new life, and final glory after long faithlessness and terrible punishments. The inward eye which has been prepared by images just seen, easily looks through the prophetic veils to the reality of the New Testament.³³⁵

The invitation to praise is universal: *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes et collaudate eum omnes populi.* The voice of one nation, the tongue of one people, is insufficient for the praise of “the God of the whole earth” (Is 54:5) who, already revealed in the first and third readings (Gn 1:1—2:22 and Ex 14:14—15:1) as Creator and Redeemer, is here revealed as Bridegroom.³³⁶ “For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer” (Is 54:5).

The praise of the Church in *Laudate Dominum* is motivated by her experience of the Bridegroom’s compassionate love. *Quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia eius* echoes the promise, “with everlasting love I will have compassion on you, says the Lord, your Redeemer” (Is 54:8). The melody soars to its highest notes on *eius*, emphasizing that abiding mercy belongs to the Lord and to no other. The eighth mode tract melody, while formulaic in construction, delivers the text with expressive fluidity.

335. A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 169.

336. This is an essential element of this final baptismal catechesis. Baptism is an initiation into the nuptial bond uniting the Church to Christ. The nuptial mysticism of the Fathers right up to Saint Bernard is essentially sacramental, rooted in Baptism and consummated in the Eucharist.

The *veritas* of *et veritas Domini manet* means steadfast loyalty which, in this liturgical context, resonates as conjugal fidelity.³³⁷ The marriage covenant is inviolable and indestructible, “for the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you . . . says the Lord who has compassion on you” (Is 54:10). The final phrase *in aeternum* gives the chant its eschatological cast. The “wife forsaken and grieved in spirit” (Is 54:6) knows that her destiny is “the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal” (Rev 21:11).

337. The verb *spondidisti* in the oration sustains the nuptial theme. *Omnipotens, sempiterne Deus, multiplica in honorem nominis tui quod patrum fidei spondidisti, et promissionis filios sacra adoptione dilata, ut quod priores sancti non dubitaverunt futurum, Ecclesia tam magna ex parte iam cognoscat impletum.*

Vinea facta est³³⁸V. After the reading of Isaiah 55:1-11

*Vinea facta est dilecta
in cornu,
in loco uberi.*

My beloved had a vineyard
in a corner of his ground,
in a fruitful spot.

*V. Et maceriam circumdedit
et circumfodit:
et plantavit vineam Sorec,
et aedificavit turrim
in medio eius.*

Around it he built a stone wall,
around it dug a trench:
and he planted a vine of Sorec,
and built a tower in the midst
thereof.

*V. Et torcular fodit in ea:
vinea enim Domini Sabaoth,
domus Israel est.*

And therein hewed a winepress:
for the vineyard of the Lord of hosts
is the house of Israel (Is 5:1-2. 7).³³⁹

In the Old Gelasian Sacramentary, *Vinea facta est* is linked to the reading of Isaiah 4:1-6 and to the oration *Deus qui nos*.³⁴⁰ Like *Cantemus*, *Vinea facta est* is common to the six most ancient Roman antiphonaries.³⁴¹ In its original

338. GR, 188.

339. Oration after *Vinea facta est*

Almighty and eternal God,
only hope of the world,
by the teaching of the prophets
you shed light upon the mysteries of this present season;
Graciously increase the devotion of your people,
since in none of the faithful can any virtues grow
except by your inspiration.
Through Christ our Lord.

340. Which oration in the present MR follows (*ad libitum*) the seventh reading. See MR, 360.

287. Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 96-97.

setting it followed directly upon the reading as the sung continuation of the text. In the present reformed liturgy, *Vinea facta est* cannot be treated as part of the reading (Is 55:1-11) that precedes it; rather, it functions as a response.

Vinea facta est continues the nuptial imagery of the fourth reading and canticle. The vineyard itself is a symbol of love; “My beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms in the vineyards of Engedi. . . . the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away” (Ct 1:14; 2:13). And again, the vineyard is the symbol of the bride’s virginity kept for her beloved; “My vineyard, my very own, is for myself” (Ct 8:12). Finally, the vineyard is the place where love is exchanged; “I am my beloved’s and his desire is for me. . . . Let us go out early to the vineyards, and see whether the grape blossoms have opened. . . . There I will give you my love” (Ct 7:10-12).³⁴²

The beloved is the husband encountered in Isaiah 54:5; the vine is the people chosen by God to “bear much fruit” (Jn 15:8). “A pleasant vineyard, sing of it! I, the Lord, am its keeper; every moment I water it. Lest any one harm it, I guard it night and day” (Is 27:2-3). The attachment of the Lord to

342. “The Paschal night is in a very special sense the Church’s bridal feast. All the bridal and marriage images which have accompanied us full of promise since Epiphany find their completion today. . . . It is night; the bridegroom is here. He comes to the house of his betrothed, and he finds her watching. She has not slept all the while he was out in the tomb. Now he has come back, alive. His locks stream the dew of the night. . . . Until now she has only seen him through the window and blinds of the prophets’ dark sayings and images. Now he has walked in from the night’s dark pass, and overpowered every image and every prophecy with the glory of his resurrection.” A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 178-179.

his vineyard is like that of Naboth the Jesreelite who would not sell, nor exchange, nor give away his vineyard to Ahab (cf. I K 21:1-14). Naboth, put to death for his cherished vineyard, is a figure of crucified love. "Christ, loved the Church and gave himself up for her" (Eph 5:25)

Et plantavit vineam Sorec, et aedificavit turrim in medio eius, et torcular fodit in ea.

The tower evokes the Church, the winepress evokes the sufferings of the Passion and Cross. The grapes of Sorec,³⁴³ reknowned for their blood red color, image the Blood of Christ. "The trampler of the vintage is at the same time the fruit which is to be broken."³⁴⁴ The key to the multivalent symbolism of the text lies in the mystery of the Eucharist. "As the wine is found in the cluster" (Is 65:8), so is the life of Christ found in the Church, and this by participation in the Eucharist. *Vinea facta est* sings a profound mystery: Christ and the Church, united as one flesh (cf. Eph 5:31-32), according to the words of Jesus, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser" (Jn 15:1).

343. Sorec grapes, red in color are so-called because they are native to the valley of Sorec, west of Jerusalem.

344. A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 75.

Sacramental symbolism links *Vinea facta est* to the reading.³⁴⁵

Contextualized by the paschal liturgy, the cry, “Come to the waters” (Is 55:1) is a ringing invitation to the font of Baptism, while verses 1-3 are dense with eucharistic imagery.

The last verses of the reading (Is 55:10-11) mesh with the intonation of the *canticum*.³⁴⁶ The word that goes forth from the mouth of the Lord is Christ, the Word proceeding from the Father, and sent into the vineyard. The vineyard of the beloved is *in loco uberi*, in a fruitful spot (Is 5:1). From the Cross and the tomb he does not return to the Father empty (cf. Is 55:11). Rather, the risen Christ ascends to the Father having accomplished that which the Father purposed in the *oikonomia*, having prospered in the thing for which he was sent (cf. Is 55:11). United to Christ and made fruitful by the *sacra menta paschalia*, the Church rises with him, and with him ascends to the Father.³⁴⁷

345. “A strict exegesis would doubtless not justify seeing in this passage any allusion to the sacraments. Christian tradition, however, and the insertion of the reading into this particular liturgical celebration require the presence of such a meaning.” Adrien Nocent, *The Liturgical Year*, vol. 3, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1977), 120.

346. The oration confesses that the *mysteria* celebrated in the Paschal Vigil are already made known in the preaching of the prophets. The fifth reading and *Vinea facta est* are illustrations of this. “Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, spes unica mundi, qui prophetarum tuorum praetoronto praesentium temporum declarasti mysteria, auge populi tui vota placatus, qui in nullo fidelium nisi ex tua inspiratione proveniunt quarumlibet incrementa virtutum.”

347. This is the meaning of one of the two options given for the second reading at the Mass on Easter Day, Col 3:1-4.

*Attende caelum*³⁴⁸VI. After the reading of Baruch 3:9-15. 32—4:4

*Attende caelum,
et loquar:
et audiat terra verba
ex ore meo.*

Give ear, O heavens,
and I shall speak;
and let earth heed the words of
my mouth.

V. *Expectetur sicut pluvia
eloquium meum:
et descendant sicut ros verba mea,
sicut imber super gramina.*

Let my discourse fall like rain,
my words drop down like dew,
like gentle rain upon
grassy shoots,

V. *Et sicut nix super fenum:
quia nomen Domini
invocabo.*

And like snow upon hay:
For I will call upon the name of
the Lord.

V. *Date magnitudinem Deo nostro:
Deus, vera opera eius,
et omnes viae eius iudicia.*

O give greatness to our God,
God true in all his works,
and all his ways are righteousness.

V. *Deus fidelis in quo non est
iniquitas:
iustus et sanctus Dominus.*

Faithful is God in whom there is no
wrong,
just and holy is the Lord
(Dt 32:1-4).³⁴⁹

348. GR, 189.

349. Collect after *Attende caelum*

O God, you give growth to your Church
by always calling the nations;
Mercifully grant that
those whom you have washed in the water of Baptism
may be held safe in your abiding protection.
Through Christ our Lord.

In the Old Gelasian Sacramentary, *Attende caelum* is linked to the reading of Deuteronomy 31 and to the collect, *Deus celsitudo humilium*.³⁵⁰ The three texts formed an inseparable unit until the Missal and lectionary of 1970. The reading and the collect disappeared, leaving behind *Attende caelum* in the *Graduale Romanum* where it was repositioned after the sixth reading (Bar 3:9-15. 32—4:4).³⁵¹

Attende caelum . . . et audiat terra. There is a cosmology of salvation inherent in the liturgical use of certain texts. Moses begins his canticle by calling upon the heavens to give ear and the earth to be attentive. In the first reading of the Vigil, God called the firmament heaven and the dry land earth (Gn 1:8. 10), thus declaring his lordship over the entire cosmos. Baruch says:

He who prepared the earth for all time filled it with four-footed creatures; he who sends forth the light, and it goes, called it, and it obeyed him in fear; the stars shone in their watches, and were glad; he called them, and they said, “Here we are!” They shone with gladness for him who made them. This is our God; no other can be compared to him (Bar 3:32b-35).

350. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 364.

351. The disappearance of the collect of the Old Gelasian is regrettable, especially because of its theology of liturgical chant. *Deus, celsitudo humilium, et fortitudo rectorum, qui per sanctum Moysen puerum tuum, ita erudire populum tuum sacri carminis tui decantantione voluisti, ut illa legis iteratio fieret etiam nostra directio, etc.* Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 364. (God, heaven of the humble and strength of the upright, who willed through your holy servant Moses to instruct your people in the chanting of your sacred song, so that their repetition of your law might be direction unto us, etc.)

The *oikonomia* does not minimize creation; the heavens and the earth are the sacrament of their Creator and the milieu of the redemptive incarnation. The birth of Christ is announced by the angelic song, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased” (Lk 2:14). At the death of Christ there was “darkness over all the land” (Mt 27:45); “the earth shook and the rocks were split” (Mt 27:51). At his resurrection “there was a great earthquake” (Mt 28:2); at his ascension he is “carried up into heaven” (Lk 24:51). He will come again “on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Mt 24:30) and until that time, “the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God” (Rom 8:19).

Attende caelum interacts with the text of the reading to disclose that the mystery of Christ pervades the heavens and the earth, making flint and fire, wax and flame, water and oil, bread and wine integral to the *actio* that makes present the Paschal Mystery. He “appeared upon earth and lived among men” (Bar 3:37). This is the *gnosis* of the liturgy.

In the canticle of Moses, the Church hears already the penetrating and unmistakable voice of Christ, his discourse dropping like dew, like gentle rain upon the grass, like snow upon the hay (Dt 32:1-4) in the final moments of the

great pre-baptismal catechesis.³⁵² “Let us press on to know the Lord; his going forth is sure as the dawn; he will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth” (Hos 6:3). The musical treatment of the phrases, *verba ex ore meo, eloquium meum*, and *verba mea* calls forth the response of faith from both catechumens and faithful: “You have the *words* of eternal life” (Jn 6:68). The Christological hermeneutic of *Attende caelum*, suggested by the liturgy, orients the last sentence of the reading — “Happy are we, O Israel, for we know what is pleasing to God” (Bar 4:4) — towards its fulfillment: “These things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves” (Jn 17:13).

Sicut cervus³⁵³

VII. After the reading of Ezekiel 36:16-28

*Sicut cervus desiderat
ad fontes aquarum:
ita desiderat anima mea
ad te, Deus.*

As a deer pants after
running water,
even so does my soul pant after
you, O God.

*V. Sitivit anima mea
ad Deum vivum:
quando veniam,
et apparebo
ante faciem Dei mei?*

My soul is athirst
for the living God;
when shall I come
and appear before the face
of my God?

