

“This is a thorough reworking of an important book. The inclusion of scholarship, church teachings, revised translations and ecumenical voices from the past twenty-five years, added to an already substantial base of church tradition, makes this a significant revision. The addition of examples from liturgical history and the recently reformed euchology enhances and fleshes out key principles and premises. In an era when the blogosphere coverage of the liturgy often reflects ideology, division, and superficiality, this book lays out the terrain in a serene and careful manner. It is a book that deserves deep reflection and prayer.”

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Mount Angel Abbey and Seminary

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Huron-Lawson Chair in Theology  
Huron University College  
Ontario, Canada

“This new edition of the book covers the same ground as one would expect, but much more. Irwin ends up with a series of constructive invitations, as it were, not only for liturgical theologians but for all Christians made by the liturgy: ‘Be honest, be attentive, be open, be grateful, be hopeful.’ This new edition of Kevin Irwin’s *Context and Text* is of enormous value in helping us to respond to these invitations and so to worship more fruitfully. I cannot recommend it highly enough.”

— Owen F. Cummings  
Academic Dean and Regents’ Professor of Theology  
Mount Angel Seminary



*Kevin W. Irwin*

# Context and Text

A Method for Liturgical Theology  
Revised Edition



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To my colleagues in the Liturgical Studies Program at  
The Catholic University of America  
past and present



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## Preface

It is a truism to say, in any academic enterprise of research and scholarship, that we stand on the shoulders of our predecessors and mentors. As I offer my reflections on method in this book I realize that, rather than to stand on their shoulders, I continue to sit at the feet of those who have shaped my ideas and formed my thoughts about the meaning of what it means to celebrate the liturgy and to reflect on it in a theological way. My own professional training in liturgy was shaped in large measure by Benedictines, in the USA and in Europe, as well as by a number of Roman Catholic and ecumenical colleagues and dialogue partners (noted more fully and explicitly in the Introduction).

At the same time, I wish to acknowledge and thank the students whom I have taught for over forty years, both inside and outside of the classroom, for the observations and questions that are undoubtedly found on every page of this book. (“By your pupils you’ll be taught!”) Words cannot give due justice to James M. Starke for his extraordinarily competent assistance at every stage in (re)writing this book. I wish to put Hans Christoffersen and his colleagues at Liturgical Press in pride of place as I thank them for their kind invitation to revise this book.

My participation in the daily celebration of the liturgy is largely parish based with some involvement on campus and at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC, next to the campus of the Catholic University of America. I preside and preach regularly at these diverse liturgies, but with the constant of having assisted at parishes on a regular basis for years at a time. These experiences will likely come through in the pages that follow. At the end of my time in seminary and in my first years after ordination my experience of the liturgy was influenced by retreats spent at Benedictine monasteries. After leaving Fordham University and before coming to CUA

(1983–85) I was a member of the Benedictine community at St. Anselm Abbey, Manchester, NH, where the daily celebration of the Hours and the Eucharist formed me in ways that I presume on and experience daily.

On January 6, 2015 (the date of the *real* Epiphany solemnity) at eleven in the morning I pressed a key on my computer keyboard to send to a publisher a book-length manuscript that took me two years to write. I felt exhilarated. At two in the afternoon I was in my doctor's office and was diagnosed with leukemia. I felt devastated. The following ten months were filled with epiphanies of many types and the revelation that none of us is alone, despite the long loneliness of facing into cancer and what it might mean. In my case it means remission, which my doctor anticipates will continue for the rest of my life. But the disease also made me and loved ones (a very real "cloud of witnesses") reflect on the reality of death of which St. Benedict urged the monks, "keep death daily before your eyes" (*Rule of St. Benedict* 4:47). I write the final words of this book well aware that death and life are a daily struggle in our liturgies and in our lives, and that we know in faith that Christ's victory always wins. This is the heart of all liturgy and all real life. Then again, as Natalie Babbitt said in *Tuck Everlasting*, "Do not fear death, but rather the un-lived life. You don't have to live forever. You just have to live."

Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 2017

## INTRODUCTION

### New Contexts

The purpose of this Introduction is to indicate the rationale for the revision of this book (originally published in 1994) and to explain why and how the book's structure has been expanded and chapter contents enhanced. The focus here on "new contexts" applies to what has occurred in the intervening years with the publication and promulgation of additional new liturgical prayers, texts, and rites, the deepening research and nuancing in understanding what constitutes an appropriate *method* with which to engage in the study of the liturgy, and the discussion of what *liturgical theology* means within Catholicism and across denominational lines within Christianity.

#### Foundations

The term "method" is the key to this work. More specifically from a Catholic perspective, this is to ask how to understand and apply an appropriate method for the study of liturgy in general and liturgical theology in particular. Within Catholicism the indications given in Vatican II's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) 15–16 and 23, as well as in the Decree on Priestly Formation (*Optatam Totius*) 16,<sup>1</sup> are especially insightful and are particularly

1. Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (4 Dec 1963), [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19631204\\_sacrosanctum-concilium\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html); Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, Decree on Priestly Training, *Optatam Totius* (28 Oct 1965), [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decree\\_19651028\\_optatam-totius\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_optatam-totius_en.html).

compelling because they are part of the church's magisterium.<sup>2</sup> Central to these indications is a theological emphasis on the event of liturgy and reflection on it as a complexus of words and actions, some of which raise up elements from creation and the work of human hands. Such reflection is a crucial task in what follows and in developing a proper method for the study of the liturgy, which (like all theological method) is a "work in progress." It is to be admitted that the work of liturgists and liturgical theologians is often regarded as less compelling than other kinds of theology (such as systematics) and sometimes

2. SC 15–16, 23:

15. Professors who are appointed to teach liturgy in seminaries, religious houses of studies, and theological faculties, must be properly trained for their work in institutes specifically designed for this purpose.

16. Sacred liturgy is to be ranked among the compulsory and major courses in seminaries and religious houses of studies. In theological faculties it is to be one of the principal courses. It is to be taught under its theological, historical, spiritual, pastoral, and juridical aspects. In addition, those who teach other subjects, especially dogmatic theology, sacred scripture, spiritual and pastoral theology, should—while accepting the intrinsic demands of their own disciplines—expound the mystery of Christ and the history of salvation in a manner that will make clear the connection between their subjects and the liturgy, and the unity of all priestly training.

23. In order that sound tradition may be retained, and yet the way remain open to legitimate progress, a careful investigation—theological, historical, and pastoral—should always, first of all, be made into each section of the liturgy which is to be revised. Furthermore the general laws governing the structure and meaning of the liturgy must be taken into account, as well as the experience derived from recent liturgical reforms and from the concessions granted in various places. Finally, there must be no innovations unless the good of the church genuinely and certainly requires them, and care must be taken that any new forms adopted should in some way grow organically from forms already existing.

See my own "The Theological Keys of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: Reflections and Proposals," *Ecclesia Orans* 30 (2013): 411–453; Jeremy Driscoll, "Reviewing and Recovering *Sacrosanctum Concilium*'s Theological Vision," *Ecclesia Orans* 30 (2013): 363–390; and Wilton D. Gregory, "On the 50th Anniversary of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," *Ecclesia Orans* 30 (2013): 391–410.

even ignored despite these statements from the magisterium.<sup>3</sup> That there is an inherent ambiguity within liturgical theology as compared to a more philosophically based systematic theology is to be admitted. But it is of the nature of the liturgy that it is primarily an event, and for this very reason the theology derived from it will be of a different genre from other kinds of theology based primarily on texts. The experience of liturgy is inherently multivalent, and its many and manifold meanings are derived from what *Sacrosanctum Concilium* succinctly calls “texts and rites” (*textus et preces*, SC 21) and “rites and prayers” (*ritus es preces*, SC 48) and from the context(s) in which they are celebrated, in space and time, as well as in the life experiences of the participants, world and church events, and so forth. This is discussed more thoroughly in chapter 2 and is to be presumed throughout. This admission opens up many possibilities for delineating a method for liturgical theology and the contours of what it is. This is also to caution against a “philosophization” of liturgy, meaning trying to put liturgy into a preexisting system, or to make it into a “one size fits all” package that can tend to ignore the theological breadth that can (and should) be acquired by a study of the data, which reveals a variety of liturgical rites in history and in the present as well as a variety of experiences of the liturgy both within Catholicism and across the ecumenical spectrum. Part of the breadth offered by liturgical data is the variety of liturgical sources on which it is based and the flexibility inherent in the “event” character of the liturgy.

#### *Methodological Influences*<sup>4</sup>

My own professional training in the craft of liturgy was shaped in large measure by Benedictines, starting in the late 1960s with Aidan Kavanagh<sup>5</sup> in the United States through the mid-1970s with Burkhard

3. This is admitted in the 2012 Catholic Theological Society of America plenary address by Bruce Morrill: “Sacramental-Liturgical Theology Since Vatican II: The Dialectic of Meaning and Performance,” *Catholic Theological Society of America Proceedings* 67 (2012): 1–13.

4. For many of the scholars discussed here, see my *Liturgical Theology: A Primer* (Collegetown: Liturgical Press, 1990).

5. Among others, see Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, The Hale Lectures (New York: Pueblo, 1984); Kavanagh, *The Shape of Baptism: The Rite of*

Neunheuser, Salvatore Marsili, Cipriano Vagaggini, Gerhard Békés, Magnus Löhrer, Adrien Nocent, Philippe Rouillard, and Basil Studer, who were like a constellation of interdependent yet intersecting lights at Sant'Anselmo (my alma mater) on my then burgeoning theological horizon based on their tutelage and example.<sup>6</sup> It is through and from them that I learned of the pivotal work of Odo Casel about the theological meanings of liturgical memorial and participation. I subsequently researched and learned from other (largely international) voices such as Hans Bernhard Meyer, Bruno Kleinheyer, Albert Gerhards, Benedikt Kranemann, Thomas Pott, Louis-Marie Chauvet, Andrea Grillo, Enrico Mazza, Caesare Giraud, Paul de Clerck, Edward Kilmartin, Robert Taft, Patrick Regan, and Jeremy Driscoll (the latter two more recently on the faculty of Sant'Anselmo). Both the professors and authors from the Institute for Pastoral Liturgy in Padua have recently become even more important in my thinking about liturgical method; among them are Aldo Natale Terrin, Giorgio Bonaccorso, Alceste Catella, Renato DeZan, Silvio Maggiani, S. Ubbiali, Manilo Sodi, and others. Among the most influential ecumenical voices in the USA for me have been Alexander Schmemmann, Thomas Talley, Geoffrey Wainwright, Don Saliers, Dwight Vogel, Karen Westerfield Tucker, and Gordon Lathrop. More generally I have learned from and been enriched by the contributions and discussions at meetings of the North American Academy of Liturgy and the Societas Liturgica. My mention of these scholars allows me to acknowledge their contributions while also seeking to presume on

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*Christian Initiation* (New York: Pueblo, 1978); Kavanagh, *Confirmation: Origins and Reform* (New York: Pueblo, 1988).

6. With regard to "liturgical theology" in particular I have relied on the writings of Marsili and Vagaggini from Sant'Anselmo, among others. For Marsili, among others see Salvatore Marsili, *I segni del mistero di Cristo: Teologia Liturgica Dei Sacramenti*, ed. Michele Alberta, Bibliotheca "Ephemerides Liturgicae" Subsidia 42 (Rome: Edizioni Liturgiche, 1987); and my *Liturgical Theology*, 25–29. For Vagaggini, see, among others, Cipriano Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy: A General Treatise on the Theology of Liturgy*, trans. W. Jurgens from the 4<sup>th</sup> rev. aug. ed. (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1976), Italian 4<sup>th</sup> rev. aug. ed., *Il Senso teologica della liturgia: Saggio di liturgia teologica generale*, 1965; and my *Liturgical Theology*, 21–23.

and apply their insights, especially on method, to the task at hand.<sup>7</sup> The work of my colleagues at CUA and at Notre Dame (in summers<sup>8</sup>), as well as the present faculty at Sant' Anselmo, continues to be an important influence on my continued professional development.<sup>9</sup>

### *The Underlying Premise*

*Liturgy is the church's privileged act of prayer done among an assembly of the faith-filled, gathered together by the triune God to engage in the most sacred of mysteries—our dying and rising through, with, and in Christ by means of the enlivening action of the Holy Spirit.<sup>10</sup>*

A major thesis that will be argued again and again from a number of perspectives in this book is that each and every time we engage in the sacred liturgy it is always a *new event*—a new event of *salvation, redemption, and reconciliation* with God and one another (among many other things), a new event of our *communal growth in holiness* and of our *communal self-transcendence*. This is to say that even though many of the elements in and through which we engage the liturgy—texts, rites, gestures, symbols, creation, and so forth—are repeated again and again (daily, weekly, annually), each and every time we celebrate the liturgy it is never the same. By their very nature the structures of and repetitions in the liturgy serve familiarity in how we engage in

7. In particular Gerard Austin, Margaret Mary Kelleher, David Power, Dominic Serra, and Michael Witczak.

8. These include the important contributions of Paul Bradshaw, Max Johnson, David Fagerberg, and Mark Searle.

9. In addition to the extraordinarily rich bibliographies of individual professors, see the volumes in the *Anàmnesis* series, begun in 1974, edited by the faculty of the Pontifical Liturgical Institute at Sant' Anselmo: *Anàmnesis: Introduzione storico-teologica alla Liturgia*, ed. Salvatore Marsili et al., 7 vols. (Turin: Marietti, 1974–1992). Also from the Pontifical Liturgical Institute, under the direction of Anscar J. Chupungco, is an English series: *Handbook for Liturgical Studies*, ed. Anscar J. Chupungco, 5 vols. (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1997–2000). While these editions are similar they are not the same. Recourse to both sets of books is necessary. In addition, another multivolume work from the Sant' Anselmo professors bears careful study: *Corso di teologia sacramentaria*, ed. Andrea Grillo, Marinella Perroni, and Pius-Ramon Tragan, 2 vols. (Brescia: Queriniana, 2000).

10. For a more complete “working definition” of the liturgy, see this Introduction’s section on important terms, pp. 8–10.

the communal worship of God. But each and every time we engage in them we experience them in new and unique ways—in ever new *contexts*—making the liturgy always a new event of *salvation* (as well as *redemption* and *reconciliation*, which terms are to be presumed when “salvation” is used throughout this book and vice versa).

A major service that a book like this can provide is to assist the church in being the praying church and the church at prayer as it celebrates its worship of and in the triune God through the sacred liturgy. Among the very many lenses through which the liturgy can be viewed and trajectories according to which the liturgy can be studied is the one that will be emphasized here—the *theological*. This means emphasizing what the liturgy reveals about God, the church, ourselves, one another, our need for God, and the ways we come to appreciate and experience who God is for us and for our salvation. All of these elements shape how liturgy is always celebrated in new *contexts*.

In his now classic book *The Idea of the Holy*,<sup>11</sup> Rudolf Otto uses the important terms *fascinans* and *mysterium tremendum* to remind us again and again of the “nonrational” factors in the notion of what the divine is and who God is. As we examine various aspects of theology, liturgy, and liturgy’s inherent theological meanings these three words should be kept in mind—*fascinans*, *mysterium tremendum*. Liturgy is always an event in which we experience the inherent transcendence of the all holy God, a Trinity of divine persons. The self-communication of God to humans in and through the liturgy is always an experience of the all holy, yet it is not the complete and full experience of God we will share in the kingdom of heaven. God’s self-communication is experienced here on earth in a unique way through the liturgy as it leads us to the fullness of life in God in the hereafter. Jesus is always the incarnate face and reality of God whose dying and rising has gained us permanent access to the kingdom of heaven, experienced here and now as fully as possible here on earth in the memorial of his paschal mystery through the liturgy. The Holy Spirit’s very name is a continual reminder that the “holy” is made

11. Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and Its Relation to the Rational*, trans. John W. Harvey (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958); German original, *Das Heilige: Über das Irrationale in der Idee des Göttlichen und sein Verhältnis zum Rationalen* (1917).

manifest in the here and now but in a way that is always transcendent, beyond comprehension and “beyond all praising.” Throughout all that follows, the “idea” and the “reality” of the all “holy” God should be borne in mind and held in heart.

In what follows, the intrinsic, essential, and existential relationship of the liturgy to the church is always to be assumed. At times this is made explicit and described from what the liturgical rites say and do, as well as from what magisterial documents describe.<sup>12</sup> At all times it should be presumed that the *communio* of the church in its many facets is, in effect, coterminous with what liturgy is about. No liturgy without the church; no church without the liturgy.

### *Some Distinctions*

At the outset it is important to offer some distinctions that have influenced my thinking on the study and practice of the craft of *liturgical theology* since this book was first published. Several other terms and phrases interrelate with this project. They include, but are not limited to, *catechesis*, *mystagogy*, *liturgical formation*, and the *relationship of liturgy and sacraments to (the new) evangelization*.<sup>13</sup> It is clear

12. See chapter 2. Also, it will frame and be a part of the discussion in chapter 7 on architecture, pp. 543–561, and it will be made an explicit topic of developing theology *from* the liturgy in Part Three.

13. The reason why “the new” is in parenthesis before “evangelization” is because of Pope Francis’s apparent preference for the term “evangelization” on its own, especially in the Latin American Episcopal Conference’s *Aparecida Document*, which he edited, and which refers to “evangelization” seventy-four times and only twice to “new evangelization”; Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano y del Caribe, *The Aparecida Document* (2007). See my own *A Commentary on Laudato Si’: Examining the Background, Contributions, Implementation, and Future of Pope Francis’s Encyclical* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2016). At the same time, in his post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, under the heading “The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Faith,” Francis writes, “We cannot forget that evangelization is first and foremost about preaching the Gospel to those who do not know Jesus Christ or who have always rejected him. Many of them are quietly seeking God, led by a yearning to see his face, even in countries of ancient Christian tradition” (EG 15). Other occurrences of “new evangelization” in *Evangelii Gaudium* include EG 14, 73, 120, 126, 198, 238, 260, 284, and 287–288. Francis, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today’s World, *Evangelii Gaudium* (24 Nov 2013),

that several things primarily associated with catechesis and mystagogy are directly related to liturgical theology and to the theological dimensions of the liturgy (to recall the title of Cipriano Vagaggini's highly influential magnum opus<sup>14</sup>).

With regard to *catechesis*, this includes appreciating (and understanding) what was contained in the prebaptismal catecheses and the (postbaptismal) mystagogical catecheses in the patristic era, namely, the ritual components of the preparation for and the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, the meaning of signs, symbols, rites, gestures, words, and so forth, in the celebration of the liturgy, as well as the interpretation of the Bible from the perspective of the history of salvation, and the experience of the new life in the triune God in the celebration of the liturgy. Recent documents within Catholicism reiterate the importance of liturgical catechesis (for example, SC 14, 33, 35, 59, and others). One particular aspect of the method we will argue in what follows concerns appreciating yet distinguishing education to understand the liturgy and the way the very act of the celebration of the liturgy is itself a catechesis about the liturgy. Among many other pastoral issues and examples, one might point to how and where liturgical assemblies have been *catechized* about what it means to participate in the liturgy as the baptized priesthood of the faithful, as opposed to functioning as passive recipients of the liturgy conducted by designated ministers, especially the priest or bishop presider.<sup>15</sup> The passivity that marks a television

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[http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html).

14. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*.

15. Among the finest expositions of this underlying concept and assumption about the liturgy is in Yves Congar, "The *Ecclesia* or Christian Community as a Whole Celebrates the Liturgy," in *At the Heart of Christian Worship: Liturgical Essays of Yves Congar*, trans. and ed. Paul Philibert, 15–68 (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2010), French original, 1967. I am indebted to several seminary and graduate school professors who encouraged me not only to read and to study, but to drink deeply from the wealth of Congar's writings, including Congar, *Tradition and Traditions: An Historical and a Theological Essay*, trans. M. Naseby and T. Rainborough (New York: Macmillan, 1966); French original, *La Tradition et les traditions*, 2 vols., 1960–1963; Congar, "My Path-Findings in the Theology of Laity and Ministries," *The Jurist* 32 (1972): 169–188. Additionally, the English translation of Congar's *My Journal of the Council* offers enormous insight into the workings of

and entertainment culture might, by default, be a passivity that people bring to the liturgy because they were not catechized about the liturgy itself and about how to participate in the liturgy in communities that comprise the worshipping church.<sup>16</sup>

With regard to *mystagogy* this includes elaborating on the liturgy as a theological event through which we celebrate the mysteries of salvation, how the elements of the liturgy engage us in the paschal mystery, the meaning of the experience of liturgical celebration, and the impact celebrations (should) have on the moral and spiritual life. The restoration of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* has revived mystagogy as an essential part of adult initiation (see OICA 38 / RCIA 245, and *passim*). Recent church documents also shed light on how mystagogy can shape our appreciation and understanding of all liturgical celebrations.<sup>17</sup> Several contemporary

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this church-changing ecumenical council (Vatican II) from one whose work prior to the council had been deemed (at least) highly suspect, if not indeed erroneous. This book helps to sketch out how (passionately) held principles interface with the reality of (church) politics, both positively and negatively. Congar, *My Journal of the Council*, trans. and ed. Mary John Ronayne, Mary Cecily Moulding, and Denis Minns (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2012), French originals, 2002.

16. In the English-speaking Roman Catholic Church the publication of a revised translation of *The Roman Missal* occasioned the publication of a number of catechetical materials about the translation and about the Eucharist in general. Among others see the interactive DVD *Become One Body One Spirit in Christ*, containing sections entitled “Exploring the Mass,” “Receiving the English Translation,” “Crafting the Art of Liturgy,” “Celebrating the Eucharist,” and “Living a Eucharistic Life”: International Committee on English in the Liturgy, *Become One Body, One Spirit in Christ* (Fraynetwork Multimedia, 2010).

