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# THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT



1930

THE LITURGICAL PRESS  
COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA

NIHIL OBSTAT

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*Bishop of St. Cloud*

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## FOREWORD



THE first article, "The Liturgical Movement—Its General Purpose and Its Influence on Priestly Piety" was an address given by a priest to his fellow priests. It appeared anonymously in *The Acolyte* of August 10, 1929, and is here reprinted with the kind permission of the Reverend Michael Andrew Chapman, Editor of that magazine.

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The second article was written by Dom Virgil Michel, O. S. B., for the *N. C. W. C. Bulletin*, where it first appeared in the issue of April, 1929. It has since been reprinted in various papers and magazines. It is here reprinted with the permission of Mr. Charles A. McMahon, Editor of the *N. C. W. C. Bulletin*.

The third article, "A Survey of the Liturgical Movement," is an address delivered by the Reverend Martin B. Hellriegel of O'Fallon, Mo., at the First National Liturgical Day, held at St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn., July 25, 1929. It is here reprinted from *Orate Fratres* (vol. III, pp. 333 ff.)

The colored cover design was specially drawn for and originally appeared on the official program of the First National Liturgical Day, held at St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn., July 25, 1929. The present form is a reprint of the design as it appeared on the first page of the liturgical review *Orate Fratres*, issue of September 8, 1929, which contained the full proceedings of the Liturgical Day.

The cover design represents two angels adoring at the altar of Christ, from which flow the saving waters of grace. The sun is liturgically a symbol of Christ. On the altar are a chalice and host. The Greek letters on each side are *alpha* and *omega*, the first and last letters of the alphabet, liturgical

symbols of Christ, who is the beginning and end of all things. On the cross above the altar is the glorified Lamb with the crown of eternal glory over it. The original program on which the design first appeared carried the following short explanation: "The saving waters of Baptism flow from the Sacrifice of Christ's Passion. Through the waters of Baptism we enter into the Eucharistic Life of the Sacrifice eternal. In the Eucharist we share the life of Christ as His members and partake of the glory of the transfigured Lamb in heaven."

The design on the title page is an old liturgical symbol. It shows the Church as the bark of Peter, with the monogram of Christ on its sail. It is safely anchored to the lighthouse, which is a symbol of Christ, the Light of the world.

As here reproduced it is taken from the cover design of *Liturgy the Life of the Church*, the first book to be published in the POPULAR LITURGICAL LIBRARY of The Liturgical Press of Collegeville, Minn.

# I. THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT

## ITS GENERAL PURPOSE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON PRIESTLY PIETY



WE hear and read a great deal nowadays of a "Liturgical Movement." Many persons perhaps, are at a loss to understand just what is meant by the expression. A number of current misconceptions and inadequate notions need to be corrected.

### I

#### WHAT IS THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT?

The word "movement" is rightly understood to indicate an endeavor "to bring about a change." The false notions in this matter are due principally to a misunderstanding as to the subject of the proposed change. Many think that what is sought after is a return to older forms of vestments, to antique chalices, crucifixes, and candlesticks, and to the ceremonial practices that have long passed out of usage. But what is really being striven for is *a change in the spiritual orientation* of the faithful, which, it is hoped, will result in a much needed strong, virile Catholicity.

The Liturgical Movement, therefore, as the words indicate, is *a movement*—a movement towards the *liturgy*. It means the sum of all the efforts being made in our day to bring the faithful back to an *active participation* in the *liturgical acts and prayers* of the Church.

#### WHAT IS THE LITURGY?

In order to appreciate fully the efforts which are being made a correct idea of the term "Liturgy" is indispensable. *What is the liturgy?* It is very important that we have a

correct understanding of the word "liturgy." I am afraid this word has been much abused in the past. We say for example: "We have studied liturgy in our seminary course" (e. g., Wapelhorst's *Compendium S. Liturgiæ*). Did we really? Would to God we had. We studied "rubrics." Important and sacred as these are, they are only the external aspects of the liturgy: they are the beautiful and venerable frame surrounding the divine masterpiece, but they are not themselves the inner source whence we are to draw the spirit and life of Christ. We have ordinarily understood the word "liturgy" to mean these *outward* things, whereas the liturgy is actually the *divine reality behind them*. Someone has said, with a touch of wit, that the difference between "liturgy" and "rubrics" is that liturgy is printed in black and rubrics in red. Of course, the Liturgical Movement insists emphatically on the importance of the red print, but eminently more on the much-neglected black print.

Hence the word "liturgy" means more than visible ceremonies, gothic vestments, Gregorian chant. All these notions have one thing in common: they emphasize the outward aspect of the liturgy; they confuse the gem with its setting; the kernel with its shell.

#### THE WORSHIP AND PRAYER-LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Liturgy is the official divine service of the Church for the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful. It is the re-enactment, the re-presentation (note well "the doing over, the making present") of the work of redemption. The liturgy is the principal manifestation and the vital expression of the inner life of the Church, the life of Christ Himself. When the liturgy is celebrated the Church glorifies God and dispenses Christ-life to her children, so that from "quasi modo geniti infantes" (as newborn babes) they may attain "to the perfect man, to the full measure of the stature of Christ" (Eph. 4, 13).