352. The oration is a prayer for the catechumens. *Deus, qui Ecclesiam tuam semper gentium vocatione multiplicas, concede propitius, ut, quos aqua baptismatis abluis, continua protectione tuearis.*

353. GR, I 90.

V. *Fuerunt mihi lacrimae meae
panes die ac nocte,
dum dicitur mihi
per singulos dies:
Ubi est Deus tuus?*

For bread I have nought but tears
by day and by night,
while it is said to me
each day:
Where is your God (Ps 41:1-3)?³⁵⁴

Sicut cervus appears in the Old Gelasian Sacramentary after the oration of the tenth and last reading, and before the blessing of the font.³⁵⁵ Sung during the descent to the font,³⁵⁶ it was followed by a psalmic oration that disclosed its meaning within the liturgical context of the Paschal Vigil:

354. Oration after *Sicut cervus*

A.

O God, unchangeable power and eternal light,
mercifully look down on the sacrament of the whole Church;
Carry out the work of man's salvation
in the tranquillity of your eternal plan,
that all the world may experience and see
that which was cast down raised up,
that which was old made new,
and all things brought to wholeness
by Christ in whom was their beginning,
He lives and reigns forever and ever.

B.

O God, who in the pages of both Testaments,
teach us to celebrate the Paschal Mystery,
grant us intelligence of your mercy,
so that the experience of the present rites
may render steadfast our desire for the things to come.
Through Christ our Lord.

355. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II. vol. 1, 365.

356. Several of the *Ordines Romani* and the Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century speaking of "descending" to the font. E.g., see Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 516, 540, 599. Schuster explains that "the word "descend" is consecrated by Roman tradition . . . since the papal baptistery of the Via Salaria, and perhaps also that of the Vatican, was a good deal below the level of the ground." *The Sacramentary*, vol. 2, 303.

*Omnipotens, sempiterne Deus,
respice propitius ad devotionem
populi renascentis,
qui sicut cervus aquarum
expectat fontem;
et concede propitius, ut
fidei ipsius sitis, baptismatis mysterio
animam corpusque sanctificet.*³⁵⁷

Almighty, everlasting God,
look graciously upon the devotion
of a people being reborn.
who, pant like the deer after
the fountain of your waters;
and mercifully grant that
the thirst of their faith may, by the
mystery of Baptism, sanctify their
souls and bodies.

The eighth century Gregorian Sacramentary of Cambrai gives another psalmic oration in the same place. Unlike that of the Old Gelasian which focuses specifically on the catechumens about to be baptized, the oration of the *Cameracense* is more general in its formulation, praying for all who keep the paschal feasts.

*Concede, quaesumus,
omnipotens Deus,
ut qui festa paschalia agimus,
caelestibus desideriis accensi
fontem vitae sitiamus.*³⁵⁸

Grant, we beseech you,
almighty God,
that, burning with heavenly desires,
we who enact the paschal feasts
may thirst for the wellspring of life

While not those of the current *Missale Romanum*, these orations witness nonetheless to the ancient liturgical hermeneutic of Psalm 41 within the Paschal Vigil. *Sicut cervus* is found in the eighth century *Modoetiensis* and in the other ancient Roman antiphonaries;³⁵⁹ in the 1955 reform of Holy Week it

357. Ibid.

358. Ibid., 375.

359. Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum sextuplex*, 98-99.

follows the blessing of the font.³⁶⁰ In the present reformed liturgy *Sicut cervus* follows the seventh reading; it is no longer a processional chant, but a response to Ezekiel 36:16-28.

Ezekiel announces God's intention to vindicate his own holiness, by sanctifying his people dispersed among the nations. The holiness of the people whom God claims as his own is the sign and the effect of his own transcendent holiness. "In us, says Sirach, thou hast been sanctified before them" (Sir 36:4). Holiness is, in the prophetic tradition, closely associated with freedom from idolatry and purity of heart; "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you" (Ez 36:25). In the context of the Paschal Vigil, the divine promises of a new heart, a new spirit, a heart of flesh and finally, of God's own Spirit indwelling the people chosen to be his own (Ez 36:26-27), all point to the mystery of holy Baptism and to the Church, the Bride of Christ, "cleansed by the washing of water with the word" (Eph 5:26).

Sicut cervus interacts with the reading by providing the catechumens with words for their descent into the waters of Baptism, according to the text: "Take with you words and return to the Lord; say to him, 'Take away all iniquity; accept that which is good and we will render the fruit of our lips'" (Hos 14:2).

360. *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae Instauratus* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1956), 131.

The liturgy invites the catechumens to see themselves in the image of the deer panting after running streams (Ps 41:1), and to go to the waters of Baptism carried forward by the impetus of an intense spiritual desire.

Quando veniam, et apparebo ante faciem Dei? Participation in the Eucharist is not dissociated from Baptism.³⁶¹ In this liturgical context, the psalmist's longing for the Temple becomes a longing for the Church and for the Eucharist in which the Church, gathered into one by the Holy Spirit appears with Christ before the Father's face. The Eucharistic Prayers describe participation in the oblation in terms of "standing around the altar,"³⁶² and "being made worthy to stand in God's presence."³⁶³

The third and final verse of *Sicut cervus* is a glance backward over the struggles of the Lenten observance, the catechumenate and the paschal fast. "We have arrived in the haven of life, whither we have come" from fasting, temptation and tears.³⁶⁴ The catechumens are reminded that Baptism effects a

361. "The Church comes up from the baptismal font to the altar of offering. Every alliance is given force by sacrifice; the alliance made in this night would not be complete, would not be sacred and sealed without the blood of sacrifice. . . . Now he invites us newly-cleansed to his table and the meal begins, by which he has willed to proclaim his death and resurrection, to give his Pasch mystical presence." A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 184-186.

362. ". . . et omnium circumstantium." PE I, MR, 448.

363. ". . . gratias agentes quia nos dignos habuisti astare coram te." PE II, MR, 458. See also PE III, MR, 464.

364. A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 12.

separation from the world. “Do not wonder, brethren, that the world hates you” (1 Jn 3:13). To the taunting question, *Ubi est Deus tuus?* the newly baptized will reply, “Without seeing him we love him, we believe in him, and rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy” (cf. 1 P 1:8). Christ will have made himself known to them, face to face, in the celebration of the mysteries.³⁶⁵

In the present Missal, a choice of three orations follows *Sicut cervus*. The second of these is taken from the Old Gelasian Sacramentary where it followed the sixth reading (Ez 37).³⁶⁶

O God, who in the pages of both Testaments,
teach us to celebrate the Paschal Mystery,
grant us intelligence of your mercy,
so that the experience of the present rites
may render steadfast our desire for the things to
come.³⁶⁷

This oration bespeaks the liturgical hermeneutic of the readings and *cantica* that is operative throughout the Liturgy of the Word of the Paschal Vigil. It may be called a key to liturgical theology.

365. According to the words of Saint Ambrose cited above in Chapter Two: “*Facie ad faciem te mihi, Christe, demonstrasti; in tuis te invenio sacramentis.*” *Apologia David* XII, 58.

366. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 364.

367. “Deus, qui nos ad celebrandum paschale sacramentum utriusque Testamenti paginis instruis, da nobis intellegere misericordiam tuam, ut ex perceptione praesentium munera sit expectatio futurorum.” MR, 360.

The collect after *Sicut cervus* is followed by the Gloria, solemnly intoned by the bishop or priest celebrant. The church bells are rung according to custom. Then the collect is sung.³⁶⁸ The reading from the Apostle Paul ensues.³⁶⁹

*Alleluia. Confitemini*³⁷⁰

VIII. After the reading of Romans 6:3-11

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia

V. *Confitemini Domino quoniam bonus: quoniam in saeculum misericordia eius.*
117:1).

Confess unto the Lord
for he is good;
unto all ages is his mercy (Ps

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

The *Alleluia* of the Paschal Vigil, with its verse *Confitemini*, is found in the *Modoetensis* and in the other ancient Roman antiphonaries.³⁷¹ Its neums are in

368. Collect

O God, you have illuminated this most sacred night
by the glory of the resurrection of the Lord;
Stir up the spirit of adoption in your Church,
that, renewed in mind and body
we may offer you a worship that is pure.
Through our Lord.

369. *Ceremonial of Bishops*, 117.

370. GR, 191.

371. See Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 98-99.

the ninth century manuscripts of Laon and Saint-Gall.³⁷² Hucke remarks that the *Alleluia Confitemini* holds a unique place in the Gregorian repertoire;³⁷³ it is the only *Alleluia* of the liturgical the intonation of which is entrusted to the celebrant, probably because melodically it is the simplest of all, and has no *iubilus*.³⁷⁴ It is the only *Alleluia* intoned three times, raising the pitch at each intonation. McKinnon observes:

The simple melody, so unlike the typical alleluia of the Mass with its extended jubilus, is certainly another indication of the ancient character of this chant. I see no reason, in fact, to deny that it is very similar in its early medieval form to what might have been sung in the fourth century. Certainly it would seem very strange indeed for the Roman singers to deliberately fashion an eccentrically simple tune for this solemn occasion after the typical melismatic alleluia had become the norm for all other festivals, minor and major.³⁷⁵

The verse *Confitemini* is musically unrelated to the *Alleluia* melody and, in all probability, is not the original verse, although the two already form a unit in

372. See *Graduale Triplex*, 191.

373. H. Hucke, “Cantus Gregorianus” in Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 2, 950. The twelfth century *Pontificale Romanum* has: “Post orationem sequitur epistola, post epistolam Alleluia, quod pro recenti sui memoria prius a sacerdote, qui missam celebrat, nobiliter decantatur.” Michel Andrieu, *Le Pontifical romain au Moyen Âge*, t. 1 (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1938), 248.

374. The *iubilus* is a long, wordless vocalization of the final syllable.

375. McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 272.

the eighth century.³⁷⁶ It is drawn from Psalm 117, the Paschal psalm *par excellence* as attested in the Scriptures.³⁷⁷

The *Alleluia* is followed by the solemn proclamation of the Gospel of the Resurrection.³⁷⁸ Schuster says that in Rome until the fourth century the *Alleluia* came after the Gospel, and that Saint Gregory placed it after the Epistle in order to allow his preaching on the Gospel text to follow immediately upon its liturgical proclamation.³⁷⁹

Be this as it may, it is certain that the *Alleluia* which now is solemnly intoned by the priest after the Epistle would—as being more logical and natural—be more appropriately placed after the Gospel narrative of the resurrection of the Lord. This was probably its original and special place in the solemn Easter Vigil.³⁸⁰

376. “We may not be sure of the precise nature of the early Christian arrangement, but that it must have consisted in the responsorial psalm *Confitemini*, followed by the psalm *Laudate* sung *in directum*, is strongly suggested by the seventh-century format — the ancient alleluia melody, the schola-style verse *Confitemini*, and the concluding schola-style tract *Laudate* serving as alleluia response. The three chants are in the same G-mode and are sung in succession without interruption.” McKinnon, *Ibid.*, 272. In the *Modoetensis* and the other five ancient antiphonaries, *Confitemini* is also found at the Major Litanies and on the Vigil of Pentecost. See Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*. 112-113, 124-125.

377. “Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the scriptures: The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?’” (Mt 22:42). And again, Saint Peter uses the same verse in reference to the Paschal Mystery: “To you therefore who believe, he is precious, but for those who do not believe, ‘The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner’” (1 P 2:7).

378. In Year A, Mt 28:1-10; in Year B, Mk 16:1-7; in Year C, Mk 16:1-7.

379. Schuster, *The Sacramentary*, vol. 2, 309.

380. *Ibid.*

The intonation of the Paschal Vigil *Alleluia* signals its return to the liturgy after a long silence, having last been sung with the *Benedicamus Domino* at Vespers of the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday.³⁸¹ The custom of bidding farewell to the *Alleluia* is expressed in an antiphon *ad Crucem* of the Ambrosian liturgy:

Alleluia, enclose and seal up this word, alleluia; let it remain in the secret of your heart, alleluia, until the appointed time; you shall say it with great joy when that day comes, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.³⁸²

The ritual return of the *Alleluia* at the Paschal Vigil has long been solemnized; in the present reformed liturgy, the *Ceremonial of Bishops* gives the following rubrics:

One of the deacons or the reader goes to the bishop and says to him, *Most Reverend Father, I bring you a message of great joy, the message of Alleluia.*

After this greeting . . . all rise. Standing and without miter, the bishop solemnly intones the *Alleluia*, assisted if necessary by one of the deacons or concelebrants. He sings it three times, a little higher each time. In the same key as the bishop, all present repeat the *Alleluia* each time.³⁸³

381. “The suppression of the *Alleluia* during Lent and its constant use during Paschaltide date from very far back. Saint Augustine, the Sixth Council of Toledo, and the Rule of Saint Benedict in the sixth century, all allude to it.” Cabrol, *Liturgical Prayer*, 46.

382. Ibid.

383. *Ceremonial of Bishops*, 117.