17. For example, see article 73 of John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on Jesus Christ Alive in His Church the Source of Hope for Europe, *Ecclesia in Europa* (28 June 2003), [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_exh\\_20030628\\_ecclesia-in-europa.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_20030628_ecclesia-in-europa.html); articles 41 and 64 of Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Eucharist as the Source and Summit of the Church’s Life and Mission, *Sacramentum Caritatis* (22 Feb 2007), [http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_exh\\_20070222\\_sacramentum-caritatis.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_exh_20070222_sacramentum-caritatis.html); articles 163–168 of Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*; articles 88–89, 108, 129, and 256 of Congregation for the Clergy, *General Directory for Catechesis* (15 Aug 1997), [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cclergy/documents/rc\\_con\\_ccatheduc\\_doc\\_17041998\\_directory-for-catechesis\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cclergy/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_17041998_directory-for-catechesis_en.html); article 67 of International Council for Catechesis, *Adult*

monographs and recent articles help to sketch out the meaning of mystagogy.<sup>18</sup>

With regard to *liturgical formation*, this includes how formation programs can systematically address the nature of the sacred liturgy, its component parts, its inherent logic, and the way the liturgy is central to leading the moral and spiritual life. (That the 2015 meeting of *Societas Liturgica* was entitled “Liturgical Formation: Traditional Task and New Challenge” indicates how this is a concern across the ecumenical spectrum.<sup>19</sup>) That liturgical formation was envisioned to be a major factor in the training of priests (largely because of the influence of Cipriano Vagaggini) is seen in many of the preconciliar discussions about the Liturgy Constitution,<sup>20</sup> as well as in important assertions by the Vatican in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 14–20 and since.<sup>21</sup> In addition, with regard to the specific issue of formation for the liturgy relevant social and cultural questions must be considered, such

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*Catechesis in the Christian Community* (1990), [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cclergy/documents/rc\\_con\\_cclergy\\_doc\\_14041990\\_acat\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cclergy/documents/rc_con_cclergy_doc_14041990_acat_en.html); para. 1075 and 1234ff of *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2016); and the various introductions to the reformed rites.

18. For example, the subtitle of Enrico Mazza’s (now classic) book *Mystagogy: A Theology of Liturgy in the Patristic Age* (New York: Pueblo, 1989) indicates the relationship between liturgical theology and mystagogy. Other dimensions are expounded in the more recent work of Goffredo Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy: School of Prayer, Source of Life* (Collegetown: Liturgical Press, 2014), Italian original, *Il senso spirituale della liturgia* (Magnano: Edizioni Qiqajon, 2012), in particular the first four chapters, pp. 15–110.

19. “Liturgical Formation: Traditional Task and New Challenge,” *Studia Liturgica* (2015).

20. See Angelo Lameri, *La “Pontificia Commissio de sacra liturgia praeparatoria Concilii Vaticani II”: Documenti, Testi, Verballi*, Bibliotheca “Ephemerides Liturgicae” 168 (Rome: Centro Liturgico Vincenziano Edizioni Liturgiche, 2013).

21. Among the most important documents about liturgical formation was the document published in 1979 by the Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education, *Instruction on Liturgical Formation in Seminaries, Istruzione sulla formazione liturgica nei seminari* (3 Jun 1979), <http://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/CCSEMS.HTM>. See also the study text on this document written by (Arch)bishop Wilton D. Gregory and published by the United States National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Bishops’ Committee on Liturgy, Liturgical Formation in Seminaries: A Commentary* (Washington: United States Catholic Conference Office of Publication Services, 1984).

as studying the effects that downsizing the number of schools sponsored by the Catholic Church (certainly in the USA) have on people's formation in and appreciation for the liturgy.

With regard to *(the new) evangelization*, while the liturgy and sacraments are intrinsic to (the new) evangelization precisely because they are the "summit and source" of the church's very life (see SC 10 and LG 11),<sup>22</sup> it is important to make a distinction about the way they were related to one another in the patristic era and other eras in the church's life and the way they are related today. This is also to say that in its classical understanding and certainly in patristic practice evangelization preceded sacramental initiation. Today the challenge is that many people are "sacramentalized" but not "evangelized"—a fact attested to by the phrase "the new evangelization" minted by John Paul II in 1983<sup>23</sup> following upon Paul VI's seminal and highly influential Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975).<sup>24</sup> That

22. On the importance of the exact wording of Vatican II's Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium* text "taking part in the eucharistic sacrifice," see my own *Models of the Eucharist* (Mahwah/New York: Paulist Press, 2005), in particular, "Model Eight: Sacramental Sacrifice," 217–237.

23. John Paul II, Address to the Assembly of CELAM in Port-au-Prince, Haiti (9 March 1983), [https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/speeches/1983/march/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_spe\\_19830309\\_assemblea-celam.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/speeches/1983/march/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19830309_assemblea-celam.html). See also the connection John Paul II made between the proclamation of the Word and "the new evangelization" in his Apostolic Letter at the Close of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, *Nuovo millennio inuente* (6 Jan 2001), [https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_letters/2001/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_20010106\\_novo-millennio-ineunte.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20010106_novo-millennio-ineunte.html).

24. Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (8 Dec 1975), [http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_exh\\_19751208\\_evangelii-nuntiandi.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi.html). It is notable that this was indicated as early as the late 1960s in relation to marriage and discussed by some national episcopal conferences like France, Belgium, and Italy, as is the writing of some sacramental theologians and canonists at the time trying to deal with this issue. The phrases "baptized non-believers" and "baptized non-practicers" themselves make a statement about the reality of the issue and some strategies to deal with it. See Walter H. Cuenin, "The Marriage of Baptized Non-Believers—Questions of Faith, Sacrament and Law," *Canon Law Society of America Proceedings* 40 (1978): 38–48. Among others see Leonardo Boff, *Church, Charism and Power: Liberation Theology and the Institutional Church*, trans. John W. Diercksmeier (New York: Crossroad, 1995), Spanish original, *Igreja, carisma e poder: Ensayos de ecclesiológia*

the liturgy is one of the possible means to offer and foster “evangelization” is clear from Paul VI’s Apostolic Exhortation itself (especially EN 1, 2, 9, 22, 34, 36, 38, 43, 61, 63) and from (some) contemporary writing on the subject.<sup>25</sup> While the celebration of the liturgy itself is catechetical (as indicated above, noting the Liturgy Constitution), it needs to be asked if the lack of prior evangelization can place too much of a burden on the liturgy. For example, can we presume on a biblical literacy (among many other things) fostered by programs of *evangelization* prior to and concurrent with the celebration of the liturgy?

A book like this (or even a library of books) on the liturgy cannot presume to answer this set of questions or the plethora of such questions that always surround the liturgy. The “prayers, texts and rites” of the liturgy and its intrinsic pastoral celebration is simply too rich

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*militante* (Brazil, 1981); Henri Burgeois, *L’initiation chretienne et ses sacrements* (Paris: Le Centurion, 1982); Burgeois, “Theologie Sacramentaire,” *Recherches de science religieuse* 72 (1984): 291–318; Henri Denis, *Des sacrements et des hommes: Dix ans apres Vatican II* (Lyon: Chalet, 1975); Denis, *Sacrements sources de vie: Etudes de theologie sacramentaire* (Paris: Cerf, 1982); Antonio Gonzales Dorado, *Los Sacramentos del Evangelio: Sacramentologia fundamental y organica* (Santa Fe de Bogota: CELAM, 1991); Edward J. Kilmartin, “Theology of the Sacraments: Toward a New Understanding of the Chief Rites of the Church of Jesus Christ,” in *Alternative Futures for Worship*, ed. Bernard Lee, vol. 1, *General Introduction*, ed. Regis Duffy, 123–175 (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1987); Philip J. Murnion, “A Sacramental Church in the Modern World,” *Origins* 14 (21 June 1984): 81–90; A. Schmeid, “Perspektiv und Akzente heutiger Sakramenttheologie,” *Wissenschaft und Weisheit* 44 (1981): 17–45; Juan Segundo, *The Sacraments Today*, trans. J. Drury (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1974); F. Tillmans, “The Sacraments as Symbolical Reality of Faith,” in *Fides sacramenti sacramentum fidei*, ed. H. J. auf der Maur et al., 253–276 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1981).

That this was part of the motivation of Pope Francis to call the Synod of Bishops into session in October 2014 and October 2015 attests to his pastoral concern for, as well as his pastoral experience of, people in second marriages. See Austen Iverleigh, *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope* (New York: Henry Holt, 2014), e.g. 286ff. It is certainly reflected in Pope Francis’s Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on Love in the Family, *Amoris Laetitia* (19 March 2016), [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20160319\\_amoris-laetitia.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20160319_amoris-laetitia.html).

25. Among many others see Timothy O’Malley, *Liturgy and the New Evangelization: Practicing the Art of Self-Giving Love* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2014); Avery Dulles, *Evangelization for the Third Millennium* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2009), especially 94–95, 106–107.

and complex for that. But what this book aims to do is to view the liturgy through a theological lens, to explore the multifaceted reality that the liturgy is and celebrates, and to offer both a critique of the reformed liturgy and suggestions for improved celebrations.<sup>26</sup> These latter two aims—to critique and to suggest—are what differentiate this book on *liturgical theology* from catechesis, mystagogy, formation, and relating liturgy to the new evangelization. The liturgy as revised after Vatican II and as celebrated here and now is the presumed basis for the efforts that follow and that view the liturgy through a *theological*

26. The use of the term “reformed” liturgy here is deliberate. The mandate from the Council Fathers, as asserted in SC 21 under the heading *De sacrae Liturgiae instauratione*, is the following: “Pia Mater Ecclesia, ut populus christianus in sacra Liturgia abundantiam gratiarum securius assequatur, ipsius Liturgiae generalem instaurationem sedulo curare cupit.” The official Vatican translation renders “instauratione” in the title of this section as “reform,” while the same word is later translated as “general restoration.” The Latin word *instaurare* can mean “to renew.” Its noun form means “renewal,” “restoration,” and “repair.”

To my way of thinking there is a distinction to be made between liturgical “reform” and liturgical “renewal.” The *reform* of the liturgy can be carried out by edict and official direction through the revision of books, changing the arrangement of churches, fostering participation, and so on. The *renewal* that the liturgy is meant to foster in church vitality, deepening spirituality, more committed witness in the world, and what we experience in worship (among other things) can only come about by personal and communal conviction and conversion to what the liturgy celebrates. This distinction will be helpful in the text that follows. At times the “revision” of the liturgy will be a synonym for “reform,” “revised rites” for “reformed rites,” and so forth. The use of the word “restoration” will be used rarely and with explanation. “Renovation” and “repair” will not be used. See Pierre-Marie Gy, “Tradition vivante, réforme liturgique et identité ecclésiale,” *La Maison-Dieu* 178 (1989): 93–106, especially: Les textes de Vatican II emploient tantôt *instauratio* tantôt *renovatio*, que les traductions en langues modernes n’hésitent guère à traduire par ‘réforme’. Dans le langage conciliaire ces divers termes désignent un retour à la Tradition et, si je puis me servir à ma manière de l’expression inventée par Chales Péguy, un ressourcement en celle-ci. En outre, dans la constitution sur la Liturgie, le mouvement d’*instauratio* se dédouble en principes et en normes, les normes étant des décisions de réforme de la liturgie romaine, et les principes s’appliquant à toutes les liturgies: c’est-à-dire que les principes sont le mouvement même de la Tradition approfondie, que le Concile concrétise d’emblée en décisions de réforme pour le rite romain, et qui appelle pour les autres rites des décisions appropriées d’inspiration analogue (Gy, “Tradition vivante,” 98).

See this Introduction’s section the authority of liturgy, pp. xliv–lvii.

lens. Suggesting how the liturgy might be crafted and celebrated is a particular contribution of the craft of liturgical theology.

### *Important Terms*

*Liturgy.* The word “liturgy” and variations on it will be used throughout this book. At the risk of oversimplification, yet with a concern to delineate the scope of what I understand the liturgy to be, I offer the following two descriptions. The first is by one of the architects of the liturgical reform<sup>27</sup> (and is dated as preconciliar), Cipriano Vagaggini:

The liturgy is the complexus of the sensible signs of things sacred, spiritual, invisible, instituted by Christ or by the Church; signs which are efficacious, each in its own way, of that which they signify; by which signs God (the Father by appropriation), through Christ the Head and Priest, and in the presence of the Holy Spirit, sanctifies the Church, and the Church as a body, in the presence of the Holy Spirit, uniting herself to Christ her Head and Priest, through Him renders her worship to God (the Father by appropriation).<sup>28</sup>

27. For example, in describing the genesis of chapter 1 of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, Carlo Braga gives pride of place to Cipriano Vagaggini (Carol Braga, “La genesi del primo capitolo della ‘Sacrosanctum Concilium’,” *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 113 (1999): 405–448). Also see Angelo Lameri, “Un ‘perito’ a servizio del concilio e della riforma liturgica promossa dal Vaticano II,” *Rivista Liturgica* 96 (2009): 348–361; Giovanni Di Napoli, “Dall’ipotesi di revisione del Canone Romano all’elaborazione di nuove preghiere eucharistiche: L’apporto determinante di Cipriano Vagaggini,” *Rivista Liturgica* 96 (2009): 385–396; Elena Massimi, “Cipriano Vagaggini, teologo di Sacrosanctum Concilium,” in *Il Concilio Vaticano II e la liturgia: Memoria e futuro*, ed. Associazione Professori di Liturgia, 127–182, Bibliotheca “Ephemerides Liturgicae” Subsidia 165 (Rome: Centro Liturgico Vincenziano Edizioni Liturgiche, 2013); Elena Massimi, *Teologia classica e modernità in Cipriano Vagaggini: Percorso tra scritti editi e inediti*, Bibliotheca “Ephemerides Liturgicae” Subsidia 167 (Rome: Centro Liturgico Vincenziano Edizioni Liturgiche, 2013); Mateo Ferrari and Giordano Remondi, eds., *Teologia “in un regime di simboli”*: Scritti in onore di Cipriano Vagaggini (1909–1999) (Camaldoli: Edizioni Camaldoli, 2011); Crispino Valenziano, “I protagonisti della prima generazione,” in *Liturgia Opus Trinitatis: Epistemologia Liturgica*, ed. Ephrem Carr, 195–222, *Studia Anselmiana* 133 (Rome: Centro Studi S. Anselmo, 2002).

28. Cipriano Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 25.

The second is my own from *What We Have Done, What We Have Failed to Do*:

Liturgy is the privileged act through which the Christian people are continually immersed into, and participate in, the reality of the living God through Christ's paschal mystery, by means of the power of the Holy Spirit, in the midst of the engaged communion of the gathered assembly of the church.

The church is where Christ continually acts in an ongoing and unique way, as head of its members, in and through the whole church, as well as in the communion of local assemblies to make present and available his unique act of redemption in acts of worship that are familiar, sacred, good, true, and beautiful.

These acts of worship are celebrated in our contemporary world and in our particular cultural contexts in a privileged and yet provisional way through the use of effective words, signs, and symbols, as these words, signs, and symbols are experienced in our human bodies: by means of the things of creation and of human manufacture, but especially through the senses of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch; through the use of our faculties of mind, heart, will, and imagination; and through the use of human speech, gesture, movement, and silence.

We celebrate according to the rhythm of a yearly calendar containing feasts and seasons, in order that the church may be continually shaped and formed by what it experiences in and through this act of worship.

In this unique way called liturgy, we offer thanks and praise to God to acknowledge the action and presence of the Trinity in the world and in the lives of the assembly, to enable those in the church to live lives more fully converted to the Gospel in and through what is enacted for our sakes and for our salvation until liturgy and sacraments cease and what we experience here is made full, real, and complete in the world to come.<sup>29</sup>

Liturgy is always an action and event in which the people's participation is of the highest value. The many references of *Sacrosanctum*

29. Kevin W. Irwin, *What We Have Done, What We Have Failed to Do: Assessing the Liturgical Reforms of Vatican II* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2013), 3.

*Concilium* to the importance of participation in the liturgy are to be recalled here and throughout.<sup>30</sup>

*Liturgy and theology.* What will be underscored throughout is the intrinsic relationship between the liturgy as an “act of theology” and “theological reflection” on the act of liturgy as it is experienced and understood in a variety of contexts, both in history and today: for example, patristic, monastic, scholastic, contemporary academic theology, and pastoral life. The role of the celebration of the liturgy and reflection on it in all these historical and contemporary contexts is crucial, despite being long neglected (understandably for apologetic reasons and because the liturgy was not in the vernacular?). This is also to admit a certain dynamism (untidiness?) inherent in liturgical theology that is based on the experience of the liturgy and not simply on its texts and prescribed rites. In the words of Enrico Mazza, the theology of a liturgical book is not the theology of the liturgical act, the latter of which is one of the premises of this book.<sup>31</sup> The priority throughout what follows will be given to answering the question, “What is the liturgy saying about God, the world, our place in the world, each other, our need for God, and so forth?” This is to be distinguished, but not separated from, other important components to the study of liturgy, among which are history, aesthetics, ritual theory, and pastoral implementation.

30. See, especially, SC 14:

It is very much the wish of the church that all the faithful should be led to take that full, conscious, and active part in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy, and to which the Christian people, “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people (1 Pet 2:9, 4-5) have a right and to which they are bound by reason of their Baptism.

In the restoration and development of the sacred liturgy the full and active participation by all the people is the paramount concern, for it is the primary, indeed the indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit. Therefore, in all their apostolic activity, pastors of souls should energetically set about achieving it through the requisite formation.

31. See “L’*autorité de la liturgie: Entre le livre, la célébration et la tradition,*” in *L’*autorité de la liturgie. Conférences Saint-Serge LIII<sup>e</sup> Semaine d’Études Liturgiques Paris 2006**, ed. Carlo Braga, 133–145 (Rome: Edizioni Liturgiche, 2007), at 144–145.

Three terms regularly used in the first edition of this book are retained and given additional explanations: *lex orandi*, *lex credendi*, and *lex vivendi*.<sup>32</sup> Precisely because the liturgy can be appreciated from a number of points of view, it is important to emphasize that our method leads to a theological emphasis while not ignoring other aspects that can enhance our appreciation and experience of it.

### *Parameters*

This is by nature and design a Roman Catholic book, which means that we will utilize and argue from the reformed post-Vatican II Catholic liturgy in whatever edition is published as of its writing, as well as Catholic magisterial statements of many types, such as conciliar documents, papal magisterium, bishops' conference documents, and others. At all times the official reformed liturgy authorized after Vatican II is the benchmark and source for what follows.

At the same time, given the very first paragraph of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* about the importance of ecumenism (in general and with regard to the liturgy),<sup>33</sup> as well as my own doctoral research and involvement in ecumenical dialogues since,<sup>34</sup> I would like this to be

32. See chapter 2, pp. 81 and 91. In the previous book we used the phrase *lex agendi* to refer to the way the liturgy was conducted. We have eliminated it here because what several other authors call *lex agendi* is what we call *lex vivendi*; hence eliminating this phrase is intended to avoid confusion. At the same time, we will refer to the way the liturgy is conducted and how that affects how the celebration of the liturgy is a theological source. For example, in chapter 8 we will refer to the issue of the use of hymns at the eucharistic liturgy whose lyrics may be at variance with the liturgy's *lex orandi*.

33. See SC 1:

The sacred council has to impart an ever-increasing vigor to the Christian lives of the faithful; to adapt more closely to the needs of our age those institutions which are subject to change; to encourage whatever can promote the union of all who believe in Christ; to strengthen whatever serves to call all of humanity into the church's fold. Accordingly it sees particularly cogent reasons for undertaking the reform and promotion of the liturgy.

34. My dissertation is *American Lutherans and Roman Catholics in Dialogue on the Eucharist: A Methodological Critique and Proposal*, Sacramentum 5, Studia Anselmiana 76 (Rome: Studia Anselmiana, 1979). I was part of the official United Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue that produced "Heaven and Earth Are

a contribution to ecumenical liturgical method and theology. This is to say that members of what I call the “liturgical churches” (such as Orthodox, Anglican, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, and Presbyterian) should find resonances in their celebration of the liturgy with what is argued here for our mutual enrichment and ecumenical progress.

Given this set of parameters, this book is intended for as wide an ecumenical audience as possible who wish to engage in the project of *liturgical theology*—including what “liturgical theology” means in its number of possible forms and how to dialogue about it. Again, part of the very notion of liturgical theology is that one can and should dialogue about it, to the point of possibly critiquing particular aspects of the ritual contents in liturgical books and actual celebrations of them. But from the start, any critique argued here will be from the benchmark of the post-Vatican II liturgy on the presumption that these are the official liturgies of the Catholic Church and therefore are theologically and liturgically normative. The same is true for the established service books of other Christian churches.

### **New Contexts for the Church and Its Liturgy**

Liturgy is never celebrated in a vacuum. It is always done in a given culture, at a given time, in a given place, by particular people. The underlying dispositions and dynamics of that interaction need to be factored into the way constituencies experience the same liturgy in terms of what the published liturgical rites say and prescribe in relation to actual celebrations of the church’s liturgy.

The first edition of this book was published twenty-five years ago, which means that more than a generation has passed. Over this time, important shifts in the religious landscapes of the world and the US in particular have occurred,<sup>35</sup> and we have witnessed lightning-fast

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Full of Your Glory: A United Methodist and Roman Catholic Statement on Eucharist and Ecology” (2008), <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/ecumenical/methodist/upload/Heaven-and-Earth-are-Full-of-Your-Glory-Methodist-Catholic-Dialogue-Agreed-Statement-Round-Seven.pdf>.