When we speak of the liturgy we mean:

A. PRIMARYLY:

- a) The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass
- b) The Sacraments
- c) The Sacramentals
- d) The Divine Office, the official prayer of the Church
- e) The Liturgical or Ecclesiastical year.

B. SECONDARILY:

- a) The Ceremonies:
- b) Rubrics
- c) Chant
- d) Vestments, etc., by which the Church has given to Sacrifice and Sacraments, etc., a precious setting.

All this is liturgy:

A.—Kernel

B.—Shell

#### AIM OF THE MOVEMENT

From this we can readily see what the Liturgical Movement means; viz., a movement towards the liturgy, a movement towards the Christ-life giving mysteries: The holy Sacrifice, the Sacraments, the Sacramentals, the Solemn Prayer of the Church and the Liturgical Year; but also towards those external things which are so necessary for the "pie, attente ac devote" (pious, attentive, devout) celebration of these mysteries. The Liturgical Movement strives to foster in the *clergy* and the *faithful* a *better understanding* of, and a *more active participation* in the official divine service of the Church, in other words, *in the liturgy*. This brings us to our second question.

## II

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT?

In the first and second chapters of the *Acts* we read of the wonderful *communal* spirit of the early converts to the Faith, how they were persevering *with one mind and one heart* in the doctrine of the Apostles, in the communication of the breaking of the bread and in prayer. For centuries and cen-

turies that was the spirit of the faithful. They participated; they took an *active* (not merely a passive) part in the celebration of the divine mysteries, especially in the holy Sacrifice. They acted during the sacred action. But how very different things look today! A gulf has appeared between the priest and the people, between the altar and the nave.

#### ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Reverend Fathers, allow me to exaggerate a little, in order to bring out my point. (a) After the Offertory we turn to the people and ask them. "Orate fratres, ut meum ac vestrum sacrificium, etc." (Pray Brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God). But the "brethren" without looking up continue in their May devotions. (b) After Consecration we say: "Unde . . . nos servi tui sed et plebs tua sancta offerimus" (Wherefore, O Lord, we Thy servants, and likewise Thy holy people . . . offer). But the "holy people" is busily engaged in another Novena to the Little Flower. At the same time the choir in the loft is trying to sing: "Mother dear, O pray for me." Three distinct things during *one great Sacrifice*, the *common Sacrifice of all*, the sun and center of our Catholic life!—The attitude and conduct of many of the faithful at Mass has little relation to the action that goes on before their eyes. This is to be regretted. Of course, we are not opposed to private devotions. On the contrary, we want to give them even greater attention in the future than we have done in the past by making them more godly and more churchly and less selfish and sentimental. But we must say this: When the treasures of Christ's Redemption are opened, when the exuberant life of the Savior flows through the arteries of the Church—i. e., the Sacraments, Sacramentals and Official Prayers, then we should *not* carry on private devotions, but rather open our hearts and minds and participate actively and intelligently in the celebration of these sacred acts, these "fountains of the Savior" and means of sanctification. "It is here, therefore, in the Church's liturgy," says the learned Abbot Schuster, "that we must preferably seek the means of sanctification, the *essential food* of our Catholic piety, to which



are to be co-ordinated with very great advantage: all other acts of private, intimate, and personal devotion by which the soul prepares and disposes itself for the great liturgy of the Sacraments."

### POPE PIUS X: RENEWAL OF CHRISTIAN SPIRIT

No one realized more keenly the spiritual disadvantages and losses resulting from a want of active participation, and the greater glory to God and greater sanctification of the faithful as the result of active participation of the faithful in the holy Mysteries, than the sainted Pope Pius X. His program was: "Instaurare omnia in Christo: to re-establish all things in Christ." He it was who in substance said: Do not pray in the Mass, *pray the Mass*. He it was who inaugurated the present liturgical movement when he declared to the world in his first *Motu proprio* (Nov. 22, 1903) that "the active participation of the faithful in the holy Mysteries and in the public and solemn prayers of the Church is the *primary* and *indispensable* source of the true Christian spirit." These words say nothing less than that the active participation in the liturgy is the primary and indispensable source from which we draw the true Christian spirit, i. e., the spirit of Jesus Christ. And this is exactly what we need today. We demand today the restoration of Christendom; not merely a superficial Christianity, a façade Christianity, not merely "the essentials of Christianity"—but Christian life whole and entire with all its vital truth and power. It is chiefly with this reality that the present Liturgical movement is concerned. Its aim is the *renewal* and *intensification* of *Catholic life* through the primary and indispensable source, the *sacred liturgy*.