The melody of the *Alleluia* is disarmingly simple, yet ample and majestic at the same time. It climbs cautiously from *mi* to *sol* to *si*, only to fall back to *sol*, until finally it leaps to an exultant *do* before coming to rest in a kind of joyful repose on the final *sol*. No one has described better than Dame Aemiliana Löhr the mystery of the Paschal *Alleluia*.

And here now when everything we have seen and felt receives its last measure of reality in the sacrifice, here is time and place for the true Paschal hymn. All the chant of the past days, all the overpowering force of the Night Offices dissolve into the one first note of joy which nothing and no one can imitate; it must be heard and where possible sung with one's own voice if one is to know fully what resurrection is: the *alleluia* of Easter night, the first after long weeks of fasting and still communion, after the days of mystical suffering and death with the Lord. Yet we are not to look for a loud shout of joy here; that is not the spirit of Christian Easter. This *alleluia* rises with a slow movement; it rises above the grave of Adam, and it has the blood of Christ on its wings. It is the marriage song of the Paschal night, which will grow slowly bright when it meets the day of resurrection. But these are only words. The first *alleluia* of the Paschal night is a mystery, unutterable like all mysteries.³⁸⁴

384. A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 189.

The Liturgy of Baptism

When the sacrament of Baptism is celebrated, the catechumens are called forward after the homily and, after an invitation to prayer, the Litany of the Saints is sung in procession to the baptistery.³⁸⁵ Baptism follows the solemn blessing of the font.³⁸⁶ The neophytes, godparents and ministers next return to the sanctuary for the sacrament of Chrismation. Then, standing and holding lighted candles, the faithful renew their baptismal promises. While the bishop or presiding priest sprinkles the faithful with the blessed water, the antiphon *Vidi aquam* is sung.³⁸⁷

The Processional Antiphon, *Vidi aquam*³⁸⁸

*Vidi aquam
egredientem de templo,
a latere dextro, alleluia:
et omnes ad quos
pervenit aqua ista,
salvi facti sunt,
et dicent, alleluia, alleluia.*

I saw water
coming forth from the Temple
at the right side, alleluia;
and all to whom
that water came
were saved
and they shall say, alleluia, alleluia
(cf. Ez 47: 1, 9).

385. If Baptism is celebrated in the sanctuary, the Litany of the Saints is sung while the catechumens and their godparents assemble around the font.

386. If the sacraments of Baptism and Chrismation are not celebrated, water is blessed and the renewal of baptismal promises and sprinkling follow immediately. During the sprinkling of the faithful *Vidi aquam* is sung.

387. See MR, 280-285.

388. GR, 708.

Vidi aquam is found in the ninth century Roman antiphonary of Compiègne in the *Ordo ad Vespertas* of Easter day.³⁸⁹ Although later used for the Sunday rite of aspersion with holy water in Paschaltide, its original context is the solemn celebration of Paschal Vespers, observed in Rome until the end of the thirteenth century.³⁹⁰

The *Compendiensis* gives the complete *ordo* of Paschal Vespers as enacted at the Lateran basilica.³⁹¹ The clergy assembled beneath the great triumphal cross of the nave; to the chant of the *Kyrie eleison*, the procession moved to the altar for the psalmody. After the *Magnificat* and an oration, clergy and white-robed neophytes processed to the baptistery singing the antiphon *In die resurrectionis*, Psalm 112, two verses of Psalm 92 in Greek, and a second *Magnificat*. A collect

389. Hesbert, *Corpus Antiphonalium Officii*, vol. 1, 184.

390. Righetti says that Paschal Vespers, called *gloriosum officium in Ecclesia Romana* by Amalarius, and also known as Baptismal Vespers, were celebrated in Germany following the ancient rite until the end of the nineteenth century. Righetti, *Storia liturgica*, vol. 2 (Milano: Editrice Ancora, 1969), 286, footnote 49.

The restoration of Baptismal Vespers is recommended in the *Institutio Generalis Liturgiae Horarum*, art. 213: “*Diligentissime, ubi viget, servetur particularis traditio celebrandi, die Paschae, eas Vespertas baptismales, in quibus, dum cantantur psalmi, fit processio ad fontes.*” The *Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts*, art. 97 reiterates the same point.

391. The *Compendiensis* is a ms. of the Roman *cursus*. Of the six monastic mss. edited by Hesbert, only the eleventh century *Silensis* gives the rite of Paschal Vespers, including the station at the font. In the twelfth century *Sandionysianus*, *Vidi Aquam* is given *ad aquam benedictionem*; and in the twelfth century *Fossatensis*, *ad processionem*. Its present use at Mass on the Sundays of Paschaltide derives then, not from the Cathedral *ordo*, but from the dominical blessing of water and procession of the monastic *ordo*.

was said at the baptistery.³⁹² Having made the visit to the font, the whole cortege moved to the oratory of Saint Andrew *ad crucem*, the site of Chrismation the previous night, singing the antiphon *Vidi aquam*. Following Psalm 113, another *Magnificat* and the final oration,³⁹³ the Pope gave the dismissal.³⁹⁴

The interest of this historical contextualization of *Vidi aquam* is that it suggests the original theological significance of the text, and sheds some light on the meaning of its present use within the Paschal Vigil. *Vidi aquam* is sung following the visit to the font, thereby linking three symbols: the Temple (cf. Ez 47:1; Mt 27:51; Mk 15:38), the side of Christ opened by the lance (Jn 19:34), and the font of Baptism.

Ezekiel, in his mystical rapture, sees the Temple as as the wellspring of an immense river irrigating the whole country and making stagnant waters fresh.

Behold, water was issuing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east . . . and it was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be passed through. . . . Wherever the river goes every living creature which swarms will live, and there will be very many fish . . . its fish will be of very many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea. . . . And on the banks, on

392. See the orations *ad fontes* of the *Paduensis. Liber Sacramentorum anni circuli der römischen Kirche*, ed. Mohlberg and Baumstark (Münster, 1927), 26-28.

393. *Ad sanctum Andream*, ibid.

394. Summarized from the *Compendiensis*, Hesbert, *Corpus Antiphonalium Officii*, vol. 1, 180-184. See also the *ordo* of Paschal Vespers in Cyrille Vogel, ed., *Pontificale Romano-Germanicum*, v. 2 (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1963), 116-117.

both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. The fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing (Ez 47:1. 5. 9-10. 12).

The Temple is the abode of the Glory of God (Ez 43:1-12). It is the source of a river, teeming with fish, and on both sides of its banks grow fruit-bearing trees because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. The text is rich in typological images.

The glorious body of the crucified and risen Christ is the new and indestructible temple of which he himself said, “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up” (Jn 2:19). At the death of Christ, the veil of the Temple was “torn in two from top to bottom” (Mt 27:51). Saint John, by recounting how the side of Jesus was pierced by the soldier’s lance, translates the same mystery. Out of the pierced heart of Jesus flows blood and water (Jn 19:34), recalling the water from the rock struck by the rod of Moses in the desert (Num 20:2-13), the fountains of salvation prophesied by Isaiah (Is 12:3), and the great river of Ezekiel’s vision.

Exemplifying how one liturgical text draws out the theological meaning of another, the prayer for the blessing of the water, that precedes *Vidi aquam*, identifies the water flowing from the side of Christ with the water of

Baptism.³⁹⁵ According to Tertullian, this is the water teeming with little fish, the newly baptized: “But we, little fish, who hold our name from our ichthus Jesus Christ, we are born in water, and it is only by remaining there that we are saved.”³⁹⁶ The fruit-bearing trees on both sides of the river also represent the newly-baptized “because the water for them flows from the sanctuary” (Ez 47:12) which is Christ. “Rooted and grounded in love” (Eph 3:17), the catechumens have at last become “like a tree planted by streams of water, that yields its fruit in due season” (Ps 1:3).³⁹⁷

395. The theological meaning of *Vidi aquam* cannot be appreciated apart from the prayer for the blessing of the font (MR, 283). Here is the most pertinent passage :

*Deus, cuius Filius,
in aqua Iordanis a Ioanne baptizatus,
Sancto Spiritu est inunctus,
et, in cruce pendens,
una cum sanguine aquam de latero
suo produxit,
ac, post resurrectionem suam,
discipulis iussit:
“Ite, docete omnes gentes,
baptizantes eos
in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti”;
respice in faciem Ecclesiae tuae
eique dignare fontem baptismatis aperire.*

God, whose Son, baptized in the water of the Jordan by John, was anointed with the Holy Spirit, and who, hanging on the Cross, gave forth water as well as blood from his side, and who, after his resurrection, bade his disciples, “Go, teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,” look upon the face of your Church and be pleased to open for her the font of Baptism.

396. “*Sed nos pisciculi secundum υχθυν nostrum Iesum Christum in aqua nascimur nec aliter quam in aqua permanendo salvi sumus.*” Tertullien, *Traité du Baptême*, S. C., 35, ed. R. F. Refoulé (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1952), 65.

397. The connection is with the communion antiphon of Ash Wednesday, the text of which is a pledge to the catechumens of the fruitful grace of Baptism: “*Qui meditabitur in lege Domini die ac nocte, dabit fructum suum in tempore suo*” GR, 67.

Vidi aquam illustrates the kind of biblical typology that is the warp and woof of liturgical theology.³⁹⁸ The salvific meaning of Old Testament events and images is unveiled by the Paschal Mystery of Christ; the Mystery, in turn, is made efficaciously present by the liturgy.³⁹⁹ Thus, the divinely intended meaning of the water flowing from the right side of the Temple (Ez 47:1) is revealed by the water flowing from the side of Christ (Jn 19:34); the divine efficacy (or *virtus*) of this water is made present by the water of Baptism.

The interval sol—do over *salvi* is bright and bold: a clear confession of salvation. The melody then climbs to its summit over *facti sunt*; salvation has been wrought by God through Christ.

For the singing of *Vidi aquam* to function theologically within the liturgy, it must be related both to the crucified and risen Christ who alone fulfills it, and to the sacramental action of Christ, working by the Holy Spirit, in the

398. “Allegory has to do with the meaning of a text, whereas typology has to do with the realization or fulfillment of a saving event.” Enrico Mazza, *Mystagogy*, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1989), 11.

399. The principle is articulated by Saint Paul. Only through Christ is the veil covering Moses and the prophets lifted. “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Cor 3:17). The Church, in her liturgy, reads and sings the Scriptures of the Old Testament by the light of the Paschal candle, i.e. in the radiance of the risen Christ. In the Word she beholds the glory of the Lord, and by means of the *sacramenta* — the *actio Christi* accomplished in the Holy Spirit for her — she is changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another. In the liturgy the glorification of the Father and the glorification of the total Christ, head and members, coincide, thus fulfilling Christ’s priestly prayer, “Glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee” (Jn 17:1).

Church's *actio*. In this way, the Temple, the pierced side of Christ, and the font of holy Baptism are seen as a single mystery.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Offertory Antiphon *Dextera Domini*

During the procession of the neophytes bearing bread and wine for the Eucharist, the antiphon *Dextera Domini* is sung.⁴⁰⁰

*Dextera Domini fecit virtutem,
dextera Domini
exaltavit me:
non moriar,
sed vivam,
et narrabo opera Domini,
alleluia.*

The right hand of the Lord has acted mightily, the right hand of the Lord has raised me up; I shall not die, but live and I shall tell of the works of the Lord, alleluia (Ps 117:16-17).

The ancient Mass antiphonaries give no *offertorium* for the Mass of the Paschal Vigil,⁴⁰¹ the formulary of the Vigil having been established before the introduction of the *offertorium* to the chants of the Mass.⁴⁰² The Paschal Vigil

400. On the origins of the Offertory Antiphon, see McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 298-304. For a discussion of *Dextera Domini*, see ibid., 313.

401. The *Rhenaugensis* is the exception; it gives *Angelus Domini*. The other mss. give only two pieces of chant, the *Alleluia Confitemini* and the tract, *Laudate Dominum*. Dom Hesbert says that the scribe of the *Rhenaugensis* thought the Paschal Vigil formulary too austere in comparison with the other Masses of the Paschal cycle and decided to add a second Alleluia, an offertory and a communion, all three borrowed from other Paschaltide Masses and from the Office antiphonary. See Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, lxi.

402. Jungmann quotes Saint Augustine (*Retractiones* II, 37) in favor of a somewhat early appearance of the *offertorium*; Brinktrine (*Eph. liturg.*, 40 [1926], 15-20) holds for the eighth century. See Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, v. 2, 27.

Mass had no *offertorium* until the *Ordo cantus missae* of 1972 introduced *Dextera Domini*.

Dextera Domini is found in five of the ancient Mass antiphonaries on the third Sunday *post Theophania*.⁴⁰³ Later it was assigned to Tuesday of the Third Week of Lent, to the Holy Thursday Mass *in cena Domini*, and to the Invention of the Holy Cross on May 3. In the present reformed liturgy, there are no longer any chants drawn from Psalm 117 during Lent. The psalm of Christ's resurrection triumph and joy is intoned only with the *Alleluia Confitemini* at the Paschal Vigil; it is continued in *Dextera Domini* and in the gradual responsory of Easter Day and all of Easter week, *Haec dies*.

