

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SOME STUDIES ON LITURGICAL THEOLOGY

Diplomarbeit

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Eingereicht bei: Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. theol. Basilius J. Groen

Eingereicht von: Charles Ikechukwu Ogbunambala

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INTRODUCTION

The relationship between theology and liturgy has been a subject of dispute among theologians. It is such that some of them have tried to emphasize the importance of one and as a result treated the other with less dedication. Some also try to strike a balance between the two by emphasizing the mutual relationship between both of them. But a common agreement has not been reached among theologians whether a priority should be accorded to theology or to liturgy. The teaching authority of the Church has maintained that there is a mutual relationship between theology and liturgy, even though theology is sometimes accorded a prime of place. The term, “liturgical theology” is coined by some theologians in an attempt to find a solution to this relationship.

The main thrust of this thesis is to study and compare some studies done on this topic. We selected four authors who have done these studies. We shall summarize their works and then compare their similarities and differences. The order of presentation will be according to their years of publication. Also, we shall follow the way the authors divided their works into parts or chapters in our summary work.

The first chapter will handle the work of Cyprian Vagaggini, OSB. He published his work, originally in Italian under the title, “Il senso teologico della liturgia” in 1959. But the revised English edition “Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy. A General Treatise on the Theology of the Liturgy”, which we shall summarize, was translated by Leonard J. Doyle and W.A. Jurgens , from the Fourth Italian Edition Revised and Augmented by the Author, and published in 1976.

Chapter Two will focus on the work of Alexander Schmemmann, “Introduction to Liturgical Theology”, which was originally written in Russian but was translated by Asheleigh E. Mooehouse and was published in 1966. The third edition which we shall summarize was translated by the same person and was published in 1986.

Chapter Three deals with the work of Kevin W. Irwin, “Context and Text: Method in Liturgical Theology”, which was published in 1994.

Chapter Four handles the work of David W. Fagerberg, “Theologia Prima. What is Liturgical Theology?” The second edition we shall summarize was published in 2004.

In Chapter Five, we shall try to show the similarities and the differences of their approaches.

Chapter Six finishes this master’s thesis with an evaluation and a conclusion.

CHAPTER ONE

1. THEOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE LITURGY. A GENERAL TREATISE ON THE THEOLOGY OF THE LITURGY¹

Profile of Cyprian Vagaggini

Cyprian Vagaggini was born on the 3rd of October 1909 in Piancastagnaio near Siena. He became a Benedictine monk of Saint André les Bruges in Belgium in 1927 and in 1934 he was ordained a priest. He obtained his doctorate degrees in philosophy and theology in the university of Sant' Anselmo in Rome. He was a vice rector in the Greek College in Rome where he acquainted himself with Eastern theology and liturgy. After the death of Fr. Anselm Stolz, he became in charge of the department of dogma in Sant'Anselmo. In 1959, he published his Work, "Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy" originally in Italian under the title, "Il senso teologico della liturgia". He died on the 18th of January 1999.²

Vagaggini divides his work into five parts³ with many chapters. The summary of his work will be done according to the parts as follows:

Part One: How Vagaggini understands the Nature of Liturgy

Part Two: The Liturgy and the General Laws of the Divine Economy in the World

Part Three: Liturgy and Bible

Part Four: Liturgy, Faith, and Theology

Part Five: Liturgy and Life

First evaluation of his work

¹ Vagaggini, Cyprian: *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy. A General Treatise on the Theology of the Liturgy*, trans. Leonardo J. Doyle and W. A. Jürgens, Minnesota: The North Central Publishing Company ⁴1976.

² Cf. www.osb.org/liturgy/ciprianobibl.htm; www.bautz.de/bbkl/v/vagaggini_c.shtml (retrieved on 18.7.2010).

³ The headings are the same as they appear in the author's book.

Part One

1.1. HOW VAGAGGINI UNDERSTANDS THE NATURE OF LITURGY

Vagaggini opines that liturgy and revelation are intimately related. This is because revelation as sacred history written in the Scripture finds its realization in the liturgy in “a certain way [...]”⁴. God takes the initiative to enter into relationship with His rational creatures. But because humanity in Adam chose freely to disobey God, this divine communication was disrupted but not destroyed. The final realization of God’s plan took place in Christ.⁵ That is to say that one can only understand revelation if one understands the mystery of Christ. And where is this mystery celebrated from the time of Pentecost to parousia? In the Church’s liturgy!

However, the liturgy of the Church is made up of different elements, namely, “the seven sacraments, with the Eucharist a sacrifice and a sacrament; the sacramentals; the prayers and ceremonies with which the Church accompanies the actual celebration of the sacrifice, the sacraments and the sacramentals; the Divine Office of the canonical hours”⁶. Now, to show that these elements have something in common (i.e. they are signs) and not just heterogeneous in nature, Vagaggini defines liturgy as “*the complexus of the sensible, efficacious signs of the Church’s sanctification and of her worship*”⁷. This definition, according to him, corresponds more to the ancient (i.e. patristic and liturgical tradition) understanding of liturgy as *mysterion, mysterium, sacramentum* than to the scholastic notion which reduced it (*sacramentum*) to the seven sacraments.⁸ It means therefore that “sacramentality is common to the whole liturgy”⁹.

The elements that make up the liturgy are different from natural or conventional signs. They are religious and sacred signs which are concerned “with the relations between God and man”¹⁰. Christ and the Church freely chose them (e.g., water, bread and wine, anointing etc) “to signify supernatural realities which they did not signify by their own natural power or by a purely human convention [...]”¹¹. Hence, Vagaggini maintains that liturgical signs can be classified into five groups: (1) Speech, (2) Gestures, attitudes

⁴ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 3.

⁵ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 15.

⁶ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 22.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁸ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 29.

⁹ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 31.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 45

and movements, (3) Elements and objects, (4) Art, and (5) Persons.¹² These signs find their expressions in any liturgical rite, e.g. Mass or baptism when it is celebrated.¹³ Moreover, liturgical signs signify “the invisible sacred realities”¹⁴ in the encounter between God and man. There are four ways (dimensions) in which they manifest them. 1) They demonstrate God as the “object of worship” that effects sanctification; Christ as “the instrumental and exemplary cause of sanctification” and the Church as the “object of sanctification and instrumental cause of worship”¹⁵. 2) They oblige one morally in this life and in the future actions. 3) They commemorate the saving events of Christ. 4) They are eschatological in the sense that they portend “the heavenly glory [...]”¹⁶. Thus, among the sacraments instituted by Christ, especially baptism and the Eucharist, the fourfold dimension of their signification can be affirmed easily in the Scripture. The rest of the seven sacraments “can be deduced by reasoning from the general theology of each one”¹⁷. On the other hand, the liturgical signs instituted by the Church can be divided into three groups. The first consists of ceremonies or gestures, attitudes, movements with which the Church accompanies its celebrations. The second consists of prayers and the third comprises the sacramentals.¹⁸ The fourfold dimension of these signs can be found in the reality of worship which characterizes the interior disposition of the Church and the believer. It is through the ceremonies, prayers and the sacramentals that the Church renders her worship to God.

However, Vagaggini asserts that liturgical signs are efficacious in nature because they produce the grace “that they signify [...]”¹⁹. But the degree of their efficacy depends on the nature of their origin. Those instituted by God (Christ) –the Eucharist and the rest of the sacraments— bestow grace *ex opere operato* i.e. they work independent of the moral merits of the receiver or the minister.²⁰ Those instituted by the Church (sacramentals, prayers, ceremonies etc) operate mainly *ex opere operantis Ecclesiae*, i.e. it is dependent on the action of the Church because of its close union with Christ.²¹ The Church receives sanctification and offers her worship to God through these efficacious signs. In the liturgical action these two movements (sanctification from God

¹² Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 47.

¹³ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 61.

¹⁴ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 69.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 74.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 74.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹⁸ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 82-83.

¹⁹ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 96.

²⁰ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 100.

²¹ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 112.

and the worship of the Church) are intimately related because they constitute the same reality (liturgy).²² However, Vagaggini maintains that an adult does not receive this sanctifying action of God mechanically but freely and consciously. It presupposes “the recognition of divine excellence and of man’s subjection to God”. This constitutes essentially “the very soul of worship”²³.

Worship in general (i.e. whether profane or religious) presupposes this recognition of divine excellence and man’s inferiority. In the supernatural order which is occasioned by revelation, worship requires that one assents to it (revelation) “in theological faith”²⁴. Although the Jewish form of worship in the Old Testament is of supernatural order, it was “a first rough draft” of that worship “which Christ would inaugurate in His mortal life”²⁵. Christ initiated the Christian worship in His mortal life through his death, resurrection and glorification. It is this divine life manifested in Him that gives the Christian worship its proper excellence. Moreover, Vagaggini identifies three degrees of Christian worship or cult. *Latria* (Greek *latreia*—service), means total surrender of oneself to God and the Trinity. The worship rendered to the angels and saints is called *dulia* (Greek *douleia*—slavery). They merit it because they are loyal servants of God. Finally, because of the privileged place which the Blessed Virgin Mary occupies among the angels and saints, the worship rendered to her is called *hyperdulia*. It is different and inferior to *latreia* but superior to *douleia*.²⁶

Vagaggini maintains that the Christian worship is possible thanks to the sacramental characters of baptism, confirmation and holy orders. The first two sacraments enable one to participate actively in other sacraments while holy orders not only make the Christian worship possible but enable or empower a person to administer the sacraments.²⁷ This is so because the Christian worship is nothing else but Christ’s worship of God in his capacity as supreme Priest and mediator between God and man. This special role of Christ as Priest and mediator provides the basis for the distinction between the hierarchical priesthood and the priesthood common to all the faithful. Vagaggini describes the hierarchical priesthood as an active participation in the priesthood of Christ, and the priesthood common to all the faithful as a passive

²² Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 125.

²³ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 125.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 134.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 135.

²⁶ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 136.

²⁷ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 140.

participation through the hierarchical priesthood.²⁸ It is the sacramental character of holy orders that capacitates the priest to offer sacrifice of Mass in the person of Christ. However, the sacrifice of Mass summarizes the history of salvation because the fourfold dimension of the liturgical signs has “its highest degree of expression and efficacy [...]”²⁹ in it. This can be seen in the Eastern Anaphoras (e.g. the Greek Anaphora of St. Basil), and the Roman Canon which summarize in every Mass the whole of the history of salvation and the mystery of Christ.³⁰ Furthermore, Vagaggini gives some theological and liturgical affirmations which support the claim that everything done in the liturgy is ordered to the Mass. Theologically, “the Eucharist is the greatest among all the sacraments not only because the other sacraments contain only an instrumental power derived from Christ, while in the Eucharist Christ Himself is contained substantially and in person, but also because of the reciprocal relationship among the sacraments themselves”³¹. Liturgically, “the ordering of all the sacraments to the Mass found its natural expression in the logical practice of antiquity, a practice which is being revived to some extent today, of administering and receiving of all the sacraments in immediate connection with the Mass”³². Added to these are the liturgical feasts and cycles which find their meaning only in connection with the sacrifice of the Mass. Thus, one can say that “every Mass is Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, Christ the King, and All Saints. A liturgical feast cannot be anything that is not already really contained in each and every Mass”³³. Therefore, Vagaggini maintains that our understanding of liturgy is based on the sacred history in which God realized his plan for mankind through Jesus Christ. It is in the liturgy that “this truth” is constantly realized “under the veil of efficacious sensible signs [...], *donec veniat*—until He comes again”³⁴.

Liturgy is a privileged place of encounter between God and man. It is God who initiates this encounter as well as determines how it is to be accomplished. The Second Part will explain the laws that guide this divine economy.

²⁸ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 145f.

²⁹ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 158.

³⁰ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 163f.

³¹ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 171.

³² *Ibid.*, 174.

³³ *Ibid.*, 176.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 179.

Part Two

1.2. THE LITURGY AND THE GENERAL LAWS OF THE DIVINE ECONOMY IN THE WORLD

God's decision to relate with man through the "sensible and efficacious signs" is borne out of His free will. There are laws which govern this relationship and it is in the liturgy that they achieve "their maximum determination and application"³⁵. They are six in number:³⁶

1. The liturgy and the law of objectivity: Vagaggini maintains that the salvation history that finds its fulfillment in Christ remains the product of God's action. If man wishes to appropriate this salvation he or she must be part of this objective law or "normative reality". It includes "Christ the incarnate Son of God; the scriptures; the sacraments; the Church, the people of God, outside of which there is no salvation; the people of God organized in such and such a hierarchical manner, under legitimate pastors, with the Pope at their head; the interpretative and determinative norms of the magisterium"³⁷.

However, the "law of objectivity" that finds its realization in the liturgy does not diminish or suppress the individual freedom in the liturgy. It emphasizes the essential role of God in the human salvation and tries to show the proper place of man in the liturgy. Thus, "[t]he liturgical action is a reality which is completed only in dependence upon an objective reality, in which it finds its impetus and its norm"³⁸.

2. From the Father, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit, to the Father: the liturgy and the Christological-Trinitarian activity in the divine plan: Vagaggini opines that the mystery of the Trinity was made known to us through the revelation. It teaches us that there are three Divine Persons, namely: Father, Son and Holy Spirit and that they relate with us in a wonderful way. The activity of the Divine Persons is presupposed in the liturgy since without it there would be no liturgy. Thus, "every good gift comes to us from the Father, through the medium of Jesus Christ His incarnate Son, in the presence of the Holy Spirit; and likewise, it is in the presence of the Holy Spirit, through the medium of Jesus Christ the incarnate Son, that everything must return to the Father and be reunited to its end, the most blessed Trinity"³⁹.

³⁵ Ibid., 184.

³⁶ The headings are the same as they appear in the author's book.

³⁷ Ibid., 184.

³⁸ Ibid., 185.

³⁹ Ibid., 191-192.

Vagaggini maintains that the New Testament and the Most Ancient Tradition primarily consider the Trinity more from “extratrinitarian point of view” than from “entitative intratrinitarian point of view” which appeared “for the sake of an apologetic defense of the faith against the rationalistic objections of Arianism [...]”⁴⁰. The New Testament’s recapitulatory formula, *a, per, in, ad* (*A Patre, per Filium eius, Iesum Christum, in Spiritu Sancto, ad Patrem*)⁴¹ was also employed by the ancient Tradition⁴² to explain salvation history in terms of “the relations of God with the world and of our relations with God [...]”⁴³. The Christological-Trinitarian perspective appears in the Roman liturgy although “a certain shift of emphasis”⁴⁴ occurred because of anti-Arian controversies. In this way, “the intratrinitarian equality of the Persons”⁴⁵ was emphasized in order to refute the Arian heresy. However, the orations, doxologies, Eucharistic prayers, sacraments, sacramentals and liturgical cycles maintain the formula “*a, per, in, ad*” even though with anti-Arian inclusions.

3. *The Kyrios- the paschal mystery: The one Liturgist and the one Liturgy*: Christ is the *Kyrios* (God and man) because he is the mediator between God and man. That is the explanation of *Per Christum Dominum nostrum* in its liturgical usage.⁴⁶ Vagaggini maintains that the paschal mystery tells us that the salvation wrought by Jesus continues in the Church’s liturgy even though he is seated at the right hand of God in heaven. The author of the letter to the Hebrews describes his heavenly Priesthood and shows that “the part played by Christ is thus so real, so vivid, so present and preponderant, that in the final analysis there is in the world but one liturgist, Christ and but one liturgy, Christ’s liturgy”⁴⁷. This reality of Christ’s presence in the liturgy distinguishes him from other ancient teachers and saints. Their disciples are aware of their action and presence only in “the moral or psychological order”⁴⁸. However, what is done in the liturgy is not a mere remembrance but “a continual epiphany of the priesthood of Christ now glorious beside the Father [...]”⁴⁹.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 196.

⁴¹ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 198.

⁴² Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 203f.

⁴³ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 198.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 208.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 208.

⁴⁶ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 247.

⁴⁷ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 254.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 255.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 267.

4. *The liturgy and the law of salvation in community*: God communicates his divine life to his people. Vagaggini opines that the communitarian nature of liturgy shows itself in the fact that God saves not the individual but him through the community. Again, the social nature of the man shows “that the individual cannot find his full development, not even his spiritual development, except in forms of religion which are social in character”⁵⁰. Vagaggini stresses that the Church as a community of believers “cannot exist without a sacramental and hierarchical priesthood, including always Christ’s vicar, the Pope”⁵¹. However, the celebration of the Mass is never the action of the priest alone but with the community of believers. The ancient liturgy knows no other type of liturgy except the one that is communitarian in nature. Vagaggini notes that the reform carried out by the Second Vatican Council has restored the communitarian character of the liturgy.

5. *The liturgy and the law of the incarnation*: Vagaggini identifies two aspects of this law. In the first place, “God communicates divine life to man through and under the veil of sensible things [...]”⁵². This implies that in order for man to attain eternal life, he or she must pass through these sensible things. The second aspect of this law concerns “a mysterious and very real theandris, a marriage between the divine and the human [...]. The divine embodies itself, so to speak, in order to elevate the human to a divine mode of being”⁵³. These two aspects of the law of incarnation are realized in Christ. He is the mediator between God and man as well as the sacrament of God. Hence, the Church as “the world of incarnation prolonged”⁵⁴ receives sanctification of God as well as renders her worship to God through Christ.

6. *The liturgy and the law of the cosmic universality of the kingdom of God*: There are two parts of this law, 1) *Liturgy, man and the infrahuman world* and 2) *Liturgy, saints and angels*.

Vagaggini maintains that the fruit of incarnation is not limited to man alone. The angels, saints and infrahuman world are parts of this plan of God. Thus, “the liturgy views the whole cosmos as an integral universe, united in worship”⁵⁵.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 273.

⁵¹ Ibid., 275.

⁵² Ibid., 300.

⁵³ Ibid., 301.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 305.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 309.

1) *Liturgy, man and the infrahuman world*: Vagaggini holds that liturgy understands man as a corporate being, i.e. made of body and soul. His presence in the liturgy is not a passive one but an active one since all his faculties are at work.⁵⁶ The liturgy understands man as a social being and that explains liturgy's interest in his culture (liturgical adaptation). But man is not alone in his world. He shares his life with other lower beings. The account of creation in the book of Genesis shows that these lower creatures are ordered to the service of man so that they can praise God their common creator through him.⁵⁷

In the New Testament, Jesus sees the “lower creation as a mirror of clearest quality in which the Father is ever revealed”⁵⁸. His parables, for example, are punctuated with natural objects and persons. That is why incarnation provides the basis for the “physical encounter between God, man and inferior creation”⁵⁹. The appreciation of the material things in nature is evident in the institution of the sacraments of Eucharist and baptism. Ordinary material things such as bread, wine, water, oil etc “are intimately associated with the higher purpose of the transmission of the divine life to men”⁶⁰. Therefore, the unity of man and infrahuman creation is realized in the liturgy because “[t]he liturgy lends a consciousness and a voice—which is the Church's voice, or better, the voice of Christ—to all infrahuman things”⁶¹.

2. *Liturgy, saints and angels*: Vagaggini opines that the celebration of the liturgy is a cosmic and heavenly event. It is a meeting point for all the creatures of God. The gathering of the Church at worship involves the participation of all its members, namely, the pilgrim church, the suffering church, the triumphant church and the angels. On one hand, the Mass for the dead developed in the fourth and fifth centuries because the Christians believed not only that their dead members were always part of them but also that through it they would “derive great profit”, i.e. be purified from “the effects of sin [...]”⁶². On the other hand, Vagaggini maintains that our communion with the church triumphant, i.e. the saints and especially the Blessed Virgin Mary, is evident in

⁵⁶ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 318.

⁵⁷ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 324f.

