

“Drawing on his experience as both a practicing church musician and a scholar, Cheung Salisbury deftly explores the relationship between worship today and its historical antecedents. He asks the important question of how worship, in each age, has appealed to the senses, what its function has been, and what it might still be. This fascinating and interdisciplinary work, which will appeal to people of faith or of none, impressively imparts insights from history, music, and liturgical practice in order to help us understand why we worship, what happens when we do, and what it is for. Cheung Salisbury shows us that, although the form of worship may have undergone change in different ages, its performative function is as relevant as ever, the constant thread being the objective of prayer and praise to God and the innate necessity for human beings to engage in God-directed activity.”

Rev. Dr. Jonathan Arnold
Chaplain and Senior Research Fellow
Worcester College, Oxford

Matthew Cheung Salisbury

Hear My Voice, O God

Functional Dimensions of
Christian Worship

A PUEBLO BOOK

Liturgical Press Collegeville, Minnesota

www.litpress.org

A Pueblo Book published by Liturgical Press

Cover design by Jodi Hendrickson. Photo: Dreamstime.

Excerpts from documents of the Second Vatican Council are from *The Documents of Vatican II, with Notes and Comments by Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Authorities*. Walter M. Abbott, S.J., General Editor. © 1966 by the America Press. Used with permission.

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture texts in this work are taken from the *New Revised Standard Version Bible* © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

© 2014 by Order of Saint Benedict, Collegeville, Minnesota. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, by print, microfilm, microfiche, mechanical recording, photocopying, translation, or by any other means, known or yet unknown, for any purpose except brief quotations in reviews, without the previous written permission of Liturgical Press, Saint John's Abbey, PO Box 7500, Collegeville, Minnesota 56321-7500. Printed in the United States of America.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Salisbury, Matthew Cheung.

Hear my voice, O God : functional dimensions of Christian worship /
Matthew Cheung Salisbury.

pages cm

"A Pueblo book."

ISBN 978-0-8146-6307-3 — ISBN 978-0-8146-6332-5 (ebook)

1. Liturgics. I. Title.

BV176.3.S25 2014

264.009—dc23

2014000347

*To students, past and present,
who have helped to ask the questions.*

Contents

Acknowledgments	ix
Introduction	xi
1. “Full and Active Participation”	1
2. The Liturgical Movement	25
3. Reformations and the Council of Trent	55
4. The Later Middle Ages	88
5. “A School for the Lord’s Service”	118
6. The Time of Jesus and the Early Church	139
Epilogue	158
Index	161

Acknowledgments

I am grateful for many discussions with students and colleagues, past and present, who encountered many of the questions posed in this book in their own studies, and who have helped me along in the task of writing. My own first explorations of liturgy and worship, guided by the late Professor Andrew Hughes and Fr. Daniel Donovan, are a point to which I often find myself returning, and I owe much to their teaching. I have been grateful for the support and encouragement of Professor John Harper and Dr. Sally Harper, whose AHRC-funded project *The Experience of Worship in Late Medieval Cathedral and Parish Church*, at Bangor University, was the source of much valuable reflection. A conversation with Mike Riley was the starting-point for the present exploration. For astute guidance and swift passage through the Press I thank Hans Christoffersen, Lauren Murphy, Colleen Stiller, and Patrick McGowan.

Dr. Daniel Grimley and the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Arnold have been patient and supportive colleagues in many ways. My wife, Dr. Jennifer Rushworth, in addition to serving as Italian translator, has helped untiringly in many more ways—editorial, critical, and domestic—to bring this work to completion, and deserves a proper holiday.

Oxford
St. Jerome, 2013

Introduction

Lex orandi, lex credendi

The law of prayer is the law of belief.

The title of this book draws upon the first verse of Psalm 64: “Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer.” It establishes clearly the axiom that worship and prayer are addressed to God. The imperative mood identifies the action desired on God’s part, and it suggests that the human mind has ways of expressing itself which are appropriate and comprehensible to its Divine Author. This is a complicated undertaking. There have been countless efforts to express how and why human attempts to address the transcendent succeed or fail. St. Augustine (d. 430), trying to establish some of the parameters, writes thus about the nature of hymns, from which we may derive an approach to the organized worship of the church more generally.

Do you know what a hymn is? It is a song in praise of God. If you praise God without singing, you are not offering a hymn. If you sing but do not praise God, that is not a hymn either. If you praise something else, something unconnected with the praise of God, then, even though you are singing praise, you are not singing a hymn. A hymn implies three things: it must be sung, it must consist of praise, and the praise must be offered to God. The praise of God, when sung, is called a hymn.¹

Augustine’s unequivocal definition may seem overly legalistic, but it is lucid, and it assumes that praise sung to a transcendent God is effective. By contrast, Ludwig Wittgenstein (d. 1951) held that the transcendent and the mystical were in fact inaccessible through

¹ *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the Twenty-First Century*, vol. III/20, *Expositions on the Psalms 121–150*, ed. Boniface Ramsey, trans. Maria Boulding (New York: New City Press, 2004), 490.

language and human expression: the limits of language, he argued in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, were the limits of the world.² Anything addressed beyond the world was inexpressible.

Wittgenstein's proposition is evidently not understood to be the case by those who employ human language to praise and pray to a deity: language in this case is an opportunity for intersection between human experience and divine totality. Worship challenges the boundaries between the world and the transcendent. It also gives rise to the aphorism given above, *lex orandi, lex credendi*: the law of prayer [is] the law of belief. Christians understand that the teaching of the church is clearly presented in a special way in their forms of worship, and that worship is the unique, privileged means through which the church and its many members enter into a dialogue with God.

Aside from the second part of this introduction, which considers the concept and practice of worship in the present day, this book is about a time when the vast majority of people in the West were Christians, and when the vast majority of Christians went to church. Why the church itself should exist is a related question to the establishment of the function of worship, because the point of the church, at least as it was understood until quite recently in the popular imagination, has not been to be one of a host of charitable organizations doing good in the world, or to help individuals explore their own relationship with the divine: in fact, the point of the church was to offer collective praise and thanksgiving to God. If this book's title seems surprisingly individualistic, recall that many of the texts of the psalms are expressed in the first person (for instance: "I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart" [Ps 9:1]), and that interiorized faith, throughout history, was often articulated through such forms.

Worship accepts (following our title) that God can *hear* the voices of the faithful, including one's own *individual* voice, and that God necessarily exists. This is not a book about the sociological functions of religion; rather, it is about (and tries to depict through several historical episodes) the life of the church and how liturgy

² Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, proposition 5.6 (London: Routledge Classics, 2001), 68.

has functioned within the beliefs, doctrines, and practices of a people of faith. It is not about the mechanics of the precise forms of worship which have been observed; rather, it is about interrelationships between form and function, which will prove especially interesting when either form or function may change.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

Faced with a world in which the worship of the past and present continues to resonate deeply, it is the aim of this book to enable students of a wide range of disciplines, together with those who have an interest in the history of the Christian church, to consider in particular the *functional dimensions* of worship, meaning the hermeneutic or significative functions or, more simply, what Christian worship has *meant* to its contemporaries across the centuries.

This task seems at first rather unnecessary, for it may be obvious in any given scenario what worship may have meant: its role should be clear from its cultural context and, more fundamentally, from what we can extract from our personal experience and knowledge of the church, liturgy, music, and culture. Yet even (and perhaps especially) within an intentionally Christian context, there is a tendency to assume that we know and understand the rationale, the motivations, and the understandings that buttress the liturgical practices of Christians of all epochs, because it is all too easy to equate present-day practice with that of any other historical period, and thereby equate a known and comprehensible scenario with one that is less well understood, which has perhaps emerged from another culture, churchmanship, or theology. This is not at all an unusual situation, because most human activity is remarked upon and framed within an existing realm of experience. But to try to pigeonhole in this way some historical act of worship—for instance the baptism of an infant—into our own limited realm of experience, even if we have experienced many infant baptisms in our own age, is to mistake the proverbial cuckoo's egg as one of our own brood. Christian worship, despite its apparent similarity of form from age to age (another illusion!), has in fact undergone many changes in respect of its function.

It is perhaps forgivable that misconceptions about the unbroken continuity of the signification of worship rites should occur.

Worship, by its very definition, is symbolic and expressive of wider truths which are implied or conveyed by acts of memory and repetition, whether these be from Scripture (the universal constant in Christian worship) or part of the very extensive extrascriptural network of liturgical text, music, movement, and symbol, including hymns and songs as well as other texts in the liturgical tradition, some of which have their roots in the earliest written evidence of Christian worship, others in successive movements and documents.

Worship illustrates doctrine, but it also helps to influence it. Yet as I have argued, we have a tendency to understand symbols in ways which we already comprehend, which is one of the reasons for misunderstanding. It is true that Christian worship is enacted to and for “the greater glory of God,” but to be satisfied with such a definition alone is to underestimate vastly its significance both mystically, spiritually, and culturally.

This volume is neither a history of Christian worship nor an explanation of the niceties of ceremonial. Nor is it a survey of the habits of some particular worship tradition. Books on liturgical topics tend typically to be divisible into two categories: those dealing with historical and philological matters (pitched mainly at academic specialists); and those with a pastoral dimension (generally associated with “liturgy” or “liturgics” as an applied discipline in ministerial formation or continuing education). Rarely do these specialized, challenging approaches suit the needs of readers who are not seeking an in-depth analysis of the mechanics or theology of worship. The present volume, by contrast, seeks to diminish the distance between these methods, exploring both aspects. It seeks, rather, to engage with the cultural and intellectual context of worship which serves as a middle ground. It is a guide for students and other non-specialist readers to the changing *functions* of Christian worship in historical perspective (What does worship *do*? What is its purpose?), an important element whose wider understanding is fraught with often indefensible stereotypes that are rarely challenged. For instance, the “Eucharist” as a concept in the year 2013 usually takes a form essentially similar to the one used in the year 1313, but the pluralistic conceptions of the rite (anything from the reenactment of a simple shared meal to a solemn High Mass in which the divine is literally made present) and all the potential cultural

functions these conceptions imply in the twenty-first century would be almost unrecognizable to a fourteenth-century Christian. "Active participation," as conceived in the present day, is a very new concept, previously unheard of in Christian history except at its inception.