In every psalm, our Lord Jesus Christ prophesies and sings, for he, who alone holds "the key of David, opens and no one shall shut, shuts and no one opens" (Rev 3:7). Psalm 117, however, proclaims in an eminent manner the mystery of the Resurrection. . . . Who of

403. Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 34-35. In her commentary on the Third Sunday after Epiphany, Dame Aemiliana Löhr draws attention to the paschal character of *Dextera Domini*. Her text is given here because it illustrates how a particular chant is theologically interpreted according to its liturgical context. The disciple of Odo Casel would rejoice to sing *Dextera Domini* in its present liturgical context at the Paschal Vigil.

"The shining certainty of the Epiphany . . . is a glory that shines through death. Christ is Lord, but through his slave-death on the Cross. This too is a part of the certainty of Epiphany; the certainty that Passion is necessary, and it is expressed today, without diminishing the light in any way. 'God's right hand has exalted me; I shall not die, but live and tell of what the Lord has done.' This is the voice of Christ which we hear in the Offertory; it is the same voice as that of Holy Thursday. There in Christ's mouth it carries all the terrors of the struggle that lies before him as he goes to his death, but the trust as well he has in the powerful right hand of his Father, the sure confidence of victory. . . . The offertory contains the full sacrifice to the Father, till death on the cross, although the hope of life and glory stand behind it. We are brought then, through the Sundays after Epiphany towards the forty days, and the Pasch of Christ." *The Mass Through the Year*, v. 1, 90-91.

us can think of what the Church proclaims, exulting, in this psalm—the Passion of the Lord, his Resurrection and his Ascension—without breaking into acclamations?⁴⁰⁴

Contextualized by the liturgy of the Paschal Vigil and, more specifically, by its position between the Liturgy of Baptism and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, *Dextera Domini* has two principal theological meanings, the first Christological and the second, sacramental. According to the first, it is the risen Christ who sings in praise of the Father, “The right hand of the Lord (my Father) has acted mightily, the right hand of the Lord (my Father) has raised me up; I shall not die, but live, and I shall tell of the works of the Lord (my Father), alleluia.” The text fulfills Psalm 21 which figures so prominently in the Liturgy of the Hours on Good Friday:

*Narrabo nomen tuum
fratribus meis,
in medio ecclesiae laudabo te.
Qui timetis Dominum,
laudate eum . . .
quoniam non sprevit neque
despexit afflictionem
pauperis,
nec avertit faciem suam ab eo
et, cum clamaret ad eum,
exaudiuit.
Apud te laus mea*

I shall tell of your name to my brethren; in the midst of the Church, shall I praise you. You who fear the Lord, praise him . . . for he neither spurned nor despised the affliction of the Poor One nor did he hide his face from him, but when he cried out the Lord heard him. With you is my praise in the

404. Saint Jerome on Psalm 117 in Claude Jean-Nesmy, ed., *La tradition médite le psautier chrétien*, v. 2 (Paris: Editions Téqui, 1974), 646.

*in ecclesia magna.*⁴⁰⁵

great Church (Ps 21:22-23a. 24-25a).

In *Dextera Domini*, the Risen Christ declares the Father's name to those who, in the waters of Baptism, have become "his brethren" (Ps 21:22).⁴⁰⁶ To them has been given the "the spirit of sonship," by which, together with Christ, they cry "Abba! Father!" (cf. Rom 8:15). The *confessio* of the risen Christ takes place *in medio Ecclesiae*, in the very enactment of the liturgy.⁴⁰⁷ Addressing the newly baptized, Christ, the true "Poor One" by reason of his *kenosis*, recounts that the Father neither spurned nor despised him in the sufferings of his Passion and death, but heard him and delivered him out of death.⁴⁰⁸ The last verse reveals that Christ's praise of the Father, in the Church and through her liturgy, is already with the Father.⁴⁰⁹ By confronting *Dextera Domini* with its

405. Latin text of the New Vulgate, *Liturgia Horarum*, v. 2, 377.

406. ". . . that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (Jn 17:3).

407. The expression *in medio* has a particular theological resonance in the liturgy; John uses it to relate the presence of the risen Jesus to his disciples: "*Venit Jesus et stetit in medio*" (Jn 20:19), and, "*Venit Jesus ianuis clausis et stetit in medio*" (Jn 20:26). Matthew uses it to describe the presence of Christ to the praying Church, "*Ubi enim sunt duo vel tres congregati in nomine meo ibi sum in medio eorum*" (Mt 18:20).

408. Cf. also Peter's Christological and Paschal hermeneutic of Psalm 15 in Acts 2:24-28.

409. Cf. the seventh reading of the Vigil, "So his life now is life with God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus" (Rom 6:10), and the second reading of the Mass of Easter Day, "Your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col 3:3).

prophetic antecedent in the Office of Good Friday, the Christological significance of both, as used by the liturgy, is elucidated.

Dextera Domini is no less the chant of the neophytes; it accompanies them as they go in procession with their offerings of bread and wine.⁴¹⁰ Now, buried with Christ by baptism into his death, and raised from the dead with him by the glory of the Father (cf. Rom 6:4), the neophytes discover that all that is sung by Christ to the Father, they too can sing in all truth: *In medio ecclesiae laudabo te* (Ps 21:23).

Dextera Domini can also be sung in another theological register. Just as it is the prayer of Christ (and of Christians) addressed to the Father, so too it is the prayer of the newly baptized addressed to the Christ, the *Kyrios*.⁴¹¹ *Dextera Domini fecit virtutum* refers to the powerful hand of Christ working in the sacraments. “Christ is always present to his Church in her liturgical actions. . . . By his power (*virtute sua*) he is present in the sacraments, so that when another baptizes it is really Christ himself who baptizes.”⁴¹² *Vivam et narrabo opera*

410. To the bread and wine are appropriately added milk and honey, symbols of the *transitus* of Baptism. (See O. Casel, *La Fête de Pâques dans l’Eglise des Pères*, 101). The latter may be blessed for use by the conclusion of the Roman Canon: “Per Christum Dominum nostrum, per quem haec omnia, Domine, semper bona creas, sanctificas, vivificas, benedicis, et praestas nobis.” PE I, MR, 455.

411. This is another example of the multivalence characteristic of the chants of the liturgy.

412. SC 10.

Domini; raised up by Christ, acting in the power of the Holy Spirit, the neophytes are called to exercise the doxological priesthood of their Baptism. “You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 P 1:10).

The second mode melody of *Dextera Domini* ascends powerfully on *fecit virtutem*. *Dextera Domini exaltavit me* is articulated around do in the uppermost range of the piece, recalling, at least theologically, the *exaltavit* of the *Christus factus est. Non moriar* descends on the *climacus* do–si–la while *sed resurget* in the bright interval sol–do, emphasized by the gentle repercussion of the *tristropha* on do. The resurrection motif is carried through in the *torculus resupinus* mi–sol–mi–sol of *vivam*. *Narrabo opera Domini* climbs from re to a peaceful but resolute ending on la, translating into movement and sound the *confessio* of the risen Christ and of risen Christians, in the midst of the Church.

The Communion Antiphon, *Alleluia*⁴¹³

The ancient antiphonaries, with the aforementioned exception of the *Rhenaugensis*, give no Communion antiphon for the Paschal Vigil. When an abbreviated form of Vespers was later appended to the Mass, a threefold *Alleluia*

413. GR, 195.

antiphon was sung with Psalm 116. The Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the Tenth Century contains the following instructions:

When all have communicated, the concluding prayer is said. And the deacon, according to the Roman ordo, says *Ite missa est*, but such is not the use of this church on account of Vespers. The Romans do nothing for Vespers in this night, neither before nor after the Mass. But with us, one of the schola upon whom it has been enjoined, begins *Alleluia* for the Vespers antiphon. Then, after Communion, in place of Vespers let the psalm *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes* be sung speedily. Before the *Magnificat* there is neither reading nor versicle, but only the antiphon *Vespere autem*. The *Magnificat* completed, this collect is said: "O God, who have opened wide the entrance of the Kingdom of heaven to those reborn of water and of the Holy Spirit, increase in your servants the grace which you have given them, so that cleansed of all their sins, nothing may deprive them of what you have promised."⁴¹⁴

The practice described above remained in use until the promulgation of the *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae Instauratus* in 1955; at that time the short appended Vespers were replaced by a similarly adapted form of Lauds in which Psalm 150 replaced Psalm 116.

414. "Postquam omnes communicaverint, dicitur oratio ad complendum. Et dicit diaconus: *Ite missa est*, secundum romanum ordinem, sed usus ecclesiae non vult hoc propter vesperos.

In hac nocte de vespertinali synaxi apud romanos nichil agitur neque ante missam neque post missam. Apud nos autem unus de scola cui iussum fuerit pro antiphona incipit *Alleluia* ad vesperum. Et dum communicaverint, cantantur pro vespera festinanter psalmus *Laudate dominum omnes gentes*. Ante *Magnificat* vero lectio non dicitur vel versus, sed antiphona *Vespere autem*. Finito *Magnificat*, dicit orationem hanc: Deus qui renatis ex aqua et spiritu sancto celestis regni pandis introitum, auge super famulos tuos gratiam quam dedisti, ut qui ab omnibus purgati sunt peccatis a nullis priventur promissis." C. Vogel, ed., *Pontificale Romano-Germanicum*, v. 2, 111.

Although in the present reform, the Church has returned to the more ancient practice of not appending a liturgical Hour to the Paschal Vigil, the sixth mode antiphon with its threefold alleluia, used first for Vespers, and after 1955 for Lauds, has been retained in the *Graduale Romanum* and in the *Graduale Simplex*. As the Communion antiphon, it is repeated after each verse of Psalm 33, *Benedicam Dominum in omni tempore*.

In both East and West, Psalm 33 is one of the most ancient and universal Communion chants.⁴¹⁵ Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, in the earliest extant reference to psalmody at the distribution of communion, writes in his *Mystagogical Catecheses*: “After these things, listen to the singer, who invites us with a sacred melody to communion in the holy mysteries, and says: ‘Taste and see that the Lord is good’” (Ps 33:9).⁴¹⁶ Saint Jerome also attests to its liturgical association with the Eucharist: “Satisfied daily by the heavenly bread, we sing: *Gustate et videte, quam suavis est Dominus.*”⁴¹⁷ In Psalm 33, interlaced with the threefold *Alleluia*, the radiant joy of the catechumens, partaking for the first time of the Body and Blood of Christ, finds appropriate expression.

415. The *Graduale Simplex* acknowledges this: “Ad communionem cantari potest semper psalmus 33 *Benedicam Dominum*, cum R. *Alleluia vel Gustate.*” (GrS, *Praenotanda*, n. 21), and provides the Mozarabic setting of Psalm 33 in its appendix. See GrS, 454.

416. Cyril of Jerusalem, “Mystagogical Catecheses V, 20; in James McKinnon, *Music in Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 76-77.

417. Saint Jerome (*In Isaiam*, II, 5, 20); in Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, v. 2, 392.

At the Mass of the DayThe Liturgy of the Word

The great and solemn Paschal Eucharist is the one celebrated at the close of the night Vigil, but as the practice of an anticipated Vigil on Holy Saturday gained ground, it was deemed necessary to solemnize the celebration of a Paschal Eucharist on Sunday morning.⁴¹⁸ Saint Augustine attests to the popularity of the Sunday celebration; “*Pascha* arrived, and on the Lord’s day, in the morning . . . the church was full.”⁴¹⁹

The Antiphon at the Introit. *Resurrexi*⁴²⁰

*Resurrexi, et adhuc tecum sum,
alleluia:
posuisti super me manum tuam,
alleluia:
mirabilis facta est
scientia tua,
alleluia, alleluia.*

I have risen, and am with you even now, alleluia;
you have laid your hand upon me, alleluia:
wondrous has become your knowledge, alleluia, alleluia.

418. Righetti, *Storia Liturgica*, v. 2, 282-283. See also Anscar J. Chupungco, “Anamnesis and Mimesis in the Celebration of Easter Sunday,” in *La celebrazione del Triduo Pasquale, Anamnesis e Mimesis: Atti del III Congresso Internazionale di Liturgia*, Roma, Pontificio Istituto Liturgico, 9-13 Maggio 1988, ed. Ildebrando Scicolone (Rome: Pontificio Ateneo S. Anselmo, 1990), 259-263.

419. “*Venit Pascha, atque ipso die Dominico, mane; . . . plena erat ecclesia.*” Saint Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XXII, 8. “Exactly when the city of Rome adopted the practice of celebrating a eucharist in Easter (in addition to the Vigil) is unclear but the custom . . . is in place at Rome by the seventh century.” Irwin, *A Guide to the Eucharist and Hours, Easter*, 89.