⁵⁸ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 328.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 327.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 328.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 334.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 338.

the whole liturgical celebration. The development of the cults of saints in the fourth and fifth centuries also gives credence to this fact.⁶³

The angelic world is also part and parcel of the human and infrahuman world. The unity of angelic world with the human world is clear in the liturgical celebration in which “the concept of the angel of sacrifice”⁶⁴ is emphasized since the patristic time. That the angels are present in the celebration of the Mass is not strange. Vagaggini gives two reasons for it. One is that “the angels constitute the court of God, their King and ours, and they are for that reason present wherever Christ, their King, is present”, and the second reason is “that the angels are our fellow-citizens, our guardians, and our intercessors with God”⁶⁵. Therefore, the idea of angels of baptism, who takes special care of the catechumen (before and after baptism)⁶⁶, and the angels for the sacraments of penance, matrimony⁶⁷ etc is not new in the Church. The extension of the feast of the guardian angels, on October 2, since 1670 for the whole Church, shows how the Church sees the unity of the angelic world with the liturgy.⁶⁸

Moreover, the last topic in this Part Two concerns, namely: *The two Cities: The Liturgy and the Struggle against Satan*.

Vagaggini maintains that the Christian struggle against “Satan and his satellites”⁶⁹ is real and should not be dismissed as an abstract struggle. Revelation (sacred history) reveals to us that some angels who fell away from heaven “introduced physical and moral evil into the cosmos”⁷⁰. There has been, since then, a struggle between two kingdoms, “God and His followers on the one hand, the Kingdom of Satan on the other”⁷¹.

The New Testament is replete with instances concerning personal struggles against Satan. Even the entire mission and work of Christ is viewed by the New Testament authors “as a struggle and a triumph against the power of Satan”⁷². The preaching of the Kingdom and the liberation of those oppressed by the Satan characterized the public ministry of Jesus. Also, the mission of the Apostles as well as the life of every Christian

⁶³ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 339f.

⁶⁴ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 349.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 351-352.

⁶⁶ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 354f.

⁶⁷ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 356f.

⁶⁸ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 360.

⁶⁹ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 362.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 363.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 363.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 367.

is also viewed as a struggle against Satan. However, Vagaggini maintains that this struggle does not intend to place Satan at par with God “because God remains the supreme Creator and Master of all things”⁷³.

However, the theme of the struggle against Satan is also found in the sacraments, especially in the liturgy of Christian initiation. Vagaggini holds that in baptism, the rites over the *audientes* (admission to catechumenate) “were all centered around the theme of liberation from Satan and the way now opened to Christ”⁷⁴. The sacrament of confirmation was seen as “the seal and fullness of baptism”⁷⁵. Also, engagement in the Eucharistic celebration was seen as “an armament and protection against the demons [...]”⁷⁶. In general, the Roman Ritual and Roman Pontifical contain evidences of this theme of struggle against Satan. Some examples include the blessing of holy water, the consecration of the virgins, the monastic profession etc. The theme of struggle against Satan is also evident in the Temporal and Sanctoral Cycles. Vagaggini insists that the reality of this struggle should be taken seriously, because “if this viewpoint be lost, neither revelation nor liturgy is comprehensible”⁷⁷.

As we have noted in the First and Second Parts, the liturgy is concerned with the sacred history. However, the sacred history as we know it is contained in the Scriptures. So, the Third Part will explain the relationship between liturgy and the Bible.

Part Three

1.3. LITURGY AND BIBLE

Vagaggini holds that liturgy did not invent the sacred history which constitutes the content of its celebration. It interprets the Scriptures in view of Christ who is the fulfillment of the revelation. That is the reason the Old and the New Testaments are not to be read separately but always in “an organic-progressive unity under the primacy of the New Testament over the Old”⁷⁸.

In order to understand the Scriptures especially the Old Testament, Vagaggini maintains that it is necessary to comprehend namely: 1) what the texts meant for the people originally, i.e. their “Contemporary depth”; 2) how the texts were later interpreted in light of Christ, i.e. their “Christic depth”; 3) how the Christians later appropriated them,

⁷³ Ibid., 383.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 397-398.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 411.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 413.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 450.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 456.

i.e. their “Christian depth”; and 4) how the texts of the Old and New Testaments point to the realities beyond them, i.e. their “eschatological depth”⁷⁹.

Now, the use of biblical texts in the liturgy does not affect the “contemporary depth” because the texts are only interpreted anew and the original sense “remains as basis”⁸⁰ for further interpretations. For example, the contemporary Jewish (c. 550 B.C) understanding of this text from Isaiah 60: 1-6, “Arise, be enlightened, O Jerusalem” etc is quite different from its Christian understanding. For the Jews, the end of exile was in sight but for the Christians it means the epiphany of the Son of God (on earth at Bethlehem) to usher in the liberation of the children of God.⁸¹ This is how the liturgy can deepen as well as surpass the “contemporary depth” since the text is always interpreted in connection with the paschal mystery of Christ.⁸²

However, Vagaggini maintains that the use of New Testaments texts in the liturgy does not present a completely new understanding in the same way the Old Testament texts do, since there is no new revelation after Christ. Nevertheless, these texts “are illuminated by a light wholly their own”⁸³. And this light which “is in some way new proceeds from three sources”⁸⁴. Namely: 1) The historical development of the Church and her life places us in a better position to understand, for example, the parable of the mustard seed (Mt. 13:31f) more than Jesus’ contemporaries. 2) The development of dogmas helps one to understand what the angel’s greetings to Maria (Lk 1:28) means for the doctrine of Immaculate Conception than the contemporaries of Apostles who were unable to “see with such clarity [...]”⁸⁵. 3) The liturgy places the texts of the New Testament in the *hic et nunc* circumstance of the believer.⁸⁶ For example, the text concerning the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles is not meant to serve the historical past but on this day it “proclaims its mystical sacramental realization in the souls of the faithful in the liturgical action”⁸⁷. This understanding, however, applies to all the historical events in the life of Christ which are realized in “a certain way” in the liturgy. Hence, Vagaggini asserts that “the liturgical reading of the Bible is the specifically Christian reading of the Scriptures”⁸⁸.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 460-462.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 462.

⁸¹ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 463f.

⁸² Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 465.

⁸³ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 481-482.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 482.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 482.

⁸⁶ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 483.

⁸⁷ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 484.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 486.

Moreover, Vagaggini maintains that liturgy interprets the psalms in light of the salvation history and the mystery of Christ. Thus, the psalms⁸⁹ can be divided into ten groups.⁹⁰

1. *Creation and general providence*: The psalms (8; 18:1-7; 28; 32; 89, etc) that fall into this group “sing of God as universal Creator, governor, and Provider of all things and for all men”⁹¹. When the liturgy makes use of these psalms it sees God’s creation and general providence as “directed to the redemption and to general providence in Christ”⁹².

2. *Election, separation, formation, and restoration of the people of God*: The psalms (76; 77; 80; 94: 5-11; 99; 104, etc) under this group recall the story of the people of Israel and how God chose them as His special people. The liturgy understands that what God did for the people of Israel “was but a first roughcast, still imperfect, of what God later did and concretized perfectly in the Church of Christ, the new people of God, the new Israel.”⁹³

3. *The king, head of the people of God*: The psalms (2; 17; 19; 20; 44, etc) in this group concern themselves with the theology of the kings as representatives of God on behalf of his people. The liturgy interprets them as referring to Christ and as such applies the royal psalms to Him who is seen as “their typological prolongation [...]”⁹⁴.

4. *Jerusalem, the holy capital city of the people of God*: The psalms (45; 47; 86; 121, etc) in this group simply mean for the Christians that “the earthly Jerusalem is a type of the Church and of the heavenly Jerusalem”⁹⁵.

5. *The temple of God; the Holy Ark; and Sion, the holy mountain*: These psalms (14; 23; 49; 64; 67, etc) are interpreted in light of Christ’s Eucharistic presence in the tabernacle. Hence, the “universal Catholic Church and Catholic churches are only a pale shadow prefigurative and preparative of the temple of the heavenly Jerusalem”⁹⁶.

6. *The law of the people of God*: In these psalms (18:8ff and 118) the Mosaic Law is understood “as a pedagogue”⁹⁷ meant to lead men to Christ who is the fulfillment of the Law.

⁸⁹ The numbering of the psalms is according to the Vulgate.

⁹⁰ The headings are the same as they appear in the author’s book.

⁹¹ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 493.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 493.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 495.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 496.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 496.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 497.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 498.

7. *The enemies of the people of God*: The psalmist in these psalms (43; 46; 78; 88; 123; 143, etc) asks for God's help against his enemies. Vagaggini maintains that Israel and the Church have the same enemy—the Satan. But the difference in the use of these psalms concerns its application to human enemies. While the people of Israel sometimes pray for the death of their enemies, Christians pray that the sinner be converted so that he may live.⁹⁸

8. *The penitent sinner among the people of God*: Christians also make use of these psalms (6; 31; 50 etc.) to express their sinfulness and ask for God's pardon for their sins.

9. *The just and pious Israelite, the God-fearing man, the "poor man of Yahweh," among God's people*: Vagaggini holds that Christian understanding of the just is different from the Israel of old. This is because their ideal of the just man was "fulfilled in a sublime way by Christ Himself, the just one par excellence and the model of the all the just"⁹⁹. Thus, the following psalms (38; 53; 93; 108 etc) are prayed differently by Christians.

10. *Attributes of God and invitations to praise Him as the direct and principal theme of some psalms*. The Christian sings these psalms (85: 8-10; 93; 98 etc.) which praise and express the attributes of God with greater reason "in as much as he sees them manifested in Christ Himself, in the Church, in the ecclesial realities [...] and in the future eschatology already announced"¹⁰⁰.

However, Vagaggini maintains that the intimate relationship between liturgy and Bible has been emphasized by the Second Vatican Council. The Constitution on the Liturgy, for example, underscores the knowledge and love of the Scriptures as very essential for a good liturgical renewal.¹⁰¹

The relationship between liturgy, faith and theology will be the next topic in Part Four.

Part Four

1.4. LITURGY, FAITH AND THEOLOGY

Vagaggini opines that the question of the relationship between liturgy and faith can be summarized with the maxim *lex orandi, lex credendi*. That is to say that "the manner in which prayer is said in the liturgy indicates what must be believed; and that which must

⁹⁸ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 499.

⁹⁹ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 502.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 503.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 505.

be believed influences the manner of praying”¹⁰². But this does not say the whole truth about this relationship because the nature of the relationship between the faithful and the ordinary magisterium of the Church needs to be clarified. Vagaggini holds that some efforts were already made in the past to address this issue but “the present-day theology can say something more and better than the theology of the eighteenth century [...]”¹⁰³. This is because, progress has been made in the understanding of the nature of liturgy; the nature of magisterium especially its relation with tradition, Scriptures etc, and the development of dogmas.¹⁰⁴

The effort in “Part One”, Vagaggini maintains, has been to explain the notion of liturgy as the privileged place of encounter between God and man under the veil of sensible and efficacious signs. In this encounter the Church receives sanctification from God as well as renders her worship to Him. When one understands liturgy in this supernatural sense then it is more than the *didascalia* of ordinary magisterium.¹⁰⁵ Christians do not gather to receive instructions but to pray and encounter God. Thus, “the common and ultimate aim of the Church’s teaching power, governing power, and sanctifying power is to stir up and to activate this encounter”¹⁰⁶. Liturgy is very good at teaching the faithful how to view life in light of Christ because it “causes doctrine to be lived”¹⁰⁷.

Moreover, Vagaggini maintains that liturgy “is less precise conceptually than the other means [...]”¹⁰⁸ in manifesting the teaching of the ordinary magisterium. Thus, it is the task of the theologian to find out “the theological authority of liturgy”¹⁰⁹. This will entail the examination of the rites, texts, etc of the liturgy by applying “accurately and honestly the laws of philological and historical research”¹¹⁰. The next step will be to subject the outcome of this enquiry to theological judgment which will explain “the extent to which the faith is involved in the single elements of the liturgy and the degree of adherence which the believer is bound to give to individual elements”¹¹¹. However, it is the ordinary magisterium¹¹² that is directly involved in the liturgy¹¹³. It proposes what is to be believed even though not all that is proposed has the same degree of

¹⁰² Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 509.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 511.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 511.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 512.

¹⁰⁶ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 513.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 518.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 518.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 519.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 519.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 520.

¹¹² The Pope and the bishops whose teachings are fallible to a certain degree.

¹¹³ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 520.

authoritative force. Those proposed with infallible authority¹¹⁴ are to be believed otherwise one risks the danger of losing one's faith. Others proposed with lesser authoritative force are to be believed as well but not in same degree.¹¹⁵

Now, concerning the mutual relationship between faith and liturgy, Vagaggini holds that it is necessary to understand the formula *lex orandi, lex credendi* in its context. It is actually a summary of a phrase *ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*¹¹⁶. It was meant to justify the fact that the command from the Apostle to pray (cf. 1 Tim 2: 1-4) which the bishops fulfill in the liturgy (*lex orandi*), extends to believing (*lex credendi*) against the Pelagians and semi-Pelagians who doubt the necessity of grace for everyone.¹¹⁷ However, when the short formula *lex orandi lex credendi* is simply used to measure the relations between "liturgy and faith, this does nothing but to extend to the liturgy in general, understood as the law and norm of the official prayer of the Church, and to the faith in general in its relations with liturgy, the somewhat more restricted reasoning of the author of the *Indiculus*"¹¹⁸.

However, Vagaggini maintains that the Catholic understanding of this maxim *lex orandi lex credendi* can be explained in the following way. Liturgy expresses the dogmas already defined and enables the faithful to live them out. That is to say that liturgy alone without the help of other sources cannot express fully "what the magisterium proposes as of faith and what it does not propose [...]"¹¹⁹. However, liturgy can contribute or precede the definition of dogmas because it serves as the occasion in which God gives "instinctive knowledge"¹²⁰ to an individual which enables him to know a certain divine truth. This "knowledge by instinct or connaturality in general"¹²¹ depends on the actual grace (a passing participation in divine life) "and not on the acumen of his intellect or on his theoretical knowledge"¹²². He is certain of this truth but it remains private to him. Also, this truth can be diffused through the action of the Holy Spirit among the members of the Church as well as among the hierarchy.¹²³ This "is the *sensus Catholicus* in action"¹²⁴. However, this truth can be made to serve the whole Church (as divine and Catholic faith) when the competent teaching authority under the assistance of

¹¹⁴ When it is done as a sacred magisterium (infallible sacred Magisterium).

¹¹⁵ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 522f.

¹¹⁶ It means literally: the law of prayer grounds the law of belief.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 530.

¹¹⁸ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 530.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 533.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 535f.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 537.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 539.

¹²³ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 539.

¹²⁴ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 540.

the Holy Spirit defines it as a dogma of the Church. The promulgation of the dogmas of Immaculate Conception and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary are practical examples of where the liturgy contributes to making dogmas explicit.¹²⁵

However, Vagaggini will now focus on the question of the relations between systematic (dogmatic) theology and liturgy. The emphasis will be on the qualitative integration of liturgy because we have seen above that liturgy has many things in common with dogmatic theology and Scriptures. Thus, the question about the relations is a theological one and not a liturgical one especially when we consider “theology itself as the supreme science”¹²⁶. Among the theologians, there are different understandings concerning the nature of theology and its method. Vagaggini examines three groups taking into consideration their different methods and how they tried to integrate liturgy in their theological enterprise.

1. Positive-scholastic method: This school of theology arose in the sixteenth century out of the need to defend the Catholic doctrine from the accusation of the Protestants and modernists. Their intention was to prove apodictically that the doctrines of the Catholic Church are not at variance with the Scriptures and tradition which the Apostles handed down. In their proofs they made allusions to liturgy but never used it as an independent source.¹²⁷ Although the positive-scholasticism had “broadened and deepened the theological propositions of the old scholasticism”, it is necessary to add “that this broadening has been conceived with a too exclusively polemical preoccupation”¹²⁸. Theology, Vagaggini opines, does not exhaust itself in polemics. It is “the scientific effort of the believer to penetrate and contemplate the riches of the revelation” [...].¹²⁹ Thus, when theology is considered in this way, the liturgy cannot but play an important role because it is the privileged place of encounter between God and man under the veil of sensible and efficacious signs. “This is the liturgy’s own specialty and wealth, which the theologian cannot know in any other theological source, in any other *locus theologicus*”¹³⁰. Therefore, it is necessary to approach liturgy “with a broader view, less directly polemic and more simply positive, penetrative and contemplative [...]”¹³¹.

¹²⁵ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 541.

¹²⁶ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 545.

¹²⁷ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 557.

¹²⁸ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 564.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 567-568.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 570.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 571.

2. *Liturgy and theology in St. Thomas Aquinas*: Vagaggini considers Aquinas because “the concept itself and the theological practice which were proper to scholasticism have their purest exemplar [...]”¹³² in him. Thomas was not in doubt about the value of liturgy in theology. Liturgy is “one of the ‘authorities’”¹³³ in theology because it manifests the faith of the Church through its rites and feasts.¹³⁴ In his treatment of the sacraments, Aquinas was not only concerned with the “substance of the sacrament” but also with “the liturgical context proper to the administration of the respective sacrament”¹³⁵. Under the treatise on Eucharist, for example, he considers “the Eucharistic fast; the communion of those who do not have the use of reason; frequent and daily communion; communion under one species”,¹³⁶ etc. However, his application of liturgy as an authority appears, for example, in his treatises “on the unity of God [...]” and “on Mariology” in which he cites “as authority a collect of the Dominican Missal” and “the liturgical feast of the Conception of Mary”¹³⁷ respectively. Other areas where liturgy appears in his theology include the treatises on the virtue of religion and on the Old law. Although the integration of liturgy in the theology of Thomas was not perfect, Vagaggini maintains that it is richer than the manner the positive-scholasticism treated it. Aquinas considered theology as a science (ontological) and this approach is strange to liturgy viewed from the perspective of sacred salvation history. This explains why liturgy was unable to distinguish “all of its potentialities in the theological synthesis itself”¹³⁸.

3. *Theology and Liturgy in the Fathers*: Vagaggini opines that from the patristic literature (catecheses, mystagogic literature and homilies) one can notice two areas of their interest, namely: 1) They are interested in the liturgy from “the point of view of its spiritual or theological value”¹³⁹. 2) The method they use “in treating the liturgy is predominantly expositive, irenic, and even contemplative [...]”¹⁴⁰. Thus, the primary aim of the Fathers is to inculcate in the believers the divine truth and if at all they applied apologetic treatment it was only in a secondary and occasional manner.

¹³² Ibid., 572.

¹³³ Ibid., 573.

¹³⁴ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 583.

¹³⁵ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 579.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 579.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 585.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 588.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 596.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 597.

The Fathers see the whole of liturgy “in the framework of the *mysteria* or *sacramenta* which for them dominate the whole of revelation”¹⁴¹. This approach to liturgy contributed to the development of symbolism and its application in theology. It helped also to work out “a theology of the ‘sacraments’ or ‘mysteries’ of the Church in general, and through the analyzing of the theology of the seven sacraments in this general picture”¹⁴². All this notwithstanding, Vagaggini maintains that the Fathers, in their treatment of liturgy, could not arrive at “a sufficient distinction of our seven sacraments from the rest of the liturgy, a distinction which looks essentially to their special origin, efficacy, and necessity [...]”¹⁴³. However, this deficiency was later rectified by Western scholasticism, especially by St. Thomas¹⁴⁴.

Moreover, the Fathers are not in doubt about the authority of the liturgy and that is why they apply it in doctrinal controversies. For example, against the question of original sin, Augustine appealed to “the baptism of infants and the rites which precede it [...]”¹⁴⁵, etc. In short the authority of the liturgy is considered as “a ‘good’ of the Church received from the Apostles [...]”¹⁴⁶. It is used specifically in the irenic exposition of the theological content of liturgy. Vagaggini maintains that this theological approach (i.e. theology understood as gnosis or wisdom), however positive it might have been, led them to exhaust their theological/liturgical exposition “in monographs and essays [...]”¹⁴⁷. Hence, the application of philosophy in their exposition was poor since their method was more of eclectic than systematic.¹⁴⁸

However, from the above analysis, Vagaggini asserts that none of the three methods: positive-scholastic (entitative and apologetic), Thomas Aquinas (entitative) and the patristic (gnosis or wisdom), can “assimilate organically into the general theological synthesis the material of theological value included in liturgy”¹⁴⁹. However, one can arrive at a solution when “the concept of theology as science [...]”¹⁵⁰ is viewed as having “two integral moments: the empirical-historical inductive moment and the

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 598.