### III

#### HOW DOES THE MOVEMENT INFLUENCE PRIESTLY PIETY?

Our third question: "How does the Liturgical Movement influence priestly piety?" really needs no answer. We have answered it already. For what is true in the case of the

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faithful, is particularly true of us who—without any merits of our own—have been raised to the highest dignity on earth on that blessed day when the apostolic hands of the Bishop were imposed upon our heads. By the sacramental liturgy of Ordination we were made “ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the Mysteries of God.” By reason of our sacerdotal state we are the “*liturgoi* of God”: our whole life is from the liturgy, in the liturgy and for the liturgy. Just as a farmer will ever promote the farming interests, so *must we*—God’s liturgoi—*promote the liturgical movement*, whose aim is the renewal and intensification of our own spiritual life and that of the flock entrusted to us by the eternal Highpriest. But lest this answer be insufficient, permit me to state—in conclusion—what the two pontiffs, Benedict XV and Pius XI, said in regard to this.

#### BENEDICT XV AND PIUS XI

(1) Benedict XV in July 1915: “To spread among the faithful an exact knowledge of the liturgy; to inspire in their hearts a holy delight in the prayers, rites and chants by means of which, in union with their common Mother, they pay their worship to God; to attract them to take an active part in the holy Mysteries and ecclesiastical festivals—all this would have a wonderful influence in drawing priest and people together, in bringing back the people to the Church, by nourishing their piety, strengthening their faith and teaching them to lead lives of perfection.”

(2) Pius XI, Feb. 16, 1929: “The liturgy is truly a sacred thing, for by it we are drawn to God and united to Him, profess our faith, and pay the great debt we owe Him for the benefits and help we have received and of which we are always in need. In order that the faithful take a more active part in the divine worship, let the Gregorian chant, in so far as it pertains to the people, be restored to use by them. It is most necessary that the faithful, *not as outsiders or as dumb spectators*, but as understanding truly, and as penetrated by, the beauty of the liturgy, should so assist at the sacred functions—also when solemn processions take place—that their

voices alternate with those of the priest and choir. If this be happily brought about, there will no longer be any need to lament the sad spectacle in which the people do not respond at all, or only in a subdued and indistinct murmur, to the most common prayers, whether these be said in the liturgical language or in the vernacular."

The Father has spoken. The Vicar of Christ has shown the way. As loyal sons we are ready to go together with our flock to the "primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit". And to Him who is able to do all things more abundantly than we desire or understand, according to the power that worketh in us; to Him be glory in the Church, and in Jesus Christ, unto all generations, world without end.

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## II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT



WHAT is the true significance of the liturgical movement? At this question anyone who has given thought and energy to the promotion of the liturgical apostolate might throw up his hands in despair and exclaim: "Why, it is everything!" But for the person who has not been initiated so to say, into the aims and ideas underlying this apostolate, the answer would convey precisely nothing. It is in the hope of striking a golden mean between these two extremes that I shall try to express something of what the liturgical apostolate stands for, in the hope that many readers may receive therefrom the conviction that it really stands for something, and for something of great moment in the Church.

### HISTORICAL BEGINNINGS

I may well begin with a sketchy allusion to some historical data. To begin with, the movement is in every way Catholic. That is true both of the conscious and of the unconscious movement. I mention the latter because there have always been many individuals whose own devotional life is deeply anchored in and drawn from the liturgy, the Church's own worship and prayer-life, even during the past centuries when we could hardly speak of a real liturgical consciousness among Catholics as a whole. In our own day a foremost factor in the reawakening of a liturgical consciousness was undoubtedly the work of Dom Gueranger, Abbot of Solesmes (d. 1875). It was brought about by his writings, especially *The Liturgical Year*, which was translated into many languages, and through the evident good results his initiative had in combating the destructive effects of Gallicanism on the life and worship of the Church in France. The liturgical apostolate

was given its official stamp by the *Motu proprio* of Pius X on Church Music, November 22, 1903. Perhaps few passages from papal documents have been quoted as often as the following words of the above *Motu proprio*:

"Filled as we are with a most ardent desire to see the true Christian spirit flourish again in every respect and be preserved by all the faithful, we deem it necessary to provide before aught else for the sanctity and dignity of the temple, in which the faithful assemble for no other object than that of acquiring this spirit from its foremost and indispensable fount, which is the active participation in the most holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church."

Space will not allow me to comment on the full meaning of these words. The reader will be able to see its meaning for himself by meditating on this passage.

Papal pronouncements are clarion calls to action. But before the real action can be entered upon, there must be some understanding of the objectives, a sinking in of the message contained in the papal plan of battle. Hence it is that some time ordinarily elapses before the actual command of "Forward, March," the command to real action, is given by official leaders on the actual scene of battle.

#### GROWTH OF THE MOVEMENT

Several years after the above pronouncement the first organized effort towards its fulfilment took place under the auspices of the Benedictines of Belgium. They received the heartiest endorsement and encouragement of the Belgian episcopate in the way of private as well as public and official pastoral letters. Most ardent was the support, in word and action, of Cardinal Mercier, ever zealous in the cause of the liturgical apostolate. "Liturgical weeks" or "congresses" are now an annual event in Belgium (conducted both in French and in Flemish), the reports of which fill volumes of four hundred pages or more. As elsewhere, the participants represent all the different ranks of the Church, diocesan and regular clergy and layfolk. In 1920 a national council, held at

Malines, organized an Interdiocesan Committee for Liturgical and Parochial Action. The Committee was approved by the Holy See in 1922, and was promulgated by all the Bishops of Belgium in 1923. It has since brought out a definite and detailed "Program of Liturgical and Parochial Action."