420. GR, 196.

*V. Domine, probasti me
et cognovisti me:
tu cognovisti sessionen meam
et resurrectionem meam.*

*V. Lord, you have proved me
and have known me;
you have known my repose
and my resurrection
(Ps 138:18. 5. 6., 1-2).*

Resurrexi is found in the eighth century *Rhenaugensis* as well as in four other ancient antiphonaries of the eighth and ninth centuries.⁴²¹ Reserved to the holy Sunday of the Pasch, it is sung on no other day of the liturgical year. The text of *Resurrexi* is a liturgical adaptation of selected verses of Psalm 138, artfully combined and interwoven with alleluias.⁴²²

As the liturgical use of a particular psalm is often determined by a single verse rich in Christological content, one can legitimately ask if Psalm 138 was chosen only because of verse 18, “*Resurrexi, et adhuc tecum sum.*”

From beginning to end Psalm 138 is the prayer of a mysterious figure, representing both Israel and the awaited Christ: the Chosen One. God knows the Chosen One with a searching and all-surpassing knowledge (Ps 138:1-6).⁴²³

421. See Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 100-101. See also W. Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, 122 ff. Eight plates reproduce *Resurrexi* in the mss. of Saint-Gall 359, Saint-Gall 339, Chartres 47, Egerton 857, Paris, Bibl. nat., lat. 776, Montpellier, H. 159, Vatican, lat. 5319, and Paris, Bibl. nat. lat. 17436. The *R* of *Resurrexi* is highly illuminated in several of the mss., indicating the solemnity of the feast and the importance of the text.

422. The liturgical text is from the *Psalteria Latina Antiqua* as opposed to the Vulgate or the Psalter *iuxta Hebraeos* of Saint Jerome. See *Le Psautier Romain*, ed. Robert Weber (Rome: Libreria Vaticana, 1953), viii-xii.

423. Jesus too presents himself as the one whom the Father knows. “No one knows who the Son is except the Father” (Lk 10:22). “I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father” (Jn 10:14b-15a).

He belongs to God from the womb, and lives every instant of the night and day in the intimacy of his all-enveloping presence. The Chosen One knows that nothing can hide him from God's searching gaze. There is no escape from God's presence, not in the heights of heaven, nor in Sheol's depths, nor in night's darkness (vv. 7-12). The hand of God leads him, holds him and in every circumstance rests upon him (v. 10).

When the Chosen One came forth from the secret of the womb, it was to behold the face of God; awaking from sleep, he sees that God has kept vigil over him all through the night (v. 18). So complete is the Chosen One's consecration to God that the enemies of God he counts as his own (vv. 21-22). Pursued by men of blood, tested and probed by suffering, the Chosen One is confident of being led by God in the everlasting way (vv. 19-24). Commentators have remarked on the affinities of the psalm's subject with the Servant of Second Isaiah,⁴²⁴ and with Job, figures in whom the Church discerns the traits of the suffering and glorious Christ.⁴²⁵

There emerges from Psalm 138 a portrait of the Chosen One that corresponds strikingly to the Johannine icon of Christ in which the Father is

424. See Is 42:14; 49:1-6; 50:4-11; 52:13—53:12.

425. See Evode Beaucamp and Jean-Pascal de Relles, "L'élu sous le regard de Dieu (Psaume 139)," *Bible et vie chrétienne* 58 (July-August 1964): 29-41.

ever present to the Son, and the Son to the Father.⁴²⁶ On the night before his Passion, Jesus says, “I came from the Father and have come into the world; again I am leaving the world and going to the Father. . . . I am not alone, for the Father is with me” (Jn 16: 28. 32).

The ancient Roman text of Psalm 138⁴²⁷ uses a vocabulary that lends itself readily to a Christological interpretation and, therefore, to use in the Paschal liturgy. We read in the *Veronensis psalter*⁴²⁸: “*Domine, probasti me et cognouisti me; tu cognouisti passionem meam et resurrectionem meam*” (v. 1). “*Sessio meam et resurrectionem meam*” (v. 1) evokes Christ’s repose in the tomb and his resurrection.⁴²⁹ “*Si ascendero in caelum tu illic es; si descendero in infernum*” (v. 8) calls up images of the descent into hell and the Ascension. “*Et nox sicut dies illuminabitur*” (v. 12) and “*illuminatio mea in deliciis meis*” (v. 10) are found in the text of the *Exultet*.⁴³⁰ “*Confitebor tibi, Domine, quoniam terribiliter mirificatus es; mira*

426. E.g., “The Father is in me and I am in the Father” (Jn 10:38); “If you had known me, you would have known my Father also; henceforth you know him and have seen him. . . . Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me. . . . I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father” (Jn 14:7. 11. 31).

427. Edited by Weber with the variants from twelve other ancient psalters, *Le Psautier Romain*, 334-338.

428. *Veronensis*, Capituli I, sixth or seventh century. Weber, *Le Psautier Romain*, 334.

429. *Sessio* can mean repose as well as a place to sit.

430. Cf., MR, 345.

opera tua et anima mea nouit nimis" (v. 14) is readily placed in the mouth of the risen Christ. It would seem therefore that the anonymous composer of *Resurrexi* crafted his introit with reference to the whole text of the psalm as he read it in his ancient Roman text. Of all these texts, "*Resurrexi et adhuc tecum sum*" (v. 18) was most appropriately chosen as the *incipit* of the introit.

The Christological reading of Psalm 138 is also attested by some of the *tituli psalmorum* attributed to it: "It is the voice of Christ";⁴³¹ "How he vanquished the shadows of hell and made the night shine like the day";⁴³² and, "Christ speaking to the Father of his death and Resurrection."⁴³³ Among others, Origen, Chrysostom, Cassiodorus and Augustine, recognize in Psalm 138: 18, "*Resurrexi et adhuc sum tecum*," the mystery of the Lord's Resurrection and Ascension.⁴³⁴ Amalarius of Metz simply echoes the received liturgical interpretation of the text in saying that "on the day of the holy Pasch, at the introit, Christ, speaking through the mouths of the prophets, and fresh from

431. "Vox Christ est." Pierre Salmon, *Les tituli psalmorum des manuscrits latins* (Rome: Abbaye Saint-Jérôme, 1959), 73.

432. "Quod ipse tartareas tenebras evincens noctem sicut diem elucere fecit." Ibid., 147.

433. "Christus ad Patrem, de pausatione et resurrectione sua loquitur." Ibid., 184.

434. See C. Jean-Nesmy, *Le Psautier chrétien*, v. 2, 755.

the Resurrection, presents himself to his Father, in his Church, saying: I have risen, and am with you even now.”⁴³⁵

In one other introit of the liturgical year, that of the Christmas Mass *in nocte* (*Dominus dixit*), the Eternal Son is heard to sing in the first person; “The Lord said to me, ‘You are my Son; today, I have begotten you’” (Ps 2:7).⁴³⁶ Between *Dominus dixit* and *Resurrexit*, the introit of the First Sunday of Lent (*Invocabit me*) is sung, in which the Church hears the voice of the Father: “He shall cry unto me, and I will hearken unto him. I am with him in affliction; I will rescue him and glorify him. With length of days will I satisfy him.”⁴³⁷ In order for the theological richness of any one of these texts to be fully perceived, it must be related to the other two, and beyond them to the introits of Pentecost (*Spiritus Domini*),⁴³⁸ in which the Church’s voice is heard confessing

435. “*Die sancto paschae in introitu per ora prophetarum praesentat se Christus ex resurrectione Patri suo in ecclesia sua, dicens: Resurrexi et adhuc tecum sum.*” Amalarius Episcopus, *Liber officialis* 1, ch. XXXIII, “De die sancto Paschae,” ed. J. M. Hanssens (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1948), 167.

436. “*Dominus dixit ad me: Filius meus es tu, ego hodie genui te.*” GR, 41. The text evokes the eternal generation of the Son in the bosom of the Father. According to Vagaggini’s schematization of salvation history (and of the liturgy), this is the point of departure of the *exitus a Deo*, “the Father appearing primarily as the one *a quo*.” Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 199.

437. “*Invocabit me, et ego exaudiam eum: eripiam eum, et glorificabo eum: longitudine dierum adimplebo eum.*” GR, 71. “It is the Father who helps Jesus in his Passion. . . . It is the Father who raises him up.” Vagaggini, *Ibid.*, 242.

438. “*Spiritus Domini replevit orbem terrarum, alleluia: et hoc quod continet omnia, scientiam habet vocis, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.*” GR, 252. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church, and the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the Church are the effect of Christ’s Passion, death,

the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and of the First Sunday of Advent (*Ad te levavi*),⁴³⁹ in which she sings her sure and certain hope in the Bridegroom's return. Considered synoptically, the five introits function as a theological paradigm of the *oikonomia* as it unfolds in the liturgical year. Within this theological paradigm, the introit *Resurrexi* symbolizes that the kenotic movement of descent (*a Patre*) has, in the Resurrection of Christ, been changed into the eucharistic movement of ascent (*ad Patrem*), both being accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Precisely because the whole Paschal Mystery is essentially Trinitarian, too narrow a focus on its Christological dimension diminishes our perception of its true theological splendor. *Resurrexi*, by introducing the hidden face of the Father into the Mass of Easter Day, completes the words of Jesus addressed to the Father, from the Cross, and brings them to fulfillment.⁴⁴⁰

Resurrection and Ascension. The Spirit is “missioned” to the Church by the Father, at the intercession of the Son. Unlike the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit does not speak but is rather manifested in the communion of the Church.

439. “*Ad te levavi animam meam: Deus meus in te confido, non erubescam: neque irrideant me inimici mei: etenim universi qui te expectant, non confundentur.*” GR, 15. The chant is eschatological in its essential upward thrust; it is the confident prayer of the Church as she waits in joyful hope for the glorious advent of the Lord Christ. Apart from the four introits that precede it, its theological significance is obscured.

440. “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, ‘*Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani?*’ that is ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ . . . And Jesus cried again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit” (Mt 27:46. 50). Cf. Mk 15: 34. 37. “And Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.’ . . . Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, ‘Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!’ (Lk 23:34. 46). “After this Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to

In this period the whole liturgy is full of the prayers which Jesus addresses to the Father. It is the Father who raises Him up; it is always the Father who is seen as the beginning and end of the whole paschal mystery of the regeneration of men to a new life through baptism. . . . In the ascension, it is the Father who glorifies the Son definitively, and makes Him to sit at His right in glory.⁴⁴¹

Within the Paschal liturgy, *Resurrexi* is the voice of the risen Christ addressing the Father, echoing in human words, the ineffable conversation which takes place in the *communio* of the three Divine Persons. All who, by baptism into the death and Resurrection of Christ, have passed over with him, participate by grace in the conversation that, by nature, belongs to the Eternal Son, and in the *communio* of the Three Divine Persons reflected in the eucharistic *communio* of the Church. *Resurrexi* is then the paschal chant of the whole Christ, sung to the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit.

Christ speaks as the Son of God to his Father; Adam speaks as man to his Creator; the Church speaks as the people of God, the chosen sons of Adam and members of Christ, as the bride to the Father of her Lord; ‘I have risen from the dead and am with thee now.’ Thus it is that the introit for the Mass of Easter Sunday embraces the whole paschal action, the whole work of salvation and the holy liturgy of the year. It makes all of this present in this short phrase:

fulfill the scripture), ‘I thirst.’ . . . When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, ‘It is finished’; and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit” (Jn 19:28. 30).

441. C. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 242.

'I have risen and am still with thee.' The mystical quality of the fourth tone gives the words their deep, other-worldly stillness, and puts out of all doubt that we are in the world beyond. Christ has unlocked the gates of eternity, and the *ecclesia* has gone in.⁴⁴²

The fourth mode melody of *Resurrexi* is recollected and mysterious. It seems to come from afar and yet it comes from within. The first word, *resurrexi*, rising delicately, almost tentatively, from re to fa, is the first word of one waking from death's deep sleep. The recitation on sol in *adhuc tecum sum*, and in particular, the *porrectus* over *sum* brings the piece into a morning brightness. In the phrase *scientia tua*, the *porrectus flexus* resolving on sol over *tua* makes the presence of the Father the central motif of the whole piece; to sing *Resurrexi*, then, is to be with Christ wholly turned *ad Patrem*. There are no flights of exuberant jubilation; instead the antiphon hovers within a range of six notes, yet this restraint is so artistically crafted, and so perfectly wedded to the text, that it reveals itself wonderfully adequate to the Mystery it seeks to express.