¹⁴² Ibid., 610.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 610.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 610.

¹⁴⁵ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 613.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 616.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 625.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 624.

¹⁴⁹ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 626.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 630.

ontological properly deductive moment”¹⁵¹. This approach will balance the deficiencies in the above methods and pave way for a systematic exposition that involves “general theological methodology”¹⁵². The task of “general theological methodology” consists not only in explaining “the nature of theology, its proper method, its sources and its criteria”¹⁵³ but also in considering liturgy as part of theological sources. That is to say that it should also show how liturgy is used in systematic theology. For example, “[i]n the treatise on the triune God, the theologian must show in one chapter by itself how and under what precise view the Church in the liturgy always lived and lives her faith in the triune God”¹⁵⁴. The same approach, however, applies to the treatises on man, on Christ, etc.

Moreover, Vagaggini stresses that the study of liturgy should include its theological, ascetical and pastoral aspects. This will help to unpack the riches of liturgy which has been affected by the reduction of this study to rubrics or history of liturgy. If one should maintain the unity which has existed between Scriptures, dogmatic theology and liturgy then “the professors of dogmatics and of Sacred Scripture ought (to) have the mentality, the status and the importance of the professor of liturgy”¹⁵⁵. It is therefore not by accident that the Second Vatican Council said that liturgy “is to be taught under its theological, historical, spiritual, pastoral and juridical aspects” (SC, 16)¹⁵⁶. This calls, Vagaggini opines, for a review of the hours assigned to the study of liturgy especially in the seminaries and theological faculties.

Moreover, the final part will focus on the two aspects of liturgy—spiritual and pastoral—as they pertain to the life of the believer.

Part Five

1.5. LITURGY AND LIFE

Liturgy promotes active life through its spiritual and pastoral aspects. The purpose of this part is to elucidate the relationship “between liturgy and spirituality and between liturgy and pastoral [...]”¹⁵⁷.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 631.

¹⁵² Ibid., 635.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 635.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 635.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 638.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 640.

¹⁵⁷ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 647.

1. Liturgy and Spirituality: Vagaggini asserts that spirituality “is the doctrine of the way of achieving the most perfect union with God that is possible here below”¹⁵⁸. Christian spirituality or life presupposes the action of God (sanctifying grace) which enables man to achieve perfection as a Christian. There are different types of spiritualities in the Catholic Church, to wit, Benedictine, Franciscan, Ignatian, etc¹⁵⁹. However, since we are concerned with relations between liturgy and spirituality, can one also speak of liturgical spirituality? To answer this question Vagaggini starts by pointing out the end and means which are common to all Catholic spiritualities.

He distinguishes between the end (absolute) common to all creatures—“the glory of God” and “the specific ultimate end of all spirituality”¹⁶⁰ — the perfection of Christian person. Also, the common means considered generically are the same for all spiritualities but can become specific means for some when they “are specified and concretized”¹⁶¹. There are two classes of common means. The first includes the commandments of God and the Church which help one, when rightly observed, to remain in the state of grace.¹⁶² The second involves prayer, meditation, examination of life etc. However, if there are differences among the schools of spirituality they are normally found among the specific means (e.g. participation in the Mass and reception of communion apply to all but the frequency can vary from one school to another). In light of this clarification, Vagaggini attempts to explain the concept of liturgical spirituality.

It “is that spirituality in which the specific concretization and the proper synthetic relative ordering of the diverse elements common to every Catholic spirituality as a means toward Christian perfection are determined by the liturgy itself”¹⁶³. Liturgy is understood here “in the plenary sense”¹⁶⁴ i.e. it encompasses all spiritual exercises outside the liturgical action itself. Vagaggini points out some features that distinguish liturgical spirituality from other spiritualities. 1) It is communitarian in nature since it focuses on the salvation of all. 2) It maintains a balance between “object-subject” relationships in worship. The liturgy fixes “men’s attention, will, and emotional process in all their gradations more on God who knows and loves man than on man who knows

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 648.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 651.

¹⁶⁰ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 652.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 652.

¹⁶² Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 653.

¹⁶³ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 661.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 661.

and loves God”¹⁶⁵. 3) It is theocentric (Trinitarian), Christocentric (incarnational), Eucharistic and biblical.¹⁶⁶ All these characteristics constitute in making liturgy the “source and zenith of Church’s life”. However, the relationship between liturgy and other extra-eucharistic devotions or activities lies in the fact that they are either ordered to the liturgy or derived from it. Thus, liturgical spirituality cannot be identified with any of the schools of spirituality because it “is the spirituality of the Church by a title which is suitable to none other”¹⁶⁷.

Moreover, Vagaggini holds that liturgical spirituality is not alien to ascetical and mystical striving toward Christian perfection. Liturgy and liturgical spirituality do not absorb the individual in such a way that he or she cannot personalize the activities of the liturgy. Although there are some mystics (e.g. St. Theresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross) who do not see any possible combination of liturgy and mystical life or experiences, it is important to mention those who see its possibility. The liturgy was, for Venerable Mary of the Incarnation, (1599—1672) a source of profound religious life.¹⁶⁸ In her testimonies which she wrote between 1633 and 1654 she pointed out that liturgy and liturgical activities assisted her mystic experiences. Also, the writings of St. Gertrude (1256—1302 or 1303), called the great, mystic of Helfta (Germany) also show that the liturgical action of Mass and communion, of the canonical hours, of feasts, etc, assisted her in the search for a fruitful union with God.¹⁶⁹ Therefore, Vagaggini maintains that liturgical spirituality is not one of the spiritualities of the Church. It is the spirituality of the Church and of every Christian. It is suitable for any kind of Christian perfection.

2. *Liturgy and Pastoral*: Vagaggini understands pastoral to mean “the art of leading and conducting the people to Christ and Christ to the people” [...]”¹⁷⁰ and “[p]astoral theology” to mean “the theological science of the art of leading and conducting people to Christ”¹⁷¹. However, the way to conduct and lead the people to Christ involves some unchangeable and changeable aspects. The former pertains to the end of the pastoral as determined “by the positive will of Christ Himself, e.g. orthodox morality and faith; the

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 668.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 668f.

¹⁶⁷ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 675.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 723.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 740f.

¹⁷⁰ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 805.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 806.

sacraments; the hierarchical structure of the Church [...]”¹⁷². The latter is determined “by the temporal dispositions of the people [...] and by the positive means of ecclesiastical institutions [...]”¹⁷³ e.g. liturgy and canon law.

In light of “law of salvation in community” (as hinted in part two), it is the people who are the direct object of the pastoral.¹⁷⁴ This is not limited to a specific group (e.g. parishioners) but to all people irrespective of religion or culture since the goal of pastoral is to lead everyone to Christ. Also, “the end of every pastoral” is fulfilled “in the liturgy and principally in the celebration of the Eucharistic mystery”¹⁷⁵. Although liturgy does not exhaust itself in the Eucharist, all the sacraments, sacramentals and other activities of the Church are ordered to it “as to the reality in which the aim of all pastoral is fully realized”¹⁷⁶. The intimate relationship between liturgy and pastoral manifests when liturgy serves as a means of uniting and strengthening the Christians especially in communist regime where there is persecution or suppression.¹⁷⁷ Also, through “the pastoral force of the liturgy [...]”¹⁷⁸ (i.e. the witness of the Christians), the people of other faiths can be attracted to Christ. Furthermore, the growing interest in liturgy occasioned by liturgical and ecumenical movements which cut across many Churches has created a fertile ground for a rapprochement. Liturgical questions have paved way for a reevaluation of some positions (theological and liturgical). The Catholic Church understands the need to focus more on the Scriptures and patristic tradition in order to augment “the scholastic and positive-scholastic points of view”¹⁷⁹. The Protestant communities see the necessity of reevaluating their positions on the Eucharist with particular reference to Real Presence, sacrifice etc.¹⁸⁰ The Orthodox Church on the other hand understands that she does not monopolize the riches of Catholic doctrine and tradition.¹⁸¹

Furthermore, Vagaggini maintains that full and active participation in the liturgy constitute the goal of liturgical pastoral. However, the sacrifice of the Mass remains “the soul and center of the liturgy” and as such the goal of liturgical pastoral is “to

¹⁷² Ibid., 807.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 807.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 809.

¹⁷⁵ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 813.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 821.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 824.

¹⁷⁸ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 825.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 833.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 834.

¹⁸¹ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 835.

conduct the people to the Mass and the Mass to the people”¹⁸². This involves a plenary participation which consists of 1) external (a material preparation for the liturgy) and the internal (a spiritual preparation) encounter; and 2) active participation which involves both the roles of the lay faithful and the clergy. Also, the nature of the Church as “the sacrament of unity” demands that both bishop and the clergy lead in the liturgical celebrations of the diocese and parish respectively. It is the duty of liturgical pastoral to make sure that this goal (active participation of all) is achieved.

However, Vagaggini asserts that the achievement of this goal involves three presuppositions, namely: 1) Liturgical pastoral presupposes a pastor who has not only the required knowledge of liturgy but also “what its pastoral strength can be”¹⁸³. This explains why the Second Vatican Council recommends a liturgical and pastoral formation of the clergy as a necessity for an active and full participation in the liturgy. 2) This formation, however, will enable the priest to have a concrete knowledge of his parishioners in order to assist them in their present condition. 3) The work of guiding “the people back to liturgy” involves educating and shaping their religious psychology. This is not always easy because of individual orientations. Hence, one should not rely solely on his pastoral prudence but should take into account “the spirit of the directives imparted by the Church in the Second Vatican Council”¹⁸⁴.

In addition to the three presuppositions, Vagaggini offers two general directions for the work of liturgical pastoral, namely: “bringing people to the liturgy as it is today and bringing the liturgy to the people”¹⁸⁵. Both directions, however, involve an adequate use of the various options proposed by the liturgical reform which should suit the circumstances of the people. Thus, in order to bring people to the liturgy as it is today, it behooves the clergy, teachers, and educators who are mindful of the liturgical reform to expound 1) “the vital theological meaning of the liturgical assembly and [...] its individual rites”¹⁸⁶; 2) the relationship between liturgy and Scriptures and 3) to show how liturgy is “deeply anchored in tradition”¹⁸⁷. On the other hand, to bring the liturgy to the people demands that priests make wise use of the “diverse forms of liturgical

¹⁸² Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 838.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 848.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 851.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 851.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 852.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 853.

celebrations of various rites [...]”¹⁸⁸. This will help, for example in the celebration of the Mass, to bring the liturgy much closer to the people.

However, Vagaggini maintains that the means by which to achieve the goal of the liturgical pastoral, i.e. “bringing people to the liturgy as it is today and bringing the liturgy to the people” involve two aspects—a practical and a theoretical aspect¹⁸⁹. The former has the duty of making the faithful participate actively in the liturgy through the various means of celebration recommended by the Council. Subordinate to this is the importance of popular devotions, especially the reading and sharing of the Scriptures, which will enable the faithful to participate actively in the liturgy. The theoretical aspect, however, involves catecheses in its various types and preaching as long as they “maintain their necessary connection with the liturgy”¹⁹⁰. Although these two aspects (practical and theoretical) contain “the theological principles which we have sought to explain in this present work [...],” we can nonetheless “insist in particular upon the theological liturgical bases that are demanded by the strict relationships between preaching and liturgy, and between liturgy and catechism”¹⁹¹.

Preaching and Liturgy: Vagaggini asserts that the word of God is made known to the faithful through its oral announcement by the authentic ministers of the Church. Preaching is more than an instruction which appeals only to the intellect. It “aims directly at moving the affection and the will of the hearer to induce him immediately to take a certain vital attitude in the face of the truth announced, a certain personal decision binding one’s own being in view of that truth”¹⁹². Even though preaching strictly speaking is not part of the seven sacraments and can as well not be reduced to a sacramental because of its divine origin (cf. Mk 16, 15); it “involves a sensible sign, (word) efficacious in its own way [...]”¹⁹³. Thus, “it is possible to speak of the proclamation of the word of God as something intermediate between the seven sacraments proper and the sacramentals of simple ecclesiastical institution”¹⁹⁴. There is an intimate connection between the liturgical rite and the word. They are complementary in the sense that the rite remains abstract and unfruitful if the word does

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 853.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 856.

¹⁹⁰ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 857.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 858.

¹⁹² Ibid., 859.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 861.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 863.

not expound it.¹⁹⁵ However, preaching or sermon achieves its “highest actualization”¹⁹⁶ when it is done in connection with Mass. It is called “homily” i.e. an exposition of the readings (Word of God) by the bishop or the parish priest. Also, preaching and liturgy have the same content—the salvation history as realized in Christ.¹⁹⁷

Catechism and liturgy: Vagaggini maintains that the content of the sacred history links liturgy and catechism together. But the way of making it more understandable to the children in order to introduce them to Catholic faith has not been easy. At times it appeals more to their intellect (explanation of doctrine in an analytic and systematic way) than to the entire person which involves imagination, affection and will.¹⁹⁸ In order to make catechism more biblical and liturgical it is necessary to present “certain truths of revelation, like God, His attributes, grace [...], (though speculative in nature) in some way through sacred history, starting, as it were, from this same concept which must remain always on the primary level of Attention”¹⁹⁹. Vagaggini opines that the knowledge of God’s omnipotence is not imparted by the Bible and the liturgy in an abstract form. What they do is to show God “acting in the world with great power, form which fact one can pass more easily to the affirmation even of a more abstract character, that God is omnipotent [...]”²⁰⁰. Catechism promotes liturgical life when it presents the sacred history as the paschal mystery in a form that is “more intuitive and synthetic”²⁰¹. The new German catechism published in 1955 is a practical example of this initiative. It was conceived not only as a book of instruction “but also as a book of religious education [...] which [...] engages not only the intelligence but also the imagination, the affection and the will of the pupil and which therefore considers in every individual question the vital and personal implications as well”²⁰². In short, Vagaggini holds that it is liturgical in nature.

Finally, Vagaggini maintains that the aim of his book “was to shed some light upon the theological structure of the liturgy [...]”²⁰³ and that is what we have tried to show from part one through part five. Hence, “the liturgy appears as the greatest concretization, the center of the relations between God and man in the period of time intervening between

¹⁹⁵ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 882.

¹⁹⁶ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 884.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 885.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 889.

¹⁹⁹ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 890.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 890-891.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 889.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 893.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 899.

Pentecost and parousia; the privileged place of the encounter in Christ between God and mankind, where all the creatures of the infrahuman as well as the angelic world, all history, past, present and future, come together; where all faith, Scripture, theology, spiritual life, pastoral and missionary life of the Church converge”²⁰⁴.

1.6. FIRST EVALUATION OF HIS WORK

We are going to evaluate some of the positions of Vagaggini based on the above summary. The rest will be done in Chapter Five where we shall do a general comparison.

1. His strict definition of liturgy restores again the understanding of the whole of liturgy as *mysterion*, *mysterium* or *sacramentum*. I see his idea of signs (sensible and efficacious) as an attempt to bridge the modern misunderstanding (dichotomy) between sign/symbol and reality.
2. The theological elucidation of liturgy as he has tried to do in his work has helped his broader notion of liturgy to serve as a reference point for other theological disciplines. Since theological science “embraces empirical-historical science as much as entitative science [...]”²⁰⁵, his critique of the theological ideals of positive-scholastics, scholastics represented by Aquinas and the Fathers is justified.
3. To understand liturgy as the right *locus* where the Scriptures are interpreted in a Christian way is laudable. Also, that the study of liturgy should include its theological, ascetical and pastoral aspects is the right step in the right direction.
4. Conscious of the recommendations of the liturgical Constitution of Vatican II, which necessitated the revision of his work, he advocates the active and full participation in the liturgy which is to be achieved through sound liturgical pastoral. His analysis of the relations between spirituality, preaching, catechism and liturgy helps to drive home his point. He has no apologies in presenting liturgical spirituality as *the* spirituality of the Church.
5. Although he played an active role during the Second Vatican Council, one would have expected that he changes some of his perceptions about the Jewish people which “*Nostra Aetate*” in article 4 advocates. He presents the Jewish worship of the Old Testament as inferior to Christian worship.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 901.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 630.

6. As a dogmatist, it is not surprising that he maintains the strict distinction between the hierarchical priesthood and the priesthood of all the faithful. But to still hold the view that the community of believers without the hierarchy is no community at all is for me not understandable. For instance, when Jesus said, “Where two or three meet in my name, I am there among them”, (Mt 18:20), he was not making any distinction among any category of believers.
7. The distinction he made between instinctive knowledge and reflective knowledge is commendable but to deny those at the level of instinctive knowledge of any systematic or abstract thinking is questionable.
8. His treatment of the role of Trinity in the liturgy is Christ-centered. One would have expected that he elaborates more on the place of the Holy Spirit in the liturgy.
9. The way he presents liturgy at the end of his book as the place where everything converges including theology is not clear. Is liturgy both the source and end of theology? This is because he presents liturgy always as a theological source for theology.

CHAPTER TWO
2. INTRODUCTION TO LITURGICAL THEOLOGY²⁰⁶

Profile of Alexander Schmemmann

Fr. Alexander Schmemmann was born in 1921 to Russian émigrés in Estonia. His family moved to France, where he received his university education. He married Juliana Osorguine in 1943 and was ordained a priest in the Orthodox Church in 1946. From 1946 to 1951, he taught Church History at St. Sergius, an Institute of Orthodox theology in Paris. He was invited to join the faculty of St. Vladimir's Seminary in New York City, where he taught from 1951 onwards. He was the dean of this faculty from 1962 till his death in 1983. He also served as adjunct professor at Columbia University, New York University, Union Theological Seminary and General Theological Seminary in New York. Much of his focus at St. Vladimir's was on liturgical theology, which emphasizes the liturgical tradition of the Church as a main expression of the Christian faith.

Fr. Alexander was accorded the title of *protopresbyter* (also called *archpriest* in some Orthodox jurisdictions), the highest honor that can be bestowed on a married Orthodox priest. He was an Orthodox observer during the Second Vatican Council of the Roman Catholic Church from 1962 to 1965. Besides “Introduction to Liturgical Theology”, some of his other works include: *Great Lent: Journey to Pascha* (1969); *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (1970); *Liturgy and Life: Christian Development Through Liturgical Experience* (1974), etc.²⁰⁷

Schmemmann divides his work into five chapters with an introduction. We shall summarize his work according to this order²⁰⁸:

1. The Task and Method of Liturgical Theology
2. The Problem of the Ordo
3. The Problem of the Origin of the Ordo: The First Centuries
4. The Problem of the Development of the Ordo: The Fourth and Fifth Centuries
5. The Byzantine Synthesis
6. Conclusion: An Evaluation of the *Typicon*
7. First evaluation of his work

²⁰⁶ Schmemmann, Alexander: Introduction to Liturgical Theology, trans. by Asheleigh Moorhouse, New York: Athens Printing Company ³1986.

²⁰⁷ Cf. http://www.orthodoxwiki.org/Alexander_Schmemmann [retrieved on 22.8.2010]

²⁰⁸ The headings are the same as they appear in the author's book.

2.1 THE TASK AND METHOD OF LITURGICAL THEOLOGY

Schememann maintains that the study of liturgics should be more than a mere study of liturgical ceremonies if it is to be equated with liturgical theology. This is because the study of liturgics, as it is understood in the West, concerns itself with the explanation of the rules (rubrics) governing worship and not with ‘what’ takes place in the worship services.²⁰⁹ In this way, the theological as well as the historical dimensions of worship were neglected. Orthodox theology, however, imitated this approach which was championed by later scholastic theology. But the consequence was obvious—a dichotomy between the liturgical tradition and Orthodox theology.²¹⁰

The need to restore this lost link necessitated “the revival of historical interest in worship”²¹¹. The Russian theology of the “historical school”, for example, made contributions in this regard but it “was only clearing the way for a genuine liturgical theology, or more accurately, for the growth of the liturgics into a genuinely theological discipline”²¹². But the liturgical movement, which cut across different Churches, repositioned worship in the Church’s life and as a result provided a good atmosphere for liturgical theology. It emphasized also “the need for a strictly theological analysis of the data of the liturgical experience and tradition of the Church”²¹³. However, the liturgical movement which started in the West “as a kind of ‘Orthodox’ movement in a non-Orthodox context [...]”²¹⁴, contributed in enriching Orthodox theology.