It is all too clear that this short volume cannot hope to explain in any depth the contemporary significance of the multitude of rites of worship, not least because the fullest such explanations need to come from specialists in the arcane knowledge of each period. I focus, then, on the development and practice of daily public prayer, and on the Eucharist, necessarily branching away from these central rites where other elements demand attention. The chapters of this book are episodic and incomplete by nature, arranged in reverse chronological order to avoid teleological conclusions on the part of author or reader. Each chapter focuses on a few developments in order to draw out both the unique features of a historical period and to allow a particular scenario to be discussed in depth. It is, therefore, a study in historical perspective, a series of scenes from a wider happening. But it is not a comprehensive history. It focuses on expressions of Western Christianity, leaving (for the most part) antecedent Jewish forms and the unique perspective of the Eastern churches to more qualified hands.

Some conclusions, though, are constant. In the most general sense, this book will argue that while worship has always been a central activity of Christian life, its pragmatic functions have changed substantially, a point which is often missed in favor of oversimplification of the purpose of worship. Examples are legion: early Christian worship had the veiled effect of bringing a persecuted minority community together; the medieval Mass allowed for a surprising degree of personal devotion, but also nonverbal participation from the laity, bringing them into a wider communion with the rest of the praying church, the body of Christ; nineteenth-century ecclesiologists saw in the restoration of the grand ceremony, music, and decoration of the medieval church an opportunity to recapture in their own time the fervent piety of the Middle Ages. The title of the book emphasizes the independent and colorful voices of each community studied, the particular significance of individual experience, the stress on "functional"

dimensions highlights the fact that in all cases worship is performative, that is, that its performance “does something,” one element of worship that is a constant.

It will be helpful to consider the connections between the *form* of worship and its *function*. Broadly speaking, the form of a rite normally corresponds to its function: for instance, the texts and actions involved in baptism are representative of the (implied) cleansing and washing spiritual function of the rite. Sometimes, without the function apparently changing, a form may be expanded or amended, although never contrary to its purpose. This change happens often through the extension or embellishment (“troping”) of a text or melody, or through increased complexity of the undertaking, as in the appearance of processions in the later Middle Ages. It is primarily with changes in the function of the rite that substantial changes are made to the form. An innovation in form may appear, for instance, when the function of a rite demands that a lay audience be able to understand it, or to be instructed in their faith by it, a principle which was the motivator for the widespread use of vernacular language by sixteenth-century reformers and equally by mid-twentieth-century developments in the Roman Catholic Church. In the Middle Ages the reception of consecrated bread and wine at the Eucharist by the celebrating priest alone was a consequence of the principal lay obligation of *being present* at the sacrifice. Where possible in subsequent chapters the relationship between form and function will be underlined.

“Liturgy” and “worship” are both terms that have been defined in many different ways, sometimes at cross-purposes. It is worth discussing what they mean in the context of this book. “Worship” is derived from the Old English *weorðscipe*, worth-ship, a word that encompasses both the act and the worthiness of the recipient. What is worth worshipping, and how worship is done, are inexhaustibly variable: in the words of twenty-first-century spiritual director Rachelle Mee-Chapman, “In emerging churches, all things are worship: everyday conversation or watching kids skateboard and seeing their devotion to practice, passion, and skills.”³

³ Eddie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger, *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures* (London: SPCK, 2006), 222.

“Liturgy” has its origin in the Greek word *leitourgia*, meaning the “work of the people,” with an emphasis on the corporate nature of the activity. It has come, however, to be associated particularly with the organized and regulated rites by which worship is enacted, sometimes even to the celebration of the Eucharist alone (i.e., the “Divine Liturgy”). The so-called “liturgical” churches (broadly speaking Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans, and others who follow fixed, historically guided forms in their public activities) are sometimes distinguished from the “nonliturgical,” i.e., those whose worship takes a freer or extemporized form. I would argue that this separation is not helpful. It gives rise to an artificial distinction between forms that are fixed and others that are not. In my view, “liturgy” and “worship” are broadly synonymous, as in John Harper’s definition: “liturgy embraces all the formal worship of a corporate Christian community.”⁴ Indeed, even among Christians who have sought to move away from tradition and precedent, the term “liturgy,” particularly with its inclusive etymology, is sometimes rehabilitated: emerging church leader Sue Wallace writes, “Liturgy and ritual do not have to be dirty words. They can be rediscovered, and if they are relevant and meaningful, they can be amazingly powerful.”⁵



This book’s constituent chapters, each of which treats a different episode in the history of the Christian church, will raise the following questions:

1. Why did Christians go to church? *Why worship?*
2. *What happened* to them there, substantively and otherwise, and how did they respond?

With these particular queries, as well as passages from contemporary theological and liturgical texts as a starting-point, the

⁴ John Harper, *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy from the Tenth to the Eighteenth Century: A Historical Introduction and Guide for Students and Musicians* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1991), 12.

⁵ Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 224.

reader will be encouraged to consider carefully the evidence for the functions of Christian worship.

“SPIRITUALITY,” MEGACHURCHES, AND THE “REFORM OF THE REFORM”: FUNCTIONS OF WORSHIP TODAY

The 2011 census in the United Kingdom suggests that just over ten percent of the population attend weekly church services, and a further twenty-five percent attend church at least once a year, apart from services such as baptisms, weddings, and funerals. The increasingly multicultural face of Britain means that Christian beliefs have been joined by those of many other theistic religions, especially Islam, whose adherents make up five percent of the population.⁶ Over a quarter of adults surveyed in 2007, of whom a slightly larger proportion were women, believed in “something,” but they were not sure what that “something” was.⁷ Church attendance in the United States is considerably higher, but regular worshippers are still a minority. In both countries, broadly described as Christian at least in heritage (59.3% of residents in the United Kingdom identify as Christian⁸), fewer people than ever before have any substantive knowledge of the Bible, Christian ideas or doctrines, or familiarity with organized worship, other than in its broadest objectives.

This state of affairs is precipitated by not only a disenfranchisement with the church on the part of formerly practicing Christians, but also the fact that as older generations die out, fewer and fewer people have had even infrequent exposure to Christian worship.

⁶ “Full Story: What Does the Census Tell Us about Religion in 2011?” Office of National Statistics, report, May 16, 2013, http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_310454.pdf. Accessed November 15, 2013.

⁷ Office of National Statistics, *Social Trends 40: Lifestyles and Social Participation*, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/social-trends-rd/social-trends/social-trends-40/social-trends-40—lifestyles-and-social-participation-chapter.pdf>. Sixteen percent of adults surveyed agreed with the statement “I am an atheist. The whole notion of a supernatural god is nonsense.”

⁸ “Percentage of the population with no religion has increased in England and Wales,” Office of National Statistics website, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/key-statistics-for-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/sty-religion.html>. Accessed November 11, 2013.

British surveys suggest that about 40 percent nationwide are “un-churched,” meaning that they have never attended church, even occasionally. This figure increases, up to 80 percent, in urban areas.⁹

The controversial and enigmatic utterance “God is dead,” issued by Friedrich Nietzsche in the late nineteenth century and further explored as a symbol of the growth of atheism throughout the twentieth, finds considerable support and confirmation in the fact that it is possible for someone in Western civilization (formerly termed “the Christian West”) to live a complete life, never having made a conscious choice to do so, with no need or desire to interact with religion (organized or otherwise) or with the transcendent. Civil weddings and secular funerals are uncontroversial and fulfilling replacements for their religious alternatives. Increasing burdens on time mean that Sunday, traditionally the day set aside for corporate Christian worship, is also in demand for family and community activities, and the “Victorian” observance of the Sabbath, restricting activities in favor of hallowing the day, is viewed as unreasonably strict. The ban on transacting business, until relatively recently upheld in part by Sunday shopping laws, has been lifted in many places.¹⁰

Despite the fact that Christianity retains some cultural and historical significance in the pluralistic, postmodern West, the diminishing congregations attending organized church services after a historically recognizable pattern appear to show that there is a decreasing appetite for worship of this sort and also, more generally, for organized religion. Worship might be seen as unnecessary, an opportunity for those with strong doctrinal views to proselytize, and to be intolerant of individualistic belief systems. It is also worth mentioning that in most Western civilizations, it is culturally acceptable and indeed sometimes desirable *not* to be a Christian. Aside from a sense of postcolonial shame over the “civilizing” influence

⁹ *Mission-Shaped Church: Church Planting and Fresh Expressions of Church in a Changing Context*, ed. Mission and Public Affairs Council, Church of England, 2nd ed. (London: Church House Publishing, 2009), 37.