442. A. Löhr, *The Mass Through the Year*, v. 2, 73.

The canticle *Cantemus Domino* is found in the Old Gelasian Sacramentary (ca. 750) together with the reading from Exodus and the collect *Deus, cuius antiqua miracula.*³²¹ *Cantemus Domino* is a constant element in the Paschal Vigil, from the most ancient Roman antiphonaries³²² to the present *Graduale Romanum*.³²³ It is a true *canticum*, a sung continuation of the reading rather than a response to it.³²⁴

The reading and canticle from Exodus are a liturgical contemplation of Baptism. The passage of Moses and of the people of Israel through the Red Sea is an image of the Pasch of Christ and of Christians out of bondage into freedom, out of darkness into light, out of sadness into joy, out of death into life.

As Israel, led by Moses, came through the Red Sea unharmed and reached the promised land, while the Egyptians sank into the waters, so in the ritual of the

may be regenerated by sharing in your Spirit.
Through Christ our Lord.

321. Schmidt, *Hebdomada Sancta*, Section II, vol. 1, 364.

322. Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 96-97.

323. See Jean Danielou, "Le cantique de Moïse et la Vigile Paschale," *Bible et vie chrétienne* 1 (March-May 1953): 21-30.

324. The usual conclusion to a reading, *Verbum Domini*, is omitted after the reading from Exodus and the canticle is intoned straightaway. See *Lectionarium*, vol. 1 (Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1970), 676.

Paschal night the sea of baptism will bury the Pharaoh of hell, and God's new Israel, the Church, will pass through the waters of pain in the Lord's company, and will come out of the baptism in his death on to the banks of the new life. In his strength she will make her way over the waves of this life to the promised land of eternity.³²⁵

Through faith and Baptism, all nations become children of Abraham, all peoples enter into the promised inheritance of the Israelites.³²⁶ Here, reading, *canticum* and collect point to the command of the risen Christ to the eleven: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28:19).³²⁷

The first verse of *Cantemus Domino* (Ex 15:1) recurs in Exodus 15:21. The canticle sung by Moses and the people of Israel is, in fact, intoned by Miriam. Moses lifts up his rod³²⁸ and stretches his hand over the sea; Miriam takes up the timbrel and sings the glorious triumph of the Lord (Ex 15:21). Miriam is a

325. A. Löhr, *The Great Week*, 167.

326. In the oration, the ancient marvels wrought in splendor by God's right hand for one people announce the new wonders wrought in the splendor of the paschal sacraments for many peoples. The verb *transeat* is part of the theological vocabulary of the Paschal Mystery. *Deus, cuius antiqua miracula, etiam nostris temporibus coruscare sentimus, dum, quod uni populo a persecutione Pharaonis liberando dexteræ tuae potentia contulisti, id in salutem gentium per aquam regenerationis operaris, praesta, ut in Abrahae filios, et in Israeliticam dignitatem totius mundi transeat plenitudo.*

327. Cf. the *Benedictio aquae*, MR, 283.

328. "Lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go on dry ground through the sea" (Ex 14:16). This is again a type of the wood of the Cross; moreover the rod of Moses is "lifted up" over the water.

type of the Church engaged in the liturgy, celebrating the power of the Cross of Christ and the marvelous deeds wrought by his outstretched arms.

Laudate Dominum³²⁹

IV. After the reading of Isaiah 54:5-14

*Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes:
et collaudate eum omnes populi.*

Praise the Lord, all you nations;
praise him together all you peoples.

*V. Quoniam confirmata est super nos
misericordia eius:
et veritas Domini
manet in aeternum.*

For certain is his mercy
towards us,
and the fidelity of the Lord
abides forever (Ps 116).³³⁰

Laudate Dominum, identified as a tract, precedes the *Alleluia*, *Confitemini
Domino quoniam bonus* in the *Modoetiensis* and the *Rhenaugiensis*; in the other four

329. GR, 187.

330. Oration after *Laudate Dominum*

Almighty and eternal God,
for the honour of your name,
multiply what you pledged to the faith of our fathers,
and increase, by your sacred adoption,
the children of the promise,
that your Church may know now
that what the saints of old never doubted
you have already largely fulfilled.
Through Christ our Lord.

The Gradual, *Haec dies*⁴⁴³

*Haec dies,
quam fecit Dominus:
exsultemus,
et laetemur in ea.*

V. *Confitemini Domino,
quoniam bonus:
quoniam in saeculum
misericordia eius.*

*Haec dies,
quam fecit Dominus:
exsultemus,
et laetemur in ea.*

This is the day
which the Lord has made;
let us rejoice
and be glad therein.

Confess unto the Lord
for he is good:
unto ages unending
is his mercy.

This is the day
which the Lord has made;
let us rejoice
and be glad therein
(Ps 117: 24. 1).

Haec dies is given for the Mass of Easter Day in the six ancient antiphonaries edited by Dom Hesbert.⁴⁴⁴ McKinnon remarks that,

there is, of course, but one Paschaltime gradual, *Haec Dies*, or to put in more precisely, there is but one gradual respond, *Haec dies*, which is sung on Easter with the verse *Confitemini* (Ps 117:1) and repeated on the five subsequent days of Easter week with different verses.⁴⁴⁵

The eighth century *Blandiniensis* gives a series of seven verses (Ps 117:1. 2. 3. 4. 16. 22. 26); it is, in fact, a true *psalmus responsorius*. In the other codices the

443. GR, 196.

444. Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 100-101. On graduals of the second mode, see Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 77-80.

445. McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 239.

verses are distributed throughout the octave, an option followed in the present *Graduale Romanum*.⁴⁴⁶

The great Paschal psalm intoned at the *Alleluia Confitemini* of the Vigil is continued in the gradual, with verse 24 as the refrain: “This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad therein.” Psalm 117 is the last of the six psalms of praise known as the *Hallel* which, in the liturgy of the second Temple, were sung at Passover, at Pentecost, and on the other high feasts. The synagogal liturgy applied the psalm to the triumph of the Messiah.⁴⁴⁷ Verses 21-23 recount the glorious experience of God’s saving intervention on behalf of a warrior king: “I thank thee that thou hast answered me and hast become my salvation. The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.”⁴⁴⁸ God’s victorious intervention makes the day on which it occurs a day forever to be

446. See GR, 196-212. The responsorial psalm given in the Lectionary and *Graduale Simplex* is also Psalm 117.

447. Louis Jacquet, “Chant liturgique d’action de grâce, psaume 117,” *Bible et vie chrétienne* 36 (November-December 1960): 31-40.

448. “Be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by him this man is standing before you well. This is the stone which was rejected by you builders, but which has become the head of the corner. And there is salvation in no one else, for here is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Ac 4:10-12). See also Mt 22:42.

remembered. In the voice of the royal psalmist the Church recognizes the voice of Christ, the *victor Rex*,⁴⁴⁹ and so joins her voice to his.

In this liturgical context *Haec dies* is sung in response to Peter's confession of the crucified and risen Jesus in the first reading: "They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and made him manifest; not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead" (Ac 10:39-41). In *Haec dies*, the "third day" of Peter's discourse becomes "the day the Lord has made" (Ps 117:24); it becomes the the "first day," the day of the creation of the light (Gn 1:3) and the "eighth day",⁴⁵⁰ the beginning of the new creation which has the glory of God for its light and for lamp, the Lamb of God (Rev 21:22).

The gradual resonates with the first reading to reveal that in the Paschal *actio* of the Church celebrated on the "Day of the Lord" (Rev 1:10), the "third day," the "first day" and the "eighth day" are mysteriously and simultaneously made present. *Haec dies* articulates a theology of the liturgy as the efficacious and saving remembrance of the Paschal Mystery, the fulfillment of the work of

449. Sequence, *Victimae paschali laudes*, GR, 199.

450. In Ezekiel's prophecy, the eighth day follows upon seven days of purification, and inaugurates in the new Temple, the beginning of a new cult acceptable to the Lord. "From the eighth day onward, the priests shall offer upon the altar, your burnt offerings and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, says the Lord God" (Ez 43:27).

creation, and the anticipation of the heavenly Jerusalem in which “night shall be no more” (Rev 22:5).

The melody, as far as *Dominus*, is an original composition marked by exuberant gladness. After *Dominus*, it is an adaptation of the formulae characteristic of graduals of the second mode. The melisma on *ea* is a stream of joy almost liquid in its musical texture. In the verse, the treatment of *quoniam bonus* captures the attention until its resolution in the cadence, *quoniam in saeculum misericordia eius*.

The Alleluia, *Pascha nostrum*⁴⁵¹

Alleluia. Alleluia.

Alleluia. Alleluia.

*Pascha nostrum
immolatus est
Christus.*

Christ
our Pasch
has been sacrificed (1 Cor 5:7).

Alleluia.

Alleluia.

The Alleluia *Pascha nostrum* is found in the six ancient Roman antiphonaries. All six codices give at least two verses; the ninth century *Compendiensis* gives three.⁴⁵² The Alleluia would have been repeated after each verse. The *Graduale Romanum* no longer gives the following two verses:

451. GR, 196.

452. Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 100-101.

2. *Epulemur in azymis sinceritatis et veritatis.*

Let us eat the festal banquet with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

3. *Non in fermento malitia et nequitiae sed in azymis sinceritatis et veritatis.*

Not with the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Cor 5:8).⁴⁵³

The *Alleluia* is, of all the elements in liturgical chant, the one that most closely corresponds to the mystical experience of “things that cannot be told, which man may not utter” (2 Cor 12:4). By reason of its liturgical context, the *Alleluia* signals a *parousia* of the Risen Christ in the midst of the Church, for “the liturgic Gospel is something more than a mere instruction of the faithful. It is a vital moment in the sacred action of the Church. In it Christ the Energetic Word speaks and acts.”⁴⁵⁴ The *Alleluia* heralds the presence of the Word whose glorious advent leaves the Church without words to express her joy. Thus obliged to “climb above the zone of words,”⁴⁵⁵ she bursts into the ecstatic jubilation of a single syllable soaring on the breath of the Spirit into uncharted regions of light and of love.

453. The text of the verses is drawn from 1 Corinthians 5:6-8, one of the present options for the second reading. For a discussion of the use of *Pascha nostrum* at Mass and at the so-called *gloriosum officium* of Easter Sunday Vespers, see McKinnon, *The Advent Project*, 257.

454. E. Underhill, *The Mystery of Sacrifice*, 9-10.

455. Zundel, *The Splendour of the Liturgy*, 84.

He who jubilates utters no words, but a sound of joy without words: for it is the voice of the spirit lost in joy, expressing that joy to the utmost of its power but unable to define its meaning.⁴⁵⁶

And who is the fit object of this jubilation but the ineffable God? Ineffable indeed is He whom thou canst not name. But if thou canst not name Him, yet may not keep silence, what canst thou do but jubilate, that thy heart may rejoice without words, and the immensity of thy joy escape the constraint of syllables.⁴⁵⁷

Alleluia Pascha nostrum dilates and stretches the joy of the Church enacting the liturgy into the joy of “a great multitude, like the sound of many waters.” (Rev 19:6). The melody of the verse emphasizes *nostrum*; Christ is *our* Pasch, the Pasch of the newly baptized and of the whole Church. On *immolatus* it soars to the uppermost limits of the seventh mode; the melisma on *immolatus* twice repeats its joy by unfurling the same succession of neums. The cadence on *immolatus* leads into the piece’s ultimate word: *Christus*.

The verse *Pascha nostrum* is the core phrase of the second reading:⁴⁵⁸ “Christ, our paschal lamb has been sacrificed” (1 Cor 5:7). In the first reading of the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper (Ex 12:1-8, 11-14), the Lord gave Moses and Aaron detailed instructions concerning the immolation of the

456. Saint Augustine, *In psalm. xcix*, 4, quoted in Zundel, *The Splendour of the Liturgy*, 84.

457. Saint Augustine, *In psalm. xxxii*, quoted ibid., 85.

458. The Lectionary gives a choice for the second reading: Col 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6-8.

paschal lamb, the mark of the passover in its blood, and the paschal supper. All of these are fulfilled in Christ, in the saving mystery of his Blood, and in the Paschal Eucharist by which the Blood of the true Lamb marks, not doorposts, “but the lips of the faithful which are the doors of the temple of Christ.”⁴⁵⁹

Behold the passover that passes away
and the Pasch that remains forever.
Behold the figure;
and see here its fulfillment.

Blessed the Cenacle wherein the lamb of passage
runs to meet the Lamb of truth. . . .
The lamb of the passing feast surrenders its noble place
and offers it in homage to the Lamb of God. . . .

The disciples are seated betwixt two lambs,
feeding upon the passover lamb and fed by the Lamb in
truth.
Placed betwixt the shadow and the Reality,
they see the figure fade and the Truth appear.

Blessed are they who possess both the end of the figure
and the beginning of the Truth.⁴⁶⁰

The verse *Pascha nostrum* points not only to the pasch of the Old Law, but because of the eschatological significance of the *Alleluia* that frames it, points also to “the Lamb standing as though it had been slain” (Rev 5:6), to “the Lamb in the midst of the throne” (Rev 6:17). The verb *epulemur* points to the banquet

459. Saint John Chrysostom, “Instructions to Catechumens” 3:13-19, read on Good Friday at the Office of Readings. *The Divine Office*, v. 2, 297.