Schememann defines liturgical theology as “the elucidation of the meaning of worship”²¹⁵. It is more than an explanation of ‘how’ the worship is done. It has more to do with theological explanation of worship. As a theological enterprise, liturgical theology is occupied with the task of “giving theological basis to the explanation of worship and the whole liturgical tradition of the Church”²¹⁶. It is unfortunate that in an attempt to give this explanation scholastic theology neglected the liturgical tradition of the Church which is supposed to be “one of the sources” theology must use in order to “expound fully the faith and life of the Church”²¹⁷. However, the early Church was not

²⁰⁹ Cf. Schememann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 9.

²¹⁰ Cf. Schememann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* 10.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 12.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 15.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 16.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 17.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.

in doubt about the meaning of the “principle *lex orandi lex est credendi* (sic) [...]”²¹⁸ and as such theology must recognize the science of liturgics as a theological science.²¹⁹

Schememann stresses that no theological science can exhaust the one truth preserved by the Church, because each one has a way of explaining it²²⁰. If liturgical theology is to achieve its task, it has to be an independent discipline and no longer a part of dogmatic theology. This will enable it to focus fully on its subject which is “the liturgical tradition of the Church”²²¹. Liturgical theology requires also its own method in order to carry out its task. This involves “a historical study of the worship”²²² in order to find out its structures and their developments. This is to be followed by “a theological synthesis” of the data, i.e. “the elucidation of the rule of prayer as the rule of faith [...]”²²³

Schememann suggests “a general plan” which should not be regarded as the only one possible for liturgical theology but can be useful for the exposition he intends to make concerning the problem of the Ordo.²²⁴ It has to begin with an introductory part which will focus on the fundamental structure of the Church’s liturgical life, i.e. the Ordo. The rest will go in this order: the exposition of (1) the Eucharist, (2) the sacraments of entrance: Baptism and Chrismation (confirmation in the West), (3) the liturgy of the time and (4) the liturgy of sanctification of life.²²⁵ However, the plan does not intend to divide worship into parts but to show how it can be treated in detail without leaving any part untouched.

Moreover, Schememann describes the “liturgical situation” of contemporary Orthodoxy as “a profound liturgical crisis”²²⁶. This is borne out of the fact that worship has been conceived as an end in itself and no longer taken as the expression of the Church. This runs contrary to the mind of Christ who established the Church not as a “cultic society” but rather as “the way of salvation, as the new life of re-created mankind”²²⁷. Schememann maintains that the main aim of his book is to find out the reasons behind this “metamorphosis” in the understanding of worship. Liturgical theology will help in

²¹⁸ Ibid., 18.

²¹⁹ Cf. Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 18.

²²⁰ Cf. Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 18.

²²¹ Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 19.

²²² Ibid., 20.

²²³ Ibid., 21.

²²⁴ Ibid., 25.

²²⁵ Cf. Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 25- 26.

²²⁶ Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 27.

²²⁷ Ibid., 29.

this regard by reconsidering “the Church’s everlasting ‘rule of prayer’, and to hear and understand in it the ‘rule of faith’”²²⁸.

2.2 THE PROBLEM OF THE ORDO

Schememann opines that Orthodox worship has rules. It does not happen on the spur of the moment. It is the Ordo that regulates it and these rules “are set forth in the *Typicon*²²⁹ and various other books of rites and ceremonies. Thus, to know the Ordo is to know the content of *Typicon* and its ‘rubrics’; to fulfill the Ordo is to observe its prescriptions in liturgical practice”²³⁰.

Schememann maintains that the problem of the Ordo is multidimensional. In the first place, it is difficult to determine the “exact scope of the Ordo” because most of the liturgical rules are not taken from the “written Ordo, the *Typicon*”²³¹. Secondly, the content of Ordo posits some problems, because there is lack of correspondence between the rules and the liturgical practice²³². The reasons for these problems are not far-fetched because the two Ordos (Jerusalem and Studite) which the Orthodox Church uses were products of monastic worship. This makes it difficult for some rules to be carried out in full in an area other than their original contexts.²³³ All this contributed to the replacement of the “inner logic” of Ordo with “alien logic”²³⁴.

But the Ordo is not just a set of rules. It contains the meaning of the Church’s worship. That is to say that the study of *lex orandi* of the Church is the same as the study of Ordo. It is the task of liturgical theology to identify “that element of the *Typicon* which is presupposed by its whole content, rather than contained by it, in short, its general ‘philosophy’”²³⁵. Therefore, to discover the meaning which the Ordo manifests, many questions need to be asked: (1) what do the “rubrics” presuppose, (2) what constitutes the origin of the Ordo, and (3) what is the theological meaning of the Ordo?²³⁶

In as much as the fact that the Ordo is problematic, one thing appears to be worthy of note, i.e. its connection with the Eucharist (as well as other sacraments related to it) and the liturgy of time.²³⁷ These two elements “do not simply ‘co-exist’” but “are connected

²²⁸ Ibid., 32.

²²⁹ It is a book that contains regulations concerning the order of divine services in the Orthodox Church.

²³⁰ Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 33.

²³¹ Ibid., 34.

²³² Cf. Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 34.

²³³ Cf. Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 35.

²³⁴ Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 37.

²³⁵ Ibid., 39.

²³⁶ Cf. Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 40.

²³⁷ Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 41.

in such a way that this connection constitutes the Ordo in its general and basic form”²³⁸. Their connection could be explained in terms of “their relatedness and their differentiation”²³⁹ to time. Both of them take place in time, but the celebration of the Eucharist is not limited by time because of its nature, which manifests a reality independent of time. At the same time, hours or days could be assigned for its celebration in order to show that “it is a ‘correlative’ of time”²⁴⁰. On the other hand, the liturgy of time is defined by the time. For example, it is difficult for Matins or Vespers to be carried out without reference to time. Thus, the acknowledgement of this connection makes it imperative for the present Ordo to be subjected to a historical and theological study.²⁴¹

However, Schmemmann describes the dangers inherent in the modern liturgical tendencies, namely “Eucharistic revival”²⁴² and “liturgical movement”²⁴³. There is no doubt that they assist in revitalizing the liturgical life of the Church but they also constitute some problems. Neither the whole liturgy of the Church can be reduced to one sacrament (Eucharistic revival) nor the understanding of sacrament be expanded to encompass the whole of worship (liturgical movement).²⁴⁴ These tendencies can lead to “a serious distortion not only of the *lex orandi* of the Church, but also of her *lex credendi*, as it is expressed, inspired and nourished in worship”²⁴⁵.

So, in light of all the problems expressed above, Schmemmann asserts that the problem of Ordo constitutes “the basic problem of liturgical theology”²⁴⁶.

2.3 THE PROBLEM OF THE ORIGIN OF THE ORDO: THE FIRST CENTURIES

As we have indicated above, the basic structure of Ordo was based on the connection between the Eucharist and the liturgy of time. Schmemmann maintains that this connection was not simply invented by Christians but rather arose out of the Jewish and Judeo-Christian foundations of the Christian cult. The link between Christian and Jewish worship is a fact which every historian of Christian cult accepts.²⁴⁷ But this link or connection does not mean that the Christians simply substituted the old with the new

²³⁸ Ibid., 42.

²³⁹ Ibid., 43.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 44.

²⁴¹ Cf. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 45.

²⁴² Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 45.

²⁴³ Ibid., 46.

²⁴⁴ Cf. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 46.

²⁴⁵ Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 47.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 47.

²⁴⁷ Cf. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 53.

cult. It started as “a liturgical dualism”²⁴⁸. The old cult was not completely abandoned, but a new understanding arose because of the new cult. Thus, the cult in its newness is Jewish “both in form and spirit”²⁴⁹ and not a product of non-Jewish source. However, this new understanding of the cult is expressed in the awareness of the fact that the awaited Messiah has come and has inaugurated the messianic community. So, it is not a question of the New Testament replacing the Old Testament but rather the latter finding its fulfillment in the former.²⁵⁰ Thus, this liturgical dualism is not to be seen as a product of chance or circumstance but really “as the primary and fundamental expression of the Christian *lex orandi*”²⁵¹.

Furthermore, the liturgical dualism did not stop after the break with Judaism but was transformed into one Christian cult. The nature of the Eucharistic worship testifies to it. “The synaxis²⁵²—according to the generally accepted theory—preserved the structure of the synagogue assembly, in which the reading of Scripture and its explanation in preaching occupied the main position. The Eucharistic part preserved the form and order of the *Kiddush*^{253,254}. But the question remains: does this combination explain the whole *lex orandi* of the Church or could some parts of it have originated from other foreign sources? This is part of the problems of the Ordo and it demands some answers.”²⁵⁵

However, another area where the two worship services show different understandings concerns the “conception of events by which time is spiritually measured”²⁵⁶. Schmemmann stresses that Christians celebrate the coming of the Messiah and await his second coming while the Jews still await the first coming of the Messiah. The celebration of the Eucharist was for the early Christians a manifestation of the new Kingdom of God which Christ made possible in the Church. Thus, the eschatological dimension of the Eucharist does not entail a rejection of the world but rather its transformation. It is a participation in the New Kingdom yet to be realized fully at the end of time.²⁵⁷ Also, the difference between the Sabbath and the Lord’s Day is understood in this eschatological framework. The Lord’s Day does not simply mean for

²⁴⁸ Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 59.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 59.

²⁵⁰ Cf. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 59.

²⁵¹ Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 64.

²⁵² It means a gathering or an assembly for liturgical purposes in the Orthodox Church.

²⁵³ Jewish blessing or prayer said over a cup of wine on the eve of Sabbath or a festival.

²⁵⁴ Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 64.

²⁵⁵ Cf. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 68.

²⁵⁶ Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 71.

²⁵⁷ Cf. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 73f.

the Church “the substitution of one form of reckoning time for another, the replacement of Saturday by Sunday, but a break into the ‘New Aeon’, a participation in a time that is by nature totally different”²⁵⁸. Again, the Christian and Jewish hours of prayer have so many things in common. To maintain that they originated later in the development of the Church’s life is to deny this relationship.²⁵⁹ The liturgical tradition has always included the hours of prayers as part of Church’s life. In short, it sees the day as “a liturgical unit, in which definite hours and times—evening, morning and night—should be devoted to prayer; and not just to private prayer, but also to prayer in the Church”²⁶⁰. Furthermore, Schmemmann maintains that the preservation of the two great Jewish feasts—Passover and Pentecost—(even though they acquired new meanings) justifies the Jewish root of the Church’s year. “Christ dies as ‘our Passover’, while in the ‘last and great day’ of Pentecost, which had already acquired an eschatological character in late Judaism, the descent of the Holy Spirit was accomplished. This was the actualization of the Church, marking the beginning of the time of the Church”²⁶¹.

However, in light of the connections between the Jewish and Christian worship services Schmemmann opines that they could not have originated in any other era apart from the early Judeo-Christian era. That is to say that the Ordo preserves “the fundamental structure of the Church’s prayer [...] from the very beginning in her ‘rule of prayer’, as the real principle of this rule”²⁶².

2.4 THE PROBLEM OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORDO: THE FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES

Schmemmann opines that the conversion of the Roman Emperor Constantine and his influence on the life of the Church has been viewed both positively and negatively by some people. Positively, the Church became free, “universal”, no longer restricted to catacombs; and negatively the Church imbibed many cultures and traditions that were of pagan origin. But, it depends from which angle one judges. At the same time, it is necessary to accept the fact that in both ways, the divine and human elements were at work.²⁶³

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 80.

²⁵⁹ Cf. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 81.

²⁶⁰ Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 85.

²⁶¹ Ibid., 86.

²⁶² Ibid., 89.

²⁶³ Cf. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 91f.

There is no denying the fact that the Church developed rapidly since the time of Constantine. The stages of this development can be classified as follows: (1) the fourth and fifth centuries are seen as the period of growth and major transformation in the life of the Church; (2) the sixth to eight centuries are regarded as the period of gradual stability of the new cult; (3) the Byzantine worship acquired its form from the beginning of the ninth century.²⁶⁴

However, Schmemmann maintains that it would be unhistorical to assume that these stages of development have their absolute origin from the time of Constantine. The Church has always been living her liturgical life before the persecution started and therefore it can only be said that Constantine guaranteed her “a freedom of cult”²⁶⁵. Hence, what later developed in the liturgical life of the Church has been prepared by the earlier periods. For example, Christians did not start to build churches or develop the cult of the saints from the time of Constantine. There was really no “liturgical revolution” as one would think throughout these epochs. It is only that some historians have not taken seriously the influence of liturgical piety in the development of the Church’s liturgical life. The liturgical life of the Church is not only limited to texts, it includes the “coloring” of these texts which occurs in the minds of the people. It is “the psychological acceptance of the cult, its experience within the religious mind, its refraction within the consciousness of the believer”²⁶⁶. Therefore, to look for changes which occurred in these epochs, liturgical piety should be taken into consideration.

The early Christian piety consists in the reception of the Old Testament categories of temple, priesthood and sacrifice in a new way.²⁶⁷ The early Christians saw them as foundational to the work of Christ and as a result, the cult acquired for them an eschatological character. “This liturgical piety of the early Church, which can be called quite accurately eschatological and ecclesiological, [...] gave a completely unique character to the Christian worship of the first three centuries revealing the significance of its *lex orandi*”²⁶⁸.

But the influence of the religious piety of the Greco-Roman world exerted some influence on the Christian piety. The religious piety that existed then could be characterized as “mysteriological” (i.e. in the manner in which the cult is conceived). Schmemmann stresses that the argument by some people that the concept of mystery in

²⁶⁴ Cf. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 92-93.

²⁶⁵ Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 94.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 97.

²⁶⁷ Cf. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 100.

²⁶⁸ Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 103.

the Church originated from this relationship does not hold, because in his writings Paul has described the whole life of Christ as mystery. Again, the understanding of cult in this piety is quite different from Christian understanding. In the pagan mystery religion, the cult is an end in itself because through its repetition it guarantees efficacy and saving action.²⁶⁹ In the Church, the cult is a means and not an end. “Christianity was preached as a saving faith and not as a saving cult. In it the cult was not an object of faith but its result”²⁷⁰. When Christians gather to celebrate the Eucharist it is not as if the Eucharist repeats the saving events of Christ. It manifests them. It is a celebration of a historical fact and not a myth. This explains why the Church in this period fought against the “gnostic sects” because of “the danger of dissolving her *kerygma* in myth”²⁷¹. In spite of all this, it is necessary to outline how the new experience of worship affected the Church’s *lex orandi* in the fourth and fifth centuries.

After the “peace of Constantine”, the Church interacted freely with the pagan world of the time. It was only natural that Constantine and other new converts would bring their own liturgical piety into the Church. Since the Church’s mission was to save and not to destroy, she had no other option than to adapt this piety into her liturgical life. Schmemmann maintains that this “adaptation” should not be viewed as if it affected seriously the Church’s *lex orandi*. It “was not a metamorphosis or radical regeneration of the *lex orandi* which had existed from the beginning”²⁷².

But the effects of this “‘break-through’ of the mysteriological piety” become clear in the new understanding of the church building, which was conceived as an end in itself. The community of believers as a living temple was overshadowed by the church building. It became a sacred place in which the divine dwells and as a result it lost its eschatological character. The new experience of the cult contributed also to the designation of some places as sacred places. These places were venerated and memorial-churches were constructed especially “in the sacred centers of Christian history (The Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, the tomb of the Apostle Peter in the Vatican) [...]”²⁷³ The erection of big churches also led to the “external pomp and ceremony” in the liturgical celebration. This affected the Byzantine liturgy because simple churches could no longer fit in for this type of ceremony and as a result reconstructions had to be made in order to accommodate the changes.

²⁶⁹ Cf. Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 106.

²⁷⁰ Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 107.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 109-110.

²⁷² Ibid., 113.

²⁷³ Ibid., 117.

Furthermore, there was the “historicization” of worship. In this way, places connected with the life of Christ were regarded as sacred places. But this “remembrance” was not occasioned by myth or invention but has something to do with historical facts. This is where the Christian remembrance differs from the mystery religion.²⁷⁴ Also, worship was seen as “sanctification” just as the pagan mystery religion understands it. There is this idea of “profane” and “sacred” realities in the world which the pagan mystery presupposed. They believe in “their ontological incompatibility and immutability”²⁷⁵. The idea of eschatology was missing. Unfortunately, the Christian cult was influenced by this understanding. In the Byzantine liturgy, “the cult would become a sacred action in itself, a mystery performed for the sanctification of those participating”²⁷⁶. Other influences include: Only Priests were allowed to near the sanctuary. New converts were “initiated” into the Church. The idea of private communion replaced its ecclesial dimension, etc.

Schmemmann sees the role of monasticism as another major influence in the development of Ordo. It began as “a lay and indeed private movement”²⁷⁷ in opposition to the secular nature of the Church. The monks developed their own rule of prayer but did not bring any “liturgical revolution” as some historians claim. Evidence from monastic memorials shows that they accepted “the Church’s cult [...] as norm and ideal, even when it could not be fulfilled”²⁷⁸. They also laid emphasis on prayer and chanting of psalms which was a continuation of the early Christian tradition. What can be regarded as “new here was the idea of prayer as the sole content of life, as a task which required a separation from and renunciation of the world and its entire works”²⁷⁹. In this context, monasticism can be called an eschatological movement. So, the idea that they developed an Ordo does not arise, since their rule of life was private to them and never meant to be a universal norm. But it must be acknowledged that their withdrawal “from the church’s communities inevitably acquired new and special features and these features, in turn, gradually created a new ‘experience’ of worship, or in our own terminology, a new liturgical piety”²⁸⁰. This new liturgical piety can be seen, for example, in their Eucharistic practice in which the reception of the communion was subordinated to individual piety. The Eucharist “became an instrument of piety, an element of

²⁷⁴ Cf. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 124.

²⁷⁵ Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 126.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 127.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 133.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 135.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 136.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 141.

asceticism, an aid in the struggle against demons, etc”²⁸¹. For the liturgy of time, there was a “merging of the Church’s tradition with the private ascetical rule”. And “once included in the Ordo the monastic rule acquired a liturgical character and came to be thought of as an inviolable and integral part of worship [...]”²⁸²

However, Schmemmann maintains that these two examples (post-Constantine piety and the monastic piety) exercised great influence on the Church’s Ordo. But the fact remains that the Ordo did not change in its structure and content, rather their understanding and acceptance influenced it. In this case, there appeared different types of piety: monastic and the “‘churching’ of the masses”. Thus, there was need to harmonize these two approaches and it can be regarded as the “starting point for Byzantine synthesis and the Byzantine *Typicon*”²⁸³. Again, when monasticism shifted its base from the desert to the cities, it influenced the Church’s life in different ways. In the first place, it “became a kind of ideal society, a witness and summons to Christian maximalism”²⁸⁴. It played also a significant role in resolving great theological controversies during the councils. In short, the monastic influence on the Church’s Ordo was so enormous that “the monastic ordo of worship became the Church’s Ordo or, rather, its general and determining form”²⁸⁵.

2.5 THE BYZANTINE SYNTHESIS

We have said that there was need to synthesize these two lines of the development of Ordo: monastic and parish. In this way, the history of *Typicon* can be grouped into two stages. The first stage concerns the merging of both types of worship—monastic and parish—which can be said to stretch “from the fourth to the ninth centuries” and the second stage stretches “from the ninth century (i.e. when the Ordo can be regarded as completed) down to the present”²⁸⁶. Historians concentrate more on the second stage, because there are written evidences showing how the process went. But the first stage, which is actually the determining factor in the synthesis, does not provide written evidences. However, if we were to take out of the *Typicon* everything which was introduced after ninth century, three basic “strata” would remain, namely 1) the pre-Constantine Ordo, 2) the “Secular” or “Cathedral” Ordo and 3) the “Monastic” Ordo.