The movement has spread to all the countries of Europe. A word or two on some of these will indicate a variety of approaches, thus substantiating the old saying: "All roads lead to Rome."

In Germany, the Benedictines, especially of Maria-Laach, organized liturgical retreats for the students and the educated, and unfolded immense activity in the scientific study of the liturgy, without neglecting the aspect of popularization.

The best development of popular initiation into liturgical worship is undoubtedly that of the indefatigable Dr. Pius Parsch, Augustinian Canon Regular of Klosterneuburg, near Vienna, with his vast array of popular books and pamphlets.

In Italy, perhaps more than anywhere else, the pastoral letters of cardinal-archbishops and other ordinaries have insisted time and again on popular participation in the liturgy.

In Holland definite organization began in 1911 in the Diocese of S'Hertogenbosch (Bois-le-Duc), where a liturgical society was founded among the secular clergy under the auspices of the Rt. Rev. W. Van de Ven. The other dioceses of Holland soon followed, whereupon a central confederation was formed headed by two directive members of each diocesan society.

In France there have been innumerable diocesan liturgical days and Gregorian days conducted under the inspiration and leaderships of the bishops.

Last summer, Portugal held its Second Liturgical Congress attended by archbishops, bishops, priests, religious and lay people in large numbers. His Holiness, Pius XI, appointed the Most Reverend Archbishop of Braga Papal Legate to the Congress and granted him the faculty "of blessing in O"

name, on the most solemn day and after the celebration of the holy Sacrifice, all assisting thereat, and of extending to them a plenary indulgence under the usual conditions."

The liturgical spirit has been astir in our own country for some years, especially in regard to Gregorian chant. But no definite organization existed for the promotion of the liturgical apostolate until the founding of The Liturgical Press by the monks of St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, with the definite and very active assistance of associate editors from various parts of the United States, and from England and Ireland. The Liturgical Press publishes a review, *Orate Fratres* ("Pray, Brethren"), and a *Popular Liturgical Library* of small books and pamphlets. A notable feature of its apostolate is the zealous response had from individuals, even in distant Australia and New Zealand, and the promising branch unfolding its activity in South Africa.

#### THE CENTRAL IDEA

"But what is the idea behind all this activity?" the reader will be asking by this time. Let us come to the point at once. It is precisely, as Pius X said, the "reflourishing of the true Christian spirit." We all know that a minimum active contact with the Church's liturgy (mainly Sacrifice and Sacraments) is necessary for us to be good Catholics. We are better Catholics in our spiritual life, the better we make this contact, i. e., the more actively we participate with understanding and will in the holy mysteries and worship. Similarly, the more we know of the true nature of the latter, the more do we know of our faith, of its beauty and its true spiritual value. Lest this statement seem exaggerated, I shall quote from the Holy Father's encyclical letter on the Feast of the Kingship of Christ (December 11, 1925):

"For the people are better instructed in the truths of faith by the annual celebration of our sacred mysteries than by even the weightiest pronouncements of the teaching of the Church. . . . Man being composed of body and soul, is so moved and stimulated by the external solemnities of festivals, and such is the variety and beauty of the sacred rites, that

he drinks more deeply of divine doctrine, assimilates it into his very system, and makes it a source of strength for progress in his spiritual life."

But again, what is the idea behind it all? It is, first of all, the doctrine, so well understood and lived by the early Christians, of the Mystic Body of Christ. Every formal Catholic has by Baptism become a branch engrafted upon the Vine Christ (see John, ch. 15). All the members of the Church together form a great spiritual vine, the branches living their life and bearing their fruits through the sap flowing from the trunk, i. e., through the energy of the Spirit of Christ. Spiritually, we all live our life in Christ and only in Him, and together with Him we form one living organism.

To go over to the favorite picture of St. Paul, all of us together, Christ and we, form a living spiritual body, the Church, the mystical body of which Christ is the Head and we the members. In this living organism, the Church, not all members are alike, "for as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office: so we being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (Rom. 12, 1-5). Thus differences remain, the laity are not the clergy, priests are not bishops; yet we all are called to our active share in the life of Christ, that is, in the life of the Church, which is the mystic but real continuation of Christ.

#### COLLECTIVE OFFERING OF MASS

As images, the pictures of the body and of the vine are figures, but figures that portray a supreme and multiple spiritual reality: our union with Christ here and now, our life in Him through the Church, the corporate social though differentiated nature of the Church, our active spiritual and integral membership in the latter. This shows us at once the significance, e. g., of the social note in the texts of the Mass. The priest at times prays in the name of the people ("we," "our," "let us pray") and at times addresses them and is in turn answered by them. (See any text of the Ordinary of



the Mass.) The Mass is the sacrifice of Christ, but also the sacrifice of the entire mystic body, for spiritually the two are one. In the Mass, Christ is both offerer and the oblation offered; therefore the mystic body of Christ is both offerer and the oblation offered; therefore we all are so by general inclusion; therefore those present are so by special inclusion and collective association—the priests by the right of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders, the laity by right of Baptism and Confirmation and association with the action of the ordained priest celebrating the Mass. Thus active participation truly becomes a “primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit,” of union and life in Christ, and of universal inspiration for higher things.