460. Saint Ephrem the Syrian, “Hymns,” trans. J. Gribomont, in E. de Solms et al., *Bible chrétienne I**, 224. English trans. by this author.

of the Paschal Eucharist and, beyond it, to the “marriage supper of the Lamb” (Rev 19:9). The allusion will be echoed in the invitation to Communion,⁴⁶¹ and in the Communion Antiphon itself which will repeat the text of the *Alleluia* verse. The image of the Lamb carries over into the sequence.

The Sequence, *Victimae paschali laudes*⁴⁶²

*Victimae paschali laudes
immolent Christiani.*

*Agnus redemit oves:
Christus innocens Patri
reconciliavit peccatores.*

*Mors et vita duello
conflixerunt mirando:
dux vitae mortuus, regnat vivus.*

*Dic nobis Maria,
quid vidisti in via?*

*Sepulcrum Christi viventis,
et gloriam vidi resurgentis:*

*Angelicos testes,
sudarium et vestes.*

*Surrexit Christus spes mea:
praecedet suos in Galilaeam.*

Forth to the Paschal Victim,
Christians, bring your sacrifice of praise.

The Lamb redeems the sheep:
And Christ, the sinless One
has reconciled sinners to the Father.

Life and death together fought
in an awesome struggle:
The Prince of Life who died, now living
reigns.

Tell, O Mary, what you saw
as you went along your way?

I saw the tomb of the living Christ
and the glory of his rising,

Angels bearing witness,
the shroud and napkins too.

Yes, he is risen, Christ my hope.
He goes before his own into Galilee.

461. “Ecce Agnus Dei, ecce qui tollit peccata mundi. Beati qui ad cenam Agni vocati sunt.” MR, 474.

462. GR, 198.

*Scimus Christum surrexisse
a mortuis vere:
tu nobis, victor Rex, miserere.*

We know that Christ from death
has truly risen!
On us, O Victor King, have mercy.

The origin of the sequence as a genre of liturgical chant is the object of ongoing discussion.⁴⁶³ According to one theory, the sequence originated in the application of rhythmical texts to the lengthy vocalisations at the end of the *Alleluia*. Notker Balbulus (840-912), monk of Saint-Gall, is credited with the composition of an impressive collection of sequence texts. Another theory sees in the sequence “a new creation of the ninth century, arising out of the musical impulses and ambitions of Frankish musicians,” only gradually assimilated to the *Alleluia* of the Mass.⁴⁶⁴ A compromise theory, favored by Hiley, admits of an early linkage between the *Alleluia* and the sequence which later evolved into the composition of autonomous sequences, “original creations of a poet/musician composing text and music together.”⁴⁶⁵

Zundel writes of the sequence in characteristically poetic terms from the essentially experiential point of view of one actively engaged in singing the liturgy:

463. Hiley discusses the question thoroughly and presents the theories of the principal protagonists. See *Western Plainchant*, 172-195

464. This is the theory advanced by Richard L. Crocker in *The Early Medieval Sequence* (Berkeley, 1977); quoted in Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 187.

465. Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 187.

When the *Alleluia*, having soared to its highest point, bends earthward once more to return to vocal chant, a rocket, as it were, dissolves into sparkling stars, the neums spread out into a shower and give rise to the Sequence.⁴⁶⁶

Victimae paschali laudes is attributed to Wipo (died c. 1050), court chaplain of the emperors Conrad II and Henry III. The text of the *Graduale Romanum* omits the fifth strophe on account of its anti-Semitic sentiment:

<i>Credendum est magis soli Mariae veraci: quam Iudeorum turbae fallaci.</i>	Let greater credence be given to the truth-telling Mary than to the fallacies of crowds of Jews. ⁴⁶⁷
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Victimae paschali laudes is the most popular of the medieval sequences, having often inspired para-liturgical dramas or vivid representations of the Magdalene in dialogue with the Apostles within the context of the liturgy itself.⁴⁶⁸ Its inspiration is biblical; the author aims at a presentation of the Mystery that is at once lyrical, didactic and popular. The first and second verses appeal to all who share in the redemption wrought by Christ the immolated Lamb, through participation in the *sacmenta paschalia*. Christ, the “lamb without blemish” (Ex 12:5), is contrasted with the sheep marred by sin (cf. Is 53:6).

466. Zundel, *The Splendour of the Liturgy*, 86.

467. Given in Schuster, *The Sacramentary*, v. 2, 316, and in Hiley, *Western Plainchant*, 189.

468. Schuster, *The Sacramentary*, v. 2, 315-316.

The third verse describes the Passion as a struggle between death and the Prince of Life, echoing 1 Corinthians 15:54-55: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” Mary Magdalene, the *apostola apostolorum*, enters the scene on the fourth verse to sing of the glory of the risen Christ (cf. Jn 20:18), of bright angels (cf. Mk 16:5 and Lk 24:4) and of the empty tomb (cf. Jn 20:12-13). She proclaims to the apostles that “Christ, her hope is risen,” and obedient to the Lord’s injunction (Mt 28:10), announces that he goes before his own into Galilee.

The final verse, a triumphant confession of Christ’s resurrection, is sung in unison by the entire chorus: the faithful, Mary Magdalene, and apostles. The last line, a plea for mercy, addresses Jesus as *victor Rex* (cf. Rev 19:16).⁴⁶⁹

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Offertory. *Terra tremuit*⁴⁷⁰

*Terra tremuit et quievit,
dum resurgeret in iudicio Deus,
alleluia.*

The earth trembled and was still,
when God rose in judgment,
alleluia (Ps 75:8-9).

469. We note a discrepancy among the liturgical books of the present reform. Most editions of the Lectionary print the *Victimae paschali laudes* before the *Alleluia*. The *Graduale Romanum* prints it after the *Alleluia*. The MR *Editio Tertia* orders it as follows: “Sequentia, quae praeter quam diebus Paschae et Pentecostes, est ad libitum, cantatur ante Alleluia.” IGMR, n. 64, 33.

470. GR, 199.

Five of the ancient Roman antiphonaries attest to the offertory processional chant, *Terra Tremuit*; the *Blandiniensis*, *Compendiensis*, and the *Silvanetensis* indicate three verses.⁴⁷¹ These verses, not given in the *Graduale Romanum*, are:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <i>Notus in Judea Deus
in Israhel magnum nomen ejus.</i> | In Judea is God known,
his name is great in Israel. |
| 2. <i>Et factus est in pace
locus ejus
et habitatio ejus in Sion, alleluia.</i> | And his place has been made in peace,
and his dwelling in Sion, alleluia. |
| 3. <i>Ideo confregit cornu arcum
scutum et gladium
inluminans tu mirabiliter
a montibus aeternis alleluia.</i> ⁴⁷² | Therefore did he shatter the power
of the bow, the shield and the sword;
You shine wondrously from the
everlasting mountains, alleluia
(Ps 75: 1. 2. 3). |

Theodoret of Cyrrhus (c. 393-466) identifies Psalm 75 as the chant of victory sung after the miraculous defeat of the Assyrian King Sennacherib.⁴⁷³

Then Hezekiah the king and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, prayed because of this and cried to heaven. And the Lord sent an angel, who cut off all the mighty warriors and commanders and officers in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he came

471. See Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 100-101.

472. The text we give is that of the *Compendiensis*, the most complete of the three codices. The version of Psalm 75 conforms to that of the old Roman psalter with the exception of *ideo* in the place of *ibi* in verse 3 and a few minor orthographical differences, e.g., *eius/ejus*. See *Le Psautier Romain*, ed. Weber, 179.

473. C. Jean-Nesmy, *Le psautier chrétien*, v. 2, 410.

into the house of his god, some of his own sons struck him down there with the sword. So the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib king of Assyria and from the hand of all his enemies; and he gave them rest on every side. And many brought gifts to the Lord to Jerusalem and precious things to Hezekiah king of Judah, so that he was exalted in the sight of all nations from that time forward (2 Chr 32: 20-23).

The association of Psalm 75 with the victory of Sennacherib, the establishment of peace in Jerusalem, and the exaltation of King Hezekiah, elucidate the Christological hermeneutic of the psalm in the Paschal liturgy. Like Hezekiah the King and Isaiah the prophet who “prayed because of this and cried to heaven” (2 Chr 32:20), Jesus Christ, both King and Prophet, “offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard for his godly fear” (Heb 5:7). The angel sent in response to the prayer of Hezekiah and Isaiah inflicts a shameful defeat upon Sennacherib’s “mighty warriors and commanders and officers in the camp” (2 Chr 32:21). Similarly, in Matthew’s account of the burial and Resurrection of Jesus, the angel of the Lord descends from heaven, “and for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men”(Mt 28:2-4). The defeat, and subsequent slaying of Sennacherib by his own men, assure “rest on every side” (2 Chr 32:22) for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Their victory over the Assyrians redounds to the glory of God; “God is made known in Judah, his

name is great in Israel” (Ps 75:1). The Resurrection of Christ results in the apostolic preaching by which the name of Jesus is made known to the “men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem” (Ac 2:14). Finally, following Hezekiah’s triumph, many bring gifts to the Lord and precious things to Hezekiah, so that he is “exalted in the sight of the nations from that time forward” (2 Chr 32:23). Like Hezekiah, Jesus, the *victor Rex* of the sequence, is “highly exalted.” God bestows on him “the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father” (Phil 2:9).

The liturgical hermeneutic of the Paschal liturgy presents *Terra tremuit* and its verses as the Church’s chant of victory following Christ’s Resurrection. *Terra tremuit*; in Scripture the earthquake has a theophanic and an eschatological significance.⁴⁷⁴ The Resurrection of Christ manifests his divinity and signals the arrival of the Kingdom of God. *Et quievit*; the stillness recalls the “still, small voice” that revealed to Elijah the passage of the Lord. Here, the stillness reveals the passage (*transitus*) of the Lord in the mystery of the Resurrection. *Dum resurgeret in iudicio Deus*; the eschatological character of the Resurrection is again disclosed, by linking it to judgment. The Christological interpretation of Psalm

474. See Jg 5:4-5, Ps 67:8, Na 1:5, Hab 3:10, 1K 19:11.

75 is intimated on Holy Saturday by the use of verse 2 as the antiphon of the Midday Hour: "*In pace factus est locus eius, et in Sion habitatio eius.*"⁴⁷⁵ *Inluminans tu mirabiliter a montibus aeternis;* the third verse evokes the symbolism of light, charged with theological meaning in the whole Paschal liturgy.⁴⁷⁶ Here, it is the risen Christ—the Word by whom the light was created (Gn 1:3) and the mountains were brought forth (Ps 89:2)—who shines wondrously, manifesting by his Resurrection the glory of his divinity.⁴⁷⁷

Terra tremuit has about it something awesome and yet its fourth mode melody is profoundly peaceful. Its Paschal theology is theophanic and eschatological. Like the introit *Resurrexi*, it is a liturgical contemplation of Christ's divinity epiphanied in his Pasch; again, like *Resurrexi*, it opens with the interval re-fa. *Tremuit*, with its sudden bright sol-fa-la-la contrasts with the ample melismatic treatment of *quievit*. The neumatic cadence on *quievit* recalls the deep stillness of the introit; the final re of *quievit* is the return of all things into silence. *Dum resurget in iudicio* is solemn and grandiose; it emphasizes *dum*,

475. *Liturgia Horarum*, v. 2 (Rome: Editrice Vaticana, 1986), 412.

476. Cf. the first antiphon of Lauds, "*Surrexit Christus et illuxit populo suo, quem redemit sanguine suo, alleluia.*" *Liturgia Horarum*, v. 2, 430.

477. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God" (Ps 89:2).

then opens up the word *resurget* to interpret it in the light of Christ's resurrection. The cadence on *Deus* gives the word its full theological resonance.

The Communion Antiphon, *Pascha nostrum*⁴⁷⁸

*Pascha nostrum immolatus est
Christus, alleluia:
itaque epulemur
in azymis
sinceritatis et veritatis
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.*

Christ our Pasch has been sacrificed, alleluia; let us then partake of the festal banquet, with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia (1 Cor 5:7-8).

The Communion antiphon *Pascha nostrum* is appointed for the Mass of Easter Day in five Roman antiphonaries of the eighth and ninth centuries.⁴⁷⁹

The *Compendiensis* indicates that Psalm 138 (the psalm of the introit *Resurrexi*) should be sung with the antiphon; the *Corbiensis* and *Silvanectensis* indicate Psalm 117 (the psalm of the gradual *Haec dies*). The present *Graduale Romanum* indicates that *Psalm 117* should be sung with the antiphon. The entire psalmody of the Mass of Easter Day draws upon three sources: Psalm 138, Psalm 117, and Psalm 75.