¹⁰ In the UK (2013), while shops with floor-space less than 280 square meters may open at any hour of any day of the week, shops larger than this size may only open for six hours between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

of Christian practice in mission lands, the postmodern critique of institutions, doctrines, and systems, together with a florescence of alternative cultural practices that satisfy the community-cohesion and existential functions of religion, mean that the perceived top-down approach and endemic corruption of an institution that has outlived its time seem to outweigh any potential spiritual benefits. Present-day criticisms are legion for a church that despite its perceived high moral standpoint, fixed codes of behavior, and self-identification with minorities and the oppressed, is apparently depersonalized, sexist, intolerant, and dominated by a strong, wealthy, powerful hierarchy. Secular society, by contrast, appears to encourage a radically inclusive, open-minded approach that is not narrow minded enough even to suggest there may be one ideal belief system. Because for practicing Christians and outside observers alike, the church is identified with and is most obviously manifest in its public acts of worship, a similar judgment is passed on the services of the church which may appear to be an incredible amount of time spent worshipping an invisible, nonimmanent deity, propounding a strong moral message, and excluding outsiders while also being framed with archaic language, historically dubious texts, and esoteric symbolism. Thus worship traditions associated with unpopular doctrinal positions are written off along with the perceived intolerance and inflexibility of their practitioners.

Perhaps because the expected pattern of traditional Sunday worship is associated with a high level of doctrinal control and fixity, interest in internalized searches for the transcendent (explorations which often identify with the term “spirituality” rather than “religion”) is catered to by many new forms of service within traditional and less traditional frameworks that are designed to introduce “seekers” to the Christian faith, as well as in new forms of Christian gathering that aim to bring together believers and seekers alike who have other common interests, for instance nightclub culture or a place of business. It is also the force behind the outpouring of interest in alternative forms of “spirituality” outside organized religion. An almost unimaginable variety of forms of enquiry (and worship) have emerged, in part perhaps because the element of seemingly limitless choice is one of the ever-present

principles of present-day living, and in part because people's reasons for going to church may differ in as many ways as exist styles of worship. This profusion of choice makes it difficult for us to conceptualize why anyone in the past, let alone all Western Christians, would have bothered to adhere to such an inflexible obligation, even if a concern with the practice of worship or to historical forms of liturgical text, music, action, or theology is often in the remit of those who are concerned with related forms of cultural activity.

It is with the somewhat pessimistic scenario presented earlier in this introduction that we begin to explore the functionality of worship through a brief look at the present day.

Why worship? Responding to the first of our principal questions posed in the case of the former "Christian West," we must recognize that a very large proportion of the population do not attend church, and in fact many of the two billion people who identify as "Christian" are not in the habit of attending public worship on a regular basis. But this is a result of the sentiment behind the real answer to the question: never before the twentieth century have Christians "gone to church," or *not* gone to church, for as many different reasons, influenced by as many different strands of spirituality identifying as Christian, employing as many disparate forms of public worship as can be imagined. Because to be Christian is broadly but completely defined as being a follower of Jesus Christ, whether this allegiance falls within the remit of any of the enormous range of organized subcategories of institutional Christianity appears to be immaterial, as does the traditional imperative to attend some form of worship in community, no matter how much liturgical theologians insist that corporate gatherings are the authentic expression of the body of Christ, the church. For perhaps the first time, it is possible to identify as a Christian without an allegiance to one or another organized form of worship.

The second of the principal questions may be answered for the present day in as many ways as the first. *What happens in church?* It follows that in addition to the wide variety of mainline denominational styles of worship, many of which have existed historically, there exist a very large number of styles of Christian community

gathering which give the impression and effect of ritualized worship, while not avowedly subscribing to the idea that a repeatable, organized event, however extemporized in execution, can or should be equated with “ritual” of any sort. Never has there been a wider range of worship styles, but many can be associated readily with the priorities which have existed throughout Christian history: the glorification and praise-giving to a merciful God, the sharing of word and sacrament, and the building up of a community descended from the disciples of Christ.

It is also worth mentioning that the state of present-day Christianity resembles, in several ways, that of the disciples of Christ who celebrated the rites of the nascent church in the years before the Christian religion became legal in AD 313, the “Peace of Constantine.” It is certainly true that practicing, confessing Christians, like their counterparts 1700 years ago, are in a small minority and sometimes discouraged by external parties from practicing their faith. There can be a “high social cost” (as opposed to a threat to life) that discourages Christians from exercising, for instance, the public ministry of evangelism. It is also worth mentioning that in many forms of church, small group/cell group ministry, similar to the small-scale meetings of the persecuted church in members’ houses, are popular, and the meal-sharing of the Alpha Course, also sometimes held in private homes, could be said to resemble the shared meals of the earliest Christian communities.

The failure of forms of worship to be explicable, relevant, or appealing to consumers of religion and spirituality leads Eddie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger, authors of a study of “emerging churches,” to describe a situation where “the majority of current church practices are cultural accommodations to a society that no longer exists.”¹¹ Similarly Paul Heelas and Linda Woodhead, in *The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion Is Giving Way to Spirituality*, write that the “great historical bond between Western cultures and a Christianity whose characteristic mode is to make appeal to transcendent authority is dissolving.”¹² The Church of England’s document *Mission-Shaped*

¹¹ Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 19.

¹² Paul Heelas et al., *The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion Is Giving Way to Spirituality* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2005), 10.

Church makes very clear that in its own heartland, Christianity is “in a critical missionary situation.”¹³ Yet in the face of this apparently resolute rejection of *organized* religion, many people continue to aspire to a relationship with the transcendent.

Although a sense of disenfranchisement with church institutions, including worship services, has been widely associated with the later twentieth century, as early as 1906 the liturgical scholar and Anglican religious Walter Howard Frere recognized that many people who liked ceremonies and rituals in some places tended to despise them in a church context, an observation which in the early twentieth century was linked most closely to disputes over churchmanship (particular stances on doctrines and practices) in the Church of England, an institution which since its foundation has been forced to contend with great variety in both doctrine and liturgical practices, the former often in a complicated relationship with the latter. “Ceremonial is at one moment the outcome of doctrine,” wrote Frere, “and at another the inculcator of it, at another a perverter of it.”¹⁴ It may be this very close association to doctrine, another element that is fixed, that diminishes the attraction of organized worship, particularly when forms of service deliberately underline the central precepts of faith, for instance in the recitation of one of the Creeds, the foundational professions of faith, by clergy and congregation, or even in the collective singing of hymns. By its very definition, liturgy helps to inculcate and give expression to belief, and the practice of ritual without the associated sentiment is next to meaningless. Yet there is a strong attraction to formulating and practicing habits and ritual actions, and this tendency, linked with the materialistic, tangible nature of human experience, as well as the appeal of the transcendent, means that the search for the spiritual can be manifested in different material ways.¹⁵

¹³ *Mission-Shaped Church*, 12.

¹⁴ Walter Howard Frere, *The Principles of Religious Ceremonial*, 2nd ed. (London: A.R. Mowbray, 1928), 10.

¹⁵ See Austin Farrer, *The Glass of Vision* (London: Dacre Press, 1948), and John Macquarrie, *A Guide to the Sacraments* (London: SCM Press, 1997).

One expression of human spirituality particularly prevalent at the present time is found in the phrase “spiritual and not religious.” But what does this mean? To have a hankering for the transcendent without being a confessing member of an organized body? Or to accept Jesus or some other manifestation of a deity as a teacher/moral guide? Or merely to embrace the obscure, profound, mysterious aspects of inward faith? Or to be safely relativistic and say that all religions are one/equally valid? Or does it mean that the speaker would rather not rule the option out? It is difficult to define this phrase because it, like other post-positivist concepts, escapes a single definition. Is it just a “turn of phrase” rather than an identity? (In succeeding chapters dealing with periods before the twentieth century, “spirituality” will refer not to this modern phenomenon but to the wider Christian spiritual enterprise.)

The pervasive and influential postmodern critique which emerged in the late twentieth century, described by Jean-François Lyotard as “incredulity towards metanarratives” or, put more simply, a devaluing of systems, teleologies, and the modernist dialectic of the earlier part of the century, has exerted a predictably chaotic influence on fixed forms of worship. It is a product of the postmodern experience that choice, and plurality, are prioritized because metanarratives which supply a clear prerogative to a single course of action have been rejected. Given that up to eighty percent of the population is “unchurched,” that is, with no present or prior Christian ecclesial identity or experience, people who are seeking spiritual experience are in a position where they need to “shop” for religious experiences that suit them, an extended analogy put forward by Bryan Spinks in his book *The Worship Mall*. Not only must they choose the Christian religion (whatever that may mean), it is now necessary to choose from a wide and potentially bewildering array of worship styles, organized denominations, demographically defined church groups, and spiritualities in a way that Christians of an earlier period, even those from the times of reform, would have found surprisingly subjective and individualistic.

Some mainstream churches have recognized the need for “inculturation,” or the adaptation of Christian rites to align with existing

cultural norms, not only in the case of the developing world, where Western conventions may not be suitable expressions for communities with very different worldviews,¹⁶ but also in their customary environments, where, in the words of the York Statement, “*Down to Earth*” *Worship*, issued by a group of Anglican clergy and scholars in 1989, “a lack of inculturation has fostered both the cultural alienation of some Christians and an over-ready willingness of others to live in two different cultures, one of their religion and the other of their daily life.”¹⁷ This observation very clearly identifies a critical issue, one which has occupied most of the designers of the new patterns for worship which have emerged in the last fifty years or so: that the language, or the style, or the music, or the physical appearance of worship (both in the Western world and outside) bear very little resemblance to any equivalents in the secular world. For some this is not an issue, as the material and the transcendent necessarily take different forms (the often-mocked archaism of language identified with the King James Bible and the Book of Common Prayer has also been described as a special linguistic way of identifying the sacred) but for others it poses a real problem for inclusivity, and the “worship mall” includes a vast range of options for shoehorning religion into different cultural environments.