35. I have previously noted the implications for Catholicism in the fact that the Catholic population is no longer nearly exclusive (90 percent) to Europe

changes in numberless (perhaps all) areas of life, including communications, an awareness of and experience of globalization, mobility of Western societies (especially millennials), international migration, issues of belonging, advances in technology (and its possible use and misuse in liturgy), and so forth.

### *Religious Affiliation*

One of the reasons why the Catholic Church in the US is engaged in efforts of evangelization is reflected in the number of Catholics who no longer practice the faith or affiliate with the faith. Since 2007 the PEW Research Center has studied the religious affiliation of Americans.<sup>36</sup> Through 2014 the survey results indicate a steady decline in the number of Americans affiliated with any church. In 2014 the so-called “nones” (for “no affiliation”) amounted to 22.8 percent of Americans (up from 16.1 percent in 2007 and, remarkably, 2 percent in 1950), which number amounts to well more than the Evangelical Lutherans (1.5 percent), United Methodists (3.6 percent) and Episcopalians and Anglicans (<1.5 percent) combined. Even as evangelical Protestants have declined from 26.3 percent (2007) to 25.4 percent (2014) and mainline Protestants have declined from 18.1 percent to 14.7 percent, the Roman Catholic numbers have fallen from 23.9 percent to 20.8 percent.<sup>37</sup>

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and the Americas, as it was a century ago. Moreover, a majority of the Catholic population, previously found in Europe alone (falling dramatically from 65 percent of the Catholic population in 1910 to 24 percent in 2013), is now spread throughout the world, most notably in Latin America / the Caribbean (rising from 24 percent in 1910 to 39 percent in 2013), Sub-Saharan Africa (from less than 1 percent to 16 percent) and Asia / the Pacific (from 5 percent to 12 percent). See my own *A Commentary on Laudato Si'*. The data comes from the Pew Research Center, “The Global Catholic Population” (13 Feb 2013), <http://www.pewforum.org/2013/02/13/the-global-catholic-population/>. Shifts in the US, in particular, will be addressed in more detail.

36. See Pew Research Center, “America’s Changing Religious Landscape” (12 May 2015), <http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>.

37. According to the survey, “Evangelical Protestants” (25.4 percent in 2014) include the evangelical traditions of the following families: Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Episcopalian/Anglican, Restorationist, Congregationalist, Holiness, Reformed, Adventist, Anabaptist, Pietist,

According to the annual surveys of the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) covering the decade from 2006 to (May) 2016, American Catholic attendance at Mass once or more than once per week has varied from 21 percent to 24 percent, with the most recent May 2016 survey showing 22 percent.<sup>38</sup> An example analysis of this data, made available for 2008, shows that 32 percent of American Catholics say they rarely or never attend Mass, 24.1 percent say they attend a few times a year, 10.1 percent say they attend once or twice a month, 10.4 percent say they attend almost every week, 20 percent say they attend weekly, and 3.3 percent say they attend more than once a week.<sup>39</sup> Among other issues at stake here is that participation in the liturgy presumes familiarity with its ritual shape, a certain biblical literacy, some knowledge of the faith, and belonging to a faith community. These survey results cast doubt on those presumptions. In effect, for very many the regular celebration of Sunday liturgy has become an occasional religious service, the exact opposite of what liturgy should be. With regard to other acts of prayer and devotion there are no similar surveys or statistics. That many Christians engage in such prayer outside of the Mass is clear by the popularity of books about the daily liturgy (Mass and Hours) in such monthly publications as *This Is the Day*, *Living with Christ*, and *Magnificat*.

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nondenominational, and nonspecified (the largest group being the Baptist family at 9.2 percent). "Mainline Protestants" (14.7 percent in 2014) include the mainline traditions of the following families: Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Episcopalian/Anglican, Restorationist, Congregationalist, Reformed, Anabaptist, Friends, nondenominational, and nonspecified (the largest group being the Methodist family at 3.9 percent of which United Methodist is 3.6 percent). These two categories do not include "Historically Black Protestant" traditions (6.5%). The "Catholic" category (20.8 percent) is simply listed as "Catholic," without further specification. See Pew Research Center, "America's Changing Religious Landscape."

38. See Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, "Frequently Requested Church Statistics" (2016), <http://cara.georgetown.edu/frequently-requested-church-statistics/> and the graphic at <http://cara.georgetown.edu/CARAServices/ccp.jpg>.

39. See Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, "The Nuances of Accurately Measuring Mass Attendance" (22 September 2009), <http://nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com/2009/09/nuances-of-accurately-measuring-mass.html>.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Method

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the thesis and parameters of our effort in the rest of this book, as well as to situate our work within the broader consideration of method for liturgical studies in general and liturgical theology more precisely. Our concern throughout this book (as noted in the Introduction) is to articulate what it means to experience and appreciate “*liturgy from the inside*” in which every text, act, gesture, posture, and element from creation or manufactured by the work of human hands has a theological meaning, with many of them containing more than one meaning, because many of the components of the liturgical action are inherently multivalent. These components are experienced together in the liturgical rite, the enactment of which influences how they are understood and interpreted.

Among the premises on which our argument is based are the following:

- The inner dynamic of the liturgy is always theological in terms of God’s actions among us and our response;
- The intrinsic “dynamism” of liturgy involves and respects varying and varied liturgical contexts in which liturgy is celebrated;
- Part of the inner dynamic at work in liturgy is its external manifestations and expressions, for these are the very “stuff” of an incarnated liturgy suited to and suitable for human beings in the act of worship;
- “Participation” presumes bodily engagement<sup>1</sup> and a sensual experience, as well as thought and comprehension;

1. See Frank Senn, *Embodied Liturgy: Lessons in Christian Ritual* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016). For an approach reflective of an African orientation, see

- Because not all texts, music, and rites bear the same theological “weight” (recall the use of this word with regard to the church’s magisterium in chapter 1), distinctions among the elements of the liturgy will need be made and prioritized theologically.

The chapter is divided into four unequal parts. The first section offers some ideas about the method for the study of liturgy in general. The second presents distinctions and definitions about how liturgy and theology are related as this relationship bears on and is a central part of our argument. The third section articulates how the term “liturgical theology” can be understood in light of (but not limited to) the historical overview of the previous chapter and how it will be understood here. The fourth section articulates the three elements that underlie our approach to liturgical theology as it is argued in the succeeding chapters.

## I. Method for the Study of Liturgy

As noted in the previous chapter, a major contribution to the method to be used in the study of the liturgy was articulated in the Vatican II Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy and the Decree on Priestly Training.<sup>2</sup> Before calling for the reform of the sacred liturgy

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Elochukwu E. Uzukwu, *Worship as Body Language: Introduction to Christian Worship: An African Orientation* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1997). For a modern articulation of the classical adage from Tertullian that “the flesh is the instrument of salvation” see Cipriano Vagaggini, *The Flesh, Instrument of Salvation: A Theology of the Human Body* (Staten Island: Alba House, 1969); Italian original, “*Caro Salutis est Cardio: Corporeità, eucaristia e liturgia*, Introduction by Andrea Grillo and Postscript by Girogio Bonaccorso, new ed. (Arezzo: Edizioni Camaldoli, 2009 [1<sup>st</sup> ed., 1966]).

2. Among the most comprehensive treatments of the progress of the reform of the Roman Catholic liturgy from Vatican II to the publication of all of the revised rites is Annibale Bugnini, *The Reform of the Liturgy, 1948–1975*, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1990); Bugnini, *La Riforma liturgica, 1948–1975*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Rome: Centro Liturgico Vincenziano Edizioni Liturgiche, 1997 [1<sup>st</sup> ed., 1983]). The work on the revision of the “Order of Mass” by Maurizio Barba is nothing less than a model for the breadth of sources cited and depth of insight into the process that shaped the revised Missal: see Maurizio Barba, *La riforma conciliare dell’ “ordo Missae.” Il percorso storico-redazionale dei riti d’ingresso, di offertorio,*

(SC 21ff), the Liturgy Constitution argues carefully and fully about the “promotion of liturgical instruction” (specifically, SC 15–19 and reiterated in the Decree on Priestly Training, OT 16). The constitution decreed that liturgy should be studied “under its theological, historical, spiritual, pastoral, and juridical aspects” (SC 16).<sup>3</sup> Let us take them in turn.

### *Theological*

As already noted and as will be repeated throughout this book, liturgy is primarily an *act of theology* through which we enter into the otherness of the infinite and transcendent God through the very human means of texts and rites, words and gestures, speech and symbolic action, all involving the body and the human senses. The church’s decisions about what words, rites, symbols, and gestures to use matter a great deal since they comprise the church’s rule of faith, its *lex orandi*.

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*e di communio*, rev. ed. (Rome: Edizione Liturgiche, 2008). That the process of the reform and the reformed liturgy itself had its critics is amply documented in Piero Marini, *A Challenging Reform: Realizing the Vision of the Liturgical Renewal*, ed. Mark Francis, John Page, and Keith Pecklers (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2007). Part of Marini’s argument is to support the work of Bugnini, which has sometimes been the subject of unfair and prejudiced criticism: for example, Yves Chiron, *Annibale Bugnini: Reformateur de la Liturgie* (Paris: Editions Desclee de Brower, 2016).

3. These terms are seen repeatedly in the debate on the draft of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*—especially on the relationship of theology and spirituality to the liturgy—and in the writings of Cipriano Vagaggini, one of the “architects” of the Liturgy Constitution and the reform of several liturgical rites. On Vagaggini’s contribution to the debates of the Preparatory Commission see Angelo Lameri, *La “Pontificia Commissio de sacra liturgia praeparatoria Concilii Vaticani II”: Documenti, Testi, Verbali*, Bibliotheca “Ephemerides Liturgicae” 168 (Rome: Centro Liturgico Vincenziano Edizioni Liturgiche, 2013). On Vagaggini’s specific contribution to the Liturgy Constitution see Carlo Braga, “La genesi del primo capitolo della ‘Sacrosanctum Concilium,’” *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 113 (1999): 405–448. See also “Cipriano Vagaggini: L’intelligenza’ della liturgia,” *Rivista Liturgica* 96, no. 3 (2009); Elena Massimi, “Il contributo di Dom Cipriano Vagaggini alla Commissione liturgica Preparatoria del Concilio Vaticano II,” *Ecclesia Orans* 31 (2014): 233–275, 389–446; Massimi, *Teologia classica e modernità in Cipriano Vagaggini: Percorso tra scritti editi e inediti*, Bibliotheca “Ephemerides Liturgicae” Subsidia 167 (Rome: Centro Liturgico Vincenziano Edizioni Liturgiche, 2013).

Clearly, we have made strides in the last five decades in refining the method for liturgical study. A principal stimulus has been the historical study of rites and, in the process, the unveiling of a plethora of rites and texts in order to discover from them a vast array of theological insights. Liturgy is that privileged moment when God acts to disclose and reveal the fullness of the divine life and, through the liturgy, to invite us to take part in and live that divine life. Liturgy is the descent of God to us and our ascent, always through, with, and in Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit in the communion of the pilgrim church on earth.

### *Historical*

It is clear that the study of the historic sources of the liturgy helped to break the logjam prior to Vatican II about whether and how the liturgy could be reformed and its rites revised.<sup>4</sup> A legitimate emphasis in liturgical study was placed on liturgical sources properly speaking (rituals, missals, lectionaries, books of hours, and so forth)—West and East—precisely because of the breadth and depth of what that historical investigation revealed. It is not a surprise that many of the post-Vatican II liturgies were revised on the basis of “traditional” liturgies, often from the patristic era.

Furthermore, in the past decade, across denominational lines, there has been some very important revisiting of the premises of the liturgical reforms as the “liturgical churches” reflect on what occurred in the 1970s in revising our liturgies. In introducing a series of essays assessing the reformed liturgy in the American ecumenical context (as already noted partially and briefly in the Introduction), the esteemed Lutheran liturgical scholar and pastor Frank Senn puts it this way:

The essays in this issue of *Liturgy* do not add up to a program or even a direction for further liturgical revision. They do sound a note of self-criticism within the liturgical establishment that brought us our present liturgical orders and rites. We sometimes acted too precipitously on too little information, or on insufficient

4. For a summary of preconciliar debates about the reform of the liturgy see the important work by Angelo Lameri, *La “Pontificia Commissio de sacra liturgia praeparatoria Concilii Vaticani II.”*

digging. Churches that use the historic liturgy certainly have to pay attention to history. But it is inadequate to pay attention only for the purpose of replicating ancient orders and retrieving ancient texts in contemporary patterns and books of worship. Those ancient orders and texts were used in a social context just as our orders and texts are—the context of an assembly that was as much enmeshed in the culture of which they were a part as we are enmeshed in our own contemporary cultures. If we use an ancient text or follow an ancient pattern today, it should not be just because it is ancient, but because it expresses a world view that we share with those who have gone before us in the faith, or that we are in the process of recovering.<sup>5</sup>

Clearly, decisions were made after Vatican II by the various *coetus* groups and consultants who were charged with the task of revising the liturgy based on historical sources. Lingering questions do remain, however, about who decided what and on what basis. These are still debated and debatable issues precisely because historical data and evidence often lead in more than one direction and can yield more than one result. To study the liturgy under its historical aspects is to offer vistas and approaches to the study and celebration of the liturgy, but it cannot ever be said to be determinative and definitive of itself and on its own.<sup>6</sup>

### *Spiritual*

Closely allied with the theological and historical aspects of the study of the liturgy is our concern about how the celebration of the liturgy is nothing less than integral to and integrative of the Christian life (elaborated more fully in chapter 9). To study the historical evolution of rites and the theology inherent in the past and present revised rites of the liturgy should lead to an ever deepening appreciation for the inherent dialogic of what God says and does among us in its celebration and what we say and do in response to God through the liturgy's rites and prayers, and, in light of the liturgy, in the way we view

5. Frank Senn, "Liturgical Reconnaissance 2000," *Liturgy: Journal of the Liturgical Conference* 16, no. 1 (Summer 2000): 1–5.

6. Recall the comments from Dominic Serra and Robert Taft in chapter 1, pp. 6 and 42.

reality and live the Christian life. In effect there is no such thing as “just” a liturgical change. Changes in the liturgy affect anthropology, theology (specifically about Christ and the Trinity), ecclesiology (who it is who participates, when, and how), and spirituality (the living in life of the Gospel values central to and celebrated in the liturgy). The “academic” study of liturgy should guide and direct how and why we do what we do in the enactment of the liturgy.

Definitions of spirituality abound today both in Catholicism and in the world at large. A great source of Catholic pride is the breadth of spiritualities that coexist and comprise the genius of Catholicism both in history and today. “Spiritualities” here is understood in the sense of varying yet complimentary approaches to God, to prayer, and to leading the Christian life. These abound in the history of Christianity, examples of which are the proliferation of monastic, mendicant, and apostolic orders and communities, as well as the variety of ordained, religious, and lay associations in the church. Among the many possible working definitions of “spirituality” the following is meant to underscore the relationship of the what and how of worship of God and the inherent life relation of the liturgy.

Spirituality is a way of thinking and acting shaped primarily by the church’s corporate experience of God, who is immanent and transcendent, revealed yet remaining hidden, a triune God who invites us into deep and abiding relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as this triune God is experienced in a premier way in the liturgy. This deep and abiding relationship in God joins us to the whole church, especially at worship, and to the wider world in mission and witness. Spirituality enables church members to maintain corporate values and minority positions with confidence in the face of contrary cultural pressures because of the power of God’s enlivening Spirit within and among us. Spirituality guides a person’s understanding of the world and it provides a basis for discipline in one’s life.<sup>7</sup>

This working definition is inspired by the liturgy and presumes regular participation in the liturgy, which participation is a chief

7. Adapted from my own *What We Have Done, What We Have Failed to Do* (New York/Mahwah: 2014), 225.

means of praying and of shaping one's worldview. But this does not mean that celebrating the liturgy is at all coterminous with one's spirituality, as the Liturgy Constitution reminds us:

The spiritual life, however, is not limited solely to participation in the liturgy. Christians are indeed called to pray with others, but they must also enter into their rooms to pray to their Father in secret (see Mt 6:6); furthermore, according to the teaching of the apostle, they must pray without ceasing (see 1 Thess 5:17). We also learn from the same apostle that we must always carry around in our bodies the dying of Jesus, so that the life too of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh (see 2 Cor 4:10-11). That is why we beg the Lord in the sacrifice of the Mass that "receiving the offering of the spiritual victim" he may fashion us for himself "as an eternal gift" [prayer over the gifts former Missal, Monday after Pentecost]. (SC 12)

Liturgy is, however, a privileged means of shaping our spirituality.

### *Pastoral*

All liturgy is pastoral in the sense that it is always celebrated in and among the Christian community in the various church contexts in which the liturgy is celebrated. The academic study of liturgy concerns a number of things, among which is to bear fruit in the way the liturgy is celebrated and appropriated both theologically and pastorally. One of the most important lessons we can learn from the history of the liturgy is that "one size does not fit all." It was never thus in the history and evolution of the liturgy. For example, liturgical history reveals a variety of non-Roman Western liturgical rites whose differences were largely based on cultural and geographical differences. Liturgical history reveals a variety of ways of celebrating the Liturgy of the Hours, with principal and obvious differences between and among monastic communities, religious communities, and (what is often termed) the "cathedral" or the "parish" tradition.<sup>8</sup> The same

8. The conventional distinction between the "cathedral" and the "monastic" kinds of celebrations of the Hours has been critiqued and nuanced by, among others, W. Jardine Grisbrooke, "A Contemporary Liturgical Problem: The Divine Office and Public Worship," *Studia Liturgica* 8 (1971-1972): 129-168; Grisbrooke,

variety is seen in liturgies presided over by the diocesan bishop in the cathedral or in various places in the dioceses (often termed “stations”) and those presided over by parish priest/presbyter. In fact, the city of Rome exemplified these differences because, at the same time, it had papal liturgies (stational and at the basilicas), liturgies in the papal household, and liturgies celebrated in the parishes of Rome.<sup>9</sup> All were and are the Roman Rite. Even after the promulgation of the 1570 Missal after Trent, any community or location that had its own usage of the Missal in place for two hundred years could continue that usage (as noted in the previous chapter, for example, the Ambrosian, Dominican, and Carthusian liturgies).<sup>10</sup>

This is all to suggest that “pastoral” does not mean the implementation of “the” liturgy for every pastoral context in the church today. Historical study reveals that it was never so in Catholicism. True pastoral liturgy is where the historical, the theological, the spiritual, and the juridical intersect. That is pastoral liturgy, and all liturgy is pastoral.

At the same time, it must also be asserted that at times in the implementation of the reformed post-Vatican II liturgy certain liberties were taken with the rites that have fostered a certain “parochialism” with neighboring parishes celebrating the liturgy differently, most evidently in their choice of music, the celebration style of the presiding priest, or the way the churches are arranged or constructed. The critique of some social anthropologists about the revised liturgy cau-

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“The Formative Period—Cathedral and Monastic Offices,” in *The Study of the Liturgy*, ed. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold, 403–420 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978). On the revision of the Hours in general see Elena Massimi, ed., *Liturgia delle ore: Una riforma incompiuta. Atti della 43. Settimana di Studio dell’Associazione Professori di Liturgia, Palermo, 31 agosto–4 settembre 2015* (Rome: Edizioni Liturgiche, 2016). In particular see the very useful historical overview of the Hours by Pietro Sorci, “Forme di una Liturgia delle Ore popolare nella storia,” in *Liturgia delle ore*, 11–34.

9. See S. J. P. Van Dijk and J. Hazelden Walker, *The Origins of the Modern Roman Liturgy: The Liturgy of the Papal Court and the Franciscan Order in the Thirteenth Century* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1960).

10. Pius V, Apostolic Constitution, *Quo primum* (14 Jul 1570), in *Missale Romanum ex decreto SS. Concilii Tridentini restitutum, summorum Pontificum cura recognitum, editio typica*, 1962, ed. Manlio Sodi and Alessandro Toniolo, *Monumenta Liturgica Piana 1* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2007).

tions us not to make too many (more?) changes too quickly in the liturgy.<sup>11</sup> The curious thing is that what was legitimately prized as a source of stability and familiarity in Catholicism—the liturgy—has sometimes become a source of instability and lack of familiarity. The “fault” lies less in the Liturgy Constitution and in the revised published rites, and, to our way of thinking, more with individual, local leadership about the liturgy.

### *Juridical*

When the Liturgy Constitution was first promulgated, the previous Code of Canon Law (1917) was in force. Twenty years later after the constitution, the revised Code of Canon Law (1983) was promulgated, which code offers a very different source for study and reflection on liturgy and sacraments. The brief section in Book Three, on “The Ministry of the Divine Word” (canons 756–780), combined with the extraordinarily complete treatment of “The Sanctifying Function of the Church” in Book Four (canons 849–1258), make for rich study and reflection on the sacred liturgy. That each section on individual sacraments (except for marriage) begins with a description of “the celebration of the sacrament” before treating “the minister of the sacrament” is just one indication of the broad ecclesiological and liturgical context and understanding that the new Code brings to its understanding of liturgy and sacraments. That the canons on marriage begin with a thorough description of “pastoral care and those things which must precede the celebration of Marriage” (canons 1063–1072) indicate the seriousness with which the church approaches the celebration of marriage. These are enriched by the *Praenotanda* (General Instruction) of the revised Rite of Marriage itself.<sup>12</sup>

One of the challenges offered by the delineation of these five aspects of the study of the liturgy is to ensure that these aspects are integrated with one another and that the mindset of the pre-Vatican II rubrical approach to liturgy is firmly transcended. In effect, this means that

11. A far more polemical, not to say inimical, critique of the reformed liturgy is found in David Torevell, *Losing the Sacred: Ritual, Modernity and Liturgical Reform*, new ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004).