What is here said of the Mass, the “holy mysteries,” is true in proper proportion of the entire “public and solemn prayer of the Church.” Active participation in these can mean only a participation as rational creatures, a participation by means of our rational faculties of understanding and will, a participation that *knows* what it is doing and *wills* it. Applied to the Mass this means an attendance at Mass in which the “member” understands in more detail what is going on in the Mass, knows how the progressive action is intimately related to his presence at the Mass, and desires and aspires to enter into the action with heart and mind as fully as possible.

In the light of this, must not the actual situation often seem almost like mockery? When after the beginning of the offering action the priest turns to the people and says “Orate Fratres”, what are the people doing? How far, is not even the pious individual recitation of a litany or a morning prayer removed from the ideal expressed in the priest’s exhortation: “Pray, Brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may become acceptable to God the Father Almighty!”

#### LIVING WITH THE CHURCH

Our sad ignorance of the true significance of the liturgical worship of the Church (i. e., its detailed significance for us) must make us all aware of the rift in our spiritual lives, a rift made by the fact that many of us are really leading a

sort of double life in our religious practices. We are present in body at church services officially enacted for us, of which we possess but a very general understanding, and we are mentally occupied with concrete and personal private prayers of our own choosing that are totally unrelated to the above except in point of time.

The healing of this rift in individual spiritual life is one of the objectives of the liturgical apostolate. So is the unification of the individual and social elements in our spiritual life and the closer bringing together of clergy and people in active spiritual life (without elimination of differences)—a closer union between members and Church, between the branches and the Vine.

We should now be more ready to understand that the liturgical apostolate is immense in its scope and possibilities; that it is something infinitely greater than archeological or artistic interest in the liturgy. We should likewise understand better now what the phrase—"the liturgy for the people"—means, and in general how true are the claims made by Pius X and echoed by his successors.

A further question, however, must present itself to the reader: How practical is all this? I can but answer with the fullest deliberation: Supremely practical in the widest meaning and extent of that term. Without some attainment of the above ideals, there can be no complete union of theory and practice in the life of the Catholic, in fact, no successful Catholic Action as the present Holy Father understands it.

#### CATHOLIC ACTION AND THE LITURGY

First of all, as to general practicality, think of the early Christians! Where do we find better models of the active liturgical life and of Catholic Action? Evidence of the practicality of the above ideal can be found in every country in which the liturgical apostolate has been flourishing for some years. Many letters received since the organization of the Liturgical Press attest to this practicality of it both in individual and in parish religious life. And yet we are only at

the beginning. Some day, when the grace of the Lord has prepared the ground amongst us for a proper response, the call to greater liturgical life will come as in other countries, from the combined hierarchy. In the opinion of the writer the day is not far distant: for there have been rapid strides in our growing sense that "it is the Mass that matters"; that the liturgy has been too long a hidden spiritual treasure for many of us.

An outstanding recent factor in this growing sense is the action of the *N. C. W. C. News Service* in sending out popular weekly explanations of the Sunday Mass liturgy. That is as it should be. For the National Catholic Welfare Conference represents official Catholic Action and must therefore be Catholic in its scope. That brings me to a last point indicated above, the inseparability of the liturgical life and Catholic Action.

In a recent sermon on Catholic Action, Cardinal Faulhaber said: "It is not impossible that Pope Pius XI will bear the name of the 'Pope of Catholic Action' in history." On the other hand, Pope Pius X bears the name of "Father of the Liturgical Movement." It would be extravagant to read a meaning into the fact that the two Popes bear the name of Pius; yet the fact happens to furnish a parallel that I need not hesitate to use. As XI follows X, so Catholic Action is but the further development of the liturgical life; as we must have "X" before we can have "XI", so we must have the liturgical life before we can have true Catholic Action. For the latter, in the words of Pius XI, is "a participation of the laity in the hierarchical apostolate."

### THE APOSTOLATE

As the river can never rise above its source, so the spiritual results of the lay apostolate, as such, can not rise above the spiritual level of the lay apostles. Besides, as charity begins at home, so must every true apostolate. An explanatory leaflet of *The Liturgical Apostolate* has the following pertinent paragraph:

"Of the dire need today of the liturgical life there can be no doubt. We are in an age of transition that is questioning all its old beliefs and habits. For their own safety and for missionary work among their separated brethren, the Catholics of today must be more firmly grounded in the truths of their religion, must know more thoroughly what they do in their religious life and why they do it, and just what it means to the soul. And this spirit they must impart especially to their children, to the youth of our day, beloved of Christ, and the hope of the future."