The text of the antiphon has been treated above in our study of the *Alleluia Pascha nostrum*. The same text, however, used in different liturgical

478. GR, 199.

479. It is missing only from the *Modoetiensis*. See Hesbert, *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex*, 100-101.

contexts and with a different melody, yields a different theology. Liturgical theology must take into account not only the text of a chant, but also its liturgical context, ritual function, and musical treatment. Here, the sixth mode melody is luminous and transparent; it contains nothing burdensome, heavy or belabored. The threefold *Alleluia* of the ending is a progressive expansion of joy. The cadence of the first *alleluia* prepares an effortless leap to the modal dominant in the second; the third *alleluia* takes the melody to its summit and then returns, with certainty and fullness, to its point of origin.

Used as an antiphon to accompany the Communion procession, *Pascha nostrum* resonates differently than it did with the *Alleluia* in the Liturgy of the Word. The Eucharist is the festal banquet in which Christ, the Paschal Lamb, gives himself as “real food and real drink”(cf. Jn 6:55). *Immolatus est Christus*; all who partake of the Eucharist are united to the Paschal sacrifice of Christ by which is wrought the redemption of the world and the glorification of the Father in the Holy Spirit. The Eucharist is the substance of the shadow, for in the Eucharist, the shadow of the lamb of the passover has passed into the light, disappearing into the reality of the immolated Lamb who is Christ. The Eucharist is the presence of the Mystery, for so often as it is celebrated, Christ and those whose lips bear the mark of his Blood, pass over to the Father, as one Body in the Holy Spirit. Finally, the Eucharist while recalling figures and

shadows, and while actualizing the Mystery, already anticipates its eschatological completion in the “marriage supper of the Lamb” (Rev 19:9).

Itaque epulemur in azymis sinceritatis et veritatis; the unleavened bread of the Paschal meal is a figure of the “true bread from that gives life to the world” (Jn 6:32). The literary context of 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 clearly indicates an ethical hermeneutic. The antiphon’s liturgical context, however, without denying the validity of the ethical hermeneutic, suggests that it does not exhaust the whole theological import of the text.⁴⁸⁰ Participation in the Eucharist not only engages the Christian to the practice of sincerity and truth; it efficaciously communicates the very principle of “newness of life” (Rom 6:4).

The antiphon *Pascha nostrum* relates the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Cor 5:8) to the Bread of Life, broken in sacrifice, and distributed in Communion to the neophytes and to all the faithful. The empty tomb of the gospel (Jn 20:1-9) is already a pledge of the eucharistic presence of the Risen Christ to the Church, and in the Eucharist, the Church holds the irrefutable sign of the empty tomb.

480. The work of liturgical theology does not oppose layers of meaning but rather views them in a synthetic contemplation of the whole Mystery.

CONCLUSION

From *Nos autem*, the introit of the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper to *Pascha nostrum*, the communion antiphon of Easter Sunday, the liturgical chants of the Paschal Triduum play an integral part in the annual *actio* of the Church by which the Paschal Mystery is made efficaciously present. The chants of the *Graduale Romanum* function symbiotically with the eucharology, the readings and the whole complexus of sacred signs, to constitute a primary and indispensable theological source and a supremely effective means of active and conscious participation in the mysteries of the Pasch of the Lord.

The proper chants of the Paschal Triduum do not function independently of other symbolic elements; rather, their full theological resonance requires the eucharological texts of the Missal, the biblical texts of the Lectionary, and the whole array of sacred signs and ritual gestures proper to the liturgy of the Paschal Triduum. Within the yearly celebration of the Paschal Mystery in the Triduum, the proper chants of the *Graduale Romanum* resonate as a sacramental expression of God's saving word, Jesus Christ, addressed to the Church in the power of the Holy Spirit: word *from* God. In singing them, the Church makes her eucharistic and doxological response to the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit: word *to* God. By the same token, they express the Church's own

understanding of her participation in the Paschal Mystery, and allow that participation to be more fully articulated: word *about* God.

Kevin Irwin speaks of the liturgy of the Word as “a dialogue of call and response experienced through the Scriptures whose repeated reading is a symbolic rehearsal of salvation.”⁴⁸¹ The phrase “symbolic rehearsal of salvation” aptly describes not only the liturgy of the Word, but the *actio* as a whole in which the repetition of symbolic rites makes present the saving Mystery of Christ and anticipates its eschatological completion. Within this wider symbolic context, liturgical chant itself is a dialogue of call and response implicitly bringing together the question of God in the garden, “Where are you?” (Gn 3:9), the response of the second Adam, the crucified Son, “Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit” (Lk 23:46) , and the cry of the new Eve, the Church, prompted by the Holy Spirit, “Come” (Rev 22:17).

Singing the proper chants of the Paschal Triduum, within their liturgical context, recalls the historical events of salvation history and makes them efficaciously present, here and now, to worshiping assemblies marked by their own particular sufferings and hopes. Moreover, the chants are a sign of the Church’s anticipation and ascension to the glorious completion of the Paschal Mystery in the Kingdom of Heaven.

481. Irwin, *Context and Text*, 88.

As Chapter Three amply evidenced, the chants of the Paschal Triduum represent a vast selection of scriptural texts lifted out of their literary context within the Bible and set into a new context — that of the liturgy. Within the liturgical context, the biblical texts are arranged, adapted, and combined with other texts, in such a way as to evoke more than the literal meaning of their original context without, however, contradicting that literal meaning.

When in celebrating the Liturgy the Church proclaims both the Old and New Testaments, it is proclaiming one and the same mystery of Christ. The New Testament lies hidden in the Old; the Old Testament comes fully to light in the New. Christ himself is the center and fullness of the whole of Scripture, just as he is of all liturgical celebration.⁴⁸²

The chants of the *Graduale Romanum* represent a liturgical hermeneutic of Scripture. Their theological richness is experienced optimally when the chants, eucharoly and readings are sung and heard within their proper liturgical context. This includes the liturgical moment, feast or season, the sacramental actions and symbolic rites that are part of the celebration, and the particular identity and needs of the worshiping assembly.

Use of the *Graduale Romanum* in concert with the Roman Missal and Lectionary allows the Word of God to be sung, heard and pondered at various moments of the *actio*; it guarantees the essentially biblical character of Catholic

482. “Introduction” in the *Lectionary for Mass*, n. 5, xiv.

worship, and the privileged place of the Psalter, as “a central source for the Christian’s liturgical and personal prayer.”⁴⁸³

Sacred Scripture is of the greatest importance in the celebration of the liturgy. It is from the scriptures that lessons are read and explained in the homily, and psalms are sung. The inspiration and meaning of the prayers, orations and liturgical chants flow out of the scriptures, and it is from them that actions and signs receive their meaning.⁴⁸⁴

The revised Lectionary and *Graduale Romanum* are mutually complementary; functioning together within the liturgy, they “open up more lavishly the treasures of the Bible, so that richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of the Word of God.”⁴⁸⁵ “The biblical tradition functions as a source of theology, especially when unlocked with the keys which the liturgy provides, chant being not the least among them.

Then the liturgical celebration, founded primarily on the word of God and sustained by it, becomes a new event and enriches the word itself with new meaning and power. Thus in the Liturgy the Church faithfully adheres to the way Christ himself read and explained the Sacred Scriptures, beginning with the “today” of

483. Irwin, *Context and Text*, 239.

484. SC, art. 24.

485. SC, art. 51.

his coming forward in the synagogue and urging all to search the Scriptures.⁴⁸⁶

Dom Hesbert's *Antiphonale Missarum Sextuplex* and other critical editions of ancient antiphonaries reveal patterns of the liturgical hermeneutic of Scripture; if there are variants among these patterns, there are also instances of an impressive continuity stretching from the eighth century to the present. The use of the ancient *cantica* at the Paschal Vigil, and of Psalms 138 and 117 in the Mass of Easter Day are examples of this. A concomitant study of the ancient sacramentaries⁴⁸⁷ and eucharistic lectionaries⁴⁸⁸ elucidates the liturgical theology emerging from these patterns. The discovery of these patterns is the occasion of a living and contemporary *theologia prima*.

Irwin rightly asserts that “the context established for the hearing of the gospel by a first reading, psalm, second reading and gospel acclamation influences how that gospel is heard and how it ought to be interpreted.”⁴⁸⁹ In saying this, he acknowledges implicitly the role of the *Graduale Romanum* in

486. “Introduction” in the *Lectionary for Mass*, n. 4, xiv.

487. See Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, 64-105.

488. *Ibid.*, 303-355.

489. Irwin, *Context and Text*, 96.

establishing a context for the hearing of the gospel and, we would add, for the eucharistic action as well.

The *Graduale Romanum* enhances and completes the liturgical context by adding to the responsorial psalm and gospel acclamation given in the Lectionary, the introit, offertory and communion antiphons with their respective psalmodies. The context woven by these chants casts the proclamation of the gospel and the eucharistic action in a particular theological light immediately perceptible to those who are attentive to the unity underlying the liturgy's changing patterns and configurations.

The Propers of the Mass were not determined by a systematic attempt to develop a doctrinal or psychological theme. The true unity of the texts is rather to be found in the sacramental mystery which they surround. Every Mass is the feast of our Redemption through the Death of Jesus and of His Exaltation unto glory as the Lord. This is also the heart of the Ecclesiastical Year. Time and eternity, earth and heaven, man and God meet in this central event which is the turning point of human history.⁴⁹⁰

This study has approached the Proper Chants of the Paschal Triduum with a specifically theological, and therefore spiritual, intent. The annual celebration of the Paschal Mystery in the Triduum, and the theologically contingent weekly and daily celebrations of the Paschal Mystery as they unfold

490. Damasus Winzen in the Foreword to Aemiliana Löhr, *The Mass Through the Year*, trans. I. T. Hale (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1958), vii.

in the course of sacred time, are the source, the matrix and the expression of a true liturgical theology. If, as we said in Chapter One, “theology emerges from the font of liturgical experience,”⁴⁹¹ then the chants of the *Graduale Romanum* are in no way foreign to the *theologia prima*. They are as integral to the *lex orandi* as the euchological texts of the Missal and the order of readings provided by the Lectionary. In consequence, the chants of the *Graduale Romanum* contribute to the articulation of the *lex credendi*, shaping its expression and serving as a living vehicle of its transmission.

The proper chants of the Paschal Triduum contained in the revised *Graduale Romanum* function either directly or indirectly as a theological source. They function as a theological source directly when they are sung integrally as laid out in the *Graduale Romanum*, or sung selectively in conjunction with the corresponding chants of the *Graduale Simplex* or with equivalent settings in the vernacular.⁴⁹² They function as a theological source indirectly when they are the norm by which the liturgical and theological adequacy of other musical compositions is measured, and when they are the fertile ground from which new compositions for liturgical use emerge, adapted to the particular needs of

491. Vasilieios, Archimandrite, *Hymn of Entry*, 11.

492. Paul F. Ford’s English version of the *Graduale Simplex* is worthy of note: *By Flowing Waters* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1999). *The American Gradual*, adapted and edited by Bruce E. Ford (Hopkinsville: St. James Music Press, 2001) adapts the melodies of the *Graduale Romanum* to English words.

contemporary worship and yet marked by an organic continuity with the past.⁴⁹³ In both instances, a thorough knowledge of the *Graduale Romanum* is the *sine qua non* of the liturgical musician or composer serving within the Roman Catholic tradition.

The proper chants of the Paschal Triduum are normative in the present reformed liturgy at three levels: (1) at the level of their biblical content and of the contingent liturgical hermeneutic, (2) at the level of their liturgical idoneity, and (3) at the level of their theological significance. The interest of the present study of these chants is therefore not limited to the relatively few communities in which they are sung integrally.

The greatest limitation of this study is that it cannot replace liturgical experience. Liturgical theology is, in the final analysis, a gnostico-sapiential discipline. To be grasped in the fullness of their theological and spiritual density, the proper chants of the Paschal Triduum have to be sung and heard in their liturgical context, and allowed to resonate within the wider context of a life congruent with the *sacra menta paschalia*, a life indelibly marked by the

493. “In their approach to a new work, composers should have as their motive the continuation of the tradition that provided for the Church a genuine treasury of music for use in divine worship. They should thoroughly study the works of the past, their styles and characteristics; at the same time they should reflect on the new laws and requirements of the liturgy. The objective is that ‘any new form adopted should in some way grow organically from forms already existing’ and that new works will become a truly worthy part of the Church’s musical heritage.” MS, n. 59.

victorious sign of the Cross, “a life in which God is sought and praised.”⁴⁹⁴ To sing and hear the proper chants of the Paschal Triduum in this way is to experience the liturgy as the Church’s own theology, and as the power of Christ’s glorious Cross, the “tree of life” (Rev 22:2), flourishing even now amidst “thorns and thistles” (Gn 3:18). As the Church celebrates the liturgy, “the river of the water of life, bright as crystal flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb” (Rev 22:1) quenching the thirst of those who sing and of those who listen.

494. Magnus Löhrer, “Il modello gnostico-sapienziale della teologia,” 31.

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