²⁸¹ Ibid., 142.

²⁸² Ibid., 143.

²⁸³ Ibid., 144.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 145.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 145.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 149.

But there are some difficulties in defining these layers individually because they were not simply “linked” to each other. They have taken an organic shape in the Ordo and this has “deprived both the historical and theological study of the Ordo of all perspective”²⁸⁷.

1. The First Stratum: The Pre-Constantine Ordo

Schememann focuses here on the basic structures of the Ordo which have connection with the Jewish worship in the synagogue: the three cycles of the liturgy of time and its relationship with the Eucharist. “In our present order for Vespers and Matins three basic elements, which in combination form their ordo, must be traced back to this original layer. These are: (a) the chanting of psalms, (b) eschatological material, and (c) hymns. These three elements stem in one way or another from the worship of the synagogue”²⁸⁸. Also, the weekly cycle of celebrating the Eucharist on the Lord’s Day could be traced to the early Church. The Eucharist was also celebrated on Saturday since the third century in the East.²⁸⁹ This invites for explanation about the liturgical character of Saturday, to which the Orthodox liturgical Ordo bears witness. It can only be said that the “dualism” continued till Saturday “began to pale after the ‘Lord’s Day’ was ‘naturalized’ and returned into the time of this world as a day of rest”²⁹⁰.

Fasting on Wednesday and Friday was appropriated by Christians from the ancient sacred calendar of the Essenes²⁹¹ and given a new meaning. It signified the betrayal and death of Christ respectively. With reference to Eucharist, fasting had in the pre-Constantine Ordo an eschatological character. It was related to worship and never viewed as a private matter.

As already indicated above, the annual cycle of Easter and Pentecost, which underlies the Church’s liturgy of time, has its origin in the Jewish worship. It is part of the pre-Constantine Ordo.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 150.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 151-152.

²⁸⁹ Cf. Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 154.

²⁹⁰ Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 156.

²⁹¹ Cf. Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 156.

2. The Second Stratum: The “Secular”, or “Cathedral”, Ordo

The two features in this secular or Cathedral Ordo which arose in the post-Constantine period “were first, the new and great importance acquired by chanting in worship; and second, the dramatic nature of its ritual”²⁹².

In the Orthodox Ordo, two models of chanting can be identified. One is related to worship and can be said to have a Jewish root. The other type is not related to worship but has acquired its own character.²⁹³ This, however, can be traced to the post-Constantine Ordo. This period witnessed also a complicated system of ritual worship in which “entrances and exits, processions etc. [...]”²⁹⁴, played important roles. Other features include an increased number of holy days, the cult of the saints and the new understanding of time.²⁹⁵ However, the new experience of worship in this second layer contributed to the complication of the Ordo.

3. The Third Stratum: The “Monastic” Ordo

We have spoken about the monastic influence in the formation of Ordo. Schmemmann mentions some features that make up this layer of the Ordo. In the first place, the “‘chanting of the Psalter in sequence’ was the basic change introduced by monasticism into the liturgical Ordo. What had been characteristic of the early Ordo was the *psalmus fixus*, a specific psalm related in its theme to the structure of worship—expressing some particular element of this structure”²⁹⁶. On the other hand, the entire Psalter is recited in the monastic ordo. Secondly, the eschatological understanding of fasting was replaced by asceticism. Thirdly, this understanding affected also the old Eucharistic piety. The reception of communion became an individual act for private sanctification. This separation of the Eucharist from its eschatological and ecclesial significance was “one of the most important and profound upheavals ever to occur in liturgical piety”²⁹⁷.

The Synthesis of “Secular” and “Monastic” Practice.

Schmemmann maintains that when monasticism found its way in the cities, it was not so easy to integrate its liturgical piety into the parish piety or vice versa. There arose a polarization of worship in which some people opted for unification while others did not.

²⁹² Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 164.

²⁹³ Cf. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 165f.

²⁹⁴ Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 170.

²⁹⁵ Cf. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 178f.

²⁹⁶ Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 194.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 201.

But this did not last long since it paved way for what is known as the “Byzantine synthesis”, i.e. the combination of the two pieties.²⁹⁸

Although we lack the adequate knowledge of how “this development and synthesis” took place, “it is not by chance that the Orthodox liturgical tradition has kept a memory of the two main sources of the *Typicon*, in the *Ordos* of the Palestine monastery of St. Sabas and the Studite monastery in Constantinople”²⁹⁹. These two centers served as collection points in which other syntheses were orderly arranged. The history of the synthesis can be divided into two. The first period took place in Palestine where the synthesis actually started and was completed by the ninth century.³⁰⁰ The second period which can be described as the time of “crystallization”³⁰¹ of the early synthesis took place in the aforementioned centers. In this way, there arose out of “the original synthesis (what we may call the early Jerusalem- Palestine Ordo) [...] two basic ‘recensions’. These are Jerusalem (in the narrow sense of the term) and the Studite *Ordos*”³⁰².

Even though we do not have reliable copies of the Jerusalem and Studite *Ordos*, one thing can be taken as certain. Their structural resemblance and the period in which their texts were completed reveal that they are different versions of the earliest Ordo, i.e. the original Byzantine synthesis.³⁰³ Therefore, other *Ordos* which came later added only new things like hymns, memorials etc, but in essence did not alter the structure of the original Ordo which was by then “complete and unchangeable”³⁰⁴.

2.6 CONCLUSION: AN EVALUATION OF THE TYPICON

Schememann maintains that the efforts made so far to discover the principle behind the Ordo have shown that some factors blurred the tradition of the Church’s *lex orandi*³⁰⁵. But in spite of these side-effects which the “secondary layer” caused, the Ordo “has remained organically connected with the theology of time which contained its original organizing principle”³⁰⁶.

In the first place, the celebration of the Eucharist remained in connection with the liturgy of time. It has remained central to the Church’s life and has preserved also its

²⁹⁸ Cf. Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 202.

²⁹⁹ Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 205-206.

³⁰⁰ Cf. Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 209.

³⁰¹ Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 209.

³⁰² Ibid., 210.

³⁰³ Cf. Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 211-212.

³⁰⁴ Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 212.

³⁰⁵ Cf. Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 213.

³⁰⁶ Schememann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 214.

eschatological dimension in which fasting is subordinated to it and not vice versa.³⁰⁷ Secondly, the liturgy of time expressed in daily cycle has remained part of the Ordo. The themes of creation, sin and fall etc, as reflected in the Vespers and Matins underlie the Church's theology of time.³⁰⁸ The prayer of the Church is a prayer for the renewal and sanctification of time. Thirdly, the Church's year has remained connected with the theology of time as it is made manifest in the Easter celebration. It is an eschatological feast which unites all feasts in the Church.³⁰⁹ In light of this, it can be said that the "Byzantine synthesis" has not only "preserved the eschatological theology of the time" but also "the ecclesiological significance of the Church's 'rule of prayer'"³¹⁰. Therefore, the "secondary layer" affected but did not completely distort the inner logic of the Ordo. It remains foundational to the Church's worship since it preserves as well as discloses her doctrine.

Finally, Schmemmann would prefer to "suspend rather than terminate our analysis of the problem of Ordo"³¹¹. This is because the present work is an introduction and as such what is treated in it "can find its application and 'justification' only in a liturgical theology in the true meaning of this term, i.e., in a theological apprehension of worship itself"³¹².

2.7. FIRST EVALUATION OF HIS WORK

It is necessary to evaluate some of the positions of Schmemmann based on the above summary. The rest will be done in chapter Five where we shall make a general comparison.

1. Schmemmann's definition of liturgical theology summarizes his quest to find out what is the philosophy behind the Ordo. His application of the historical and theological methods assisted him in discovering the problems of the Ordo, even though he acknowledged that the task was not simple.
2. That Schmemmann identified liturgical theology as a theological science which should have an independent method of operation is an achievement on his part.

³⁰⁷ Cf. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 215.

³⁰⁸ Cf. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 216-217.

³⁰⁹ Cf. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 218.

³¹⁰ Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 218.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, 220.

³¹² *Ibid.*, 220.

3. I find his appreciation of the Jewish worship as foundational to the Christian worship a step in the right direction.
4. However, I think that the task of liturgical theology should not be limited only to discovering the liturgical tradition, which I suppose does not present itself as a unified whole because of the variety characteristic of the early Church. I believe it should focus also on how to give theological basis to new “traditions” or “modes of worship” which might eventually become part of the liturgical tradition of the Church.
5. It is not clear whether “the early Church”, “the liturgical tradition” and “Holy Tradition” mean the same thing. He did not explain fully what he means when he said that the early Church confessed the principle *lex orandi lex est credendi* (sic).
6. I was impressed by his eschatological understanding of the Eucharist and the Lord’s Day which leads to viewing the world as one and redeemed instead of in categories of “profane” and “sacred”. But I am not sure whether the early Church’s view of redemption, which was also motivated by the immediate expectation of the Lord’s second coming, can still be understood in the same light today.
7. I find his treatment of religious piety as one of the factors that affect the *lex orandi* of the Church very interesting. It is a call for more attention to be paid to actual celebrations than only to texts.

CHAPTER THREE
3. CONTEXT AND TEXT. METHOD IN LITURGICAL THEOLOGY³¹³

Profile of Kevin W. Irwin

Kevin W. Irwin was born on the 1st of February 1946. He was ordained a Catholic priest of the archdiocese of New York in 1971. His education career took him to St. Joseph's Seminary (Dunwoodie) Yonkers, N.Y., where he got his Master of Divinity in 1971. He got his Master of Arts in Liturgical Studies in the University of Notre Dame in 1973, and at Ateneo of Sant' Anselmo in Rome, he got his S.T.D (Doctor of Sacred Theology) in 1977 with specialization in Sacramental Theology. He was named Monsignor with the rank of Prelate of Honor in December 1999.

In August, 2005, he was appointed Dean of the School of Theology and Religious Studies, at the Catholic University of America. His first term ended in August 2009 and the second term commenced in August 2009. He joined the faculty in August 1985 as ordinary Professor of Liturgy and Sacramental Theology. Kevin W. Irwin holds the Walter J. Schmitz Chair of Liturgical Studies since September 2000. Apart from "Context And Text. Method in Liturgical Theology", some of his other publications include: *American Lutherans and Roman Catholics in Dialogue on the Eucharist: A Methodological Critique and Proposal*. Rome: Editrice Anselmiana, 1979; *Lent: A Guide to the Eucharist and Hours*. New York: Pueblo Publishing Co., 1985. *Models of the Eucharist*. New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2005.etc.³¹⁴

Irwin divides his work into three parts with many chapters. We shall summarize his work according to these parts³¹⁵, namely:

Part 1—Relating Liturgy and Theology

Part 2—Context is Text: Theology of Liturgy

Part 3—Text Shapes Context: Liturgical Theology

First evaluation of his work

However, as we proceed with our presentation, it is important to bear in mind the three meanings which, according to Irwin, *liturgical theology* can have, namely, "(1) 'theology of liturgy' in the sense of a theological description of what occurs in the act of

³¹³ Irwin, Kevin W.: *Context And Text. Method in Liturgical Theology*, Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press 1994.

³¹⁴ Cf. <http://www.trs.cua.edu/res/docs/faculty-pages/irwin/irwin-CV.pdf> [retrieved on 13.08.2010].

³¹⁵ The headings are the same as they appear in the author's book.

worship, (2) ‘theology *drawn from* liturgy’, thus making liturgy a theological source along with other sources [...], and (3) (as an extension of ‘theology derived from the liturgy’) the moral and spiritual *implications* derived from engaging in liturgy”³¹⁶.

Part 1

3.1. RELATING LITURGY AND THEOLOGY

Irwin stresses that the aims of this part include: (1) to show the historical views regarding the interpretation of Prosper of Aquitaine’s phrase (*ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*)³¹⁷ in light of liturgical theology and (2) to present the method that will be employed in the whole presentation.

Irwin asserts that the phrase “the law of prayer grounds the law of belief” which is credited to Prosper of Aquitaine³¹⁸ seems to summarize “what had, in fact, already been an accepted premise of theological argument”³¹⁹. Some of the examples that justify this claim include Hippolytus’ *Apostolic Tradition* as well as the positions represented by Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian and Augustine. They used the elements of liturgy such as texts, ritual practices etc, to support their theological arguments.³²⁰

Now, Prosper’s phrase is part of his arguments against the error of semi-Pelagians who disputed the necessity of grace for salvation. In the compilation *Indiculus*, he cites liturgical texts, especially the traditional Good Friday intercessions as one of the examples in which the Church prays “for a variety of people who need the grace of God for a variety of reasons”³²¹. Irwin stresses that he classifies liturgical prayers as next in rank after the decrees of the Holy See and as such presents the liturgy as a theological source. Contextually, his phrase can be interpreted to mean that the celebration of the liturgy articulates the faith of the Church. In this way, it captures the patristic view of liturgy.³²²

The Fathers were not in doubt about the theological dimensions of liturgy. Irwin maintains that their views can be seen in their mystagogic catecheses which explain the sacraments as they are celebrated in the liturgy and their homilies which expound the theological meaning of the feasts and seasons. Also, their theological writings which dwell on different aspects of liturgical celebration emphasize the value of liturgy for

³¹⁶ Irwin, *Context And Text*, x.

³¹⁷ The abridged form reads: *lex orandi, lex credendi*.

³¹⁸ St. Prosper of Aquitaine (390 – 455) was a disciple of St. Augustine of Hippo.

³¹⁹ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 4.

³²⁰ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 4.

³²¹ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 5.

³²² Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 6.

theology.³²³ Thanks to the dynamic nature of the theological explanation of the liturgy in this period, Irwin opines that two things can be drawn from their approach. In the first place, “it is liturgy as *enacted rites* (and not only texts) that serves as the primary source for theology”³²⁴. Secondly, the theology of sacraments derived from this era is “rich and multifaceted”³²⁵. For example, such meanings like rebirth, illumination etc associated with the sacrament of initiation, owe their origin to liturgy.³²⁶

Moreover, with regard to the relationship between liturgy and theology in the medieval period, Irwin considers the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas who is “the representative author for this period [...]”³²⁷ Aquinas considered “liturgy as one of the Church’s *auctoritates* and not as a *locus theologicus* (this would mean a diminishment)”³²⁸. This is because the life and faith of the Church is manifested through the liturgy. Irwin sees the “assertion *sacramenta significando causant*”³²⁹ as a chief legacy of Thomas’ contribution to sacramental theology but observes that the elaborate descriptions, as was the case in the patristic period, waned during his time because of the disappearance of the adult baptism and its replacement with infant baptism.³³⁰ However, the theologians of the medieval period focused more on how the sacraments can be systematized and less on the theological explanation of the liturgical rites. Even though Aquinas understood the value of liturgy in his theological enterprise, Irwin opines that his commentators as well as the “later Thomists did something of an injustice to a careful, balanced and measured scholastic theology he produced”³³¹. Since then, “[l]iturgy continued to influence theology but more as rites performed *for* the people, than *by* and *with* the community”³³².

However, the relation of liturgy and theology took a new shape in the period of Reformation and Trent. Irwin stresses that a good analysis of what transpired in this era is very important because “theological reasons and concerns influence the way the liturgy was changed by both the Reformers and in the Catholic Church after Trent [...]”³³³ The situation calls for a guide, otherwise it could be undervalued. Irwin finds

³²³ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 6.

³²⁴ Irwin, Context And Text, 10.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

³²⁶ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 10.

³²⁷ Irwin, Context And Text, 10.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

³³⁰ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 14.

³³¹ Irwin, Context And Text, 15.

³³² *Ibid.*, 15.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 15.

Geoffrey Wainwright a good example of such a guide.³³⁴ Wainwright argues that the sanitization of liturgy which took place during the Reformation was occasioned by theological reasons. It was based on the fact that doctrinal control over liturgy took place in the early Church and as such it was not an invention of the Reformers. Irwin opines that Wainwright's argument especially in chapter eight of his book (*Doxology*)³³⁵ "is based on his working assumption that the couplet, *lex orandi, lex credendi* can be and has been interpreted to mean that liturgy can influence theology and that theology can influence liturgy"³³⁶. He acknowledges that Wainwright's assumption could also point at something very important to us. That is to say that "the relationship of the *lex orandi* to the *lex credendi* is more continuous and dialectical than is sometimes assumed"³³⁷.

On the other hand, Irwin stresses that the liturgical reform carried out initially by Trent, was more on definite abuses. It was only later that "they called for the (Roman) revision of two key books: the Missal and the Breviary"³³⁸. But the consequences are obvious because the separation which "developed between the liturgy and sacramental theology"³³⁹ owes its existence to this period. That means that dogmatic theology included sacramental theology in its manuals and "paid little attention to the rites themselves as a theological source"³⁴⁰. Even the theological manuals that came up after Trent were apologetic in nature and this did not help matters in terms of relating liturgy and theology. The aim, no doubt, was to defend the Catholic doctrine but it was expected, Irwin maintains, that one would have gone beyond using liturgical texts as "proofs"³⁴¹. In spite of all this, there was no clear separation between liturgy and theology in this period but much weight was "given to how correct theology influenced the reform of the Western liturgy"³⁴².

Moreover, the fact that the condition of liturgy was not satisfactory after Trent is clear from the "historical study of the evolution of rites and their theological interpretation"³⁴³ undertaken by modern theologians. Irwin opines that theologians like Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875), Lambert Beauduin (1873-1960), Romano Guardini

³³⁴ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 15.

³³⁵ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 37.

³³⁶ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 15-16.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 18.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 18.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 18.

(1885-1968), Odo Casel (1886-1948) and Anton Baumstark (1873-1960) contributed with their different works to greater understanding of the theological dimensions of the liturgy.³⁴⁴ Also some systematic theologians like Yves Congar and Edward Schillebeeckx are (were)³⁴⁵ not in doubt about the value of liturgy for theology.³⁴⁶ Furthermore, Irwin maintains that a review of papal pronouncements since Trent shows that the issue of *lex orandi* was not lacking. For example, both Pope Sixtus V in setting up the congregation of Rites (*Immensa aeterni* -1587) and Pope Pius IX in promulgating the dogma of Immaculate Conception (*Ineffabilis Deus* - 1854) maintained that *lex orandi* grounds *lex credendi*.³⁴⁷ However, it was by Pius XII that a change occurred. In his encyclical *Mediator Dei*, especially in paragraphs 45 and 47, he used the phrases “*lex orandi, lex credendi*” as well as “*lex credendi legem statuat supplicandi*” respectively in a way that avoids giving ultimate priority to *lex orandi*.³⁴⁸ It is a position which some commentators judged positively because it opposed the modernists’³⁴⁹ application of the phrase.³⁵⁰

Irwin opines that the liturgical reform of the Vatican II Constitution on Sacred Liturgy which recommends active participation in the liturgy (par. 14), provides also the theological dimensions of liturgy, especially in paragraphs 7 and 10. Here, the liturgy is not only presented as the action of Christ but also as the “summit” and “fountain-head” of the Church’s life.³⁵¹ Other documents of the Council which emphasize the theological value of liturgy include the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (i.e. how the sacraments help in building up the Church, par 7) and the Decree on Ecumenism (i.e. the place of the Eucharist in constituting the unity of the Church, par 2).³⁵² Moreover, Irwin stresses that some of the addresses of Paul VI from 1966-1970 (i.e. for the implementation of liturgy according to the recommendations of Vatican II), tried to sustain the balance or equation between *lex orandi* and *lex credendi*.³⁵³ The “pope’s statements both sustain the value of the *lex orandi* and emphasize how correct theology should be preserved. If ‘orthodoxy’ can and should mean both ‘right praise’ of God and

³⁴⁴ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 19f.

³⁴⁵ Both theologians died after Irwin published his work in 1994 (Yves Congar 1904-1995; Edward Schillebeeckx 1914-2009).

³⁴⁶ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 24f.