Of the social incentive and inspiration contained in the proper understanding of what the mystical body of Christ should mean to us, a foregoing paragraph may have given some intimation. The idea is briefly developed in a brochure published by the Central Bureau of the Catholic Central Verein of St. Louis. It is entitled *The True Basis of Christian Solidarity* and bears the sub-title "The Liturgy as an Aid to the Solution of the Social Question."

Not only are the liturgical life and Catholic Action inseparable, but the two together go to the very heart of the Christian Dispensation. Christ gave to the latter its new law which contains all the rest, the twofold law of (1) the love of God and (2) the love of neighbor. That the first without the second does not suffice, He told us when He spoke about reconciliation with our brethren before offering to God. That the second is but a further expression of the first will be apparent to all of us at the last judgment, when our actions will be rewarded on the principle: "Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these, my least brethren, you did it to me" (Matt. 25, 40—Gospel of Mon. after 1st Sunday of Lent). It remained for the modern pagan sociologist to write this twofold commandment on the blackboard and then with a dramatic gesture to cross out the first part and ask a gaping audience: "Now what is the difference?" The true answer is simply "all the difference in the world." for a service of neighbor not based on love of God logically becomes a service of self, being based on pride and self-love.

Such a service, being fundamentally un-Christian, is compatible with all that is pagan in civilization.

### CALL OF THE POPES

Love of God and love of man, the liturgical life and Catholic Action—such is the final unity achieved by the “active participation of all the faithful in the most holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church.” What wonder that the two Popes speak interchangeably? “The times need action,” said Pius X, father of the Liturgical Movement. “The liturgy,” exclaims the present Holy Father, the Pope of Catholic Action. The platform of Pius X ran as follows:

“This we declare as our one purpose—to bring all under the headship of Christ, namely, that Christ may be all things and in all” (*Encyclical Letter* of October 4, 1903).

Pius XI, writing to the assembled Bishops of the United States in 1927 on the subject of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, said:

“By uniting ever more closely the forces at your command, you will impart to the Christian life in your country a greater and greater vigor in the spirit of justice and charity, to the end that the reign among you of the Lord Jesus, the Prince of true peace, may be supreme and abound in every blessing. ‘The Peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ.’” (*Salient Facts About the N. C. W. C.*)

The two are one, Pius X and Pius XI. Nor has Pius X’s idea of participation of the people in the liturgy been better expressed than in these words of our present Holy Father:

“Not only are those persons partakers in the mysteries of the priesthood [of Christ] and in the duty of offering sacrifices and satisfactions to God, who have been appointed by Jesus Christ the High Priest as the ministers of such sacrifices, to offer God ‘a clean oblation in every place from the rising of the sun even to the going down’ (Malach. 1, 10)—but also those Christians [the laity] called, and rightly so, by

the Prince of Apostles 'a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood' (1 Pet. 2, 9), who are to offer 'sacrifices for sin' (Heb. 5, 1) not only for themselves but for all mankind, and this in much the same way as every priest and 'highpriest taken from among men is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God' (Heb. 5, 1)." (*Miserentissimus Redemptor* of May 9, 1928.)

The true significance of the liturgical movement, therefore, lies just in this: that it tries to lead men back to the "primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit"; it tries to restore that of which Catholic Action is the further flowering and fruitage.

### III. A SURVEY OF THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT



WE must thank God for letting us live in this age of liturgical revival. This is one of God's gifts and we must use it for His honor and glory. The name given to this revival is "liturgical movement." As the words show, the liturgical movement is a *movement* towards the liturgy, towards the 'fountains of the Savior,' towards the Christ-life-imparting mysteries of our holy faith, namely:

- 1) the holy Sacrifice, the sun and center of our Religion;
- 2) the other Sacraments, the *great* channels of supernatural life, instituted by Christ Himself;
- 3) the Sacramentals, the *smaller* channels of supernatural life, instituted by the Church;
- 4) the divine Office, the official, solemn, heaven-penetrating prayer of the Mystical Body;
- 5) the ecclesiastical or liturgical year, the annual re-enactment of the principal events of the work of *redemption*.

But why do we speak of a liturgical revival? Has the Church perhaps lost her liturgy? Surely not. Because without it the Church could not live, no more than a body can live without its soul, for the liturgy is the very soul and life of the Church. We speak of a liturgical movement because for centuries we have been too far removed from this divine furnace and its all penetrating sacred fire. We have always felt some of its heat, but not enough to get warm. We were chilled by a degenerated humanism and rationalism and frostbitten by materialism and religious indifference. We lost a goodly portion of the "sentire cum Ecclesia"—the mind of the Church; and, by and by, quite a bit of our living the liturgical life of the Church.

When did all this come about? Roughly speaking some five or six centuries ago. At first very slowly, but since the rise, and through the unwholesome influence of Protestantism—which the learned Guéranger calls the “anti-liturgical heresy”—more and more rapidly. And what did the Church do during these centuries of liturgical depreciation? Like always, her ministers went forth to preach and teach. But their teaching was of a more apologetic nature, largely a defense of the very doctrines which had been cast overboard by the “private interpreters” of the word of God, with the result that the sacred liturgy of the Church and the realization of its importance by the faithful was too much neglected. Still there were always men who fully comprehended the super-importance of the Church’s liturgy for the spiritual lives of the faithful; men who, like the priest-reformer, Peter Canisius, were filled with such a burning “sentire cum Ecclesia” that, by word and example and pen, they spent themselves for a restoration of the “Sanctitas Divini Cultus,” of the sacred liturgy.