One of the most prevalent and successful options “shoppers” have, and one which corresponds reasonably well to previous incarnations of church, but which embraces the habits and preferences of the twenty-first-century faith environment is the so-called *megachurch*, defined by Spinks as a Protestant church averaging 2,000 attendees in weekend services.¹⁸ Megachurches often craft “seekers’ services” on Sundays. These services are accessible to

¹⁶ For the Roman Catholic Church in particular, see the works of Anscar Chupungco, i.e., *Liturgies of the Future: The Process and Methods of Inculturation* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989).

¹⁷ In David Holeton, ed., *Liturgical Inculturation in the Anglican Communion, Including the York Statement “Down to Earth” Worship* (Cambridge, UK: Grove Books Ltd., 1990), 15:9.

¹⁸ Bryan Spinks, *The Worship Mall: Contemporary Responses to Christian Culture* (London: SPCK, 2010), 63.

outsiders and are designed for their needs. They are often the church's primary offering. In this scenario, worship serves as a means of introducing the Christian story to people with little experience of church. Timothy Wright, of the Community of Grace, Arizona, in the United States, writes that seekers' services must be well signposted both literally and in the service sheet, prioritizing "presentation over participation, celebration over the cerebral, and intimacy over awe," allowing those who are less familiar with the practices of worship as well as the basic principles of Christianity to be clearly presented.¹⁹

Music is often used to make those unfamiliar with the form of the service comfortable, to allow them to sit back and enjoy rather than participate actively, and visitors are welcomed warmly and presented with information about the church to take home: if a collection is taken, often visitors are told not to contribute but to supply their contact details instead, so that the church can contact them personally.

The Church of England's document *Mission-Shaped Church* highlights very clearly that even geography, irrespective of spirituality, is no longer a major determinant of congregational identity. Communities, it says, are now built around "leisure, work, and friendship," and consequently, "the gospel has to meet people where they are."²⁰ The adoption of a religion, and the choice of that religion, is an open choice in a quasi-consumerist scenario where the idea of free choice is central, particularly when identification as a committed Christian seems more important. Similarly, the writers of *Mission-Shaped Church* believe that the missionary scenario of the Church of England, together with the responsibility of that body, is to be an all-encompassing, national church. This means that fresh expressions of church—for instance, worship or prayer meetings centered around a school, place of work, or shared interest—may be more suitable to the reception of new worshippers than a traditional "congregation."²¹ Yet for some there are clear disadvantages

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 81.

²⁰ *Mission-Shaped Church*, 6.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 23.

in expressions of “church” that do not involve a building or a Sunday service also called “church”: as Gibbs and Bolger write, “the desire for church to be a meeting at a particular place and time is hard to shake,” and without these components the service, however committed, seems to lack legitimacy. Equally critics wonder whether “fresh expressions” are capable of being sustained by Christian communities which also need to serve their existing congregations: if existing forms of worship appear to “work,” there is little motivation or incentive to change.

“Blended” or alternative worship incorporates elements from a variety of sources to suit particular circumstances, and is associated with the pastiche culture of postmodernity. Here worship embraces plurality, doubt, nonbelief, and nontraditional churchgoing through stimuli familiar from the wider world or from art and music. Gibbs and Bolger separate such forms from the megachurch and “young adult services” targeted at the “millennial” generation, which are described as repackaged forms of traditional church.²² Jonny Baker, one of the leaders of Grace, an alternative congregation in London, appropriates the idea of “curation” from the art world as an alternative to “leading worship.” Curators of worship can be, he says, “midwives, DJs, brokers, fools, middlewomen, encouragers, magpies.”²³ The idea at the heart of alternative worship is to take “a vulgar, secular space and change it in some way.”²⁴ There are many similarities between the external form of traditional worship and the stimulus of art and music in these experimental forms of curated worship, not so much in their appearance but in the way that they are apprehended by the participant. “You have a sacramental theology,” writes Baker, “making connections between the presence of God and very ordinary day-to-day stuff. I really love that, particularly as often worship can seem so divorced from everyday life experience.”²⁵ Similarly Nic Hughes, one of the founders of the British church Vaux, writes, “Christianity provided

²² Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 45.

²³ Jonny Baker, *Curating Worship* (London: SPCK, 2010), 9.

²⁴ Baker, xiii, 24.

²⁵ Baker, 141.

the exo-skeleton, both physically and conceptually. It became a resource, a vast playground to re-pattern faith."²⁶ Spinks supplies some further examples of "blended" worship: the "U2charist," which features the music, full of Scriptural references, of the well-known band; the "Duke Ellington Mass"; and the "Hip-hop Eucharist," which applies the vocabulary of hip-hop culture to the celebration; as well as the liturgy of St. Gregory of Nyssa, San Francisco, a church which has adopted artistic elements from a wide range of world cultures and refashioned liturgies into new but recognizable forms.²⁷

In the millennial Roman Catholic Church, with the election of Pope Benedict XVI came a series of liturgical developments popularly known as "the reform of the reform," a reference to the very considerable changes initiated by the Second Vatican Council and, forty years later, seen as ripe for further revision and clarification. Pope Benedict eased restrictions on the use of the pre-Vatican II order of service for the Mass, strongly encouraged the cultivation of skill in the traditional plainchant of the church and, most noticeably, endorsed the retranslation into the vernacular of the authorized Latin edition of the liturgy, meaning that Catholics who had been celebrating Mass with the same texts since they were first translated after the council were asked to learn and embrace new translations seen by some as more faithful to the Latin, less reductive, and generally richer in imagery, allusion, and style.

There is a noticeable similarity in both the emerging churches and in churches which normally adhere to the ecclesial conventions of earlier times, namely to find alternatives to forms of worship that make assumptions about the pre-existent belief of the people who attend. Worship, like all church activity, is seen as necessarily missional, bringing both the Gospel and the present-day practices of the church into the open.

Many Christian writers have contemplated the association of material things with the divine, and seeing and hearing remarkable things (for instance perhaps, the description of the New Jerusalem

²⁶ Quoted in Baker, 100.

²⁷ Spinks, 5-6.

in the Revelation of St. John) can be associated in Scripture with the idea of beauty. Beauty in the material world can also be equated with divine beauty, the complex things in creation viewed in conjunction with unknowable divine truths that are simultaneously too complex and simple to be comprehended in any other way. Light and beauty are synonyms for the divine, as in the Creed: God from God, Light from Light. In the same way if God is unknowable, he is reflected in things that can be known. A critical example of this is the manifestation of God in Christ, God made man, manifest in the Eucharist and in the proclaimed Word. God may also be seen in the beautiful things of creation which, when helping to form the fullness of the liturgy, also point out and reflect the Creator of all things, praising him for his goodness and celebrating all that God's people have been given, from everyday conversation and watching skateboards to the grace received in the sacraments. This interpretation of liturgical function may hold true in the present-day world, but it has also been true from age to age in varied and exciting ways, as the subsequent chapters will illustrate.

Chapter 1 explores the roles played by the liturgy in the interactions between the church and the modern world, particularly through the lens of the Second Vatican Council and of the liturgical reforms of the twentieth century in the Anglican Communion. Central to this vision is the realization of "full and active participation" of the laity in liturgical worship. In chapter 2, the groundwork for this participation is seen in the Liturgical Movement and the Romantic ideals behind the restoration of historic practices, particularly in the restoration of plainchant and medieval ceremonial, as well as the reprioritization of the sacraments within the life of the worshipping church. Chapter 3 considers the effects of changing theological emphases, both Catholic and Protestant, on the worship of the Western church as for the first time it was divided. Liturgy became a means of expressing the faith of a congregation, as well as building it up through exegesis. In Chapter 4, worship is seen as the single most important occupation of the church, the focus of clerical and lay religious life, and a source of aesthetic inspiration in the later Middle Ages. The interiorization of devotion

in this period meant that the liturgy served as the setting for personal acts of piety. Chapter 5 considers the implications of the legal and official status of Christianity, including the development of large-scale institutions (monasteries) built around a schedule of worship. Chapter 6 returns to the scriptural and patristic record to examine later claims of authenticity and divine institution for the sacraments and other worship of the church. In each of these episodes of Christian history, the forms, settings, and theology of worship will be introduced, and their varied functions explored.

“Full and Active Participation”

Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy.

—Sacrosanctum Concilium, II.14

Imagine entering a Sunday service of the twentieth or twenty-first century taking place in a Catholic church or in one of the mainline Protestant churches. It is quite likely that your imagined service, whatever your own experience of church may be (or may not be), will involve some dialogue between the presider and the congregation (and, perhaps more obviously, that there will be a congregation), as well as some other opportunities to contribute to the service, possibly through singing hymns, and almost certainly through the reading of the Bible. This familiar (or less familiar) scenario is, quite predictably, based on the assumptions that the congregation should be made to feel included, that inclusion mainly comes from verbally participating or being verbally addressed, and that attending the service will help the congregation to grow in their own faith through the sharing of the good news of Christ, through the dialogue and the ritual, and perhaps through the sharing of bread and wine. Yet these assumptions about what constitutes “participation,” and particularly “full and active participation” date back, in terms of their impact on worship, only to the middle part of the twentieth century, when, despite outwardly presenting a face of continuity, the Christian church dramatically changed the presentation of its worship with a wide range of follow-on effects.

At first glance, the period in question does not appear to be one that was ripe for reform. The spectacular changes in the worshipping practices of the several Christian churches around the time of the European Reformations, as they went their separate ways, can be seen to have been an inevitable result of deep-seated theological and social change. It might be more surprising that similarly dramatic change—in both the forms of worship and their influence on Christian people—took place in the twentieth century, a time of comparatively little religious upheaval and dwindling religious practice, after over three hundred years of relative fixity in which Roman Catholics, Anglicans, and Lutherans (being the main “liturgical” churches) had settled into reasonably established forms, some of which (the Roman Catholic Mass, for instance, and nearly all of the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England) remained in the precise form they had had at their inception.¹ Yet it was precisely the settled nature of worship that stimulated an ecumenical council of the Catholic Church whose first priority was a reseating of the liturgy within the paradigm of the modern world.