³⁴⁷ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 27.

³⁴⁸ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 27.

³⁴⁹ Some modernists used the phrase to ridicule the liturgy of the Church.

³⁵⁰ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 28.

³⁵¹ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 28f.

³⁵² Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 29.

³⁵³ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 30.

‘right belief’ in God, then the pope’s statements may be said to sustain both meanings”³⁵⁴.

However, from the above historical survey, Irwin maintains that one can notice many shades of meaning which the interpretation of Prosper of Aquitaine’s phrase can have for liturgical theology. It can mean either a theological description of what occurs in the liturgy or the use of liturgy as a theological source or even both meanings.³⁵⁵ But the disadvantage of this distinction is that it can lead to a separation of two things that are intimately connected as one reality.³⁵⁶ Another observation is the overemphasis placed on the liturgical texts by some of the authors, thereby separating them from their actual use in the celebration. In the course of the presentation, Irwin will argue that liturgy is best understood as celebrated rites and not only as texts. He will also explain “how to develop liturgical theology based on the multifaceted *event* called liturgy”³⁵⁷.

Now, before the introduction of the method, Irwin will make some definitions and distinctions about liturgy in general (i.e. to introduce a working definition for *liturgy* and *liturgical theology*).

Irwin maintains that it is in the liturgy that the Church encounters God. This is done through the articulation of its belief in words and actions, which are sometimes figurative or metaphorical in nature. In this way, the liturgy provides the environment not only for the Church to speak to God but also to make pronouncements about Him. Thus, “liturgy is an *act of theology* [...]”³⁵⁸. Also, “[l]iturgy is *orthodoxia prima* in the sense that it is the first order (of) doxological address to and about God”³⁵⁹. That means that engaging in the liturgy involves direct address to God and encounter with Him and as such it is “*primary theology*”. On the other hand, reflecting on the act of liturgy as primary theology is “[s]econdary theology”. Hence, in light of our presentation, Irwin stresses that “liturgical theology is secondary theology”³⁶⁰. However, in addition to the distinctions made by Gerard Lukken and David Power on the *theologia prima* (as an act of liturgy) and *theologia secunda* (as systematic reflection on the liturgy)³⁶¹, Irwin introduces “*theologia tertia*” in order to stress the relationship between the liturgy and

³⁵⁴ Irwin, Context And Text, 31.

³⁵⁵ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 31.

³⁵⁶ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 31.

³⁵⁷ Irwin, Context And Text, 32.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., 44.

³⁵⁹ Ibid., 44-45.

³⁶⁰ Ibid., 45.

³⁶¹ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 45f.

the Christian life. Thus, it brings out what is inherent in “*lex orandi, lex credendi* in that the rule of prayer reflects both the rule of belief and the rule of right living”³⁶².

Irwin will now elaborate on the distinctions made above³⁶³ in which “‘liturgical theology’ can mean both a theology of liturgy and theology drawn from liturgy, with the latter including moral and spiritual theology”³⁶⁴.

1. *Theology of Liturgy.* This is a description of what occurs in the liturgy as a manifestation of the saving works of Christ. Irwin maintains that there are some theological principles that buttress this understanding of liturgy. In the first place, the celebration of liturgy recalls the saving actions of Christ and makes them present for the contemporary believers. Therefore, “liturgy is essentially *anamnetic* [...]”³⁶⁵ Secondly, without the action of the Holy Spirit the celebration of the liturgy would be impossible. It is the Holy Spirit that transforms not only the gifts into the Body and Blood of Christ but also the worshiping community in order to make them Christ-like. Thus, “liturgy is essentially *epicletic* [...]”³⁶⁶ Thirdly, the Church at worship is a Church at prayer. Liturgy is not a private matter but an ecclesial action in which the community of believers actualize the saving actions of Christ. Therefore, “liturgy is essentially *ecclesiological*”³⁶⁷. However, Irwin holds that the experience of liturgy is different from the meditation on the paschal mystery. “The former enacts these saving events; the latter derives from them, and, in comparison, only reflects on them”³⁶⁸.

2. *Theology drawn from Liturgy.* Liturgy involves ritual actions and words which are rich in meaning. They can function as materials from which systematic theology can be developed.³⁶⁹ Irwin stresses that the effort should not be limited only to mining the liturgy but also ensuring that systematic theology is consistently connected to the liturgy.³⁷⁰ Again, the language of liturgy is better understood when it is viewed as symbolic language aimed at divine encounter than as technical language that explains

³⁶² Irwin, *Context And Text*, 46.

³⁶³ We noted above three meanings which *liturgical theology* can have.

³⁶⁴ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 46.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 47.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 48.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 48.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 49-50.

³⁶⁹ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 50.

³⁷⁰ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 51.

and prescribes.³⁷¹ This will pave way, according to Irwin, to an effective use of the materials of liturgy for systematic theology.

3. *Doxological Theology*. Irwin conceives it as a theology that combines “right praise” and “correct belief”³⁷² in the theological enterprise (understood as liturgical theology). In this way, theology has a scientific cast (i.e. systematic in nature) and also is grounded in liturgy (i.e. expressive of faith).³⁷³ The theologian is neither abstract nor unreflective of what occurs in the liturgy. The experience of liturgy helps to deepen the faith which the believer brings to it. Irwin will apply this understanding of theology later in our discussion to ecumenism.

Having explained these terms, Irwin will now point out why a new method is needed for liturgical theology.

Method

Irwin gives two reasons (i.e. in light of the observations made above concerning the approach of some authors) why liturgical theology requires a new method, namely (1) Liturgy is now considered more as a concrete event and not limited to texts alone. (2) The reforms carried out by the Roman Catholic Church and other Christian Churches (marked by options and variety) provide avenues for more understanding of liturgy in its actual celebration.³⁷⁴ Thus, for the development of liturgical theology, Irwin maintains that the methodological approach will centre primarily on the reformed rites of Vatican II. To be considered include: (1) the correspondence of the actual celebration with the reformed rites themselves and (2) the possibility of developing liturgical theology from different rites with variety of settings.³⁷⁵

Irwin intends to approach his presentation as follows: In part two, (“Context is Text: Theology of Liturgy”), he will argue that “the constitutive elements of the liturgy—Word, symbol, euchology, liturgical arts [...] are only adequately understood and interpreted theologically in relation to their experienced context”³⁷⁶. Therefore “the first part of our thesis is that *liturgical context is text*, in the sense that *context* provides the

³⁷¹ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 51.

³⁷² Irwin, Context And Text, 52.

³⁷³ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 52.

³⁷⁴ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 53.

³⁷⁵ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 53.

³⁷⁶ Irwin, Context And Text, 54.

source—*text*—for developing liturgical theology”³⁷⁷. Now, what does *context* mean in this sense? Irwin maintains that it means (a) the study of the historical development of a given rite in order to determine the liturgical and theological meaning it acquired originally; (b) the examination of the present reformed rites to see whether the forms of celebrations intended in the published rites actually correspond to the present celebration; (c) the “critical function of liturgical theology”: This is an evaluation of the present reformed rites in the light of the contemporary cultural and theological context of liturgical celebration.³⁷⁸ However, Irwin stresses that this understanding of *context* implies a shift from liturgical texts such as pontificals, sacramentaries etc. to actual explanation of these sources as they are used in the liturgical celebration.³⁷⁹ Thus, *lex agendi* (understood as enacted rites as well as theological source) will be the focus for *lex orandi, lex credendi*.³⁸⁰ So, when *context* is understood in the three aforementioned meanings, “then *context* becomes the *text* in the sense of the primary source for developing liturgical theology”³⁸¹.

In part three (“Text Shapes Context: Liturgical Theology”), Irwin will focus on some ways in which “the act of liturgy can influence the shape of theology, ecumenical dialogue and living moral, spiritual life [...]”³⁸² Also, the contributions of liturgical theology to theology and ecumenical dialogue will be laid out. Again, Irwin will argue that *theologia tertia* (spiritual and ethical sides of liturgy) will require that *lex orandi, lex credendi* yield a third part which is *lex vivendi* (i.e., unity of liturgy and Christian life).³⁸³ Hence, “[i]f the first part of our thesis concerning the theology of liturgy is *context is text*, then the second part of our thesis on theology and spirituality derived from liturgy is *text shapes context*. [...]”³⁸⁴ That is to say that engaging in liturgy has its implications and as such there is “an *ongoing dialectical relationship* between *text* and *context*. Just as *context* influences how the *text* of liturgy is interpreted, the other side of the equation concerns how that data we call *text* necessarily influences the Church’s theology, spirituality and life—*context*”³⁸⁵.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 54.

³⁷⁸ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 54-55.

³⁷⁹ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 55.

³⁸⁰ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 55.

³⁸¹ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 55.

³⁸² *Ibid.*, 55.

³⁸³ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 55f.

³⁸⁴ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 56.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 56.

Now, Irwin will analyze the three constituent elements of liturgical context.

1. *Historical Evolution of Rites*. Irwin maintains that liturgical rites have a history and its study will take into consideration the theological interpretations they have acquired in their years of development. With regard to the thesis *context is text*, he points out the need to raise some questions concerning the historical data of this study, namely: (1) how did some elements of liturgy (texts, music, symbols etc) originate and who made use of them? This is to ascertain how the participants took part in the celebration; (2) what sources (biblical or otherwise) were used to create the liturgical rites and how did the different elements of the rites (scriptural proclamation, acclamation, prayer texts, etc) relate to each other?³⁸⁶; (3) did the rites also develop out of liturgical tradition which is regarded as normative for any evolution of rites?³⁸⁷ However, “the historical and theological study of the liturgy”³⁸⁸, understood as liturgical tradition, helps to situate the rites (liturgy) within the context of their actual celebration. Irwin stresses that the present reformed liturgy is a product of liturgical tradition. Tradition, as understood here, is not “something in the past but the present shaped by past experience”³⁸⁹. In this way, the study of the liturgical history (tradition) provides us the main but not the only aspect of the liturgical context.³⁹⁰

2. *Contemporary Liturgical Reform*. The present reformed liturgy advocates for active participation in the liturgical celebration. In light of the thesis *context is text*, Irwin maintains that it is necessary to examine whether the celebrated liturgy actually promotes active participation as well as whether these celebrations correspond “to the reformed rites themselves”³⁹¹. In order to deal with the differences in the interpretation of the reformed liturgy, Irwin applies “a hermeneutic of *dynamic dialectic*”³⁹². It means that the interpretation of any element of liturgy should not be done in isolation. It must incorporate other elements of celebration which constitute its meaning. For example, one interprets the sign of peace given at the Eucharistic celebration differently from the one at a reconciliation service.³⁹³ Also, the contexts of celebration affect the way the texts are understood in the liturgy. For instance, liturgical texts proclaimed in the

³⁸⁶ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 58f.

³⁸⁷ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 60.

³⁸⁸ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 60.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 62.

³⁹⁰ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 62.

³⁹¹ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 62.

³⁹² *Ibid.*, 62.

³⁹³ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 63.

cathedral and in the parish churches are understood differently because of their physical setting.

However, Irwin stresses that the reformed rites “function as normative for and a critique of inadequate *contexts* for contemporary liturgical celebration”³⁹⁴. Thus, the readings are not to be chosen arbitrarily but to be taken from the Lectionary. Also, the interpretation of the texts of the reading is not to be done at one’s whim and caprice. It should reflect the feast and the season of the actual celebration. Thus, Irwin holds that when one takes the present reformed liturgy as normative, then it will be good to ask whether the present celebration reflects the reform or not? Also, to what extent has one utilized the variety of readings in the Lectionary? Irwin gives one example (among many that need evaluation) as the constant use of Mt 28: 18-20 for baptism even though the Lectionary provides many options.³⁹⁵ So, in light of the thesis *context is text*, two points stand out, to wit: (1) each element of the liturgy is to be interpreted in relation to other components and (2) the present reformed liturgy serves as normative for the current liturgical celebration.³⁹⁶

3. *Liturgical Adaptation and Critical Liturgical Theology*. Irwin stresses that the present reformed liturgy provides the basis for liturgical adaptations thanks to its nature which is marked by variety and options. However, the historical study of liturgy also reveals different liturgical forms (contexts) on whose basis the indigenization of liturgy could be worked out. One can also argue that the present reformed liturgy is based on the liturgical tradition (variety of ritual forms).³⁹⁷ Irwin maintains that for the present exposition, “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 indigenization agenda”³⁹⁸. Here, “critical liturgical theology” evaluates the present reformed rites in order to ascertain how it can be improved. This will involve the utilization of “recent advances in anthropology, ecclesiology, Christology, pneumatology, Trinity, and eschatology”³⁹⁹. In other words, one can use the knowledge of liturgical tradition to critique the present reform on the

³⁹⁴ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 64.

³⁹⁵ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 67.

³⁹⁶ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 67.

³⁹⁷ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 69.

³⁹⁸ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 69.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 70.

role of the Holy Spirit in the liturgy which is still inadequate.⁴⁰⁰ Also, the present Eucharistic prayers have insufficient theology of creation as well as restricted use of acclamations.⁴⁰¹

Moreover, the “critical liturgical theology” raises questions on the rite of ordination for non-diocesan clergy, namely: (1) who should call to ordination?⁴⁰² For the diocesan priest, it is the people of God (the Church) that call for ordination, but for a Benedictine monk it is the abbot; (2) to whom is the promise of obedience directed – to the local bishop or to the superior? Thus, this reality calls for the revision of the rite which should incorporate “the theological reality of the distinctions among the ordained [...]”⁴⁰³. However, the work of indigenization is an ongoing task and as a result the determination of different contexts (cultural and ecclesial) is dependent on it. Irwin opines that the thesis “*context is text* is necessarily open ended in this third part [...]”⁴⁰⁴. Moreover, the effort in general (i.e. in Part- I) has been to show “how liturgical theology can be drawn from liturgy as an event and as a theological act”⁴⁰⁵.

Part 2

3.2. CONTEXT IS TEXT: THEOLOGY OF LITURGY [i.e. a theological description of what occurs in the act of liturgy]

As already stated, Irwin maintains that the elements of liturgy such as **Word, symbol, euchology** and **liturgical arts** are theologically interpreted and understood in relation to their experienced context. It is a “shift from a philological-theological study of liturgical texts to discussing these sources in light of their celebration”⁴⁰⁶.

Word— Irwin stresses that the event of liturgy helps in the interpretation and understanding of the Scriptures in different ways. In the first place, the dialogical nature of the proclaimed Word presupposes a speaker (God) and a hearer (assembly). It establishes a faith relationship between God and His people and enables them to experience the saving works of God anew. The hearing of the Word and the response to it creates the assembly (Church). This explains why the exercise of personal devotion based on the Scriptures (*lectio divina*) is not to be equated with the event of the

⁴⁰⁰ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 70.

⁴⁰¹ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 71.

⁴⁰² Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 72f.

⁴⁰³ Irwin, Context And Text, 73.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., 73.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., 74.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., 55.

proclaimed Word.⁴⁰⁷ Secondly, the event of liturgy enables the Church to respond theologically to the proclaimed Word through intercessions, acclamations etc. The assignment of readings in the Lectionary for different feasts and seasons shows that the texts are taken out of their original contexts and meant to serve new ones. Thus, liturgy cannot happen twice because “the circumstances of culture, time and place in which the liturgy takes place are never repeated”⁴⁰⁸. Furthermore, the liturgical homily helps to recontextualize certain texts (e.g. Isaiah 42: 1-7 and related parts which originally referred to the people of Israel) by interpreting them as Christological texts. This helps to bring out the richness of these texts in the different contexts in which they are meant to serve. Also, the prayer texts (euchology, to be treated below) disclose how the liturgy interprets and uses the Scriptures. Thirdly, the theological value of the proclaimed Word is evident in the way it makes the saving events that took place in history such as Exodus and Paschal mystery “transtemporal and metahistorical”⁴⁰⁹. They are no longer taken as events of the past since they affect the concrete situation or circumstances of the believers. Also, liturgy enables the believer through the proclaimed Word to experience provisionally the glory of God. The transfiguration of Christ (extended through the liturgy) was a special occasion for the apostles Peter, James and John to witness the glory of Christ.⁴¹⁰ Moreover, the proclaimed Word of God invites the believers also to attentive listening and obedience. Irwin opines that it is not by accident that one of the psalms (Ps 94) that begin the liturgy of hours invites the believers not to harden their hearts.⁴¹¹ Thus, in light of the thesis *context is text*, Irwin maintains that “the most appropriate theological setting for the appreciation and interpretation of the Scriptures is the act of liturgical proclamation”⁴¹².

Symbol— Irwin opines that the act of liturgy provides the adequate context for the application and interpretation of the symbols. Liturgy recognizes and appreciates creation as a sacrament (sign) that mediates the knowledge and love of God. The movements of the cosmos, for example, establish the times for the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours as well as some feasts of the Church’s calendar.⁴¹³ The theology of the Liturgy of Hours, also, discloses that creation serves as incentive for liturgical

⁴⁰⁷ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 90.

⁴⁰⁸ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 96-97.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 111.

⁴¹⁰ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 114.

⁴¹¹ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 116f.

⁴¹² Irwin, *Context And Text*, 118.

⁴¹³ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 133.

celebration. It provides the *context* (i.e. the understanding of God as creator and maker of all things) and *text* (hymns and prayer texts that praise the handwork of God) for celebration.⁴¹⁴ Now, Irwin maintains that “symbolic engagement”⁴¹⁵ in liturgy presupposes the interaction of symbols (e.g. some elements of creation, water, oil etc, and products of human hands— bread and wine) and prayer texts. However, symbols and symbolic gestures (movement, touching, eating and drinking etc) show different shades of meaning by their nature. The text of blessing prayers which accompany them helps to articulate these meanings in light of salvation history.⁴¹⁶ The symbolic use of water, for example, can evoke a positive meaning (thirst quenching, bathing etc.) or a negative meaning (causing death by drowning, flooding etc.), but it acquires in baptism a sacramental and theological meaning through the prayer text that accompanies it.⁴¹⁷ Irwin opines that a liturgical theology of baptism can be drawn from the symbolic use of water and the theological meaning of the baptism as reflected in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. The point here is that the text (Scripture and blessing prayer) as well as the symbolic use of water (preferably by immersion) “discloses part of the *context* that provides the *text* from which to develop the theology of liturgy of a given rite and the theology of a given symbol”⁴¹⁸. However, the use of symbols in the liturgy should encourage “active participation” of the worshipping community. The objectification of the Eucharistic species for the sole purpose of highlighting the “real presence” downplays the centrality of the Eucharistic banquet in which the believers should take part.⁴¹⁹

Furthermore, Irwin stresses that the contextual use of light (sun/moon and candle light) can also help “towards developing a liturgical theology of light as symbol”⁴²⁰. The season of winter, especially in the northern hemisphere, provides the context for the appreciation of “light” in Advent as a source of hope.⁴²¹ Also, the symbolic use of candle light during the feast of the Presentation of the Lord and the Easter Vigil shows its connection with Christ, who is the true light of the world.⁴²² The use of bread and wine in the Eucharistic celebration shows that human manufacture of these elements and the cosmic cycle of planting and harvesting form part of the context for their use in

⁴¹⁴ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 135f.

⁴¹⁵ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 142.

⁴¹⁶ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 143.

⁴¹⁷ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 144f.

⁴¹⁸ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 146.

⁴¹⁹ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 145.

⁴²⁰ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 151.

⁴²¹ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 152.

⁴²² Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 153.

liturgy. Both wheat and grapes ‘die’ in order to become bread and wine—suitable “symbols for the commemoration of the death and resurrection of Christ in the Eucharistic meal”⁴²³.

Irwin offers some critiques/ observations on the present reformed liturgy’s use of creation and symbol in the liturgical event. They include: (1) the reception of communion especially in one species (bread) does not speak well of the symbolic engagement of the Eucharistic rites;⁴²⁴ (2) the praise of God for creation is reflected only in the 4th Eucharistic prayer. The need for “more emphasis on the symbolism of creation and the use of manufactured goods would be welcomed in new Eucharistic prayer texts”⁴²⁵; (3) the provision for the use of oil other than olive oil in the revised rite is praiseworthy but the reduction of the number of anointings from five to two raises questions about the sacramental symbolism of the anointing;⁴²⁶ (4) the prayer texts (euchology) used for the celebration of liturgical feasts and seasons are to be adapted to the southern hemisphere since its seasons sometimes differ from northern hemisphere.⁴²⁷ However, Irwin maintains that the correction of these and other inadequacies will improve “the use of creation and symbolic engagement in liturgy”⁴²⁸.