12. *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, Second Typical Edition (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2016), see pages 1–8 for the *Introduction*.

the key question for our purposes is not (primarily) “how” the liturgy is conducted; rather, the overriding question is “what” do these rites mean when they are enacted?

## II. Relating Liturgy and Theology

As an *act of theology* liturgy is a structured and ritualized event in which the believing church addresses God, is drawn into an experience of the living God, makes statements about its belief in God, and expresses this belief through a variety of means including creation, words, manufactured symbols, gestures, and actions. The many and multifaceted components of liturgy include words (principally Sacred Scripture and euchology), symbols, and gestures, all expressed and experienced within a rite whose structure has an inherent logic from beginning to end. We gather to celebrate sacred realities in which we literally “take part” in God, are shaped through Christ’s paschal mystery in the power of the Holy Spirit, and are then dismissed to live what we celebrate. To comprehend liturgy requires that one regard highly the value of the theologically rich words and symbols of liturgy, which are inherently metaphorical, polyvalent, often ambiguous, and always oriented toward engagement in and appropriation of the mystery of the living God. Liturgy is an act of theology in the sense that its statements and actions are addressed *to* God, are made *about* God, and are expressed in public for the sake of the gathered community’s ever deepening experience of God and conversion to God. All liturgy is prayer. Liturgical prayer is central to the whole Christian life.

One of the more poignant and pertinent descriptions of the liturgy in the Liturgy Constitution (as already noted briefly and as will be stated again in what follows) is found in article 10, which states:

Nevertheless, the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the church is directed; it is also the source from which all its power flows. For the goal of apostolic endeavor is that all who are made children of God by faith and Baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of his church, to take part in the sacrifice and to eat the Lord’s Supper.

This unambiguous assertion gives the liturgy its pride of place in the life of the church in terms of its celebration, reflection on its texts and

rites and their collective implications on Christian living. In our view “liturgical theology” can mean both a *theology of liturgy* and *theology drawn from liturgy*, with the latter including (what is conventionally called) systematic, moral, and spiritual theology.<sup>13</sup> Also considered below is theology as doxology (and drawn out more fully in chapter 8).

### *Theology of Liturgy*

This term describes what Christian liturgy is and what it does in terms of actualizing the reality of Christ’s paschal mystery for the

13. Various approaches to making appropriate distinctions about what can be understood by this general term can be found in the following, among others: Hans B. Meyer, “Liturgische Theologie oder Theologie des Gottesdienstes,” *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 86 (1964): 327–331; Francois Vandenbroucke, “Sur la théologie de la liturgie,” *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 92 (1970): 135–164; Geoffrey Wainwright, “Der Gottesdienst als ‘Locus Theologicus,’ oder: Der Gottesdienst als Quelle und Thema der Theologie,” *Kerygma und Dogma* 28 (1982): 248–258. Parts of this section rely on the work of Salvatore Marsili, especially the following four articles: Marsili, “Liturgia,” in *Nuovo dizionario di liturgia*, ed. A. M. Triacca and D. Sartore, 1037–1054 (Rome: Edizioni Paoline, 1984); Marsili, “Teologia Liturgica,” in *Nuovo dizionario di liturgia*, 2001–2019; Marsili, “Liturgia,” in *Dizionario del Concilio ecumenico Vaticano secondo*, ed. Salvatore Garofalo and Tommaso Federici, 1294–1342 (Rome: UNEDI, 1969); and “Liturgia,” in *Dizionario enciclopedico di teologia morale*, ed. Leandro Rossi and Ambrogio Valsecchi, 574–582 (Rome: Edizioni Paoline, 1973). Among Achille M. Triacca’s many articles related to this topic note especially Triacca, “La sens théologique de la liturgie et/ou le sens liturgique de la théologie. Esquisse initiale pour une synthèse,” in *La liturgie, son sens, son esprit, sa methode: Liturgie et théologie*, ed. A. Pistoia and A. M. Triacca, 321–337, *Conferences St. Serge* 28 (Rome: Edizione Liturgiche, 1982). See also Teresa Berger, “Modelle der Kirche Modelle der Liturgiewissenschaft,” *Ecclesia Orans* 10 (1993): 339–353; Pedro Fernández, “La Theologia de la Liturgia: Una Cuestion pendiente,” *Ecclesia Orans* 23 (2006): 99–127; Andrea Grillo, “Alla riscoperta del ruolo fondamentale della liturgia,” *Ecclesia Orans* 16 (1999): 365–391; Reinhard Meßner, “Was ist Systematische Liturgiewissenschaft? Ein Entwurf in sieben Thesen,” *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 40 (1998): 257–274; Mary M. Schaefer, “*Lex orandi, lex credenda*: Faith, Doctrine and Theology in Dialogue,” *Studies in Religion* 26, no. 4 (1997): 467–479; Annika Bender, “Programm und Rezeption der Liturgischen Bewegungen im Spiegel der *Liturgischen Zeitschrift*,” *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 51 (2009): 311–333; Paul De Clerck, “Les grands changements de paradigme dans les études liturgiques: Les grands débats théologiques depuis le concile Vatican II,” *Transversalités* 79 (2001): 83–99.

church, gathered and enlivened by power of the Holy Spirit. Through the liturgy contemporary believers are drawn into the paschal mystery and experience redemption through it.<sup>14</sup> This is to view the liturgy as a ritual enactment in the believing church of the transtemporal event of Christ's dying and rising (which happened once in history but which, by its nature, is not bound by time and space categories) through the particular means proper to the liturgy. As fundamentally a *memorial action* the liturgy is the manifestation of Christ's unique paschal mystery for the sake of contemporary congregations gathered in faith as this saving event is renewed through "texts and rites," words and gestures, elements of creation and "the work of human hands" (*et operis manuum hominum*), narrative, and ritual (among other things). This is to suggest that liturgy is essentially a privileged means, not of reenacting the past redemptive deeds of Jesus (which is impossible) but of being drawn into them in such a way that a new act of salvation occurs here and now for contemporary believers precisely because they engage in the act of memory that is liturgy.<sup>15</sup> Therefore a high theological value is placed on the church's *orandi* because of the way liturgical prayer reincorporates contemporary faith communities

14. The important phrase *opus nostrae exercetur* ("the work of our redemption is accomplished") in the Liturgy Constitution, *Sacrosanctum Concilium 2*, is taken from the (present) prayer over the offerings at the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper and in the Mass formula for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* [4 Dec 1963], [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19631204\\_sacrosanctum-concilium\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html)). The same phrase has been used as a touchstone for the theology of the liturgy. What may be called a "classic" is by Burkhard Neunheuser, "Der Beitrag der Liturgie zur theologischen Erneuerung," *Gregorianum* 50 (1969): 589–614; also, Neunheuser, "Liturgiewissenschaft: Exakte Geschichtsforschung oder (und) Theologie der Liturgie," *Ecclesia Orans* 4 (1987): 87–102. Among very many others see Jose Luis Gutierrez-Martin, "'Opus nostrae redemptionis exercetur.' Aproximación Historica al Concepto Conciliar de Liturgia: Análisis de un Proceso de Comprensión Teologica," *Scripta Theologica* 28 (1996): 475–497.

15. This important distinction is based on the key insight of Robert Taft in "Toward a Theology of the Christian Feast," in *Beyond East and West: Problems in Liturgical Understanding*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. and enlarged ed., 15–29 (Rome: Edizioni Orientalia Christiana, 1997).

into continually reappropriating Christ's redemption day in and day out.

The following three theological principles underpin this understanding of liturgy; they are inherent, presupposed and articulated in and through the liturgy itself, understanding "liturgy" to mean the celebration of the Hours, sacraments, rites of profession, ordination, funerals, and so forth. First, liturgy is essentially *anamnetic* (taken from the Greek word *anamnesis*, the opposite of "amnesia") of the paschal mystery in ritual actions through which Christ's high priesthood and intercession for humanity's salvation are continually made manifest and experienced by the gathered assembly. Here we understand anamnesis to be linked directly to Christ's high priesthood (SC 7). Liturgy is anamnetic in the sense that it combines the past redemptive deeds of Jesus (kenosis, obedient life, humiliation, suffering, death, resurrection, ascension) and draws the contemporary church into a unique and ever new experience of these redemptive deeds through the words and symbols of liturgy even as the church yearns for redemption's eschatological fulfillment in the kingdom. All liturgy bridges the past, present, and future of the church in Christ. Recalling the helpful distinctions of Aquinas<sup>16</sup> we can say that liturgy is commemorative of Christ's redemption accomplished once for all in the past, it is demonstrative of Christ's redemption in the present, and it is prognostic of the final consummation of redemption in the kingdom at the end of time. Liturgical anamnesis makes Christ's act of redemption present in order to enable the contemporary church to experience here and now an event of grace predicated on Christ's once-for-all act of redemption.<sup>17</sup>

With regard to the church's *orandi*, this is to assert that the traditional phrases from the euchology (term originally meaning "prayer book" or "sacramentary," but which we will use more generally to

16. See chapter 1, pp. 21–28.

17. There are important implications of this presupposition for pastoral practice, including whether a Christmas Eve "pageant" at Mass is desirable (because it dramatizes the past only) or where a crèche is located in a sanctuary area (if placed in front of the altar, it diminishes the paschal and anamnetic character of the place where the sacrifice of Christ is experienced again and again until it is fulfilled at the eschatological banquet). Such actions cannot but mitigate the inherent multivalence of the liturgy.

refer to the church's prayer texts, *orandi*) on Christmas and Easter are of central theological importance. The use of the repeated designation *hodie* in the antiphon to the Canticle of Mary at Evening Prayer on Christmas Day ("Christ the Lord is born *today*; *today* the Savior has appeared. Earth echoes songs of angel choirs, archangels' joyful praise. *Today* on earth his friends exult: Glory to God in the highest, alleluia"<sup>18</sup>) and the phrase "Christ is born for us: come let us adore him"<sup>19</sup> as the invitatory to the Liturgy of the Hours on Christmas asserts that each year the church rejoices once more in the birth of the Messiah in such a way that on this very day a new event of grace occurs. Similarly, to respond to the first reading at the Eucharist and to the Scripture readings at Morning and Evening Prayer on Easter (and through the Easter octave) by using the temporal designation *haec dies* and the text from Ps 118:24—"This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad, alleluia"<sup>20</sup>—also underscores how Christ's act of salvation, accomplished once and for all time, occurs still, here and now in the liturgy, a liturgical experience that is a new event of redemption.

Second, liturgy is essentially *epicletic* (from the Greek term *epikaleo*, meaning "to invoke") in that it derives from and is dependent upon the action and power of the Holy Spirit. In every act of liturgy it is the Holy Spirit who transforms faith communities through their liturgical experience of the paschal mystery. In our view the classic theology of liturgical epiclesis in terms of invoking the Spirit to transform symbolic elements of liturgy (such as bread, wine, oil, chrism) and to transform the worshipping community into a more complete corporate manifestation of the body of Christ in unity is an example

18. *Hodie Christus natus est: hodie in terra canunt Angeli, laetantur Archangeli: hodie exsultant iusti, dicentes: Gloria in excelsis Deo, alleluia.* English translations and Latin originals are from the following: *Roman Missal Renewed by Decree of the Most Holy Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican Promulgated by Authority of Pope Paul VI and Revised by Direction of Pope John Paul II, The Roman Missal, Amended Third Typical Edition* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2011); *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concilii Vaticani II instauratum auctoritate Pauli PP. VI promulgatum editum Ioannis Pauli PP. II cura recognitum, Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia emendata* (Vatican City: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 2008).

19. *Christus natus est nobis: Venite adoremus.*

20. *Haec dies, quam fecit Dominus: exsultemus, et laetemur in ea.*

of this essential foundation for the theology of liturgy. The fact that epicletic prayers classically use the subjunctive is illustrative. To pray “let your Spirit . . .” speaks of the church’s need to *invoke* the Spirit. It also speaks of the church’s faith in the Father’s providence to send the Holy Spirit upon the church gathered in worship to enable its participants to enact the liturgy. It is the Spirit who initiates, sustains, and will bring liturgy to its fulfillment in the kingdom. Thus, we understand all notions of “power” in liturgy to be analogous and that those ordained and installed to liturgical ministries act by virtue of the encompassing power of the Holy Spirit, not by their own power.<sup>21</sup> Thus what really matters first and foremost in every act of liturgy is what God accomplishes among us through Christ in the power of the Spirit. All ministerial discussions are appropriately contextualized within the parameters of the ways in which the celebrating assembly is incorporated into the mystery of the Trinity through worship and is continually sanctified by the liturgy through the power of the Spirit.

Third, liturgy is essentially *ecclesiological* (from the Greek term *ekklesia*, which means a gathering that is called forth, convoked, gathered; it is not a self-generated reality). Liturgy is always an act of the church’s self-understanding and self-expression as the assembly gathered by God.<sup>22</sup> All liturgy is accomplished by, with, and in the church assembled at prayer. From among the significant statements of the Liturgy Constitution about the ecclesiology of liturgy, two are particularly notable: SC 14 about fostering fully conscious, and active participation in the liturgy and SC 26, “Liturgical services are not private functions but are celebrations of the church which is

21. For a succinct feminist critique and proposal about the power involved in the act of blessing see Janet Walton, “Ecclesiastical and Feminist Blessing: Women as Objects and Subjects of the Power of Blessing,” in *Blessing and Power*, ed. David Power and Mary Collins, 73–80, Concilium 178 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1985).

22. The comment of Karl Rahner in this connection is well known: the church “is most manifest and in the most intensive form, she attains the highest actuality of her own nature, when she celebrates the eucharist” (Rahner, *The Church and the Sacraments*, trans. W. J. O’Hara [New York: Herder and Herder, 1963], 84, German original, *Kirche und Sakramente* [Freiburg: Herder, 1961]). See, among others, the helpful essay of Gerard Békés, “The Eucharist Makes the Church: The Ecclesial Dimension of Sacrament,” in *Vatican II: Assessment and Perspectives*, vol. 2, ed. Rene Latourelle, 347–363 (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1988).

“the sacrament of unity” . . . Therefore, liturgical services have to do with the whole body, the church; they make it visible and have effects on it.” To stress the ecclesiology of liturgy is to stress theologically the particularly soteriological aspect of liturgy. The church at prayer is the church in need of redemption; through the liturgy it experiences its hoped-for redemption. Furthermore, when the church celebrates the liturgy it partakes in the mystery of the Trinity in the sense that the essential interrelatedness of three Persons in God is again made manifest in and through the liturgy in a way that both invites and draws its participants into greater and deeper communion in the life of the triune God. The communion among the Persons of the Trinity is thus shared through the liturgy with the praying church.

Especially in light of the essentially anamnetic, epicletic, and ecclesiological nature of liturgy we want to assert the importance of understanding liturgy as a unique way for the worshipping assembly to experience Christ’s mediation of salvation and the Spirit’s power to sanctify and unify the church. To assert that the liturgy is the church’s central act of corporate prayer is to argue that liturgy is a unique, but not exclusive, locus for the church’s experience of God.<sup>23</sup> The Spirit enables the church to celebrate liturgy, at which time the church becomes an event, and the event of liturgy makes the church more fully itself as the body of Christ on earth. Liturgy occurs at the intersection of the vertical (God to us) and the horizontal (church communion); both these realities occur because of the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit. Liturgy is the event that constitutes the church; in so doing, it becomes a *kairos* of salvation.

From the anamnetic-christological, epicletic-pneumatological, and ecclesial-soteriological aspects thus asserted, we will argue that there is a significant difference theologically between experiencing the paschal mystery in liturgy and personal meditation on Christ’s passion, death, and resurrection. The former enacts these saving events; the latter derives from them and, in comparison, only reflects on

23. For a more complete explanation of this distinction see my own, “Toward a Theological Anthropology of Sacraments,” in *A Promise of Presence: Studies in Honor of David N. Power*, ed. Michael Downey and Richard Fragomeni, 29–47 (Washington: Pastoral Press, 1992), especially 40–43.

them. The former experience always gives birth again and again to the church. The latter is open to the defect of leading to a privatized appreciation of these sacred events that the liturgy by its nature cannot endorse. The essentially communal experience of God through liturgy implicitly critiques any prayer forms or spirituality that focus on individuals.<sup>24</sup> However, when and where references are made to individuals (for example, in many Eastern liturgies) these should be understood not to be a way of privatizing the ecclesial act of the liturgy but as ways to interiorize it even as individuals are gathered by God to comprise the liturgical assembly.

The craft of theologizing on the act of liturgy necessarily focuses on how the church's central saving mysteries are uniquely experienced in and through the liturgy. For our purposes in this book these three factors—anamnesis (of Christ), epiclesis (in the Spirit), and ecclesiology (in the community of the redeemed)—are to be taken together and assumed in our understanding of what is implied by a “theology of liturgy.”

### *Theology Drawn from the Liturgy*

This meaning of liturgical theology concerns how the means of communication and interaction in liturgy, especially words and symbols, can be utilized as a generative source for developing theology, particularly systematic, moral, and spiritual theology. This would mean that concepts in systematic theology can be fruitfully explored from data found in liturgical rites. Examples of this include how the reformed rites (including General Instructions) image the very being of God (literally “*theo-logy*,” speech about God), how they describe the being and redemptive work of Christ (Christology, soteriology), how they describe the being and work of the Holy Spirit (pneumatology), how they image the church (ecclesiology), and how they describe and reflect on our need for grace (Christian anthropology), especially as grace is experienced and mediated through liturgy. One of the desired results of the kind of liturgical study called for in the Constitution on the Liturgy would be met if the liturgy is thus mined

24. See chapter 9, especially pp. 599 and 617. See my own *What We Have Done*, chapter 10, 213–232.

for the way it deals with these central aspects of Christian faith and theology:

In addition, those who teach other subjects, especially dogmatic theology, sacred scripture, spiritual and pastoral theology, should—while accepting the intrinsic demands of their own disciplines—expound the mystery of Christ and the history of salvation in a manner that will make clear the connection between their subjects and the liturgy, and the unity of all priestly training. (SC 16)

For example, if one were to reflect on the way Christ is imaged in the liturgy one would come up with a variety and pluriformity of titles and usages. Such a study would mine the meaning of terms such as “redemption,” “sanctification,” “forgiveness,” and “reconciliation” since such frequently used terms in the liturgy describe our need for Christ and image how his salvation is enacted through liturgy. Here the disciplines of Christian anthropology and Christology would appropriately converge, as both derive from reflection on what happens in liturgy and how the liturgy itself describes it. Methodologically, the point here would be to utilize liturgy as a source for systematic theology in such a way that systematic theology is intrinsically connected to the act of worship.

With regard to sacramental theology specifically, if one were to probe the eucharistic liturgy to discover the theological meaning of Eucharist (understanding that “Eucharist” can be both a verb and a noun in terms of what the church *does* and what it *receives*), one would explore how the eucharistic memorial actualizes Christ’s paschal mystery and how this actualization deepens our progressive assimilation into the mystery of God through Christ. These notions are thoroughly traditional in eucharistic theology but were often eclipsed in the Reformation and post-Tridentine debates over eucharistic presence and sacrifice. This is to reassert the value of articulating a number of complementary ways of understanding what occurs in the Eucharist. The unique experience of the Eucharist appropriately emphasizes the assembly’s transformation into the body of Christ by the sacrament of Christ’s body and blood. This intrinsic ecclesiological aspect of the Eucharist can stand alongside objective descriptions of Christ’s

presence in the eucharistic sacrifice (which descriptions do not necessarily refer to the church's participation in this sacrificial meal).<sup>25</sup>

Theologizing from the liturgy requires a reexamination of the sources of concepts in Christian theology and of the ways these concepts are developed. This issue touches on the important distinction frequently made today between "symbolic" and "technical" language.<sup>26</sup> If the words, symbols, gestures, and rites of the liturgy are essentially metaphorical, then one needs to admit that such modes of expression are essentially "symbolic"<sup>27</sup> and will often be less precise than the more technical language of dogmatic assertions.<sup>28</sup> This itself, however, may be an important contribution to the ways in which contemporary liturgical and systematic theologians approach their work. The language of the liturgy is oriented to encounter and to appropriate the mysteries celebrated. To assert the value of theologizing about the Eucharist from the liturgy would be to reassert how the language about the Eucharist and the eucharistic reality are oriented to the church's experience of the Eucharist, part of which is described in what follows.

### *Theology as Doxology*

This understanding of liturgical theology has been more hinted at than delineated in full in recent theological writing.<sup>29</sup> In such an understanding, systematic theology would have a doxological focus,

25. See my own *Models of the Eucharist*, the chapters of which are [1] Cosmic Mass, [2] The Church's Eucharist, [3] The Effective Word of God, [4] Memorial of the Paschal Mystery, [5] Covenant Renewal, [6] The Lord's Supper, [7] Food for the Journey, [8] Sacramental Sacrifice, [9] Active Presence, and [10] Work of the Holy Spirit.

26. Among others see Avery Dulles, *The Craft of Theology: From Symbol to System* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1992).

27. On the dialogic nature of symbol see chapter 3, especially p. 155, and on the symbolic nature of the Word see chapter 4, pp. 190–194.