Here it is worth recalling the balancing act between form and function presented in the introduction. Though prescribed forms of worship had remained relatively fixed, the same could not necessarily be said for their desired function, particularly in a changed world where levels of literacy, education, and religious instruction were dramatically different than three hundred years previous. Among many other influences, forms of communication, emerging art forms, worldwide travel, and changed living habits significantly altered the way that people, including Christians, were interacting with the world around them. The intellectual world had been shaken by the effects of the Enlightenment, when the value of long-held ideals and the methodology of scholarship came into question, and no assumption was safe from doubt, thanks to the inception of “natural philosophy” (the original name for science) and the social acceptability of skepticism. In the early twentieth

¹ More or less unrelated developments (except as a means of contrast) were taking place in the Reformed and Free Churches which, in trying to come to terms with their function and doctrine, were continuously developing new forms of worship.

century, two world wars had forced society to consider seriously its morals. Worship was the public and accessible face of a religion whose mysteries were still opaque to the laity, but control of its forms was important to ecclesiastical authorities and also consequently an area for experimentation and political statement, for instance during the English Protectorate and in nineteenth-century France.²

This discontinuity between form and function did not go unnoticed by contemporary commentators. In the early days of the twentieth century, the noted liturgical scholar (and architect *manqué* of Anglican worship) Walter Howard Frere, variously Anglican Bishop of Truro and founding member of the religious order of the Community of the Resurrection, proposed a three-part cycle of liturgical development which he believed could encapsulate and explain, as well as perhaps predict, the storied development of liturgy throughout Christian history. At the beginning of the cycle, patterns of worship went through a stage of experiment and innovation. In the second part, established forms experienced consolidation and settlement. The final stage was a period of stagnation and decay.

Writing in 1906, Frere believed that the church was in the third of these stages, with liturgy no longer suitable to purpose. He believed that some of the admirable functions of worship for the faithful, such as edification and the inspiration of awe, were insufficiently exploited, in part because of the inappropriateness of the archaic forms in use and the improvised modifications to them. The present-day theologian John Macquarrie has echoed these sentiments, writing that rituals quite predictably have a tendency “to become more elaborate,” but that such accretions can harm the overall effect of the rite (an opinion shared by the medieval writer Thomas Aquinas, explored in chapter 5). Macquarrie writes that sometimes, “words and ceremonial . . . of the sacraments need to be revised and even drastically cut back.”³

² See Katharine Ellis, *The Politics of Plainchant in fin-de-siècle France* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2013).

³ Macquarrie, *A Guide to the Sacraments*, 63.

In the mid-twentieth century, in fact, encouraging active participation necessitated putting, for the first time, many of the words of the liturgy in the mouths of the faithful. The Tridentine Low Mass,⁴ because the text could be spoken entirely by the celebrant, appeared to carry no participative value for the hearer, even if it was beautifully written and full of devotional language.

In the face of diminishing adherence to religion and criticisms of ecclesiastical authority, as well as the enormous growth of alternative forms in the wide range of new churches designed to suit every taste and requirement, churches of the 1960s were using forms of worship not really updated since their inception. They faced a changing theological consensus about the operation of worship within the life of the church and the agency of the individual. These problems were compounded by the continuing threats of atheism and scientific rationality.

The twentieth-century state of affairs owed much to the Liturgical Movement (discussed more fully in chapter 2), a pan-Western series of influences which strove to return worship to a place of centrality in the activities of Christians, to prioritize the celebration of the Eucharist above devotional practices, and to inspire deep personal spirituality. The consideration of all of these factors by liturgical scholars contributed to a very clear desire for change—to bring the faithful into the enactment of worship. The effects of this desire were felt in efforts to encourage “active participation” and in ways which sought to provide edification, comfort, and strength through shared experience in the rites of the church. The next chapter of the present volume will end with a discussion of the papal *motu proprio*⁵ of Pius X, *Tra le sollecitudini* (1903), a document of guidance issued by the Vatican that recognizes the growth and diversity in sacred music at the beginning of the twentieth century, but one whose implications also lie beyond the purview of musicians. Pius’s text is also the origin of the phrase “active participation” as it relates to liturgy, a phrase taken up enthusiastically by

⁴ An ordinary Catholic Mass according to the rite used between the Council of Trent and the 1960s.

⁵ A document issued by the Pope’s own volition.

the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy promulgated by the Second Vatican Council and one which will have a significant effect on this chapter of history, because it helped to form a new consensus on the function of the liturgy across all the Christian churches.

What was this phrase, “active participation,” taken to mean? Many twentieth-century liturgical architects were of the opinion that it meant that everyone should regularly have a part to speak or sing, either to make them feel included, or to inspire them to believe what they say, or to empower the voice of the individual Christian. This inclination toward “participation” is reflected in many of the new developments in worship.

WHY WORSHIP?

One important consequence of secular twentieth-century society was that for the faithful, time spent worshipping in church was the main opportunity for shared spiritual activity as well as an opportunity for the entire Christian community to gather in one place in which to share their lives and experiences in a world where, increasingly, other forms of gathering were not guaranteed to do this. In churches where the sacraments (and especially the Eucharist) were highly valued, the mid-twentieth century saw these rites being more explicitly framed as acts of community through which the grace of the sacraments was bestowed on the faithful, who could respond independently and actively by having a role in the celebration. The teaching function of the rites, which now more explicitly included the hearing of logical sequences of Scripture arranged in a revised lectionary, and regular affirmations of belief such as the recitation of one of the creeds, affirmation of faith at such events as baptisms and the reinvigorated Easter Vigil, was another central benefit. All of these principles were aided, in the Roman Catholic Church, by the return of almost all public worship to vernacular language.

WHAT HAPPENED?

In all churches, worship became increasingly interactive, with the “full and active participation” of all the faithful, understood as their taking on actions, words, and artistic expressions according to

their abilities and talents, considered to be crucial. In order for the rites to be readily understandable by the widest range of people, and so that all worshippers could make some contribution, they were framed in language and artistic forms with which they could interact and to which they could contribute (in some cases, for the first time); this meant the widespread introduction of the vernacular in place of the Latin liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church, and a diminution of archaic formulations and complicated symbolism for other liturgies already in the vernacular. For Catholics, this was a watershed in two senses of the word: it was a turning-point in the history of lay participation and education about the liturgy, but it was also a point of division, one of the main areas of disagreement among the Church Fathers at the Second Vatican Council.

In the Church of England and Protestant denominations, the effects of the Liturgical Movement had also produced a stronger sense of sacramentality, mainly evidenced by an increase in the celebration of the Eucharist (and in receiving both the consecrated bread and wine by the faithful). In the twentieth century there developed means of expression, following the new theological consensus, which found their voice in orders of service. This sacramental emphasis, and an increased desire for the laity to become spiritually and emotionally engaged with the liturgy, comprised the strongest common ground with earlier periods, especially when the fundamental forms of worship were being so substantially changed.

THE DAILY ROUND OF WORSHIP

Almost every church service one might attend at the present time includes at least some points where there is a dialogue between the clergy and the congregation, often in a call-and-response format in which the minister's part (i.e., "The Lord be with you") is to encourage a response (both verbal and spiritual, such as "And also with you/And with your spirit") from the faithful, in effect putting words of faith in the mouths and hearts of the congregation. This is, to a significant extent, an inheritance of the culture of participation represented by Vatican II, of which it was a part. Such dialogues existed at an earlier time, but rarely were they fully engaged in by

congregations. Even within services in the vernacular, no one assumed that a sixteenth-century congregation with no knowledge of the precise texts to be used, no mass-produced prayer books or missalettes in the pews to consult, and little religious education to draw upon, would have known the responses in the first place. The tables in English churches bearing the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments in English bear witness to a desire to put at least those texts in front of the congregation. While services of the Word, such as Morning and Evening Prayer, had retained the essential form (the recitation or singing of psalms, canticles, dialogues, and prayers) in which they emerged during the Middle Ages, in practice these services (where not said exclusively by clerics) had often been dialogues between minister and parish clerk. From an early stage the offices of Morning and Evening Prayer had been the most frequently celebrated in Anglican and Protestant churches, but by the twentieth century there was greater encouragement to prioritize the Eucharist. The largest proportion of text in this service, too, was spoken in monologue by the minister, and even when the congregation received Holy Communion in the form of bread and wine it was not customarily an opportunity for further verbal participation beyond a token amount.

Eucharistic liturgies in the Roman Catholic Church (until 1964) had had a more or less fixed form for nearly four hundred years, beginning with the Tridentine Missal, which had replaced most of the earlier locally-practiced variants of the medieval Mass in the sixteenth century. Concerning the precise form of the service, as with the form of the Eucharist in the Middle Ages, there were dialogues at sung celebrations between the celebrant and others present who sang the Ordinary and the Proper of the Mass, respectively the parts of the Mass which remained from service to service, and those parts which were "proper" to the service of the day.⁶ Ordinarily, though, these were chanted by clerics in choir or by lay singers, with the remainder of the congregation engaged almost exclusively in silent prayer or devotion. Attendance at Mass was

⁶ That is, texts specifically written to be performed on a particular day.

accompanied by the spiritual benefits of those devotions (forgiveness of sins, blessing, the opportunity to share in a sacrament instituted by Christ) as well as the sacrifice offered by the celebrant on behalf of the congregation and any particular intentions (which dedicated the service to some special subject of care such as a deceased relative). For Catholics, the expression “to hear Mass” had a different meaning before Vatican II—a rather literal one.