Euchology⁴²⁹— We have already hinted to the use of prayer texts in the treatment of Word and Symbol. Irwin maintains that euchological texts (sacramentaries, rituals and pontificals) contain scriptural images or allusions and give direction and meaning to the symbols as they are used in liturgy.⁴³⁰ They are basically “poetic, metaphorical and image-filled”⁴³¹ and as such it requires that their “*proper genre*”⁴³² be respected. Two examples of such prayer texts include the Eucharistic prayer and the variable presidential prayers. The Eucharistic prayer reflects in its origins and structures the features of the Jewish *berakah*⁴³³ and *todah*⁴³⁴ traditions.⁴³⁵ It articulates the saving work of God that was wrought through Jesus Christ and thanks God for giving man the

⁴²³ Irwin, Context And Text, 158.

⁴²⁴ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 160.

⁴²⁵ Irwin, Context And Text, 161.

⁴²⁶ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 161.

⁴²⁷ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 162.

⁴²⁸ Irwin, Context And Text, 165.

⁴²⁹ It derives from Greek- εὐχολόγιον- εὐχή meaning “prayer” and λόγος meaning “discourse about”.

⁴³⁰ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 176.

⁴³¹ Irwin, Context And Text, 177.

⁴³² Ibid., 176.

⁴³³ It means blessing which is usually said at a ceremony or activity.

⁴³⁴ It means simply “thanksgiving” in Hebrew.

⁴³⁵ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 179.

privilege of sharing in it. The contents of this prayer include “thanksgiving, acclamation, epiclesis, institution narrative, anamnesis, offering, intercessions, and final doxology”⁴³⁶. The variable presidential prayers, though less theological than the Eucharistic prayer, articulate also the redemptive work of Christ as it is celebrated in the liturgy. The collect (summarizes the prayers of the community as well as introduces the theme of celebration); the prayer over the gifts (serves as preparation for the Eucharistic prayer); and the prayer after communion or concluding prayer (asks for the realization of what is celebrated in the lives of the believers).⁴³⁷ However, euchological texts address many aspects of human life because of different contexts (seasons and feasts) in which they are used. Hence, “only a theology derived from a cross section of prayers can represent what can be termed a liturgical theology of a given sacrament or a liturgical theology of the triune God”⁴³⁸. From the Eucharistic prayers, one can derive a liturgical theology that sustains images of thanksgiving, memorial and especially of God as one who feeds and strengthens his people.⁴³⁹

Moreover, Irwin maintains that the translation of the euchological texts of the present *Missale Romanum* into many languages has not been easy. There is always the tendency to improve upon or render in a weak form what the original Latin texts mean to say. The efforts made by ICEL⁴⁴⁰ in this regard are encouraging but more revisions are needed in order to render properly the spirit of the original Latin texts. Concerning the inculturation or adaptation of the prayer texts, Irwin welcomes the initiative of ICEL in the composition of “*alternative opening prayer*”⁴⁴¹ for the Mass but would prefer “a more anamnetic and less didactic theology of the Word as constitutive of the liturgical theology of the Eucharist”⁴⁴².

Irwin critiques the present euchological texts in a number of ways, namely (1) the praise of God for creation is reflected only in the 4th Eucharistic prayer; (2) the suitability of the split epiclesis in the Eucharistic prayers is still debatable. Some people opt for one and not two or split epiclesis; (3) the way praise and thanks are positively reflected in the Eucharistic prayers say little about the difficult situation of the worshipers. It would be nice to have a section that includes expression of grief as well as hope in the midst of difficult situations; (4) the present euchology and calendar reflect the northern

⁴³⁶ Irwin, Context And Text 180.

⁴³⁷ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 182f.

⁴³⁸ Irwin, Context And Text, 189.

⁴³⁹ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 189.

⁴⁴⁰ International Committee for English in the Liturgy.

⁴⁴¹ Irwin, Context And Text, 198.

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, 199.

hemisphere and ignore the cosmological nature of the southern hemisphere, etc.⁴⁴³ So, with regard to the thesis *context is text*, Irwin maintains that the event of liturgy provides the most adequate context for the theological interpretation and understanding of euchological texts.

Liturgical Arts— Irwin stresses that the liturgical arts (i.e., music, architecture, artifacts and pictorial art) complement experience of liturgy and present themselves as sources for liturgical theology. They help to augment how we interpret Scripture, symbol, and euchology in the liturgy.⁴⁴⁴ That the Liturgy Constitution of Vatican II accorded importance to “sacred music” and “sacred art and furnishing” is evident in its chapters 6 and 7 respectively. They are at the service of the liturgy and as such they are expected to epitomize God’s beauty so as to encourage worship. Music, for example, should be seen as an integral part of the liturgy and not as a means of “supporting” it. The use of music (songs) in liturgy requires also that the active participation of the worshipping community be taken into consideration since it expresses its praise and faith through the music (songs). Hence, efforts should be made to select hymns/songs that correspond to the context of liturgical celebration. Also, since musical texts reflect the theology of the celebration they can serve as sources for developing liturgical theology. However, there are some examples that show that liturgical arts provide context for understanding liturgical texts. That means that the nature of the church (architectural design and internal furnishing) plays a big role in this regard. There is a great difference between experiencing the Roman liturgy in “a cruciform Church” in which only the crucifix adorns the sanctuary with the images of the Stations of the Cross around the walls of the Church⁴⁴⁵ and in a non-cruciform church (e.g. San Vitale in Ravenna) which has many biblical images and artifacts.⁴⁴⁶ The latter offers more avenues for the theological articulation of the paschal mystery expressed in the Roman rite than the former. Again, the liturgical celebration in the parish church gives a different experience than the one in the monastic church in which the central place is given to the Liturgy of the Hours.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴³ Ibid., 203f.

⁴⁴⁴ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 219.

⁴⁴⁵ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 231.

⁴⁴⁶ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 232.

⁴⁴⁷ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 246.

Irwin offers some suggestions/critiques toward a proper utilization of the liturgical arts, namely, (1) proper attention should be given to “liturgical ‘aesthetics’”⁴⁴⁸. It is necessary to identify its importance in worship. Otherwise one runs the danger of simply equating aesthetics with ostentation and beauty; (2) the Eucharistic liturgy as practiced by the monks can enrich the music especially “in the area of antiphonal and responsorial psalmody at the entrance, presentation and communion processions”⁴⁴⁹; (3) the design and use of liturgical artifacts should reflect varying cultural needs and should not be Eurocentric in nature, etc.⁴⁵⁰ Irwin maintains that the thesis *context is text* affirms that liturgical arts “are both central and complementary to the experience of worship. They shape the *context* of engagement in the present reformed liturgy in a number of verbal and nonverbal ways”⁴⁵¹.

Part 3

3.3. TEXT SHAPES CONTEXT: LITURGICAL THEOLOGY

As already indicated above (see details under **Method** in **Part I**), Irwin’s focus in Part 3 will be on the implications of engaging in the liturgy as enacted rites and on further presentation of the dialectical relationship between *text* and *context* in the understanding of liturgical theology.

Irwin opines that “the theology derived from liturgy is [...] ‘orthodox doxology’”⁴⁵². This is borne out of the fact that liturgy understood as “inherently doxological shapes both the Church’s prayer and belief, which realities are intrinsically theological realities”⁴⁵³. The event of liturgy which is carried out through different rites, align the believers primarily “to doxological confession, which confession shapes doxological theology”⁴⁵⁴. From this understanding it can be said that “liturgy is the origin of doctrine”⁴⁵⁵. Yet, “there is a mutual relationship between liturgy and theology because liturgy must be orthodox in the way it images and expresses the reality of God disclosed in the liturgy”⁴⁵⁶. However, the provisional nature of liturgy (i.e., product of man which

⁴⁴⁸ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 250.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 252.

⁴⁵⁰ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 252.

⁴⁵¹ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 253.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, 269.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*, 267.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 270.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 270.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 270.

is not perfect) requires a critique of theology in order to ensure “right belief” in its expression of the mystery that is God.⁴⁵⁷

Irwin maintains that liturgy is “*a locus theologicus par excellence*” because of (1) “the *orthodox doxology* which it expresses and which derives from it”⁴⁵⁸; and (2) “the *integral vision* of the theological enterprise and the *genetic vision* of reality that is disclosed in liturgy”⁴⁵⁹. The holistic nature of liturgy which does not exclude theology offers an integral experience and vision of God. That is to say that the combination of many images of God or the Church taken from liturgy can help in articulating a liturgical theology of God or of the Church.⁴⁶⁰ This will lead in fashioning out an integral theology which unifies the experience and description of God in the liturgy. An integral theology understood as liturgical theology can help in exploring “the relationship between right praise and right belief”⁴⁶¹. In other words, it will assist in considering the maxim *lex orandi, lex credendi* “in a way that avoids a ‘fideism’ in theology as well as a mere ‘philosophy of religion’ approach to theology”⁴⁶².

However, the development of liturgical theology is not free from some influences. Just like the interpretation of Word, symbol etc is affected by cultural and ecclesial contexts, so is the case with liturgical theology (understood as theology derived from liturgy). Hence, in this situation “it is liturgy that supplies the measure in terms of a *regula fidei*, where such a ‘measure of the faith’ is descriptive and schematic rather than one that is prescriptive and closed”⁴⁶³. As a *locus theologicus*, liturgy offers also a unique vision of God and the world. Liturgical spirituality (to be treated later in detail) is borne out of the fact that the believer appreciates what takes place in the liturgy and allows the event of liturgy to influence his or her life. In the same token, “the task and method of liturgical theology requires a commitment to the God revealed and experienced through the liturgy [...]”⁴⁶⁴. Again, the doxological nature of liturgy cannot but influence liturgical theology since the language of liturgical theology “derives from prayer and reflects the faith reality that is Christian prayer”⁴⁶⁵. In this way, the language of liturgical theology prevents theological language from being too abstract and unconnected with the events

⁴⁵⁷ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 270.

⁴⁵⁸ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 270.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 271.

⁴⁶⁰ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 272.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 272.

⁴⁶² *Ibid.*, 273.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, 273.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 274.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 274.

of liturgy.⁴⁶⁶ However, the language of theology functions best when it describes the mystery celebrated in the liturgy, thereby leading the believers to experience the events of salvation in a deeper way.⁴⁶⁷ We recall here the significance of part two (i.e. theological explanation of what occurs in the liturgy) for liturgical theology. Irwin opines that this approach to theology necessarily involves a deeper penetration into the mystery of God, which of course presupposes a conversion on the part of the believer.⁴⁶⁸ This implies that the liturgy (understood as *text*) influences the life of the believer, since it shapes his/her theology and spirituality which originate from liturgy.⁴⁶⁹ However, this understanding helps the thesis *context is text* (i.e. theological description of what occurs in the liturgy) to be widened so as “to include how the theological meaning of *liturgy as text* shapes our understanding of liturgical theology as an enterprise that is much wider than exploring or describing the theological meaning of liturgy”⁴⁷⁰. Thus, *text shapes context* implies that the “liturgy as *text* shapes the wider realities of theology and spirituality [...]”⁴⁷¹

Moreover, Irwin opines that the understanding of liturgical theology involves that attention be given to the nature of theology which is “inherently *provisional* [...]”⁴⁷². Just like liturgy is an imperfect way of experiencing the fullness of God’s kingdom because its rites are products of nature and as such subject to change, so also is liturgical theology an imperfect way of articulating “what occurs in the liturgy and the theology derived from liturgy”⁴⁷³. This understanding, therefore, calls for caution against liturgical and theological formulations which often are taken to be perfect descriptions of the mysteries celebrated. Therefore, since the reality of the Kingdom is yet to be made manifest, we rely currently on “liturgy, liturgical theology and liturgical spirituality”⁴⁷⁴ as they assist in forming and shaping our encounter with God.

Furthermore, Irwin maintains that doxological theology and liturgical theology can be of help in ecumenical dialogue. This is because the language of doxological theology derives from the experience of liturgy and has less to do with abstract terminologies. The influence of this can be seen in the understanding of the Eucharistic presence of Christ among the Catholic and Lutheran Churches as stated in the “Agreed

⁴⁶⁶ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 274.

⁴⁶⁷ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 275.

⁴⁶⁸ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 275.

⁴⁶⁹ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 276.

⁴⁷⁰ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 276.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 276.

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*, 277.

⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*, 277.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 278.

Statement⁴⁷⁵. This understanding does not solve all the differences regarding how each Church interprets “transubstantiation” but it shows that change in doctrinal language has gone a long way into minimizing them. Again, one of the areas where one can apply this theology is in the area of sacramental conversation as already done from 1927 (Lausanne) to 1982 (Lima).⁴⁷⁶ These discussions have helped to improve the appreciation of each other’s understanding of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. The Lima text, especially, points out the need for a theological reflection to be made on the liturgy. We find it very important because “enacted liturgical rites create ecclesial contexts and Churches believe what Churches pray, especially at the Eucharist”⁴⁷⁷. However, Irwin offers some suggestions “for Method for Ecumenical Liturgical Theology”⁴⁷⁸. Firstly, when different Churches reevaluate their different doctrinal positions on some sacraments and criticize themselves where necessary, it would go a long way into promoting mutual enrichment among member Churches. If the Catholic Church, for example, would place less emphasis on the doctrine of “real presence” and give prominence to “the Eucharist as an experience now of the eschaton or of the life of the Church in the Trinity”⁴⁷⁹, it would not only promote dialogue with the Orthodox but also augment the traditional teaching on the real presence. Secondly, the division created by the way many Churches worship can be minimized when the unity in diversity operative in the Catholic Church is allowed to bear on other Churches. In this way “(t)he fact of a variety, if not a conflict, in interpretations helps to determine ways of reaching ecumenical *convergence* where convergence, not uniformity, is operative”⁴⁸⁰. Thirdly, the appreciation of liturgy as a source of theology can lead to more understanding of the relationship between faith and good works. Hence, “if our liturgical texts say something about our action and cooperation in achieving salvation, then a theological statement is being made about our involvement in salvation”⁴⁸¹. Irwin maintains that if the doxological theology derived from the liturgy is made to bear on the ecumenical dialogue, it would go a long way into promoting better understanding of theology and sacraments of individual Churches.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid., 279.

⁴⁷⁶ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 282f.

⁴⁷⁷ Irwin, Context And Text 284.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid., 289.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid., 290.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid., 292.

⁴⁸¹ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 293.

Now, the emphasis will shift to the spirituality (*lex vivendi*) derived from the liturgy. This spirituality, according to Irwin, is born out of “our understanding of *liturgical theology* as comprising the interrelationship among *lex orandi*, *lex credendi*, *lex vivendi*”⁴⁸². It is here that the “*genetic vision* of reality disclosed in liturgy” comes into focus. Liturgy is foundational to spirituality and other forms of Christian prayer. It is called “the official prayer of the church”⁴⁸³ because among other types of prayer it is “the most anthropologically and theologically ‘apt’”⁴⁸⁴. Irwin stresses that liturgy is anthropologically “apt” because it respects and promotes the nature of human person as a corporate being. That is to say that it makes use of human means of communication, adapts its calendar to correspond to the rhythm of his life and reflects the cultural and social situation of the worshipping community.⁴⁸⁵ The theological aptness of liturgy is characterized by the fact that the theological elements of Christianity are not only constitutive of liturgy but are also articulated in it.⁴⁸⁶ The liturgical euchology sums up the whole paschal mystery—suffering, death and resurrection of Christ. In this way, it is the Church who prays through the action of the Triune God—Father, Son and the Holy Spirit—who makes the liturgical experience possible.

However, liturgy enables the Church to enact “a paradigm against which other forms of devotion ought to be evaluated both anthropologically and theologically”⁴⁸⁷. The Liturgy Constitution in article 13 demands that other forms of prayer (devotion) should derive from liturgy and also lead the believers to it. Irwin presents two examples of such forms of prayer/devotion as “*lectio divina*” and “*domestic rituals*”⁴⁸⁸. As a devotional exercise, *lectio divina* enables one to deepen one’s knowledge of the Scriptures so as to understand fully the mysteries celebrated in the liturgy.⁴⁸⁹ Again, the family meal, as an example of *domestic rituals*, can enable the family members not only to deepen the communal dimension of the liturgy but also their family ties especially when they eat, read the Scriptures and pray together.⁴⁹⁰

Furthermore, liturgy enables the believers to view reality in the image of Christ. It influences and shapes the community’s view of reality and life in such a way that the

⁴⁸² Irwin, Context And Text, 311.

⁴⁸³ Ibid., 313.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid., 313-314.

⁴⁸⁵ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 314f.

⁴⁸⁶ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 315.

⁴⁸⁷ Irwin, Context And Text, 321.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid., 322f.

⁴⁸⁹ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 322.

⁴⁹⁰ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 323.

influence of *lex orandi* of the Church on its *lex credendi* is taken for granted.⁴⁹¹ Thanks to Incarnation, liturgy places “creation in its proper order and allows creation to be disclosed in its fullest depth”⁴⁹². In short, “liturgy is essential for Christian spirituality because it is the privileged locus for articulating how all of life is sacramental”⁴⁹³.

Moreover, Irwin maintains that the incarnational nature of liturgy grounds its eschatological and ethical dimensions. Liturgy manifests the kingdom of God which will be fully realized in the future. Since liturgy is not an end in itself but designed to form and guide the Christian in this life, its ethical demand is based on eschatology.⁴⁹⁴ The Christian life is a life lived in conformity with what is celebrated in the liturgy. That is to say “that liturgical theology necessarily includes an ethic (*vivendi*) derived from the enactment of liturgy (*agendi*) [...]”⁴⁹⁵. However, the ethical demands of liturgy issue from the love of God which grounds it. It enables the believer to be an agent of the Kingdom now even as he awaits its fulfillment in the future. In this way, the pastoral dimension of liturgy comes into focus since engagement in the liturgy presupposes that one concerns oneself with “specific ecclesial and life contexts”⁴⁹⁶. Irwin stresses that liturgical spirituality (ethics) grounded on eschatology takes serious the problems of “injustice, oppression, imperfection, pain, and suffering, even in this graced world”⁴⁹⁷ and responds to them. It does not, however, guarantee quick solutions but “offers sure hope” since “all liturgical and ethical engagement necessarily cedes to the full reality of Christ who is final reconciler and healer”⁴⁹⁸.

Furthermore, because liturgy makes use of creation and enables the believing community to appreciate creation as God’s gracious gift, it is not difficult to see a convergence of creation, liturgical theology and ethics in liturgy.⁴⁹⁹ Thus, the appreciation of creation contributes to one’s respect and care for the environment. Irwin stresses that the importance of creation as reflected in the reformed rites invites for further articulation of its central place in the liturgy. Thus, a theology of liturgy that focuses on creation “would ground the liturgical act as anthropologically apt (as we have already argued)”⁵⁰⁰. Again, a liturgical theology that focuses on creation, among

⁴⁹¹ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 324.

⁴⁹² Irwin, Context And Text, 329.

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*, 329.

⁴⁹⁴ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 330.

⁴⁹⁵ Irwin, Context And Text, 331.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 332.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 334.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 334.

⁴⁹⁹ Cf. Irwin, Context And Text, 335.