28. In fact, even the technical language describing the Eucharist from scholasticism is analogical.

29. See, among others, Harvey Guthrie, *Theology as Thanksgiving: From Israel's Psalms to the Church's Eucharist* (New York: Seabury Press, 1981), especially 181–216.

as opposed, for example, to an apologetic focus. *Doxology* is understood here to mean thanks, praise, and acknowledgment of God and God's mighty deeds of salvation experienced in and through the liturgy (*magnalia Dei*) and to reflect the belief of the theologian, particularly as theologians are subjects of the liturgical action. In the words of Geoffrey Wainwright (whose signature and highly influential book on liturgical theology is entitled *Doxology*<sup>30</sup>):

to mention the praise of God as the theologian's motivation runs the risk of provoking dissent from colleagues anxious for academic neutrality. Yet scholars who wish simply to describe the Christian faith had better call themselves historians, although good historical description usually calls for at least a certain empathy with the subject, and very little historiography proves to be ideologically 'value-free.' Again, those who wish to undertake an independent 'search for truth' are better called philosophers, for Christian theology does not start from scratch with every thinker but takes place within a tradition and community of faith and praise.<sup>31</sup>

This is to suggest that the very nature of theology ought to be oriented to praise and the acknowledgment of God in both prayer and reflection, as opposed to theology that tries to describe (much less define) sacred realities.<sup>32</sup> What is operative in this approach to theology is the important notion of how the *mystery*<sup>33</sup> that is God and that is of God is experienced through both liturgy and theology.

30. Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life. A Systematic Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

31. Geoffrey Wainwright, "The Praise of God in the Theological Reflection of the Church," *Interpretation* 39 (1985): 42–43. Also see, among others, Albert Houssiau, "La liturgie," in *Initiation à la pratique de la théologie*, vol. 5, ed. Bernard Lauret, François Refoulé, et al., 155–201 (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1983), at 158.

32. See Albert Houssiau, "La liturgie, lieu privilégié de la théologie sacramentaire," *Questions Liturgiques* 54 (1973): 7–12, especially 11, where he cautions against theology that is too didactic, a tendency that can be addressed if liturgy becomes more central as a theological source.

33. This was brought home to me personally at a meeting of the United Methodist–Roman Catholic dialogue on the Eucharist and Ecology. The agenda one afternoon was a discussion of Roman Catholic and Methodist documents on the Eucharist from the sixteenth century to the present. My presentation

A distinction made by Gerard Lukken (among others) is operative here. One meaning of *orthodoxy* is “right praise”; another meaning is “correct belief.”<sup>34</sup> In our understanding a doxological theology derives from the church’s prayer in praise of God—*lex orandi*. What is constructed on this basis is an “orthodox” set of beliefs, that is, beliefs that are based on “right praise” and also reflect correct teaching—the relationship of *lex orandi* and *lex credendi*. In our understanding the relationship of *lex orandi* and *lex credendi* also presumes, implies, and (yes) demands right living. Therefore, in our method a third operative principle is *lex vivendi*—“the law of living.”<sup>35</sup> On the one hand, some have argued that to use the phrase *lex vivendi* is to add something that the couplet *lex orandi, lex credendi* did not state (at least explicitly).<sup>36</sup> On the other hand, our argument is that to add *lex vivendi* is to emphasize what is embedded in the church’s *lex orandi* and that such an

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was on magisterial texts from the Council of Trent to John Paul II’s *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*. Karen Westerfield Tucker’s presentation was an elegant reading of and commenting on the eucharistic hymns composed by John and Charles Wesley. See *John and Charles Wesley: Selected Prayers, Hymns and Journals*, Classics in Western Spirituality (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1981).

34. See Gerard Lukken, “The Unique Expression of Faith in the Liturgy,” in *The Liturgical Experience of Faith*, ed. Herman Schmidt and David Power, trans. David Smith, 11–21, Concilium 82 (New York: Herder and Herder, 1973), especially 19. Importantly, Paul Marshall has highlighted the etymological discrepancies with understanding “orthodoxy” as “right praise”: Paul Marshall, “Reconsidering ‘Liturgical Theology’: Is There a *Lex Orandi* for All Christians?” *Studia Liturgica* 25 (1995): 129–151, at 142; see also the insightful view of Robert Taft in “The Contribution of Eastern Liturgy to the Understanding of Christian Worship,” *Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 37 (1996): 273–298, at 274.

35. See my own *The Sacraments: Historical Foundations and Liturgical Theology*. Among others see Teresa Berger, “*Lex orandi—lex credendi—lex agendi*: Auf dem Weg zu einer ökumenisch konsensfähigen Verhältnisbestimmung von Liturgie, Theologie und Ethik,” *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 27 (1985): 425–432; Berger, “Liturgy and Theology—An Ongoing Dialogue,” *Studia Liturgica* 19 (1989): 14–16; Don E. Saliers, “Liturgy and Ethics: Some New Beginnings,” in *Liturgy and the Moral Self: Humanity at Full Stretch before God*, ed. E. Byron Anderson and Bruce T. Morrill, 15–35 (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1998).

36. Among the most cogent expressions of this critique is in Enrico Mazza, “*Lex orandi et lex credendi*: Que dire d’une *lex agendi* ou *lex vivendi*?” *La Maison-Dieu* 250 (2007): 111–133.

emphasis can draw out ethical and spiritual meanings that the liturgy always presents and presumes.

One application of this approach to the theological enterprise in general would be to require theology to be both reflective of the act of faith expressed in the liturgy and rigorously scientific, because the liturgical experience leads to reflection in theological discourse (including systematics, ethics, and spirituality).<sup>37</sup> Related to this is the understanding that in doing theology the theologian expresses what he or she experiences and believes, and in delineating this as theology the theologian hands on what he or she believes for the good of others, particularly in developing their own faith. Liturgy is an event of salvation; the faith brought to the liturgy is deepened by the liturgy. This implies the involvement of the whole person in the act of liturgy and of doing theology. It relates to self-appropriation in theology of what occurs in the liturgy. This kind of theology would emphasize notions of conversion and growth in the faith, as well as growth in understanding. In light of what we argued above, doxology would always be anamnestic, epicletic, and ecclesiological. Such an approach to theology in general offers an especially fruitful approach to ecumenical dialogue and ecumenical theologizing on sacraments.<sup>38</sup>

37. See Bruce T. Morrill, "Sacramental-Liturgical Theology Since Vatican II: The Dialectic of Meaning and Performance," *Catholic Theological Society of America Proceedings* 67 (2012): 1–13, at 13:

The task for sacramental-liturgical theology is to provide church and academy perceptive, descriptive, and analytical work to help articulate what is going on and to venture judgments about what the church's ongoing sacramental-liturgical tradition has to offer, as well as how that ritual treasury is being profitably exploited or tragically squandered in practice. This surely is not to surrender the theological task to religious studies. What marks such work as theological, as it does Chauvet's, is the recourse to the biblical content of the faith as mediated through the mutually informing practices of word, sacrament, and ethics, studied scientifically in present contexts and with ongoing recourse to history and tradition, to traditions enacted historically. And so, I conclude with a bow to truth as performatively known and practically lived in an ongoing dialectic of liturgy and ethics, for articulation of that tension may be a principal way for sacramental-liturgical theology to serve its publics, present and future.

38. Some of this is specified in chapter 8, pp. 547–555.

### III. Method in Liturgical Theology

#### *Reason for a New Method*

Among the reasons why a new method is needed for liturgical theology today are the following two. It was asserted in the previous chapter that some approaches to liturgical theology from the Council of Trent through this century emphasized liturgical texts almost exclusively. To be fair, however, some authors, such as Anton Baumstark, did emphasize that liturgy was more than texts and that the whole “liturgical action” needed to be explored theologically. It is still true, however, that the seminal efforts in the last century in liturgical theology emphasized the interpretation of texts. Contemporary emphasis on *liturgy as event* comprising “texts and rites” sets the framework for a new method in liturgical theology.<sup>39</sup> (In what follows, the couplet “texts and rites” should be understood as essentially interconnected, even if one or the other term is used.)

Another reason why a new method for engaging in liturgical theology is necessary is the nature of the present reform of the liturgy in Roman Catholicism and in other Christian churches—a reform that is characterized by variety and options, especially when compared with the fixed post-Tridentine rites. The primary *locus* for articulating our methodological approach to liturgical theology is the present reformed post-Vatican II liturgy. Specific aspects of the reform that need to be borne in mind when delineating a method for liturgical theology include the variety and flexibility of rites and texts within a ritual structure, as well as the necessity of inculturating<sup>40</sup> this reformed liturgy. On one level the variety possible in the reformed liturgy concerns *how* the liturgy is prepared and actually celebrated. Examples here include music, environment, and texts not determined in the ritual books (for example, comments, intercessions, the homily/sermon). The next level (of particular interest here) concerns *how* the celebration of the reformed liturgy is used as the source for liturgical theology developed from rites that are not uniform. Hence,

39. See, among others, Pedro Fernández, “Liturgia y teología: Una cuestión metodológica,” *Ecclesia Orans* 6 (1989): 261–283.

40. The terms “adaptation,” “accommodation,” and “inculturation” are variously defined and understood to describe the process we will normally term “inculturation.”

attention moves beyond the texts found in ceremonial books to the shape and component elements of actual liturgical celebration, including texts and rites.<sup>41</sup>

As we enter this phase of our discussion of method, the challenge laid down by Joris Geldhof in the “Liturgical Theology” entry of *Religion: Oxford Research Encyclopedias* becomes particularly important:

If one admits that these data are not just texts which are (to be) approached with philological, historical, linguistic, literary, and hermeneutical methods, it is not yet clear what the best way is to delineate and investigate them. There is a broad consensus among liturgical scholars that the object of their research is not only text material, but what this means in relation to an output which is, paradoxically, above all written, is not entirely clear. Moreover, it is one thing to maintain that real liturgies are the-ology par excellence; it is quite another thing to effectively employ these liturgies in theological research and reflection.<sup>42</sup>

Because of these factors, our argument is that liturgical theology must be based on the *data* provided in the revised liturgical books, noting especially options and flexibility in the rites, as well on their *use* in actual celebration. For liturgies in the past this means assessing data from a number of sources in order to fill out the evidence found in liturgical-ceremonial books only.<sup>43</sup> For contemporary liturgical study it is helpful that work is under way utilizing allied disciplines, espe-

41. The work of Gerard Lukken and Albert Houssiau is particularly helpful in showing how these skilled theologians have moved the discussion in liturgical theology from texts, to liturgy as event, to the celebration of the reformed liturgy as the source for liturgical theology. See my own *Liturgical Theology: A Primer* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1990), for a summary of their work (29–34) and a bibliography of their writing on liturgical theology (75–76). A particularly useful statement of the need for a new method in liturgical theology based on ritual studies as a relatively new discipline and one that is germane to our argument is in Theodore W. Jennings, “Ritual Studies and Liturgical Theology: An Invitation to Dialogue,” *Journal of Ritual Studies* 1 (1987): 35–56.

42. Joris Geldhof, “Liturgical Theology,” in *Religion: Oxford Research Encyclopedias*, <http://religion.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199340378.001.0001/acrefore-9780199340378-e-14>.

43. Recall the comments in chapter 1, especially pp. 6–8, about recent advances in the study of the history of liturgy.

cially the social sciences, to develop an appropriate method for liturgical theology. Important examples of this kind of methodological discussion at present include the ongoing work of study groups of the North American Academy of Liturgy.<sup>44</sup> On the European side one important example is the liturgical method developed and exemplified in the Pastoral Liturgy Institute of Santa Giustina in Padua, Italy.<sup>45</sup>

*Context and Text: An Ongoing Dialectical Relationship*

Two main concerns comprise the agenda for this book on a method for liturgical theology. The first, discussed in Part Two of this book, relates to theology of liturgy and concerns the constitutive elements of liturgy. The second, discussed in Part Three, understands the constitutive elements to have constitutive implications and so concerns the theological and spiritual implications of engaging in the liturgy.

*Context is text.* Methodologically our concern in Part Two with the theology of liturgy will be to consider how to provide a theological interpretation of the *constitutive elements* of the liturgy—sacramentality, Word, eucharology, time, and arts—as these elements are experienced in relation to each other in liturgical celebration. Of particular interest here is the fact that liturgy is an enacted ritual of the faith

44. The annual reports of the discussions of the “Liturgy and Culture” and “Ritual Theory and Performance” study groups in the *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy* are helpful indicators of these methodological discussions.

45. For a more thorough description of the method used at the Institute and its course of study see Pelagio Visentin, “L’Istituto di Liturgia pastorale di S. Giustina—Padova: Dati e prospettive,” *Notitiae* 20 (1984): 559–567; and Franco Brovelli, “Celebrazione: Il mistero si fa esperienza. La maturazione del concetto di liturgia nel cammino dell’ILP,” in *Una Liturgia per l’uomo: La liturgia pastorale e i suoi compiti*, ed. P. Visentin, A. N. Terrin, and R. Cecolin, 325–342 (Padua: Messaggero, 1986), as well as the other essays in this volume. The course of studies of the Pastoral Liturgy Institute of Santa Giustina is summarized in Pelagio Visentin, *Culmen et fons. Raccolta di studi liturgia e spiritualità*, 2 vols., *Caro Salutis Cardo* 3–4 (Padua: Edizioni Messaggero Padova, 1986–1995). For a description of what we have called “reflection on the church’s liturgical praxis,” see Franco Giulio Brambilla, “Ermeneutica Teologica dell’adattamento liturgico,” in *Liturgia e Adattamento: Dimensioni Culturale e Teologico-Pastorali*, ed. A. Pistoia and A. M. Triacca, 39–83 (Rome: Editiones Liturgicae, 1990), especially 67, where he cites the need for “theological-practical reflection on the pastoral act itself” of liturgy.

community of the church through which the church experiences the actualization of Christ's paschal mystery in the power of the Holy Spirit. The fact that this liturgical encounter in faith is expressed through a number of means germane to liturgy as ritual requires that proper tools of interpretation be applied that respect the nature of liturgy containing "kerygmatic-prophetic" and "doxological-symbolic" elements, the former stressing verbal communication, the latter stressing symbolic engagement.<sup>46</sup>

While almost all of what is argued in Part Two will be from Roman Catholic liturgical sources, our ecumenical concern and interest requires that due respect be paid to how different liturgical (church) traditions regard some of the elements that comprise the celebration of the liturgy. Perhaps the clearest example of this concerns the singing of hymns in worship. Among others, Geoffrey Wainwright in *Doxology* presumes and relies heavily on hymns as a rich source for liturgical theology, as does Teresa Berger in *Theology in Hymns*<sup>47</sup> and Karen Westerfield Tucker in many of her publications.<sup>48</sup> The singing of hymns in Catholic eucharistic liturgy has a comparatively recent history.<sup>49</sup> For the sake of a mutually respectful ecumenical method we need to assert and bear in mind that different liturgical (church) traditions have varied understandings of the role of hymns in the Eucharist. Put somewhat differently, this asks the question in our

46. See Franco Brovelli, "Fede e Liturgia," in *Nuovo dizionario di liturgia*, ed. A. M. Triacca and D. Sartore, 543–555 (Rome: Edizioni Paoline, 1984), especially 545.

47. Teresa Berger, *Theology in Hymns? A Study of the Relationship of Doxology and Theology according to A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists (1780)* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1995).

48. See, among others, Karen Westerfield Tucker, *American Methodist Worship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Westerfield Tucker, "Music as a Language of Faith," *Ecclesia Orans* 23 (2006): 81–98; Westerfield Tucker, "Hymnals and Worship Books: An Ecumenical Review," *Studia Liturgica* 23 (1993): 207–222; Westerfield Tucker, "'In Thankful Verse Proclaim': English Eucharistic Hymns of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *Studia Liturgica* 26 (1996): 237–252; Westerfield Tucker, "Congregational Song as Liturgical Ordo and Proper: The Case of English-Language Hymns and Hymnals," *Studia Liturgica* 28 (1998): 102–120; Westerfield Tucker, "A Decade of Christian Song: Observations on Recent Hymnals and Songbooks," *Studia Liturgica* 31 (2001): 193–210.

49. See chapter 7, pp. 433–469.

various liturgical traditions to what extent hymns form part of the church's *lex orandi*.

In Part Two our thesis is that for an adequate liturgical theology one must examine the constitutive elements of liturgical rites—texts, symbols, actions, and gestures—both in relation to one another and also in light of the times and places when and where communities were or are engaged in these rites. This is to assert that liturgical rites are only adequately understood and interpreted theologically in relation to their experienced *context*. Briefly put, the first part of our thesis is that *liturgical context is text*, in the sense that *context* provides the source—*text* (again meaning “texts and rites” as enacted)—for developing liturgical theology. In our understanding, *context* means the following three things.

First, *context* means the historical evolution of a given liturgical rite in order to determine its origin, component parts, and variations in history both liturgically and theologically. The purpose of this study is to uncover the theological meanings that the rite has traditionally conveyed, as well as to distinguish aspects of the rite that are essential from those that are peripheral. For example, with regard to the Eucharist in the Roman Rite this would mean (at least) doing a comparative study of the descriptions of the eucharistic rite from Justin the Martyr (ca. 150), through the liturgical sources (properly so-called) *Ordo Romanus Primus* (eighth century), the *Missale Romanum* of 1570, 1970, 1975, 2000, the Roman Rite for the Dioceses of Zaire (1988), and *Divine Worship: The Missal, approved for the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter* (2015).<sup>50</sup> This study would yield what remained as constants in the Roman Rite of the Mass and what things were added, deleted, or made options.<sup>51</sup>

50. See <https://ordinariate.net> for a description of this church body comprised of former Anglicans.

51. See the unpublished Licentiate dissertation by Brian Mahoney, “Substantial Unity of the Roman Rite: A Structural Interpretation,” STL diss., The Catholic University of America, 2003. Especially given the way phrases from the Liturgy Constitution have been the source of caricature and reinterpretation, such as “sound tradition” (SC 23), “new forms . . . grew organically from forms already existing” (SC 23), “noble simplicity” (SC 34), and “substantial unity of the Roman Rite” (SC 38), such studies are to be very welcomed.

Second, *context* means an examination of the present reformed rites to discover their theological meanings and richness (especially as compared with those published immediately after Trent). This means examining liturgical acts as a whole where their constitutive elements (words, symbols, creation, human work, ritual, time, gestures, and so forth) are celebrated properly and interpreted in relation to one another.<sup>52</sup> In addition, this meaning of context seeks to determine the extent to which the setting for liturgy (that is, assembly, environment, building, and so on) and the conducting of liturgy (that is, preaching, music, gestures, other means of participation) facilitate and enhance the assembly's appropriation and understanding of the scriptural texts, prayers, symbols, and gestures.

The third notion of *context* argued here shifts attention from what is experienced in liturgy to what is often termed the critical function of liturgical theology.<sup>53</sup> This includes at least two things. First, it means critiquing the revised rites in terms of what they contain and raising questions about what might be contained in a new edition of the rite. This builds on the fact that since Vatican II three editions of *The Roman Missal* (1970, 1975, and 2002 in Latin, with an amended edition in 2008) and various editions of related ritual books (*Lectio-nary for Mass* in 1969 and 1981, *Ordo Cantus Missae* in 1972 and 1987, *Graduale simplex* in 1967 and 1975, and *Liber cantualis* in 1978 and 1983) have been published, as well as multiple editions of the following rites: *Rite of Baptism for Children* (1969 and 1973), *Divine Office* (1972 and 1985–87), *Rites of Ordination* (1968 and 1990), *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony* (1969 and 1991), and the *Martyrologium Romanum* (2001 and 2004).<sup>54</sup> Part of such reflection will be to indicate areas for

52. For an approach to understanding how component parts of liturgical rites are interrelated, see Robert Taft, "The Structural Analysis of Liturgical Units: An Essay in Methodology," in *Beyond East and West*, 187–202.

53. See Margaret Mary Kelleher, "Liturgy as a Source for Sacramental Theology," *Questions Liturgiques* 72 (1991): 25–42, where she writes, "liturgical texts do not become liturgy until they are performed by concrete local assemblies, and it is in the performance that meaning is actually created, communicated, and sometimes even transformed," 28–29).

54. See my own "The Theological Keys of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: Reflections and Proposals," *Ecclesia Orans* 30 (2013): 411–453. Also noteworthy are the amended editions *De exorcismis et supplicationibus quibusdam* (1999, amended

the ongoing inculturation of the Roman liturgy. Among the guiding principles here are from the Liturgy Constitution—that such rites grow organically from what has preceded and that they reflect the “substantial unity of the Roman rite” (SC 38)<sup>55</sup>—and subsequent

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2003) and *Cæremoniale Episcoporum* (1984, *reimpressio* amended edition 2008). Dates in the above items are given for the Latin typical editions as published by Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Abbatia Sanctia Petri de Solesmis, and so on.

55. See the whole of SC 37–40, given below:

*D) Norms for Adapting the Liturgy to the Temperament and Traditions of Peoples*

37. Even in the liturgy the church does not wish to impose a rigid uniformity in matters which do not affect the faith or the well-being of the entire community. Rather does it cultivate and foster the qualities and talents of the various races and nations. Anything in people’s way of life which is not indissolubly bound up with superstition and error the church studies with sympathy, and, if possible, preserves intact. It sometimes even admits such things into the liturgy itself, provided they harmonize with its true and authentic spirit.

38. Provided that the substantial unity of the Roman rite is preserved, provision shall be made, when revising the liturgical books, for legitimate variations and adaptations to different groups, regions and peoples, especially in mission countries. This should be borne in mind when drawing up the rites and rubrics.