Shortly before the middle of the 19th century a new era for a better understanding for the necessity of the sacred liturgy was opened by three providential men,—men who by their systematic efforts laid the big cornerstone of the present liturgical movement: Guéranger, Staudenmaier, and Newman.

1) The most renowned, liturgically, of these: Prosper Guéranger, Abbot of Solesmes. In 1840 he began the monumental works which he intended as an antidote to the spiritual torpor of the France of his day. He fought to have the virile Roman liturgy substituted for the somewhat emasculated diocesan liturgies, and he lived to see his efforts in this line crowned with complete success. He labored to familiarize the faithful with the official prayers of the Church by lavishly introducing fragments of the Eastern and Western rites, with interpretations and commentaries. We are well acquainted with his *L'année liturgique* (in 15 volumes), which is probably the one of all Dom Guéranger’s works that best fulfilled the purpose he had in view.

2) In Germany Franz Staudenmaier, of the University of Tübingen, published his *Geist des Christentums* (“The Spirit



of Christianity”), an introduction to the understanding of Catholic Christianity and its liturgy based on a presentation of the ecclesiastical year.

3) The Oxford Movement in England, under Newman’s leadership, was directed towards a similar revival in the Anglican Church. These efforts led Newman and many of his followers to Mother Church.

The pioneer work of these men—unknown to each other at first—was never forgotten and was not without great and lasting results. But their work would not have assumed the proportions it has today, had not the saintly Pius X been set by the Lord over His family to give them their measure of wheat in due season.

When Joseph Sarto ascended the chair of Peter as the tenth Pius he was determined to do for the *universal* Church what he had done so successfully as bishop of Mantua and Cardinal-Archbishop of Venice; viz., to lead the flock of Christ to the life-giving “fountain of the Savior,” to the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit, to the sacred liturgy. His purpose Pius symbolized in the words of St. Paul: “*Instaurare omnia in Christo*,” “to incorporate all things in Christ, to bring all things as to a head in Christ.” The liturgy is the *fountain head* of Christian life. “If the faithful were well instructed,” he says in the preface to his Catechism, “and celebrated the feasts in the spirit intended by the Church, there would be a notable revival and increase of faith, piety and religious knowledge; the entire life of the Christian would thereby become better and stronger.” And “filled with the desire to see the Christian spirit flourish again,” the ‘*Ignis ardens*,’ in the fourth month of his pontificate, told a cold world: “The primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit is the active participation in the most holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church” (Nov. 22, 1903); in other words: Active, intelligent, enthusiastic participation in the sacred liturgy is the primary and indispensable source of the spirit of Jesus Christ.

Intermission: A Pontiff sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside, and it was trodden

down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some other fell upon a rock, and as soon as it was sprung up it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns growing up with it, choked it. And some other fell upon good ground, and being sprung up, yielded fruit a hundred fold in Belgium and Holland, in parts of Germany and Austria, in Italy and France, and, some twenty years after the sowing by Pius X, in England and in our own U. S. A.

If I had more than fifteen to twenty minutes time, I might attempt a detailed survey of the liturgical movement in the countries just mentioned. A mere summary must suffice.

1) Belgium is the *oldest daughter* of the liturgical movement inaugurated by Pius X. Under the leadership of the eminent Benedictine Lambert Beauduin, and encouraged and blessed by the late Cardinal hero of Malines, there sprang up in this little country a great liturgical revival which has intensively taken hold of both clergy and laity and which is being richly fed by the publications of the three Benedictine abbeys: Mt. Cesar, Maredsous, and St. Andre.

2) Holland soon followed the "sentire cum Ecclesia" example of its neighbor. Here the movement is led principally by the secular clergy. It manifests itself along very *practical* lines; e. g., by acquainting the faithful with liturgical objects and symbols, by leading them on to active participation in the Sunday Highmass, by systematically building up congregational singing—thereby renewing and intensifying the parochial life.

3) Germany. Heroic efforts—partly due to opposition—are being made in Germany since 1915. By the way, we must be prepared to meet opposition. God permits it. It is a necessary means for the successful growth of the movement. "Debent esse errores, ut patefiat veritas!" It is good for the liturgical movement to tread the wine-press.

One of the great German pioneers was the late Dr. Stephan of the Breslau diocese, author of more than fifteen liturgical works; the most noteworthy of these: his excellent translation

of both missal and breviary.—We must not omit the names of two leading religious: Father Joseph Kramp of the Society of Jesus, and Father Hugo Dausend, a son of St. Francis.