Despite the very different theological and liturgical priorities of the Church of England, and the dramatically different form of service, a similar state of affairs had prevailed as to the eucharistic rite: it too had remained largely unchanged since the inception of the Book of Common Prayer, and its form, coupled with long exhortations commanded to be read by the priest, had not been designed to be heard (or interacted with) by congregations with modern priorities and spiritual education. The introduction in 1946 of the Shorter Prayer Book had made some strides in amending the language and the degree of congregational participation. But the emergence of this book, a successful product of an otherwise failed movement for liturgical revision, had not come without a great deal of argument.

PRAYER BOOK REVISION AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Since its separation from Rome in the sixteenth century the Church of England has always, almost by definition, accommodated a vast array of theological and liturgical preoccupations, ranging from the faith which led John Wesley from Anglicanism to what would become Methodism, to the sacramentality of William Laud, Lancelot Andrewes, and the Oxford Movement. Despite this, before the twentieth century there had been a minimum of substantive change in the actual forms of the Office and of the Eucharist since the introduction in 1549 of the Book of Common Prayer compiled by Thomas Cranmer, the first Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, a state of affairs perhaps exacerbated by the need to have any changes legislatively approved, owing to the fact that the church remained Established, that is, part of the state with the sovereign at its head. Despite the desires and efforts of the Ritualist camp (those who hoped to introduce more elaborate and some-

times historical forms of worship, especially around the Eucharist), and indeed those who had sought a more prescriptively and inflexibly Protestant expression of belief, the Prayer Book remained the only authorized form of worship in the Church of England. By the dawn of the twentieth century it was felt in many circles that there should be some revision of the Prayer Book, either to settle for a plurality of theological interpretations of the same observance or, conversely, to allow for the elaboration of rites. The Ritualists, in introducing new textual and aesthetic stimuli to the liturgy, some of which particularly appealed to the senses, used a sense of historic faith and piety as one justification: as Walter Frere (writing some time after the inception of the Liturgical Movement) put it, "Many a poor sinner can express his trust in his Divine Saviour far better by kissing his crucifix than by attempting to expound his . . . doctrine of the atonement."⁷ Further, on the subject of participation, Frere was at pains to point out that Latin Matins (as practiced in the Middle Ages) provided a "special task" to complete (whether it be reading a lesson or singing the intonation of a psalm) for each of forty or fifty persons, compared with the relatively staid and nonparticipatory dialogue of Prayer Book Mattins and Evensong.

Not all such ceremonial, doctrine, and aesthetic embellishments of the Prayer Book rite would perhaps seem overly Catholic now: among these "popish" traditions, many of which are now typical of Anglican worship, were crosses and candles on the altar (which might be made of stone rather than wood); "Roman" vestments such as chasubles and mitres; the mixture of water and wine in the chalice; reservation of the consecrated elements of the Eucharist; and celebration facing east rather than facing the congregation. Although all of these traditions are now common, none had been known in the Anglican Church until they were "restored" by the Ritualists. None existed by explicit authority in the Prayer Book of 1549, the revision of 1552, or the Restoration book of 1662. The justification for the use of such ornaments as were thought

⁷ Frere, *Religious Ceremonial*, 6–8.

“popish” was the so-called “Ornaments Rubric” which appears thus in 1662: “Ornaments . . . shall be retained, and be in use as were in this Church of England in the second year of the reign of King Edward the Sixth,” which they interpreted to mean the unaltered ceremonial practices of the unreformed English church. The paucity of rubrics elsewhere left a great deal open to interpretation, since most of the Ritualists’ activities were not expressly banned.

In his pamphlet *Protestant Ritualists* (1872), the liturgical scholar and Catholic convert William Maskell described the Prayer Book order for Holy Communion as “a pure jumble, unlike any ancient liturgy which was ever used in the Christian church. The compilers appear to have cut the Sarum ordinary and canon of the mass into pieces, and mixed the fragments with bits taken out of the Middleburg [prayer book] and other forms compiled by protestants abroad, and then taken them, as it were hap-hazard, out of a bag and stitched them together.”⁸

On the subject of ceremonial, Maskell wrote that the Ritualists

are content to be suffered to hold their particular opinions . . . to claim no higher authority than that which sends their next door neighbour into his pulpit to contradict them in every possible way . . . to be allowed to put on copes and chasubles and make “high celebrations” upon the strength of an old rubric which refers to the second year of Edward VI, although they well know that the vast majority of English ministers are no less borne out when they wear unseemly surplices and say the office of communion with every mark of carelessness.⁹

A Ritualist, for Maskell, “admits the lowest evangelical to his communion table because he has no authority to rest upon or to appeal to beyond his own private judgment.”¹⁰ Maskell was certainly right at least in the sense that the Thirty-Nine Articles,

⁸ William Maskell, *Protestant Ritualists*, 2nd ed. (London: J. Toovey, 1872), 30.

⁹ Maskell, *Protestant Ritualists*, 13.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 30.

adherence to which all clergy and persons in positions of church responsibility had to affirm, explicitly forbid some of the Ritualist practices. Initial deliberations about the potential reform of the Prayer Book, which took place around the turn of the century, were marked by conflicts between post-Tractarian Anglo-Catholics who wanted vestments and a greater emphasis on the sacraments, and the Protestants who favored a deliberate move toward “low church” and the explicit denial of more Catholic doctrine. It is interesting to note that the fathers of the Oxford Movement in fact preferred the Prayer Book to Roman practices, although this view did not continue to be held by their successors.

Seeking to find a new consensus, in 1904 the British Prime Minister Balfour initiated a Royal Commission which, in 1906, reported that “the law of public worship is too narrow for the religious life of the present generation”: in effect supporting an increase in ceremonial and tradition. Until 1927, several committees of the Convocations of the Church of England discussed the areas of potential renewal and change in the Prayer Book, especially where new developments in ritual and liturgy were concerned. The most important misgivings had by the evangelical party were related to the reservation of the Sacrament and, within the eucharistic rite, the introduction of an *epiclesis* (invocation of the Holy Spirit) during the consecration of the bread and wine, as well as moving the prayer of oblation to follow the prayer of consecration (as had been the case in the 1549 rite), both of which were attempts to incorporate historical forms of Eucharistic prayer into the service.

Despite a continued lack of agreement on the part of many bishops, including some who resisted any change at all,¹¹ the proposed revisions to the Prayer Book were approved by the Church’s own governing bodies and passed by legal requirement to the Houses of Parliament, where it became clear that the revised volume failed

¹¹ Walter Frere compares this type of dispute with the situation in the early church, namely that “[it] was more occupied with carrying out its worship than in discussing, describing, or even formulating it.” *The Principles of Religious Ceremonial*, 2nd ed. (London: A.R. Mowbray, 1928), 41.

fully to satisfy either Anglo-Catholic or evangelical interests. Although legislation to introduce the revised form was introduced and passed in the House of Lords, it failed on two occasions, the last in June 1928, to pass in the House of Commons, amid serious criticism that the Established church, including the bishops who had supported it in the Lords, was condoning “popery.” The 1662 Prayer Book, which had been issued after the Restoration of the monarchy, remained the principal authorized form of service in the Church of England until the last twenty years of the twentieth century, and remains the only one authorized on a permanent basis, although after the Second World War, Holy Communion increasingly replaced Morning Prayer as the principal Sunday service. As in the case of the Roman Catholic Tridentine Mass, questions began to be asked about the useful engagement of the laity, and the Alternative Service Book (1982) and its successor Common Worship (2000) adopted a eucharistic rite very similar to the new Mass of the postconciliar Catholic Church.

Numerous free churches (those free of institutional oversight, unlike the Church of England) had enjoyed rapid growth and permissive legislation had allowed them to take root in Britain.¹² Similar developments were taking place around the world, and in America, where the “frontier” tradition of worship was strong, camp meetings and other immersive forms of worship, preaching, conversion, and initiation had long been a key part of the Christian experience. These traditions led notably to the “Crusades” of Billy Graham, evangelistic gatherings in large venues such as theatres, stadiums, and arenas, which encouraged people to become Christians, and the growth of charismatic forms of congregational praise associated with many of the denominations developed in twentieth-century America. The very name given to “Pentecostal” worship celebrates the gifts of the Spirit within the people of God, and some of these are made manifest in worship: speaking in tongues, preaching the inspired word, healing by prayer and laying on of hands, and diverse, emotive, and lively music of all sorts. In many of these tradi-

¹² See Roger Scruton, *Our Church: A Personal History of the Church of England* (London: Atlantic Books, 2012).

tions baptism is normally reserved for older children who have reached the age of reason and adults. The regular pattern of worship often includes Communion celebrated from time to time, in a non-sacramental framework of understanding. The congregation is expressly encouraged to participate in many of the forms of worship exercised by the free churches, especially in the form of call and response, affirming statements made by preachers, and participating in the musical or prayer life of the church.

LITURGICAL RENEWAL IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

The most significant cause of liturgical change, however, was the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II for short), an ecumenical (that is, universal rather than inter-denominational) gathering of Roman Catholic leaders which was called for by Pope John XXIII in order that the church might consider seriously the future of its interactions with the modern world. The council, convened between 1962 and 1965 in four sessions, sought to engage with the new theological stance that embraced a church moving together with the experiences of a changing social, political, and cultural environment, as well as with the desire to be inspired by the writings and practices of the early church. Unsurprisingly, the liturgy was one of their greatest priorities.