39. Within the limits set by the standard editions of the liturgical books it shall be for the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority mentioned in article 22:2 to specify adaptations, especially as regards the administration of the sacraments, sacramentals, processions, liturgical language, sacred music and the arts—in keeping, however, with the fundamental norms laid down in this Constitution.

40. In some places and circumstances, however, an even more radical adaptation of the liturgy is needed, and this entails greater difficulties. For this reason: (1) The competent territorial ecclesiastical authority mentioned in article 22:2, must, in this matter, carefully and prudently consider which elements from the traditions and cultures of individual peoples might appropriately be admitted into divine worship. Adaptations which are considered useful or necessary should then be submitted to the Apostolic See, to be introduced with its consent. (2) To ensure that adaptations may be made with the requisite care, the Apostolic See will, if needs be, grant permission to this same territorial ecclesiastical authority to permit and to direct the necessary preliminary experiments over a determined period of time

documents from the Holy See and commentaries.<sup>56</sup> A second understanding of this “critical function” concerns the way the liturgy is conducted. As we asserted in the previous chapter, in what follows the revised Roman Rite will be regarded as normative and the basic source for examination and reflection. Again the “Roman Rite” here means all the revised rites as approved by Rome, including texts and

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among certain groups suitable for the purpose. (3) Because liturgical laws usually involve special difficulties with respect to adaptation, especially in mission lands, people who are experts in the matters in question must be employed when they are being formulated.

56. These include the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments’ instruction *Varietates Legitimae* and instruction *Liturgiam Authenticam*: Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Fourth Instruction for the Right Application of the Conciliar Constitution on Liturgy (Nos. 37–40), *Varietates Legitimae* (29 Mar 1994), in *The Liturgy Documents*, vol. 3, *Foundational Documents on the Origins and Implementation of Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ed. Archdiocese of Chicago, 495–518 (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2013); Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Fifth Instruction for the Right Implementation of the Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 36) on the Use of Vernacular Languages in the Publication of the Books of the Roman Liturgy, *Liturgiam Authenticam* (28 Mar 2001), in *The Liturgy Documents*, vol. 3, *Foundational Documents on the Origins and Implementation of Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 527–562.

Also see chapter 9 of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, in *The Roman Missal*. For a very positive summary and assessment of this chapter see Anthony Ward, “Features and Significance of the New Chapter of the ‘Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani,’” *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 114 (2000): 498–510. These texts have been seen by some as a counter to the arguments put forward by Anscar Chupungco from his doctoral dissertation, *The Cosmic Elements of the Passover*, *Studia Anselmiana* 72, *Analecta Liturgica* 3 (Rome: Editrice Anselmiana, 1977), through *Cultural Adaptation of the Liturgy* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1982) and *Liturgies of the Future: The Process and Methods of Inculturation* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1989) to *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacramentals, Religiosity and Catechesis* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1995).

One of the more interesting documents touching on this issue is the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments’ *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines* (2002), [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc\\_con\\_ccdds\\_doc\\_20020513\\_vers-direttorio\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_20020513_vers-direttorio_en.html). A most helpful commentary is that edited by Peter Phan, *The Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines. A Commentary* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2005).

rites for various communities, such as members of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter,<sup>57</sup> Statutes of the Neo-Catechumenal Way, Jesuits, Dominicans, and so forth.

In general, to state that liturgical *context is text* is to adjust the focus in liturgical theology from a philological-theological study of liturgical texts (such as sacramentaries, pontificals, and ordines) to discussing these sources along with everything that “texts and rites” implies in light of their being enacted in the liturgy, both past (to the extent possible) and present.

*Text shapes context.* Methodologically our concern in Part Three (though indicated throughout Part Two) is with the theological and spiritual implications of engaging in liturgy, that is, the *constitutive implications* that arise from the theological interpretation of the constitutive elements of the liturgy. This concerns some of the ways in which the act of liturgy can influence the shape of theology, ecumenical dialogue, and living the moral, spiritual life.<sup>58</sup> For example, one contribution of liturgical theology to systematic theology is the preservation of theology as disclosive of the mystery of God and not as defining or determining God’s self-disclosure. Liturgical theology is one way of redirecting theology as intrinsically oriented toward confession, thanksgiving, and praise of God. Part Three will concern what we have called the theological and spiritual dimensions of liturgy, which in our view are an intrinsic part of liturgical theology.<sup>59</sup>

All of this is to suggest that the *lex orandi, lex credendi* axiom requires attention to the *lex vivendi* beyond actual celebration to how what is celebrated and believed is reflected in how the church lives its faith.

57. See the following two sites: <https://ordinariate.net/news/witness-interview-with-most-rev-steven-j-lopes> and <https://ordinariate.net/divine-worship-missal>. See *Divine Worship: The Missal in accordance with the Roman Rite. The Celebration of the Holy Mass for Use in the Personal Ordinariates established under the Apostolic Constitution Anglicanorum coetibus* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2015).

58. See Part Three.

59. See, among others, the stellar collection of essays in Godfredo Boselli, *The Spiritual Meaning of the Liturgy: School of Prayer, Source of Life* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2014), Italian original, *Il senso spirituale della liturgia* (Magnano: Edizioni Qiqajon, 2012).

Hence, in our view the two foci of *lex orandi* and *lex credendi* yield a third part of the equation: *lex vivendi*, or life relation of the liturgy.<sup>60</sup> Such an understanding of liturgical theology can help to reunite the doing of liturgy with living Christianity, lest the craft of liturgy be understood only as engaging in church ceremonial. Cultic preoccupation appropriately accedes in this understanding of *lex vivendi* to an emphasis on a proper understanding of liturgy that is concerned with Christian conversion understood as a response to the challenge of the Gospel, ratified in cult and reflected in life.

Understood in terms of our twofold thesis that *context is text* (theology of liturgy) and *text shapes context* (theology and spirituality derived from liturgy), this means that *text* indicates all that is contained in the liturgy's "texts and rites" and includes the data derived from our investigation of the theology of liturgy (Part Two) as this data is examined and applied to the specific issues of doxological theology, ecumenical sacramental conversations, and spirituality (Part Three). Our argument is that the liturgy provides a unique and essential methodological component for theological and spiritual issues (also Part Three). Therefore, *text shapes context* is understood in the sense that the theology of liturgy (*text*) necessarily shapes the theology and spirituality of those who participate in the liturgy (*context*). That is, we understand the theological interpretation of the *constitutive elements* of the liturgy sacramentality, Word, euchology, arts, ritual, and time) to have *constitutive implications* for church life, specifically its engaging in theological reflection and leading the spiritual life based on its engagement in the liturgy.

Taken together we understand there to be an *ongoing dialectical relationship* between *text* and *context*. On the one hand, the ecclesial and cultural settings in which the liturgy takes place—*context*—influence the way we experience and interpret the liturgy—*text*. On the other hand, and just as *context* influences how the *text* of liturgy

60. This emphasis recalls the work of pioneers in the liturgical movement (notably Lambert Beauduin and Romano Guardini, as noted in chapter 1, pp. 34–38, as well as Cipriano Vagaggini) who argued for an appreciation of liturgy that concerned the renewal of the church's whole life and of the spiritual lives of those who participate. This concern is amply noted in Angelo Lameri, *La "Pontificia Commissio de sacra liturgia praeparatoria Concilii Vaticani II."*

is interpreted, that data we call *text* necessarily influences the church's theology, spirituality, and life—*context*.

#### IV. Further Reflections on Liturgical Context

In succeeding chapters our argument will repeatedly include the value of liturgical tradition in interpreting the present reformed liturgy, the theological dynamics inherent in and theological value of the present liturgy, and critiques of the revised rites in light of both liturgical tradition and the exigencies of contemporary need. Hence, an examination of what we have termed the three components of liturgical context now follows: historical evolution, contemporary reform, and critical liturgical theology.

##### *Historical Evolution of the Rites*

To study the history of liturgy is to study a history of evolving liturgical forms as well as variety and complementarity in the theological interpretation of the rites celebrated.<sup>61</sup> Part of the context that is brought to bear in every liturgical act is provided by the evolution of liturgical forms and, at least implicitly, the evolution of understandings about liturgy and of liturgical theologies. In the Western liturgy this variety is the result of several historical factors, among which are cultural (differences in the mentality of participants), theological (care to ensure correct theology), and linguistic (changes in the language used). This kind of investigation also differentiates those aspects of worship that are essential from those that are peripheral.<sup>62</sup>

Our concern here is to establish the importance of understanding the evolution and theological meaning of liturgical forms, the

61. For a careful analysis of the pivotal evolution of the shape of the liturgy in the first three centuries and the thesis that this period saw immense variety in forms, see Robert Taft, "Historicism Revisited," in *Beyond East and West*, 31–49.

62. See Herman Wegman, *Christian Worship in East and West: A Study Guide to Liturgical History*, trans. Gordon W. Lathrop (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1994). Wegman describes the "investigation of worship by historical periods because in this way the evolution of celebration in the church becomes clearer and one can show that a difference exists between essential rites and incidental rites, between what is structural and what is decorative" (Wegman, *Christian Worship in East and West*, xiv).

combination of which we understand to comprise “liturgical tradition.” Clearly, the church’s actual liturgical tradition cannot be determined without historical study and reflection. In this connection the description by Robert Taft of the importance of history for the method used in liturgical studies and liturgical theology is most useful.

And so history is a science not of past happenings, but of present understanding . . . history is not events, but events that have become ideas—and ideas are of the present. The past does not change, but we do, which is why the work of history is always of the present, and never done. Liturgical history, therefore, does not deal with the past, but with tradition, which is a *genetic vision of the present*, a present conditioned by its understanding of its roots. And the purpose of this history is not to recover the past (which is impossible), much less to imitate it (which would be fatuous), but to *understand liturgy* which, because it has a history, can only be understood in motion, just as the only way to understand a top is to spin it.<sup>63</sup>

For Taft the study of liturgy, like every other branch of theology, requires that students bring to it several skills—including historical, philological, and conceptual—in the search to uncover meaning and

63. Robert Taft, “The Structural Analysis of Liturgical Units: An Essay in Methodology,” in *Beyond East and West*, 187–202, at 191–192. In a significant footnote Taft states,

Of course we must not expect history to tell us what present practice or doctrine should be. That would be to confuse history with theology. But history can free us from the temptation to absolutize past or present by opening up to us the changing patterns—and hence relativity—of much in our practice and doctrine (Taft, “The Structural Analysis of Liturgical Units,” 192n9).

These comments should be understood in light of Taft’s view of knowledge:

Knowledge is not a collection of facts but the perception of their interrelation, and knowledge advances not so much from the discovery of hitherto unknown data as from the perception of new relationships that permit the elaboration of new patterns or systems. . . . So a method is just a way of approaching and organizing the raw information we possess (Taft, “Response to the Berakah Award: Anamnesis,” in *Beyond East and West*, 281–305, at 293).

that students be mindful that “what we find embedded in liturgical manuscripts was embedded in a sociocultural ambience outside of which it cannot be understood as liturgy.”<sup>64</sup>

In light of our thesis that *context is text*, a number of questions need to be raised about the data derived from historical research. By way of example and illustration are the following questions.

A first question asks what texts, symbols, gestures, music, and art were enacted in the liturgy and who spoke, sang, or participated in them. Implicit here is the question of the extent to which the assembly and the ministers participated in liturgy through movement, symbolic action, singing, and speaking.

A second question asks what kinds of sources were used to compose the liturgy. Implicit here is the concern to determine the biblical foundation (as the essential source) of the imagery and metaphors used in ritual language. This investigation seeks to determine to what extent the evolving rites are influenced, or even controlled, less by the Scriptures than by contemporary theological controversies or prevailing currents in contemporary spirituality. G.G. Willis’s statement on euchology is illustrative:

From the emergence of the collect form in the fifth century it has been the general Roman rule that collects, secrets, and postcommunions are addressed to the Father through the mediation of the Son. The Council of Hippo (393) and the third Council of Carthage (397) ordain that the prayers at mass are to be addressed to the Father. This regulation was made at a time when the

64. Robert Taft, “Response to the Berakah Award,” 292. In this connection the outline and scope of Herman Wegman’s *Christian Worship in East and West* is illustrative. Wegman most usually introduces each chapter by describing the liturgical evolution of that period by first describing “historical data” and “cultural data.” He then discusses liturgical evolution, including changes in rites and structures, in light of this data. More recent research in this area has already been indicated in chapter 1, pp. 18–21, especially: Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars, 1400–1580* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1992); Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Teresa Berger and Bryan Spinks, eds., *Liturgy’s Imagined Past/s: Methodologies and Materials for the Writing of Liturgical History Today*. Also see Taft’s own efforts in this area in *Through Their Own Eyes: Liturgy as the Byzantines Saw It* (Berkeley: InterOrthodox Press, 2006).

content of the prayers was still at the discretion of the celebrant and not authoritatively prescribed by the Church.<sup>65</sup>

Implicit here is the question of correct doxology and orthodox prayer.

A third question asks how the various components of liturgical rites relate to one another (for example, scriptural proclamation, blessing prayer, acclamations, chants, and other music) and how each component is interpreted in relation to the others. This is to acknowledge the various genres of communication that together comprise the act of worship—proclamation of texts, gestural enactment of symbols, communal participation in song, and so on. For example, a proper interpretation of the introit and communion antiphons at the Eucharist requires understanding the kind of melodies assigned to these texts (such as chant), not just the words of the texts, lest the study of what was experienced as sung texts be confined to a study of words only. Not to investigate melody as well as text would be to change the nature of one of the genres of communication that constitute the liturgy.<sup>66</sup>

A fourth question concerns the determination of whether and how the descriptions of liturgical ceremonial (as in patristic sources or ordines) reflected what was actually celebrated, lest more weight be given to how a rite is described (grand or simple) as opposed to how it was actually experienced.

Returning now to our thesis that *context is text*, it is important to study liturgical history and liturgical tradition in light of contemporary cultural and sociopolitical situations. Such an investigation needs to study the relationship between liturgy and contemporary theology on the one hand, and between liturgy and contemporary spirituality on the other. For example, one would need to study medieval books of hours as devotional sources used by laypersons at the same time that the Liturgy of the Hours was adapted and celebrated by the mendicant orders (such as the Franciscans and Dominicans). This shift from an exclusive concern for ritual evolution

65. G. G. Willis, "The Variable Prayers of the Roman Mass," in *Further Essays in Early Roman Liturgy*, 89–131 (London: SPCK, 1968), at 116.

66. This is specified and exemplified in chapter 7, pp. 433–469.

enhances liturgical study because it is a move in the direction of recontextualizing, and therefore being most faithful to, the liturgical sources themselves. This approach is also necessary in order to make appropriate judgments about liturgical theology since such judgments need grounding in the data about *who* celebrated the liturgy using *what* sources.

Related to this consideration is the notion of the normativity of liturgical tradition. This is to suggest that contemporary liturgical rites have developed in history and have experienced evolutions that need to be brought to bear when interpreting or critiquing present liturgical forms. Liturgical tradition both grounds the contemporary reform and ought to guide further adaptation in order that what is experienced presently is truly part of an organic development. For example, Taft's own method in studying the Eucharist<sup>67</sup> attests to how the skilled liturgiologist is equipped to make the most poignant observations about contemporary liturgy and liturgical theology precisely because of the breadth of background derived from the historical and theological study of the liturgy—which in our understanding means liturgical tradition.

The perdurance in liturgical tradition of certain symbolic actions (for example, bathing in water for baptism) and the ritual and theological importance attached to the proclamation of the blessing prayer (for example, over water in baptism) means that this evidence can be used to correct those rites which have neglected ample use of either symbolic action or blessing text. Thus liturgical tradition may be said to have provided the means whereby the preconciliar liturgy, which had often minimized sacramental liturgy to categories of matter and form in celebration and theology, was changed at the reform *in the light of liturgical tradition* to maximize symbols and to expand on the use of blessing prayers. For baptism this means giving preference to immersion over infusion for the baptismal washing and giving preference to blessing water at every baptism with an extensive blessing prayer as opposed to using the water blessed at the Easter Vigil throughout the whole year.

67. See Taft, "The Frequency of the Eucharist throughout History," in *Can We Always Celebrate the Eucharist?*, ed. Mary Collins and David Power, 13–24, Concilium 152 (New York: Seabury, 1982).

Several examples from studies on the Eucharist help to illustrate this point further. From the perspective of eucharistic praying, the studies of eucharistic prayer forms by Louis Bouyer in *Eucharist*,<sup>68</sup> Paul Bradshaw and Maxwell Johnson in *The Eucharistic Liturgies: Their Evolution and Interpretation*,<sup>69</sup> and the collection of essays *Issues in Eucharistic Praying in East and West* edited by Johnson<sup>70</sup> can help our appreciation of the rich theology of the Eucharist that can be drawn from these prayers, as well as the ways such studies can inform a contemporary critique of the anaphoras presently in use. As will be noted below, however, our method would frame such a discussion differently.

While Bouyer presents an impressive summary and interpretation of a wealth of eucharistic prayer texts, his method limits interpretation to texts only. The author deals with what the texts themselves say in order to delineate (to use his terminology) a theology *of* the Eucharist from liturgical sources rather than a theology *on* the Eucharist from other, largely doctrinal, sources.<sup>71</sup> In addition, Bouyer does not deal with how these texts were proclaimed (whether in Greek, Latin, or the vernacular, whether aloud or silently, whether sung or spoken) or whether their proclamation could be heard and comprehended by the congregation during the act of liturgy. While Bouyer's work is an impressive example of part of the method proposed here, in the sense that historical study involves textual study and an awareness of how rites developed, what is also essential is how a community experiences what it is doing liturgically.<sup>72</sup>

A very worthy successor (replacement?) to Bouyer is the very important project by Bradshaw and Johnson. This extraordinary

68. See Louis Bouyer, *Eucharist: Theology and Spirituality of the Eucharistic Prayer*, trans. Charles U. Quinn (1968; repr., Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006). See pp. 1–14 for the methodological premises of Bouyer's book.

69. Paul F. Bradshaw and Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Eucharistic Liturgies: Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2012).

70. Maxwell E. Johnson, ed., *Issues in Eucharistic Praying: Essays in Liturgical and Theological Analysis* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2010).

71. Bouyer, *Eucharist*, 1–14.

72. It is to be noted that Bouyer has been criticized for trying to make data from this rich variety of sources fit a preconceived structure that he draws from Jewish origins and sources.

in-depth presentation and commentary on a wealth of liturgical sources is a rich building block for a liturgical theology of the Eucharist. The authors assert that “with regard to Eucharistic theology we have tended to place most of our emphasis on two topics, namely, Eucharistic or real presence, including theories of and approaches to the ‘consecration’ of the bread and wine, and Eucharistic sacrifice.”<sup>73</sup> This choice to emphasize presence and sacrifice sets up this very important study. Yet, one could ask in terms of a study of eucharistic prayer texts whether this sets up a built-in limitation. Do the categories of presence and sacrifice have the same influence on the celebration of the liturgy and thinking about the Eucharist today as they did from the sixteenth century to the twentieth? Do not the liturgical reforms of the churches from the 1960s onward provide a different context for this kind of rich study?

The essays in *Issues in Eucharistic Praying in East and West* also deal with liturgical texts, but here there are expansions on and indications of new methodologies for the study of liturgical sources.<sup>74</sup>

Issues not addressed in these books, but that are important in our view for a proper interpretation of the eucharistic liturgy as a source of eucharistic theology, would need to include the primacy and adequacy of the proclamation of the Word, what music accompanied the rite, who participated in the music (for example, eucharistic acclamations), what the anaphora texts said, how much of it was comprehended by the assembly, and what the rites of Communion were, including who was invited to share in the eucharistic bread and wine.

In light of these questions, the kind of method employed by Nathan Mitchell in his work on the Eucharist, *Cult and Controversy*,<sup>75</sup> is a move

73. Bradshaw and Johnson, *The Eucharistic Liturgies*, xv.

74. Bradshaw and Johnson authored essays in the collection *Issues in Eucharistic Praying in East and West*, as did John Paul Abdelsayed, Anne Vorhes McGowan, Albertus Horsting, Michael Marx, and Nicholas Russo. The single discordant note is the essay by Neil Roy, in which he critiques Western church art on the basis of authors from the Christian East and the caricatural way he dismisses the work of Cipriano Vagaggini, a chief architect of the liturgical reform from Vatican II.

75. See Nathan Mitchell, *Cult and Controversy: The Worship of the Eucharist outside Mass* (New York: Pueblo, 1982). While Mitchell’s book is highly laudable, more recent scholarship requires some nuancing. For example, in the sections on

in the right direction. With regard to liturgy and popular piety, Mitchell's observations about the relationship between liturgy on the one hand and eucharistic exposition, benediction, and processions on the other are pertinent. He maintains that these devotions enabled people to be drawn into the eucharistic mystery at a time when the liturgy did not facilitate such access. This example demonstrates that one needs to be careful in determining a priori what constituted "liturgy" in the sense of what was experienced as "the work of the people," as opposed to what liturgical rituals said was the work of the people.<sup>76</sup> Communities present at liturgy were often engaged in personal and devotional prayer, not in the texts of the liturgy; yet they were usually conscious of the actions of the ritual taking place. Could not this visual engagement itself be termed liturgical participation? One needs to be careful about assessing how people did or did not participate in the liturgy in history.<sup>77</sup> Such questions are most significant in evaluating the contemporary liturgy since one of the stated aims of the liturgical reform is the integration of popular piety with the liturgy.<sup>78</sup> Recent research, however, reveals how elusive this task is and the depth behind many practices of popular piety.<sup>79</sup>

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the ninth century eucharistic controversies, Ratramnus and Pascasius Radbertus are described as in direct opposition (see 76–85). More recent scholarship nuances this perspective, however. See the important doctoral dissertation from Saint Louis University by Timothy R. LeCroy, "The Role of *Corpus* in the Eucharistic Theology of Pascasius Radbertus," Ph.D. diss., Saint Louis University, 2012.