The great center of liturgical activity in Germany—perhaps the greatest in the world—is the Abbey of Maria-Laach under the leadership of its eminent Abbot, Dr. Herwegen. This abbey is a veritable haven of liturgical 'ora' and 'labora.' It is noted for its scholarly research work, in particular the "Year-book" (since 1921) with as many as 800 reviews of liturgical books and leading articles which appear anywhere in the world between the one yearbook and its successor.

4) Austria. Warm liturgical life comes issuing through the wounds of down-trodden Austria. The soul and prime mover of an intensive and extensive *popular* liturgical movement in this country is Dr. Pius Parsch, canon regular of Klosterneuburg. Dr. Parsch possesses the unusual gift of assimilating the fruits of liturgical research work and of giving them to the people in simple, hearty language. The most important of his 50 to 60 liturgical publications issued since 1921 are:

a) His bi-monthly *Bibel und Liturgie* with about 10,000 subscribers;

b) His yearly *Liturgiekalender*, vol. I and II of this Church year (1929) with 15,900 copies each;

c) His weekly "Lebe mit der Kirche," begun in November 1928 with 20,000 subscribers;

d) His weekly "Masstext" (12-16 pp.), 80,000 copies weekly.

May the Lord resuscitate in every country imitators of this indefatigable promotor of the sacred liturgy!

5) Italy. The fast-growing Italian liturgical movement is headed by two very learned men: Abbot Caronti, author of *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, and the author of *The Sacramentary*, the former Abbot Schuster of St. Paul's in Rome, now Cardinal-Archbishop of Milan, who a few days ago (July 21) received episcopal consecration at the hands of the Holy Father himself, and who in the near future will proceed to join his episcopal brethren who—as a body, and by means of joint

pastoral letters—are doing most fruitful liturgical work in the fertile plains of Lombardy.

6) Since 1918 many parts of France are undergoing a remarkable spiritual transformation by means of the sacred liturgy. The striking effect of the liturgical revival in France is the restoration of parish life and, through it, the growth of a real liturgical spirit, the spirit of Christian fellowship. There are few countries which carry on such lively liturgical propaganda by means of reviews, books, pamphlets, liturgical "days," Gregorian "days," and liturgical art "days," as the France of today. The spirit of God who led a Gueranger and spoke through a Pius X is moving over a land which a little more than 100 years ago bowed before the goddess of human reason. And who can resist Him?

7) England. Our liturgically able and enthusiastic friend, Donald Attwater of Wales, tells us that England has no liturgical movement as it is understood, for example, in Belgium, and that, if there be any, it is towards the *externals* of the liturgy rather than towards the *essentials*. I am afraid Mr. Attwater is too humble.

We certainly can hope that a cultured and religious country which has men like Cabrol and Thurston, publishers like Burns and Oates, papers which carry liturgical articles at the request of their readers, like *Universe* and *Tablet*, and a liturgically inspired review like *Pax*, published by the convert monks of New Caldey,—that such a country will have, in a few years hence, a well organized liturgical movement which will bring about a flourishing liturgical life such as there was in the days of yore when all England was Mary's dowry.

8) The U. S. A. In conclusion a few words about the movement in our own country. The first ripples of the mighty wave, which began in 1903 at the tomb of the Fisher of men, have reached this country some seven or eight years ago. Since then the movement has made such marvelous progress that we can truthfully speak—Praise be to Christ—of a *great liturgical movement* in the United States.

The June (1929) number of *Stimmen der Zeit* contains an excellent article entitled "The Liturgical Movement in the

United States" by Father Ellard, S. J., whom his superiors have sent abroad for the special study of the Church liturgy. The article is a scholarly survey of:

- a. the beginnings of an organized movement;
- b. the liturgical movement and the American hierarchy;
- c. the Catholic school and the liturgy; and
- d. the liturgical training of the faithful.

As is the case everywhere, the earlier efforts here were of a more or less individual and local nature. Since 1925 we have a well organized movement, due mainly to the unselfish labors of the Benedictines of St. John's under the leadership of Abbot Alcuin, whom the Lord graced with burning love for the sacred cause and an unusual portion of foresight and generosity. Golden cords of Christian fellowship have united during the past four years the various promotors throughout the country, lay and cleric, regular and secular, with the "Liturgical Press" of Collegeville, Minnesota, for their common center, all phalanxed for one purpose: "To be instrumental in the work of incorporating all things in Christ, the Head, through the sacred liturgy of the Church."

From this center goes forth every month the herald and official spokesman of the movement, *Orate Fratres*, the only liturgical review in the English-speaking world. Over 15 popular liturgical pamphlets on various aspects of the liturgy have appeared since 1926.

But the CROWN of all holy efforts is *this very day*, "The First National Liturgical Day" in the United States. July 25th, 1929! A memorable day! An apostolic day! A day and an event that must inspire us all with apostolic zeal and holy enthusiasm for the great liturgical apostolate. Before we return let us set into this crown the precious stones of loyalty and devotedness to the sacred cause. And then let us go forth as *Apostles of the Liturgy* and rest not until "Christ be formed in all!"

Now to Him, who is able to do things more abundantly than we desire, to Christ Jesus, our glorious Highpriest and Mediator, be empire and glory now and for endless ages!

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