The council's deliberations had been informed considerably by the already mature thought stemming from the Liturgical Movement, including *Mediator Dei*, a *motu proprio* of Pius XII issued in 1947 that celebrated the renewal of the liturgy and sought to provide some guidance on how continuing revitalization should be carried out.¹³ Article 7 of *Mediator Dei* points out that "duty obliges Us [the pope] to give serious attention to this 'revival' as it is advocated in some quarters, and to take proper steps to preserve it at the outset

¹³ *Mediator Dei: Encyclical of Pope Pius XII on the Sacred Liturgy to the Venerable Brethren, the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, Bishops, and Other Ordinaries in Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See*, The Holy See website, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_20111947_mediator-dei_en.html. Accessed November 15, 2013.

from excess or outright perversion.” The enormous enthusiasm for restoring accompaniments to worship, such as plainchant, as well as some of the more inventive efforts at renewal, demanded a strong tone:

We observe with considerable anxiety and some misgiving that elsewhere certain enthusiasts, over-eager in their search for novelty, are straying beyond the path of sound doctrine and prudence. Not seldom, in fact, they interlard their plans and hopes for a revival of the sacred liturgy with principles which compromise this holiest of causes in theory or practice, and sometimes even taint it with errors touching Catholic faith and ascetical doctrine.¹⁴

Pius upheld the church’s obligations of teaching and encouraging the faithful, emphasizing the fact that worship had to be both inward and outward, but that “the chief element of divine worship must be interior.”¹⁵ It is consequently “an error . . . and a mistake to think of the sacred liturgy as merely the outward or visible part of divine worship or as an ornamental ceremonial.” Worship, therefore, did not function without the conscious and directed action of the mind and heart “in quest of the perfect life,” and true sanctity was not satisfactorily attained except through the liturgy and sacraments observed by the church in communion with Christ its divine Head. The effect of the eucharistic sacrifice and of the other sacraments (response to God’s love in Christ and transformation by grace) derives

first of all and principally from the act itself (*ex opere operato*). But if one considers the part which the Immaculate Spouse of Jesus Christ [a name for the church] takes in the action, embellishing the sacrifice and sacraments with prayer and sacred ceremonies, or if one refers to the “sacramentals” and the other rites instituted by the hierarchy of the church, then its effectiveness is due rather to the action of the church (*ex opere operantis Ecclesiae*), inasmuch as she is holy and acts always in closest union with her Head.¹⁶

¹⁴ *Mediator Dei*, Article 8.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Article 24.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Article 35.

Pius was careful to point out that within the life of the church, and in the rite itself, together with the devotions of the faithful, nothing was at odds with anything else, and all contributed to the action:

Article 36. In the spiritual life, consequently, there can be no opposition between the action of God, who pours forth His grace into men's hearts so that the work of the redemption may always abide, and the tireless collaboration of man, who must not render vain the gift of God. No more can the efficacy of the external administration of the sacraments, which comes from the rite itself (*ex opere operato*), be opposed to the meritorious action of their ministers of recipients, which we call the agent's action (*opus operantis*). Similarly, no conflict exists between public prayer and prayers in private, between morality and contemplation, between the ascetical life and devotion to the liturgy. Finally, there is no opposition between the jurisdiction and teaching office of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and the specifically priestly power exercised in the sacred ministry.

It remained necessary to affirm the place of Latin as the language of the Western church:

Article 60. The use of the Latin language, customary in a considerable portion of the Church, is a manifest and beautiful sign of unity, as well as an effective antidote for any corruption of doctrinal truth. In spite of this, the use of the mother tongue in connection with several of the rites may be of much advantage to the people. But the Apostolic See alone is empowered to grant this permission. It is forbidden, therefore, to take any action whatever of this nature without having requested and obtained such consent, since the sacred liturgy, as We have said, is entirely subject to the discretion and approval of the Holy See.

Latin, therefore, was unquestioningly retained. This being true, *Mediator Dei* did not shirk from criticizing some of the anachronistic or overtly historical reinterpretations of the liturgy, which certain segments of the church had tried to readopt:

Article 62 (on anachronism) . . . It is neither wise nor laudable to reduce everything to antiquity by every possible device. Thus, to cite

some instances, one would be straying from the straight path were he to wish the altar restored to its primitive tableform; were he to want black excluded as a color for the liturgical vestments; were he to forbid the use of sacred images and statues in Churches; were he to order the crucifix so designed that the divine Redeemer's body shows no trace of His cruel sufferings; and lastly were he to disdain and reject polyphonic music or singing in parts, even where it conforms to regulations issued by the Holy See.

It was the principal duty of the faithful to consider what was taking place before them, and to align their thoughts and prayers with those of the Mass. It was in this way that their participation in the rite could be most fully realized:

All the faithful should be aware that to participate in the eucharistic sacrifice is their chief duty and supreme dignity, and that not in an inert and negligent fashion, giving way to distractions and day-dreaming, but with such earnestness and concentration that they may be united as closely as possible with the High Priest.

Sometimes the laity were able to take part in the celebration in a substantive way:¹⁷

(article 105) They are to be praised who, with the idea of getting the Christian people to take part more easily and more fruitfully in the Mass, strive to make them familiar with the Roman Missal, so that

¹⁷ The laity were also reassured that the Office was not an obligation for them, although it could offer some benefits: "[The recitation of the Office] is the duty only of the clergy and of religious. The laity have no obligation in this matter. Still, it is greatly to be desired that they participate in reciting or chanting vespers sung in their own parish on feast days. We earnestly exhort you, Venerable Brethren, to see that this pious practice is kept up, and that wherever it has ceased you restore it if possible. This, without doubt, will produce salutary results when vespers are conducted in a worthy and fitting manner and with such helps as foster the piety of the faithful. [article 174] It is Our wish also that the faithful, as well, should take part in these practices. The chief of these are: meditation on spiritual things, diligent examination of conscience, enclosed retreats, visits to the blessed sacrament, and those special prayers in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary among which the rosary, as all know, has pride of place."

the faithful, united with the priest, may pray together in the very words and sentiments of the Church. They also are to be commended who strive to make the liturgy even in an external way a sacred act in which all who are present may share. This can be done in more than one way, when, for instance, the whole congregation, in accordance with the rules of the liturgy, either answer the priest in an orderly and fitting manner, or sing hymns suitable to the different parts of the Mass, or do both, or finally in high Masses when they answer the prayers of the minister of Jesus Christ and also sing the liturgical chant.

One of the implications of Pius's new doctrines in the spirit of *Mediator Dei* was the authorization of the introduction of the vernacular in the acts of the church, including sacraments, outside the context of the Mass. In 1948 he established the Pontifical Commission for the Reform of the Liturgy, which oversaw revisions of the liturgical calendar, a re-institution of the Easter Vigil and the substantial modification of the rites of Holy Week. It was with this atmosphere of liturgical experimentation and renewal that, almost immediately upon his election, in January 1959, Pius's successor Pope John XXIII announced his intention to summon an ecumenical council, among the concerns of which was the further revitalization of the liturgical rites of the church.

In advance of the council, new editions of the Breviary and Missal were issued in 1961 and 1962 respectively, with the hope that the current liturgical services would reflect the recent changes, but with the understanding that even more fundamental principles were to be discussed at the council. The work of a Preparatory Commission on the Liturgy solicited input from clergy, church administration, and academic authorities, almost all of whom were agreed that the basic edificatory and catechetical function of the liturgy, which had long been missing, should be restored. Respondents to this consultation were widely in favor of the continued introduction of the vernacular, the stripping-back of accretions onto the basic forms of service which had been acquired over the years, the inculturation of the liturgy in the various social and cultural circumstances in which the church found itself, and the active participation of the faithful in the rites which sustained them. One of the largest setbacks to fundamental change was the

continued desire in many constituencies for Eucharistic services, at a minimum, to be in Latin.

The liturgy was the first subject to be discussed in the sessions of the council, and the governing document for matters relating to worship which was produced (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy) was overwhelmingly approved by the council, with all but four of the over two thousand voters in favor of adopting it.

Sacrosanctum Concilium illustrated the strong will of the church to renew the liturgy so that it remained faithful to principles but benefits the faithful in pastoral and educative ways, and it was in the liturgical reforms that the *aggiornamento* or “bringing up to date” of the Catholic faith initiated by Pope John affected the laity most strongly. Some of its key objectives were to assist the faithful in growing and learning as well as offering the sacrifice of praise, and for the liturgy to reflect and appeal to all of humankind. These intentions were in agreement with some of the other priorities of the council, such as the revival of Scripture as an active and living part of Catholic life and the affirmation, in the fourth chapter of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium* (one of the other governing documents issued by the council) of the priesthood of the faithful, exercised through the congregation joining and adding to the sacrifice offered by the celebrant of the Mass. The faithful were encouraged to take up this universal priesthood through their participation in worship and sacraments.