76. See chapter 1.

77. For example, John Bossy will argue that in the Middle Ages, even though communities did not vocalize liturgical responses or prayers, they did, in fact, "participate" in the liturgy in significant but nonverbal ways. See John Bossy, "The Mass as Social Institution, 1200–1700," *Past & Present* 100 (1983): 29–61; also Bossy, *Christianity in the West, 1400–1700* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

78. See SC 13. See my own attempt at this in "Devotions and Spirituality," in *What We Have Done*, 213–232; my own "The Theological Keys of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*," especially 452; and my own "Implementing *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: Undertaken and Unfinished," *Chicago Studies* 49, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 148–179.

79. A useful introduction to this literature is provided in Mary Collins and David N. Power, eds., *Liturgy: A Creative Tradition*, Concilium 162 (New York: Seabury, 1983). The discussion of more recent methodologies and ways of interpreting data from sources that are not strictly "liturgical," as argued in chapter 1, can help to frame this discussion in a new way.

For our thesis, therefore, an essential and important component of the present liturgical context is determined by liturgical tradition, understanding liturgical history to be a chief but not the only component. Methodologically it is important to emphasize that tradition is something not in the past, but the present shaped by past experience. This acknowledges the conserving function of ritual in terms of Christian identity. Liturgy and liturgical theology are not created anew in each age; they are products of evolution in history coupled with ongoing theological and pastoral reform and renewal.

### *Contemporary Liturgical Reform*

Chief among the stated aims of the present liturgical reform is the concern to provide rites that facilitate full and active participation “demanded by the very nature of the liturgy.”<sup>80</sup> The task of determin-

80. SC 14:

It is very much the wish of the church that all the faithful should be led to take that full, conscious, and active part in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy, and to which the Christian people, “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people (1 Pet 2:9, 4-5) have a right and to which they are bound by reason of their Baptism.

In the restoration and development of the sacred liturgy the full and active participation by all the people is the paramount concern, for it is the primary, indeed the indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit. Therefore, in all their apostolic activity, pastors of souls should energetically set about achieving it through the requisite formation. Yet there is no hope of achieving this unless pastors of souls, in the first place, themselves become fully imbued with the spirit and power of the liturgy and attain competence in it. Thus it is absolutely essential, first of all, that steps be taken to ensure the liturgical training of the clergy. For that reason the sacred council has decided on the following enactments . . .

Also see SC 21:

In order that the Christian people may more certainly derive an abundance of graces from the sacred liturgy, holy Mother Church desires to undertake with great care a general restoration of the liturgy itself. For the liturgy is made up of immutable elements divinely instituted, and of elements subject to change. These not only may but ought to be changed with the passage of time if they

ing whether the present reforms actually reflect these aims can be aided by the thesis *context is text* precisely because active participation cannot be measured merely by determining whether a *rite* that facilitates such participation has been promulgated by the Holy See and published. Two key issues here concern to what extent the present rites as implemented and practiced function to facilitate popular participation (not “just” comprehension) and to what extent contemporary celebrations of liturgy conform to the revised rites themselves.

One way of dealing with the kind of variation in interpretation of the present liturgy is by way of what might be called a hermeneutic of *dynamic dialectic*. This is to suggest that an interpretation of each element of a given liturgical celebration relies on an appreciation of its place within the rest of the celebration and that this location and interrelationship, at least in part, if not in large measure, determines its meaning. The notion of *dialectic* here is called *dynamic* because at various times the same text, symbol, or gesture from a given rite can take on a new meaning because the *context* has changed or because a given ritual component (such as text, symbol, gesture) is given greater or lesser prominence at a given liturgy. An historical example here concerns the theological precision of the Roman Canon articulating the various aspects of Christ’s paschal mystery vis-à-vis a piety that emphasized only Christ’s passion. Part of what led to this dissonance was the fact that the words of the Roman Canon, with their own theological precision, were likely not heard or understood by the assembly. Rather, rubrical directions (the silent Canon, double genuflections at the consecration) and devotional practices mitigated this. Another kind of example concerns the interpretation of the sign of peace at a reconciliation service or at an ordination liturgy, in which settings it takes on meanings not customarily associated with it at a normal Eucharist.

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have suffered from the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become unsuited to it.

In this restoration, both texts and rites should be drawn up so that they express more clearly the holy things which they signify; the Christian people, so far as possible, should be enabled to understand them with ease and to take part in them fully, actively, and as befits a community.

Wherefore the sacred Council establishes the following general norms . . .

Hence, texts and gestures within the whole context of a liturgy (Eucharist) or the varying contexts in liturgy for the same gesture (sign of peace) must be factored into an adequate hermeneutic for liturgical theology.

While the word “performance” can contain the negative connotation of leaving liturgical communities passive during a rite, it can be a useful term to indicate the fact that *how a rite is conducted* (“performed”) does have an important bearing on how the liturgy engages the assembly’s participation.<sup>81</sup> It is an historical fact that for centuries the text proposed as the church’s norm for eucharistic worship and understanding—the Roman Canon—was not audible for the assembly and was not proclaimed in the vernacular. Here performance clearly mitigated the kind of active participation envisaged in the reform of the Missal after Vatican II, which also cited the eucharistic prayer as the high point of the entire celebration (see GIRM 78–79). The way the “text” of the prayer was prayed in Latin and in silence and the way this “rite” was conducted with the priest not facing the assembly were mitigating factors for participation. (Again, one needs to be careful to risk prejudging the kind of “participation” that was possible in the pre-Vatican II rite.<sup>82</sup>) Now that all of the eucharistic liturgy can be celebrated in the vernacular, the eucharistic prayer is directed to be prayed aloud, and the priest faces the people from the altar “whenever this is possible” (according to GIRM 299),<sup>83</sup> elements of ritual “performance” can facilitate active participation in the eucharistic action.

81. Among many others see Margaret Mary Kelleher, “Hermeneutics in the Study of Liturgical Performance,” *Worship* 67 (1993): 292–318; more recently, Richard D. McCall, *Do This: Liturgy as Performance* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007); John F. Baldovin, “*Accipit Panem*: The Gestures of the Priest at the Institution Narrative of the Eucharist,” in *Rule of Prayer, Rule of Faith: Essays in Honor of Aidan Kavanagh*, ed. Nathan Mitchell and John F. Baldovin, 123–139 (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1996); and the thoroughly researched summary and analysis of texts in Barry M. Craig, *Fractio Panis: A History of the Breaking of Bread in the Roman Rite*, *Analecta Liturgica* 29 (Rome: Studia Anselmiana, 2011).

82. Again, see John Bossy, “The Mass as Social Institution, 1200–1700” and *Christianity in the West, 1400–1700*.

83. The full text of GIRM 299 states:

The altar should be built separate from the wall, in such a way that it is possible to walk around it easily and that Mass can be celebrated

Thus the distinction between reformed *rite* and *context* is important to sustain since contemporary liturgical contexts may well mitigate comprehension and participation—the very things that the reformed

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at it facing the people, which is desirable wherever possible. Moreover, the altar should occupy a place where it is truly the center toward which the attention of the whole congregation of the faithful naturally turns (cf. Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction, *Inter Oecumenici*, September 26, 1964, nos. 97–98: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 56 [1964], 898). The altar should usually be fixed and dedicated.

The phrase “facing the people” (*versus populum*) is one that has spawned numberless commentaries, many of which are ideologically driven. That altars were constructed to “face the people” and Masses were celebrated “facing the people” prior to Vatican II are historical facts. Among others, see Wilton D. Gregory, “On the 50th Anniversary of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,” *Ecclesia Orans* 30 (2013): 391–410. That the Liturgy Constitution did not mandate this practice (nor did it mention anything about postures at Mass) is true. That this becomes the rationale for why the former Secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship Cardinal Ranjith argues that the practice should not be followed is to ignore the prescriptions of the (later) GIRM: see Ranjith, “The Sacred Liturgy, Source and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church,” in *Sacred Liturgy: Source and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church*, ed. Alcuin Reid, 19–40 (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2014). Despite his characteristically clear thinking on theological matters, the then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger muddied the waters by asserting that Mass ought to be celebrated *ad Orientem* (“facing the East”) to signify the importance of welcoming the return of the Lord from the East: see Ratzinger, “The Altar and the Direction of Liturgical Prayer,” in *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, trans. John Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000); Ratzinger, “Der Altar und die Gebetstrichtung in der Liturgie,” in *Theologie der Liturgie: Die sakramentale Begründung christlicher Existenz*, Joseph Ratzinger Gesammelte Schriften 11, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Freiburg im Breisgau /Basel/Vienna: Herder, 2014), with other such assertions throughout *Theologie der Liturgie*. See also Ratzinger’s Introduction to Uwe Michael Lang’s *Turning toward the Lord* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005). In June 2016 the Prefect for the Congregation for Divine Worship, Cardinal Sarah, suggested in a talk given in London to the Sacra Liturgia society that Masses should be celebrated *ad Orientem*: Sarah, “Toward an Authentic Implementation of Sacrosanctum Concilium,” in *Authentic Liturgical Renewal in Contemporary Perspective. The Proceedings of the International Conference on the Sacred Liturgy Sacra Liturgia 2016, London, 5–8 July 2016*, ed. Uwe Michael Lang (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017). Subsequent blogosphere commentaries were numerous, pro and con. The Vatican Press Office clarified that no such thing was to be required: Holy See Press Office, *Communiqué: Some Clarifications on the Celebration of Mass* (11 July 2016), <http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2016/07/11/160711c.html>.

liturgical rites sought to achieve.<sup>84</sup> In addition to the kind of ecclesial and cultural factors in the liturgical context that influence performance, and thus participation in and comprehension of the liturgy, other factors include (among other things) the physical setting in which the liturgy takes place, the arrangement of assembly in that environment, the choice of music, ministries, and the assembly's engagement in symbolic actions.<sup>85</sup>

For example, with regard to the arrangement of the assembly and (what today is commonly termed) the environment for the liturgy, while the Roman Canon and new eucharistic prayers use the pronoun "we" to articulate the prayer of the whole assembly, the very arrangement of the assembly can speak more about individuals at prayer than communal worship. Furthermore, with regard to music, if the texts sung at the communion rite refer to individual reception or to adoration, then the music in which the people participate will reflect messages at variance with those inherent in the eucharistic rite which at this point emphasizes the communal sharing in the Eucharist, one of whose purposes is to build up the church as the body of Christ.<sup>86</sup>

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What causes the confusion is the implication that Masses celebrated "facing the people" were never, at the same time, "facing East." In addition, and more in line with our thesis in this book, the original historical data for Masses celebrated *ad Orientem* also included that the gathered assembly was standing during the eucharistic prayer. Curiously, these appeals to Masses celebrated *ad Orientem* only speak about the posture of the priest celebrant, not the posture of the gathered assembly, which would be standing, not kneeling.

84. It should be pointed out here that there is some debate about the adequacy of the aim stated by the Council of intelligibility or comprehension of liturgical rites. The issue in liturgy is less verbal understanding and mental comprehension and more the shaping of attitudes and allowing one's imagination to be engaged in symbolic acts, which by their nature are not oriented to intellectual comprehension alone.

85. This is treated more fully in chapter 7.

86. For example, see GIRM 86:

While the Priest is receiving the Sacrament, the Communion Chant is begun, its purpose being to express the spiritual union of the communicants by means of the unity of their voices, to show gladness of heart, and to bring out more clearly the "communitarian" character of the procession to receive the Eucharist. The singing is prolonged for as long as the Sacrament is being administered to the faithful [cf. Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of

In another example, with regard to ministries, the performance of a ritual by a single priest celebrant as opposed to liturgy engaging the varied liturgical roles envisioned and demanded by the present rites speaks a message at variance with the notion of the church at prayer as clearly articulated in the revised liturgical rites (both the texts of the rites of Eucharist and ordination themselves and their accompanying General Instructions). In this regard, it would be an interesting exercise to trace the understanding of the phrases from the Roman Canon *et omnium circumstantium* and *et plebs tua sancta* in light of our thesis. If these texts were originally heard and comprehended by eucharistic assemblies it was not long afterward that the assembly became physically distant from the sanctuary with the result that the physical act of hearing such a text was difficult. In addition, hearing this text proclaimed from the sanctuary of a mammoth cathedral provides a far different experience from that of hearing the same text in a parish church, in a small chapel, or at a domestic liturgy.<sup>87</sup> Related to this is the posture assumed by the assembly (kneeling or standing) while these phrases were spoken. While an obvious barrier to comprehending the meaning of the gathering of the church around the altar had been the fact that the language of the Canon was Latin, one could argue that some contemporary liturgical contexts make full comprehension of these same texts impossible precisely because contexts (for example, physical arrangements) so influence how texts are heard.

The other side of the coin about context as an essential factor in understanding texts is how the present liturgical *rites* (that is, General Instruction, Lectionary readings, euchology, other texts, gestures and symbols) function as normative and as a critique of inadequate *contexts*

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the Sacraments, Instruction, *Inestimabile donum*, April 3, 1980, no. 17: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 72 (1980), p. 338]. However, if there is to be a hymn after Communion, the Communion Chant should be ended in a timely manner.

87. One could also muse about the meaning of these phrases in light of the evolution of the “private Mass” (i.e., as opposed to the individual priest celebrating alone), where it is likely that small groups gathered at altars of secondary importance (when compared with the main altar of a shrine or monastery) for a rite experienced as much simpler than that conducted at a main altar during a conventual Mass.

for contemporary liturgical celebration. An example of the normative value of the reformed rites concerns the primacy of the assembly in the conduct of and for the theology of the liturgy. The very fact that the assembly is continually referred to in the General Instruction and throughout the present eucharistic rite signals a shift from the Tridentine Missal, which directed the actions of sanctuary ministers only (in ways that were rubrically self-conscious). Therefore the emphasis on actualizing the assembly's role in the contemporary liturgy and understanding liturgical ministers as functioning in communion with and on behalf of the assembly signals a shift in how the liturgy is to be experienced and understood.<sup>88</sup> This same evidence also signals a shift in the liturgical theology of the Eucharist from objective presence in the elements only to communal transformation through the eucharistic enactment of the paschal mystery, which enactment presumes sharing in the transformed gifts of bread and wine.

For example, the fact that every revised ritual states where and how the roles of reader and deacon are to function liturgically is itself a theological statement about how the church is to be imaged in liturgy, namely, through a variety of roles serving the assembled community. Liturgical theologians rightly capitalize on such directives as indications of a shift in liturgical ministry away from the medieval eclipsing of liturgical roles into that of the priest. When such ministers do not function in the liturgy and roles are again collapsed into one (or even to a few), then the *texts* of the reformed liturgy function as appropriate critiques of those *contexts*. One could argue, therefore, that the reformed liturgy is normative in the sense that inadequate contexts need to be corrected in the light of what the rituals disclose about the ecclesiology of liturgy. One reason why some texts are simply not "heard" is that some liturgical contexts (environment, music, ministries, performance, and so forth) are simply not congruent with the vision and guidelines of the reformed rites.

The normative value of the reformed rites also indicates that one's interpretation of texts used liturgically is not relative. The meaning is grounded in the revised rites as used liturgically and as bearers of

88. This is one example of the way differing ecclesiologies are operative in the Tridentine and present Missal, now called the "Extraordinary Form" and "Ordinary Form" of the Mass (which terms were used in the previous chapter).

a rich liturgical and theological tradition, which tradition is brought to bear as they are used at present. Hence, liturgical rites must be interpreted in a way that respects their nature as intended for ritual use and as bearers of theological meanings disclosed principally in the liturgical celebration itself.

For example, the present Mass formula for the solemnity of Corpus Christi reflects traditional themes of the theology of Eucharist. These include Eucharist as memorial (opening prayer), church unity and peace (prayer over the gifts), present participation in the Eucharist as an eschatological sign (prayer after Communion), as well as images of the effects on the church of participation in the Eucharist (prefaces for the Holy Eucharist). The Scripture texts from the Lectionary are classic in the sense that they emphasize Old Testament images of feeding (during the Exodus in Deut 8:2-3, 14-16, and Exod 24:3-8) and examples of offering sacrifice (Melchizedek offering bread and wine in Gen 14:18-20), of theological expositions about Christ as high priest (Heb 9:11-15), the ecclesiological dimensions of eucharistic participation (1 Cor 10:16-17 and 1 Cor 11:23-26), and gospel texts about Jesus as the bread of life (John 6:51-58), as host at the Last Supper (Mark 14:12-16, 22-26), and feeding the crowds superabundantly with twelve baskets left over (Luke 9:11-17). Obviously these texts afford abundant material for preaching on this feast. Sermons not derived from these sources, perhaps emphasizing individual piety or the priest's power to consecrate, are implicitly critiqued by the Lectionary itself. When viewed against liturgical tradition as a whole, these texts function as normative in the sense that they ground the theology and preaching on Corpus Christi (especially anamnetic and ecclesiological aspects), and they offer a critique of eucharistic theologies and pieties, as well as notions of ordained ministry, that are individualistic or merely "power" oriented.

The issue of the normative value of the reformed rites requires investigation into what actually occurs at liturgy and (to the extent possible) how what occurs is appropriated by the gathered community. This investigation can help assess what has actually been implemented and the extent to which the revised rites are truly normative in the sense outlined above. A first question here would be *whether or not* the envisioned liturgical reform has taken place. The kind of approach used in studying the Eucharist in *The Order of Mass Study*

published by the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions<sup>89</sup> and in studying liturgy more generally in the *Notre Dame Study of Catholic Parish Life*<sup>90</sup> are significant (if not unflawed and now somewhat dated) in the sense that they open up avenues for a thorough assessment of reactions to the reforms as they are actually experienced. A second question concerns the possibility of interpreting the elements of liturgy (word, gesture, symbol, song, and so forth) in relation to one another for a liturgical hermeneutic that studies *texts in context*.

A particularly poignant example of a facet of the liturgical reform (influenced by liturgical tradition) in the present sacramental rites that needs evaluation in light of actual celebrations is the proclamation of the Word and the act of preaching.<sup>91</sup> Since one of the stated purposes of the Lectionary reform is greater variety in texts heard and preached, one could ask how much variety is experienced in the texts proclaimed at sacramental celebrations, for example, infant baptism. To overuse one text, even one suggested in the ritual itself (such as Matt 28:18-20), could mitigate one of the intentions of the reform in terms of providing a variety of readings. Further, one needs to ask how well homilies relate the Scripture readings with the sac-

89. See National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Bishops' Committee on Liturgy, and Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions, *The Order of Mass Study: A Report* (Washington: Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions, 1985).

90. *Notre Dame Study of Catholic Parish Life* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1981–1989). More recent studies include those by the Institute for Church Life (Notre Dame), the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (Georgetown), and other similar organizations and projects across Christian denominations. A wider view of the religious landscape can be found in such monographs as Christian Smith, *Young Catholic America: Emerging Adults in, out of, and Gone from the Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), as well as the data found in various polls and surveys (e.g., PEW's 2014 "Religious Landscape Study" [<http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/>], mentioned in the Introduction). See also James Davidson and Suzanne Fournier, "Recent Research on Catholic Parishes: A Research Note," *Review of Religious Research* 48, no. 1 (Sep 2006): 72–81.

91. The crucial importance of preaching in the reformed liturgy and in developing both an adequate theology of liturgy and spirituality derived from the liturgy will be addressed in chapter 4.

ramental acts that accompany them. Are Word and sacrament experienced as and perceived to be correlative? Do baptismal homilies contain any reference to the intrinsic connection between Scriptures proclaimed and bathing in water?

Another example of the liturgical reform that needs evaluation would be the use of gestures in celebrating initiation.<sup>92</sup> While the rituals of both adult and infant baptism clearly give preference to immersion over infusion,<sup>93</sup> one could ask to what extent immersion has in fact replaced the pouring of water. Another important aspect of gestural involvement presumed in the revised rite of baptism concerns the assembly's processing from the entrance of the church, to gathering to hear the Word, to the font for water baptism, and to the altar for Eucharist (or for the Lord's Prayer) and conclusion. Some assessment about whether and how communities are actually engaged in such ritual movement would be important to determine whether what is presupposed in the rite actually takes place.

Our thesis about *context is text* and a *dynamic dialectic* for interpretation is advanced here in two ways. First, it requires that liturgical units be interpreted in relation to each other and that the whole liturgical event itself be regarded as an essential component in interpreting liturgical texts, symbols, and gestures. Crucial in this first stage is the actual liturgical celebration.<sup>94</sup> Second, the postconciliar rites set a standard and measure against which to evaluate present liturgical practice. This is to suggest that the rites as revised present a minimum standard of how to celebrate liturgy—a standard that is marked by option, flexibility, and direct relationship with the given liturgical assembly.

92. See, among others, the helpful study on the implementation of the rite of infant baptism by Jean Orienne, "Baptism: An Enquiry on the Evocative Force of the Symbolism of the Baptismal Rites," *Lumen Vitae* 26 (1971): 623–648.

93. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, Typical Edition (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1988), n. 226, and *Rite of Baptism for Children*, Typical Edition (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2002), n. 60.

94. See Mark Searle, "New Tasks, New Methods: The Emergence of Pastoral Liturgical Studies," *Worship* 57 (July 1983): 291–308, where he deals with "actual liturgical performance" as the locus for pastoral liturgical study. Also see Bruce T. Morrill, "Sacramental-Liturgical Theology since Vatican II."

*Liturgical Adaptation and Critical Liturgical Theology*

It was noted above that the nature of the present liturgical reform is oriented to adaptation and indigenization depending on varying local circumstances. This needs to be kept in mind when considering the normative value of the revised rites.

By their nature the present rites contain options and choices within ritual structures that are to be determined in light of the varying settings for celebration. For example, the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* states that “the pastoral effectiveness of a celebration will be greatly increased if the texts of the readings, the prayers, and the liturgical chants correspond as aptly as possible to the needs, the preparation and the culture of the participants. This will be achieved by appropriate use of the many possibilities of choice described below” (GIRM 352). Anscar Chupungco will argue that paragraphs 37–39 of the Liturgy Constitution provide the rationale for the kind of flexibility found in each of the rites revised since Vatican II. He (among others) then argues that paragraph 40 opens the door to a far greater liturgical change, namely, to a wide-ranging adjustment of liturgical structures and rites in light of varying cultural needs. This process has been variously described as “indigenization,” “acculturation,” “cultural adaptation,” and “inculturation.”<sup>95</sup>

The present liturgy therefore can be termed both a reform as well as the basis from which to work toward ongoing inculturation of the liturgy. Once the reformed liturgy as envisioned and enunciated in the revised rites is in place, then the “indigenization imperative” (to use Anscar Chupungco’s term) is to be undertaken. This process has seen some, although comparatively few, results in practice. Among the many factors comprising the inculturation task that cause this process to be slow are questions about what is meant by the statements of the Liturgy Constitution that in the reform of the liturgy the “church does not wish to impose a rigid uniformity” (SC 37) and that in adapting the liturgy “the substantial unity of the Roman rite” is to be preserved (SC 38). Another factor is that efforts toward inculturation continue alongside developments in the theoretical underpinnings as to why inculturation needs to be undertaken in the first place.<sup>96</sup>

95. See Chupungco, *Cultural Adaptation of the Liturgy*.

96. See the work of D. S. Amalorpavadass, “Theological Reflection on Inculturation,” *Studia Liturgica* 20 (1990): 36–54, 116–136.

For our thesis about *context* this means that the historical study of the liturgy discloses variety in liturgical forms on which basis the contemporary inculturation agenda functions to provide greater variety in liturgical forms, provided that the “substantial unity of the Roman rite” is preserved. For our purposes the methodological question that emerges concerns how to develop an adequate method for liturgical theology with these factors in mind. In other words, the contemporary issue concerns how to develop a liturgical theology on the basis of not only pluriform rites, but also on the basis of rites being adapted to changing situations in accord with the inculturation agenda.

One of the factors involved in inculturation, but which also has a life of its own, concerns what we have already referred to as “critical liturgical theology.” Here the question of the *adequacy* of the present reformed rites comes into play. The task of developing liturgical theology in the light of ongoing liturgical reform becomes all the more important since ritual changes almost always both reflect and influence shifts in contemporary theology and spirituality. There is a reciprocity between liturgy and theology that operates in ritual evolution (exemplified in much of liturgical history) and in the ritual changes occurring at present in the sense that changed liturgical rites often reflect developments in theology and changed rites can (and should) influence theology and spirituality. This is to say that the reintroduction in the present of an ancient liturgical practice or text, merely because it is well attested in the tradition, is to introduce the possibility of liturgical anachronism, at least stylistically if not substantially, recalling the assertion of Frank Senn at the beginning of this chapter. The present state of liturgical reform invites liturgical theologians to assess the adequacy of the contemporary reform in light of tradition, contemporary theology, church teaching, and present pastoral needs. Implicit in such an assessment is the acknowledgment of the provisionality and formative nature of liturgical forms; both these factors invite critical assessment of the present rites. Our method takes into consideration and is a reinterpretation of the precedent from Prosper of Aquitaine,<sup>97</sup> who himself argued not from fixed forms

97. Our method draws on, but is not an imitation of, Prosper’s maxim and argument. See Michael Church, “The Law of Begging: Prosper at the End of the Day,” *Worship* 73, no. 5 (Sep 1999): 442–453.

and texts but from a ritual structure that emphasized the value of intercessory prayer. In our understanding the contemporary reform presents us with a restored vision of what comprises ritual forms. It does not present us with a fixed and unchangeable set of texts and rites. Thus engaging in critical liturgical theology is an imperative for improving the present reformed liturgy.

Among the theological factors that need to be incorporated into such study and revision are recent advances in anthropology, ecclesiology, Christology, pneumatology, trinitarian theology, and eschatology. For example, some of the growing pains with liturgical inculturation are correlative with the contemporary tensions experienced with ecclesiology in general, specifically, how local churches relate to each other, to the church universal, and, in particular, to Rome. Another example is the crucial issue of theological language and names for God, which needs to be dealt with squarely in ongoing revision, especially because of the formative nature of liturgical prayer.<sup>98</sup>

A clear example of how knowledge of liturgical tradition, linked with contemporary theology, helps cast a critical eye on the present liturgical reforms concerns the way the Holy Spirit is imaged and operative in the present Roman liturgy. Liturgical and sacramental theologians such as Edward Kilmartin rightly lament the absence of a strong pneumatology in Western sacramental liturgy and theology in general.<sup>99</sup> Clearly one can legitimately criticize the present Roman

98. See the particularly helpful approach to this issue in Gail Ramshaw, *Revising Sacred Speech: The Meaning of Liturgical Language. Second Thoughts on Christ in Sacred Speech* (Akron: OSL Publications, 2000).

99. Yves Congar's useful term "christomonism" has been used by Edward Kilmartin and others in describing how Western euchology lacks adequate emphasis on the Holy Spirit. Kilmartin's own work, *Christian Liturgy: Theology and Practice*, vol. 1, *Systematic Theology of Liturgy* (Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1988), is a useful example of how to develop a theology of liturgy from the perspective of an economic trinitarian theology. Also see Edward Kilmartin's insightful comments on this in Kilmartin, "A Modern Approach to the Word of God and Sacraments of Christ," in *The Sacraments: God's Love and Mercy Actualized*, ed. Francis A. Eigio, 59–109 (Villanova: Villanova University Press, 1979); Kilmartin, "Theology of the Sacraments: Toward a New Understanding of the Chief Rites of the Church of Jesus Christ," in *Alternative Futures for Worship*, ed.

liturgical rites for their comparatively inadequate pneumatology. Here advances from Scripture and the theology of the person and work of the Holy Spirit would be most helpful in ongoing revisions of a Western euchology that remains primarily christocentric. The result of theology influencing liturgy would be an improved euchology and, derivatively, an improved theology of liturgy and systematic theology influenced by and/or derived from the liturgy. As part of the research into how actual liturgical assemblies understand the working of the Spirit in worship, one could inquire about the extent to which people actually “hear” the newly restored eucharistic epiclesis in the anaphora and appreciate its theological meaning, given the Western preoccupation with the institution narrative.<sup>100</sup> In addition, in accord with our thesis, a major factor in hearing such texts may not be the words of the anaphora themselves but rather liturgical art and architecture that stress images of Christ (specifically crucifixes and stations of the cross) as opposed to art depicting images or the work of the Spirit.

The tradition of allowing for liturgical pluriformity and variety within liturgical tradition could be most useful when providing for the (sometimes vastly) different needs of worshippers in terms of self-expression, patterns of bodily involvement, and habits of singing because of varied cultural backgrounds. For example, the advantage of the eucharistic rite developed in Zaire is that it capitalizes on the involvement of whole persons in worship; it is not just concerned with texts.<sup>101</sup> An example of how liturgical tradition can be brought

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Bernard Lee, vol. 1, *General Introduction*, ed. Regis A. Duffy, 123–175 (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1987).

100. Among the numerous studies on the meaning of the epiclesis in contemporary eucharistic prayers see John McKenna, “The Epiclesis Revisited: A Look at Modern Eucharistic Prayers,” *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 99 (1985): 314–336. For a review of the meaning of the epiclesis in liturgical history see Achille M. Triacca, “Teología y liturgia de la epiclesis en la tradición oriental y occidental,” *Phase* 25 (1985): 379–424.

101. See Laurent Mpongo, “Le Rite Zairois de la Messe,” *Spiritus* 19 (1978): 436–441; Engelbert Mveng, “Christ, Liturgie et Culture,” *Bulletin de Théologie Africaine* 2, no. 4 (1980): 247–255; Anselme Sanon, “Cultural Rooting of the Liturgy in Africa since Vatican II,” in *Liturgy: A Creative Tradition*, ed. Mary Collins, David Power, and Marcel Lefebure, 61–70 (New York: Seabury, 1983). Also see

to bear in critiquing the present liturgy concerns the contemporary eucharistic prayers in use in the Roman Rite. Liturgists have critiqued the use of the same structure for all the new prayers, the inadequacy of the theology of creation in them, the limited use of acclamations during the anaphoras (especially when compared with many Eastern formulas), and the symbolic gestures during the prayer, which still tend to highlight the institution narrative in a way that often exalts its position “out of context” with the rest of the prayer.<sup>102</sup> In addition, in the light of our comments above about respecting the various genres of communication in the liturgy, one needs to be aware that traditionally parts (some would argue even all) of the eucharistic prayers were sung<sup>103</sup> and that eucharistic acclamations are ranked as chief among the liturgical units to be sung by the assembly. In addition, recent research (some of which was undertaken in an ecumenical framework) indicates a wide variety of possibilities for anaphoral structures.<sup>104</sup> Furthermore, recent biblical and liturgical research

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the enormously insightful work of Elochukwu E. Uzukwu, *Worship as Body Language* (and his full *oeuvre*),

102. This is discussed in more detail in chapter 5, especially pp. 247–253. See, among others, Joseph Keenan, “The Importance of the Creation Motif in a Eucharistic Prayer,” *Worship* 53 (July 1979): 341–356. Also see my own “The Sacramentality of Creation and the Role of Creation in Liturgy and Sacraments,” in *Preserving the Creation: Environmental Theology and Ethics*, ed. Kevin W. Irwin and Edmund D. Pellegrino, 67–96 (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1994). Also see the way Pope Francis discusses liturgy and sacraments in his 2015 Encyclical Letter on Care for Our Common Home, *Laudato Si’* (24 May 2015), [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html); also see my own *A Commentary on Laudato Si’: Examining the Background, Contributions, Implementation, and Future of Pope Francis’s Encyclical* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2016), especially 108–111, 115–117, 179–180, 218–220. Also see R. Kevin Seasoltz, “Non-Verbal Symbols and the Eucharistic Prayer,” in *New Eucharistic Prayers: An Ecumenical Study of Their Development and Structure*, ed. Frank Senn, 214–234 (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1987).

103. See the first part of Jan Michael Joncas, *Hymnum Tuae Gloriam Canimus. Toward an Analysis of the Vocal and Musical Expression of the Eucharistic Prayer in the Roman Rite: Tradition, Principles, Method* (Rome: Pontificium Athenaeum S. Anselmo de Urbe, 1991), 5–157.

104. See David N. Power, “The Eucharistic Prayer: Another Look,” in *New Eucharistic Prayers*, 239–250.

reveals the need for a reevaluation of the commonly assumed direct relationship between Jewish blessing prayers and Christian anaphoras.<sup>105</sup> In our method any discussion suggesting the impropriety of adding additional eucharistic prayers to the Roman Rite is not to be countenanced. Such a critique flies in the face of the authoritative nature of the liturgical reform. The “texts and rites” as approved by the Holy See are normative. To our understanding, the critical function of liturgical theology does not eliminate a set of prayers outright. It may, however, offer additional alternatives or editing to existing texts.<sup>106</sup>

With regard to eucharistic practice there is the thorny issue of the appropriateness of eucharistic concelebration,<sup>107</sup> specifically when

105. Particularly influential studies are those of Cesare Giraudo, *La struttura letteraria della preghiera eucaristica: Saggio sulla genesi letteraria di una forma. Toda veterotestamentaria, beraka giudaica, anafora cristiana*, *Analecta Biblica* 92 (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1981); its sequel, Giraudo, *Eucaristia per la chiesa: Prospettive teologiche sull'eucaristia a partire dalla lex orandi* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1989). See also Giraudo, *Preghiere eucaristiche per la Chiesa di oggi: Riflessioni in margine al commento del canone svizzero-romano* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1993); Giraudo, *In unum corpus: Trattato mistagogico sull'eucaristia* (Milan: San Paolo, 2001). See also Thomas J. Talley, “From Berakah to Eucharistia: A Reopening Question,” in *Living Bread, Saving Cup: Readings on the Eucharist*, ed. R. Kevin Seasoltz, 80–101 (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1982). This is discussed more fully in chapter 6, especially pp. 331–338.

106. That additional eucharistic prayers should not have been added to the Roman Rite has become something of a mantra among many who oppose aspects of the reformed liturgy. For example, Louis Bouyer, in his *Memoirs*, trans. and annotated Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2015), will make this point and also severely criticize the leadership on adding and editing these texts, which Cipriano Vagaggini undertook at the request of Paul VI. That Bouyer’s book is at times a caricature and that he uses decidedly polemic rhetoric against others is the cause for enormous sadness from such a respected scholar and author. See my own “Review of Louis Bouyer, *Memoirs*, trans. and annotated Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2015),” *Worship* 90, no. 3 (May 2016): 274–280.

107. Among the more useful studies of this question in English are Robert Taft, “Ex Oriente Lux? Some Reflections on Eucharistic Concelebration,” in *Beyond East and West*, 111–132; Marcel Rooney, “Eucharistic Concelebration, Twenty-Five Years of Development,” *Ecclesia Orans* 6 (1989): 117–129; and Gilbert Ostdiek, “Concelebration Revisited,” in *Shaping English Liturgy*, ed. Peter Finn and James Schellman, 139–171 (Washington: Pastoral Press, 1990).

numbers of presbyters can overload a celebration to the detriment of the functioning of other liturgical ministers. What would be fully consonant with the argument already made about liturgical tradition would be to deal with this and other issues of practice in light of an organic development between liturgical origins and contemporary practice that would allow for greater variety in eucharistic rites<sup>108</sup> respecting the varying ecclesial settings gathered for worship. This is to suggest that the concelebration issue needs to be addressed in light of an ecclesiology rooted in both the tradition and the teachings of Vatican II, which emphasizes the liturgical roles of a variety of persons, both baptized and ordained. Part of the research into liturgical tradition here would concern noneucharistic as well as eucharistic concelebration, the ritual gestures and words presbyters were engaged in, and how various ecclesial settings experienced concelebration (for example, the fact that concelebration of the chrism Mass is well attested). The concelebration question also needs to be addressed in light of the theological reality of the particular eucharistic community. Thus, concelebration at a daily conventual Eucharist in a monastery or religious house<sup>109</sup> or at the occasion of an

108. A related issue regarding eucharistic practice is the question of using the same eucharistic rite for both weekdays and Sundays. With regard to the structure of the eucharistic rite it would be legitimate in light of liturgical tradition to argue that the ritual for weekday Eucharist should be simplified and different in terms of ritual structure (e.g., number of processions) and quantity of texts as compared with the Sunday rite.

109. In the light of the evolution of the private Mass and its subsequent abuse, eucharistic concelebration for presbyters in such settings would be a decided advance. See, among others, Cyrille Vogel, "Une mutation culturelle inexplicée: Le passage de l'Eucharistie communautaire à la messe privée," *Revue des sciences religieuses* 54 (1980): 231–250; also, Angelus Häussling, *Mönchskonvent und Eucharistiefeyer: Eine Studie über die Messe in der abendländischen Klosterliturgie des frühen Mittelalters und zur Geschichte der Messhaftigkeit*, Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen 58 (Münster-Westfalen: Aschendorff, 1972); Markus Tymister, "Konzelebration in der Messfeier," *Populo congregato: Gedanken zur Liturgie am Schnittpunkt von Wissenschaft und Pastoral* (21 Feb 2016), <http://populocongregato.over-blog.com/2016/02/konzelebration-in-der-messfeier.html>, which is a brief summary of his recent book, *La concelebrazione eucaristica. Storia. Questioni teologiche. Rito*, Bibliotheca "Ephemerides Liturgicae" Subsidia 182 (Rome: Centro Liturgico Vincenziano Edizioni Liturgicae, 2017).

ordination or the funeral of a priest would be less problematic than it might be in other situations precisely because of the nature of the liturgical community.

Another example of our approach to critical liturgical theology concerns the question of the adequacy of the present rite for the ordination of a priest for nondiocesan clergy. The explicit ecclesiology of the rite is local church understood in terms of diocese. What about the particularization of priestly ordination that arises from other ecclesiological settings? For example, how adequate is this rite when used for ordaining missionary priests when the ordination takes place in their native diocese and not their diocese of missionary assignment? Or what is the theological adequacy of this rite when used in a community of mendicants, such as Franciscans or Dominicans, whose ministry explicitly transcends any local diocese? Or what is the theological adequacy of this ordination rite for a monk priest whose ministry is largely determined by the needs of his monastery and at the will of his abbot? Monastic priesthood is in some way allied with, but certainly not determined by, the local diocese and bishop.<sup>110</sup> Within the rite itself these questions are reflected in two places: the call to ordination and the promise of obedience to the bishop. The assertion that the candidate is called “after inquiry among the people of Christ”<sup>111</sup> is certainly helpful since it implies reference to the role of the whole church in calling one to ordination. Such inquiry is less the case (if it functions at all) in the formation of mendicants, however, and certainly not the case for Benedictine monks (who are called for ordination by the abbot).<sup>112</sup> The second instance

110. See, my own “On Monastic Priesthood,” *The American Benedictine Review* 41 (September 1990): 225–262.

111. *Ordination of Deacons, Priests, and Bishops*, nn. 122 (ordination of a priest) and 197 (ordination of a deacon). For these rites, see *Rites of Ordination of a Bishop, of Priests, and of Deacons*, Second Typical Edition (Washington: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2003).

112. Irwin, “On Monastic Priesthood,” as well as *Rule of St. Benedict* 62:1 (*The Rule of St. Benedict in Latin and English with Notes and Thematic Index*, ed. and trans. Timothy Fry et al. [Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1981]). Also see Georg Holzherr, *The Rule of St. Benedict: An Invitation to the Christian Life. A New Translation of the 2005 Edition*, trans. Mark Thamert, Cistercian Studies (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2016).

concerns the promise of obedience. It is quite appropriate for a diocesan bishop to ask ordination candidates for that diocese, “Do you promise respect and obedience to me” or (as the rubrics read “if the bishop is not the candidate’s own Ordinary”) “to your Ordinary.”<sup>113</sup> Who is the rightful “Ordinary,” however, for missionaries, mendicants, and monks? If one answers that it is the bishop, then what is the role of religious superiors vis-à-vis the ordained in terms of the liturgical theology of ordination and in terms of ministerial assignment? If one answers that a monk’s ordinary is the abbot of the monastery, then the question has deeper ramifications.<sup>114</sup> On the basis of variety yet complementarity of rites in liturgical tradition, could not one legitimately argue for some adjustment in these parts of the ordination rite to reflect more adequately the theological reality of distinctions among the ordained, and that provision ought to be made for them in rites that would not eclipse the ordaining bishop but would take cognizance of differences among ordained priests, and in particular the difference between diocesan and other clergy? In what follows, where it is appropriate, reference will be made in like manner to critical liturgical theology as a constitutive factor that needs to be considered in establishing and applying a method for liturgical theology.

Our thesis about *context is text* is necessarily open-ended in this third part because of the nature of the criteria, noted above, for liturgical inculturation: contemporary theology, liturgical tradition, and pastoral practice. Especially because research in all three fields is ongoing, liturgical inculturation must be regarded as an ongoing task. In addition, inculturation can only be done in light of specific ecclesial groups and in light of specific liturgical needs. This makes the determination of specific cultural *contexts* crucial in the process of establishing new liturgical *texts* (again, this is “texts and rites”).

113. *Ordination of Deacons, Priests, and Bishops*, nn. 125 (priest) and 201 (deacon).

114. *The Rule of St. Benedict* has some cautions on separating monastery from diocese and the bishop of the place. Our question, however, concerns the issue of legitimate authority over the ordained, one aspect of which is ministerial assignment. This surfaces today in terms of the commitment of religious orders or monasteries to staff parishes and to the role of the provincials of orders and the abbots of monasteries in making ministerial assignments.

At the same time, with regard to critical liturgical theology one needs to retain a certain reserve when questioning the adequacy of the present liturgical reforms in the sense that we ought not to delude ourselves into thinking that we can achieve “the perfect rite.” Even after having determined appropriate criteria for this investigation, all that we can really hope for is to establish the least inadequate liturgical forms, forms that by their nature are meant to support the experience of God in worship, initiated and sustained by the Trinity itself.

In the chapters that follow we shall not be concerned principally with liturgical inculturation, largely because of the ongoing nature of this task, the continuing search for its own method at present, and the fact that it is best done *in context*, not in general. Rather, our concern will be to address how critical liturgical theology needs to be kept in mind as we develop and apply a method for liturgical theology.

## **Conclusion**

The chief aim of this chapter has been to present the core of our contribution to a method for doing liturgical theology in light of the present revision of the Roman liturgy. Our main focus has been how liturgical theology can be drawn from liturgy as an event and as a theological act. By their nature enacted liturgical rites are somewhat elusive because they involve more than texts on paper. In our perspective they involve texts used in contexts to the extent that *context is text*. Concomitant with interpreting the act of liturgy itself is an exploration of the *constitutive implications* of liturgical engagement. In our perspective this means that *text shapes context* both theologically and spiritually. The balance of this book concerns applying our thesis.

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