The principles in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* follow on from the basic understanding that Christ is always present in the church and especially in its liturgy; not simply in the Eucharist as sacrament, but also in the work and spiritual sacrifice of priests and in the inspired word of God expounded in Scripture. Consequently, “In the liturgy the sanctification of man is manifested by signs perceptible to the sense, and is effected in a way which is proper to each of these signs From this it follows that every liturgical celebration . . . is a sacred action surpassing all others,”¹⁸ a state-

¹⁸ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, in Walter Abbott, *The Documents of Vatican II* (London, 1966), 141.

ment which appears to uphold the prioritization of public worship and the Eucharist which had been one of the central preoccupations of the nineteenth-century liturgical revival. It was critical, then, that the laity should be exhorted to attend all services “knowingly, actively, and fruitfully,” not neglecting private prayer or devotion, but with minds focused on the act of celebration. For all, “the very nature of the Liturgy” demands “full, conscious, and active participation,” for this is “the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit.”¹⁹ In addition to attentiveness and verbal participation at appropriate times, it was pointed out that “at the proper times all should observe a reverent silence.” This was to be distinguished from passivity and from overeager verbalization, and perhaps to illustrate the fact that active participation need not necessitate constant responses from the congregation. In terms of their own spiritual engagement, and in order to exercise their own priesthood, laity were also reminded that they “should not be [present] as strangers or silent spectators,”²⁰ but to “learn to offer themselves too,” along with the priest. It was active participation that allowed the liturgy to be instructive, since “the visible signs used by the liturgy to signify invisible divine things have been chosen by Christ or the Church.” The rites themselves were to have “a noble simplicity . . . short, clear, and unencumbered.” As concerned the communion of the congregation, it was suggested that it was best for the faithful to receive the sacrament in elements consecrated at the same Mass rather than bread and wine previously reserved, presumably in order that the rite maintained its functionality and simplicity.

In a concession to those who had been insistent about the retention of Latin during the consultations prior to the council, the historic language of the church was ordered to be preserved in the liturgy itself, but the limits of what was permissible in the vernacular were to be extended considerably, first in the declamation of readings, then in prayers and chants, according to the prescriptions

¹⁹ Abbott, *The Documents of Vatican II*, 144.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 154.

of the “competent territorial authority.”²¹ This echoes the desire and the need to open “the treasures of the Bible” through more systematic reading, as well as a meaningful and relevant homily.²² There remained a need for a “warm and living love for Scripture.”²³ The laity were reminded that it was essential to attend both the Liturgy of the Word—the first half of the service comprising readings, the homily, and prayers—as well as the Liturgy of the Sacrament. This was ordained in an attempt to prevent the congregation arriving in time for the consecration, a practice which had developed from the Middle Ages onward as a result of the laity placing great emphasis on being able to see the moment of consecration and not on other parts of the service, such as readings or prayers which they could not understand explicitly.

Among other significant changes to worship, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* decreed that the ancient practice of concelebrating the Mass (celebrating with more than one priest taking an active role in the consecration) should be returned to active use. There was also a desire for the “prayer of the faithful” to be represented in the Eucharist in a permanent, recognized form. Concerning other sacraments, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* also reinstated the catechumenate (a regulated course of study) for adults preparing for baptism and confirmation, and insisted that extreme unction (the anointing of the sick) was not to be reserved for those who were dying, but to be shared with those who might be in danger. Other sacraments and sacramentals were also to be reviewed, revised, or expunged.

As part of the program of improvements which would make possible the edification of the faithful, it was stipulated that there should be compulsory education in the principles of the liturgy for seminarians and others charged with the education of Catholics. The pontifical universities and similar institutions were also encouraged to carry out advanced research on liturgical matters. Music was described as “of immeasurable value” to the experience of the liturgy. It was stated that where possible, the laity should

²¹ *Ibid.*, 150.

²² *Ibid.*, 155.

²³ *Ibid.*, 147.

participate actively in it, preferably using plainchant. Similar instruction for professional and amateur church musicians was also desirable: “Composers and singers . . . must also be given a genuine liturgical training.”

Satisfying all these desires in practice throughout the worldwide Catholic Church took a very long time, but certain of the principles could be put into practice with little difficulty. The proposed *motu proprio* of Paul VI under the title *Primitiae* gave specifics of the norms to be “put into effect immediately,” and confirmed that the additions or changes to authoritative volumes imposed at that time were to be seen as authentic, and that no one on his own merit alone was permitted to make any further modification.²⁴ The first of the new norms, and the most wide-ranging, was the instruction of the faithful in the “biblical, theological, and pastoral principles” relating to the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.

In particular, it was stipulated that the chants of the Proper and Ordinary of the Mass were not to be read alone by the celebrant. Similarly the prayer said quietly by the priest after the offertory, known as the “secret,” as well as words previously said under the breath during the Eucharistic Prayer and inaudible to the congregation, were to be spoken clearly. Prayer “of the faithful” in the vernacular was to take a form, as yet undetermined, but it was intended that “the celebrant or the deacon express the intention and the people respond.” The readings were to be delivered in the vernacular, facing the people, and from the lectern. Confirmation was to take place during Mass, and was to be preceded by the renewal of baptismal promises. As for the Divine Office, it was held that the entire Breviary needed to be overhauled in order to be satisfactory for modern use. It had suffered from centuries of stagnation as well as accretions to its fundamental contents. As the council stated, the Office was valued (“sharing in the greatest honor accorded to Christ’s spouse”), but not currently appropriate for recitation other than in religious communities. Where possible,

²⁴ The draft text of *Primitiae* may be found in the Appendix to Piero Marini, *A Challenging Reform: Realizing the Vision of the Liturgical Renewal, 1963–1975*, ed. Mark R. Francis, et al. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007).

the Office was to be recited together and its texts to be sung as much as possible. The vernacular was allowed for those “for whom the use of Latin constitutes a grave obstacle.”

SOME IMPLICATIONS OF VATICAN II

For the liturgy, the Second Vatican Council could only be described as an entirely fresh start, both in what was involved in carrying it out and in the way it was perceived to operate for Catholic Christians. Because, as the constitution had it, liturgy was the summit of Christian activity and the source of edification as well as the source of holiness. Its modification meant that Catholics were very carefully and seriously reconsidering the functions of worship in the outward-facing activity of the body of Christ, the church, and in the relationship between that body and the minds of the faithful. What the council fashioned was a church whose liturgy placed the capacity for response back in the hands of individual worshippers to affirm their faith, to experience the riches of Scripture and tradition, and an environment in which the worship of congregations became cohesive with the concerns and the cultural backdrop of the ethnic and political communities in which they existed. These effects were not felt in the Catholic Church alone, but were the source and inspiration for continued thoughtful consideration of the role of worship within spiritual life and in the modern world across all Christian denominations where “active participation” might have seemed to be lacking.

The continuing task of revision of the texts incorporated a re-writing and reorganization of the eucharistic liturgy with much inspiration taken from the practice of the early church. When these rites were complete they were translated into a wide range of vernacular languages so that, for the first time, Catholics were worshipping with words in their own customary language. Despite the restrictions placed on the use of the vernacular as described in the constitution, it had become clear that only a complete translation of the rite would be suitable to the imperative for congregational understanding and participation.

The rediscovered centrality of the Bible as the inspired Word, as well as the consequent emphasis on the regular hearing and study

of Scripture, encouraged Catholics and other Christians to prepare lectionaries for worship that embraced more of the Bible and made selections from a wider range of books. This allowed for extensive diversity of reading over a three-year period and continuous readings over a number of days from the same prophetic and historical books of the Old Testament. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, in more ways than this, represented an acceptance of some principles associated with the Reformation: the priesthood of all believers had been one concept strenuously resisted by Catholics, as had the need to participate “knowingly, actively, fruitfully.” But the adoptions went in both directions: the heretofore perceptibly hesitant stance of the Catholic Church on Scripture which had been a criticism of the Reformers and their descendants had been replaced with a very useful lectionary adopted in part by Protestants as well. The Protestant churches began to consider whether the congregation’s role in services was sufficient. Furthermore, the Eucharist began to displace other forms of service in the “liturgical” denominations after Vatican II, and (in the Anglican church, for instance) the Eucharistic vestments, reservation of the Sacrament, as well as the appropriation of some Catholic liturgical forms and rituals such as the Easter Vigil and the Paschal Candle, all encouraged by the Ritualists of an earlier century and long favored by Anglo-Catholics, began to enter the mainstream. Many churches adopted multiple forms of the Eucharistic Prayer, many of which were suitable for particular seasons, circumstances, congregations, and types of worshippers. The very words and structures of the Eucharist, as seen in forms authorized after the 1960s in the Anglican and Lutheran churches, in addition to the understanding (however varied in specific theological interpretation) that the coming together of the community to consecrate and share bread and wine was the central event of the Christian week, both show the debt owed by the worldwide church to Catholic revision.

The Western churches began together to experience modern-language vernacular liturgies in a familiar idiom which brought the Word of God closer to the language of the community. The ecumenical International Consultation on English Texts was founded in 1968 in order to discuss and settle upon forms of the texts

commonly used in worship, in addition to the denominational groups which had already been set up to do this, including the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL), a Catholic group whose work had been adopted by others, including the Lutheran Book of Worship (1978). As women began to be ordained in the Protestant churches from the 1970s onward, amongst other concerns it began to be questioned whether referencing God exclusively in male terms was entirely appropriate.

Yet as the church universal was beginning to work out, in a remarkably unified fashion, how it should engage with the modern world, the modern world began to react against the church. Although it had been a long time since the vast majority of Western families attended Christian services, the 1960s saw the widespread sentiment of disenfranchisement with institutions.

The years before and after Vatican II were witness to a radical shake up of the *status quo* which captured the sacramental emphasis and the aesthetic of the Liturgical Movement of the previous century, and simultaneously looked forward to a world in which Christian worshippers changed from passive observers locked in their own internal devotions to active participants, soaking up the riches of the renewed, accessible liturgical rites which were a focus for community life, a source of exegesis, and a continuing means of grace. The attempted Anglican revision of the Prayer Book showed that liturgy represented a serious means of identifying one's particular stance. Vatican II inspired the church, both Catholics and others, to embrace elements of the modern world. They could not have galvanized the new forms of participation of the church in the world without the efforts at liturgical renewal and the rediscovery of origins which had their origin in the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. These developments form the substance of the next chapter.