⁵⁰⁰ Irwin, Context And Text, 337.

other things, can provide the framework for the appreciation of aesthetics in liturgy. This would argue that what is “aesthetically pleasing reflects the glory of God”⁵⁰¹. It can also put forth some reasons why the use of quality materials is good for the construction of churches.⁵⁰²

Irwin offers some observations/critiques on the “present *lex orandi* [...]”⁵⁰³, namely (1) it is necessary that every Eucharistic prayer should contain the praise of God for creation and not only the 4th Eucharistic prayer as it is presently. Another place where it is necessary to express the praise of God for creation “would be in prayers over the gifts immediately preceding the preface dialogue”⁵⁰⁴; (2) the theology of some presidential prayers especially “prayer after communion” needs to be looked upon. Some, no doubt, connect the celebration of the Eucharist and its eschatological dimension with the daily living (e.g. Thursday of the Second Week after Easter and the First Sunday of Advent)⁵⁰⁵, but unfortunately, there are some “which betray what might be called a ‘tinged’ eschatology in the sense that they reflect near disdain for the things of this world, including creation. One example is from the prayer after communion of the Tuesday of the First Week of Lent [...]”⁵⁰⁶; (3) other kinds of prayer and devotion should emulate liturgy which is anthropological and theologically apt. They are not meant to be too personalized but rather to promote commitment “to both the Church community and to the wider world”⁵⁰⁷, etc.

Finally, Irwin stresses that the dialectical nature of the thesis (*context is text - text shapes context*) implies that two things are worthy of note, namely: “That the *text* of the liturgy be interpreted in relation to the *context* of our communal and personal lives and that the *context* of all life be lived in harmony with the *text* of enacted liturgy so that liturgy and life can be intrinsically and keenly related. It is the Christian’s prayer that they might eventually become congruent”⁵⁰⁸.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid., 338.

⁵⁰² Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 338.

⁵⁰³ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 340.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid., 341.

⁵⁰⁵ Cf. Irwin, *Context And Text*, 342.

⁵⁰⁶ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 343.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid., 344.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid., 346.

3.4. FIRST EVALUATION OF HIS WORK

There is need now to evaluate some of the positions of Irwin based on the above summary. The rest will be done in Chapter Five where we shall make a general comparison.

1. Irwin's work is very rich in content but the manner he presents his materials makes it difficult for me to make a good summary. He states in the preface that the chief concern of his book is purely methodological.
2. The manner he uses his dialectical thesis (*Context is Text—Text shapes Context*) in his understanding of liturgical theology is commendable. It helps him to bridge the tension between *lex orandi* and *lex credendi* equation and opens up other areas connected with liturgy (ethical, pastoral and spiritual dimensions) which will help in understanding the notion liturgical theology.
3. I find his treatment of the importance of creation in liturgy as well as the praise of God for it very important. It would be nice to be included when the euchological texts are revised.
4. I find also his call for the revision of euchological texts to reflect the conditions of the faithful in the southern hemisphere very ad rem. Inculturation can play an important role here.
5. His application of the "critical liturgical theology" in the observations and critiques is very commendable. I see it as an urgent call for a critical eye to be cast always on the theological meaning of the celebrated rites and not only on the liturgical texts. One example will be the issue of the role of the Holy Spirit in the liturgy which is still inadequate.
6. I view his emphasis on the provisional nature of theology and liturgy very important because it can assist in promoting ecumenical dialogue. Also his acknowledgment of the Jewish root of Christian Eucharistic prayer is commendable.
7. His understanding of liturgy as *enacted rites* from which not only *doxological theology* but also *liturgical theology* with its consequent parts of ethical and spiritual life of the Christian can be drawn is praiseworthy.
8. The use of such terms as *theologia tertia* (ethical and spiritual dimensions of liturgy) and *lex vivendi* (liturgical ethic) is confusing, even though, I suppose, they mean the same thing.

9. Again the use of the terms *orthodox doxology*, *doxological theology* and *liturgical theology* is also confusing. It is not clear where the *systematic theology* belongs in his distinctions since *theologia secunda* is for him *liturgical theology*.

10. He uses the terms *liturgy*, *lex orandi* or *orandi*, and liturgical prayer sometimes interchangeably. It makes it difficult at times to understand them contextually.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. THEOLOGIA PRIMA. WHAT IS LITURGICAL THEOLOGY?⁵⁰⁹

Profile of David W. Fagerberg

David Fagerberg is an associate professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame-Indiana, USA. He was the former acting professor of liturgical studies at the Liturgical Institute of St. Mary of the Lake/Mundelein Seminary, Mundelein, Illinois. He holds a Master of Divinity Degree from Luther Northwestern Seminary; a Master of Arts in liturgical studies from St. John's University, Collegeville; a Master of Sacred Theology degree from Yale Divinity School; and a Doctorate degree in liturgical theology from Yale University. He was the Richardson Fellow at Durham University, U.K. in 1996. He is on the editorial board of the *Chesterton Review*, and a contributing editor to *Gilbert! A Magazine of Chesterton*.

Apart from “Theologia Prima. What Is Liturgical Theology?” Fagerberg’s other publications include: *What is Liturgical Theology?* (Pueblo, 1992), *The Size of Chesterton’s Catholicism* (Notre Dame, 1998)⁵¹⁰, etc.

Fagerberg divides his work into three parts with many chapters. Our effort is to present a summary of his work in line with the three parts⁵¹¹, namely:

Part I: What Is Liturgical Theology?

Part II: Liturgy and *Leitourgia*

Part III: Two Examples of Liturgical Theology

First evaluation of his work

⁵⁰⁹ Fagerberg, David. W.: *Theologia Prima. What Is Liturgical Theology?* Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications²2004.

⁵¹⁰ Cf. <http://www.theology.nd.edu/people/all/fagerberg-david/index.shtml> and his Books (retrieved on 13.08.2010).

⁵¹¹ The headings are the same as they appear in the author’s book.

Part 1

4.1. WHAT IS LITURGICAL THEOLOGY?

Fagerberg stresses that an important step towards understanding the meaning of liturgical theology requires that one deepens the grammar by which one speaks about liturgy.⁵¹² The use of grammar in this context concerns primarily the actual communication and not necessarily the technical rules governing speech. That is to say that one can use words meaningfully to communicate even when “one cannot parse the sentence [...]”⁵¹³. In the same token one can “speak theologically even if one does not have that specialized knowledge about how the deposit of faith has been parsed systematically or historically”⁵¹⁴. This is because the encounter with God in the liturgy does not lead immediately to ritual analysis but to making statements about God whom the community experienced in the liturgy.⁵¹⁵ *Theologia* means originally knowledge of God (Christ) borne out of prayer (asceticism).⁵¹⁶ Liturgy has always “interpenetrated both theology and asceticism”⁵¹⁷. One sees this connection more in the East where “asceticism was especially integrated with theology as a liturgical consequence [...]”⁵¹⁸ than in the West where this connection is less evident. Hence, the idea of deepening the grammar is “to enlarge our understanding of liturgy by discovering its very theological and ascetical dimensions”⁵¹⁹. Just as liturgical theology is made up of two words (liturgy and theology) but closely united as body and soul in a human being, so can one not separate liturgy, theology and asceticism from each another. That means that “liturgy is not ritual cliché in need of theological additives and supplemental spiritualities”⁵²⁰.

However, another step towards expanding the grammar would be “to change our use of the word liturgist”⁵²¹. A liturgist is more than “a master of ceremonies” during liturgical services. If one understands a builder to be someone who builds, then a liturgist is “one who commits liturgy, and only secondarily the one who studies it or directs it”⁵²². This implies, according to Fagerberg, that the baptized faithful who gather (ecclesia) for liturgical celebrations are liturgists. This understanding is based on “the

⁵¹² Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 2.

⁵¹³ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 3.

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵¹⁵ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 3.

⁵¹⁶ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 4f.

⁵¹⁷ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 4. (asceticism will be treated in detail later)

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵²² *Ibid.*, 8.

doctrine of creation” which sees man and woman “as rational liturgists of the material world” meant “to translate the praise of mute matter into speech and symbol”⁵²³. Unfortunately “this cosmological priesthood”⁵²⁴ was lost through the fall of Adam and Eve but Christ restored it through the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial priesthood.⁵²⁵ This one priesthood of Christ in which the priests and the laity participate, enables them to encounter God in the liturgical celebration. The result of this encounter is an adjustment “which settles into ritual form”⁵²⁶. Thus, it can be said that “[l]iturgical theology is derivative from the liturgists’ encounter with God”⁵²⁷.

Furthermore, in his effort to expand the notion of liturgy, Fagerberg deems it is necessary to distinguish between the “thin” and the “thick” uses of “the term *liturgical*”⁵²⁸. Thus “liturgy in its thin sense” concerns the rubrics (temple decorum and ritual protocol) while “liturgy in its thick sense” concerns the meaning (theological and ascetical) behind the rubrics.⁵²⁹ The Church can make some changes in the “thin sense” but not in the “thick sense” since “it creates the Church”⁵³⁰. Liturgy in its Greek understanding (*leitourgia*) means more for the Church than ordinary work (*ergon*) done for the people (*laos*)⁵³¹. It is Christ who does this work and commissions the Church to continue it. The Church has no other liturgy than Christ’s liturgy.⁵³² This understanding of the liturgy of Christ underscores the Church’s understanding of worship. Liturgy is not a cultic action performed for the sole purpose of “attaining contact with God”⁵³³. The use of ritual in the liturgy does “something more than cult can ritualize”⁵³⁴. It manifests Christ as the sole mediator between heaven and earth. Such is the antinomy of the Christian cult which is made possible by the incarnation (paradox of God in human form).⁵³⁵ Therefore, when the Church gathers to celebrate liturgy, it joins God in the work of renewing the world. This encounter enables the believers to share in the mystery of divine revelation. Hence, “(t)o see by the light of this mystery (to see God’s

⁵²³ Ibid., 8.

⁵²⁴ Ibid., 8.

⁵²⁵ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 8f.

⁵²⁶ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 9.

⁵²⁷ Ibid., 9.

⁵²⁸ Ibid., 9.

⁵²⁹ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 9.

⁵³⁰ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 10.

⁵³¹ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 11.

⁵³² Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 11.

⁵³³ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 13.

⁵³⁴ Ibid., 15.

⁵³⁵ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 15.

revelation, ourselves, the world) is liturgical theology, and to be capacitated for this eternal vocation is liturgical asceticism”⁵³⁶.

Fagerberg opines that the word asceticism (ἀσκησις in Greek) means in this context more than training for athletic purposes. It is for religious purposes and as such liturgical in nature. Thus, liturgical asceticism is of “theological category”⁵³⁷ since it is intimately connected with the paschal mystery of Christ. The necessity for this training was occasioned by the fall of ἀνθρώπου⁵³⁸ as already indicated. As a consequence, the human being was unable to see the world again as a sacramental means of encounter with God.⁵³⁹ Therefore, “asceticism is necessary in order to think straight—about ourselves (anthropology), the world (cosmology), and God (theology) “⁵⁴⁰. Thanks to Christ who made it possible, liturgical asceticism enables the liturgists to share in the Trinitarian love through the liturgy. Hence, “[i]n the liturgy God presents Himself to be loved, and by loving we know Him, and knowing the Trinity is what Athanasius simply called ‘theology’. It is liturgical theology, practiced by liturgists in the ascetical discipline of *theologia prima*”⁵⁴¹.

For more understanding and application of the term “liturgical theology”, Fagerberg opines that it is necessary to know if it is part of “the current theological taxonomy”⁵⁴². By its nature, liturgical theology does not exist outside the concrete liturgical celebration. To locate it one “must begin with liturgies, and it must begin with the meaning of the whole rite, not merely with texts and rubrics”⁵⁴³. It is the theology of the community of believers which is borne out of their encounter with God. Hence, the proposed definition of liturgical theology should “rest on two crucial affirmations: 1) it is genuine theology, although it is *theologia prima* and not *theologia secunda*, 2) and it is *lex orandi*”⁵⁴⁴.

Now, *theologia secunda* (academic theology) and *theologia prima* (community theology) are different “species within the genus theology”⁵⁴⁵. *Theologia prima* can be translated into *theologia secunda* for some reasons but it does not require it in order to

⁵³⁶ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 18.

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁵³⁸ It represents here the humanity symbolized by Adam and Eve.

⁵³⁹ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 26.

⁵⁴⁰ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 27.

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 31-32.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*, 39.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 41.

acquire the quality of theology.⁵⁴⁶ Also, liturgical theology is *lex orandi* because liturgy is not only a place where the revelation of God occurs but also “where the sources of theology function precisely as sources”⁵⁴⁷. Therefore, one can assert that liturgy is theological in the sense that “(t)he subject matter of theology is God, humanity, and creation, and the vortex in which these three existentially entangle is liturgy”⁵⁴⁸. Fagerberg maintains that the above affirmations can help to bridge the dichotomy which has been created between liturgy and theology thereby making liturgy a business “for pure-hearted (but simple-minded) believers [...]” and theology “for academicians [...]”⁵⁴⁹.

Now, in order to gain more insight into liturgical theology it is necessary to distinguish two approaches that are different from it. (1) “Theology of worship” represented by the authors Regin Preter and Vilmos Vajta and (2) “Theology from worship” represented by Peter Brunner and Geoffrey Wainwright.⁵⁵⁰

1. *Theology of worship*: This understanding of liturgical theology pays little attention to the liturgical rite itself since the theologian is preoccupied with the discovery of theology inherent in the worship. Fagerberg points out that the dogmatic approach of Preter⁵⁵¹ in his theology enables him to focus more on the saving act of God as realized in worship. Liturgy is not essentially his subject matter but “the life of regenerated humanity. But since that life originated at baptism, and sustained by the proclaimed word, and fulfilled at the Eucharist, he is led to consider Christian worship. This is a theology of worship”⁵⁵². On the other hand, Vajta’s aim in his book⁵⁵³ is essentially to justify the connection between Luther’s theology as a whole and his (Luther’s) theology of worship. That is to say that since “worship and doctrine develop in ‘mutual dependence’”⁵⁵⁴ Luther’s theology (e.g. about the church, justification, atonement and creation), grounds his liturgical reforms. That means that Luther’s theology of worship explains his reforms on the practices of worship.⁵⁵⁵

⁵⁴⁶ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 41.

⁵⁴⁷ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 42.

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁵⁵⁰ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 45.

⁵⁵¹ This approach is found in his book, *Creation and Redemption*, 1968; Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 45f.

⁵⁵² Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 47.

⁵⁵³ This approach is found in his book, *Luther on Worship*, 1958; Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 47f.

⁵⁵⁴ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 47.

⁵⁵⁵ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 47.

However, Fagerberg maintains that the abstract approach of these authors in their treatment of worship “is reminiscent of the way theology manuals once spoke about real presence and transubstantiation without mentioning the ritual action of the Eucharist”⁵⁵⁶. Liturgical theology on the other hand does not deal with “worship in general but the theological meaning which derives from the symphony of structures called rite”⁵⁵⁷. It is a commitment to the act of worship which leads to the deification of the “liturgists (ascetically) who can speak theologically about themselves and the world”⁵⁵⁸.

(2) *Theology from worship*: The supposition here is that liturgy is regarded as a mine from which the theologian quarries his data. That is to say that “liturgy receives the closer attention a miner would use when panning for gold”⁵⁵⁹.

Fagerberg opines that the theology of Brunner⁵⁶⁰ owes its source to his “Lutheran worship service [...]”⁵⁶¹. His objective is to discover “what divine institution desires in assemblies of Christians, and he discovers it by observing what happens in the downward gesture of grace and the upward gesture of prayer”⁵⁶². Again, it is his wish to establish that it is the right doctrine that guarantees the correct use of worship.⁵⁶³ Therefore, it is taken for granted that liturgy is not theological and it behooves the dogmatic theologian to inform the worshiping community on how to worship correctly (theologically). On the other hand, Wainwright’s⁵⁶⁴ aim is to relate liturgy and theology closely by emphasizing the importance of worship for the theologian. “Liturgy is a contributing source to systematic theology because in worship the Christian vision comes into sharp focus, but it is theology’s task to make coherent, intellectual expression of this vision, and, when necessary, recommend corrections to the worshiping community”⁵⁶⁵.

Fagerberg maintains that both Brunner and Wainwright paid more attention to the activities of the liturgical assembly gathered in worship than Prenter and Vajta. Hence,

⁵⁵⁶ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 51.

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁵⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁵⁶⁰ This approach is found in his book, *Worship in the Name of Jesus*, 1968; Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 55f.

⁵⁶¹ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 56.

⁵⁶² *Ibid.*, 56.

⁵⁶³ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 56.

⁵⁶⁴ This approach is found in his book, *Doxology*, 1980; Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 57f.

⁵⁶⁵ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 60-61.

“they have nudged *lex orandi* and *lex credendi* closer together”⁵⁶⁶. It depends, however, where this mutual relationship exists. It is possible in the “thin sense” but not in the “thick sense” of the liturgy.⁵⁶⁷ This is because, the issue of right doctrine is not alien to liturgical theology and the broad notion (thick sense) of liturgy makes it “the basis for theologizing”⁵⁶⁸. That is why the “liturgical language” that is used by the liturgists is “performative”⁵⁶⁹ in nature. It does not only actualize what it enunciates but also creates a community who makes use of it “when liturgical rite is transacted”⁵⁷⁰. However, the fact that liturgy presents the basis from which one can theologize does not mean that liturgical practices cannot be critiqued by theology. But it borders on “who is qualified to make it. Liturgical theology affirms that the *lex orandi* capacitates a liturgist for *theologia prima*. The *lex orandi*, as it comes into being in the liturgical rite, is theological”⁵⁷¹. Also, it is a known fact that “encounter with God precedes reflection upon this encounter; but this is still not enough to explain liturgical theology. Liturgy is encounter with God, yes, but furthermore it is a living adjustment—meaning a theological response—to the Holy One. The dichotomy that places raw experience in the sanctuary but reserves theology for the lecture hall is here rejected”⁵⁷². Hence, liturgical theology can neither be identified with “theology of liturgy” nor with “theology from liturgy” because it “is distinct both in its methodology (it begins with concrete liturgies) and in its form (it is primary theology)”⁵⁷³.

Fagerberg appeals to the works (*Introduction to Liturgical theology* and *The Eucharist*) and some articles of Alexander Schmemmann⁵⁷⁴ in order to elaborate more on the notion of liturgical theology.⁵⁷⁵ He maintains that Schmemmann’s view of liturgical theology is different from what we have seen above. There is no dichotomy in his understanding of it because his preference of the Greek word *leitourgia* to explain liturgy helps to restore “theological status to liturgical tradition itself, a status that has been monopolized by second-order, academic theology”⁵⁷⁶. The word “liturgy” means different things to many people and as such *leitourgia* expresses more what he means when liturgy is

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid., 61.

⁵⁶⁷ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 63.

⁵⁶⁸ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima* 63.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid., 64.

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid., 65.

⁵⁷¹ Ibid., 66.

⁵⁷² Ibid., 67.

⁵⁷³ Ibid., 69.

⁵⁷⁴ We introduced him in Chapter two.

⁵⁷⁵ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 73.

⁵⁷⁶ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 77.

understood as “the accomplishment of the salvation of which theology speaks”⁵⁷⁷. It characterizes the nature of the new community of believers that has been inaugurated by Christ. However, the inability to understand liturgy in this sense was occasioned by the loss of eschatological and ecclesiastical dimensions of the Eucharist. Liturgy was reduced to “a cult” and worship ceased to be the function of the Church and instead became synonymous with it. As a result, liturgy ceased to manifest the Church and theology was unable to speak adequately for the Church. Again, a new understanding of the relationship between symbol/sign and reality by the scholastics contributed to the dichotomy between liturgy and theology. Their interpretation of the words of consecration outside the liturgical event, for example, placed undue emphasis on the Eucharistic species (bread and wine) and as a result they neglected the transforming work of the Holy Spirit on the whole assembly (Church).⁵⁷⁸ Schmemmann understands the whole of liturgy to be “one sacramental, transforming act”⁵⁷⁹. The Eucharist is the sacrament that manifests the reality of the new Kingdom (the church) inaugurated by Christ.

Schmemmann maintains that the function (task) of liturgical theology consists in discovering again the link between *leitourgia* and the Church. He advocates a historical and theological method which will analyze the structures of worship and determine its theological meaning behind the *Ordo*.⁵⁸⁰ This will provide the forum from which liturgy and theology can critique each other since their relationship has been misunderstood. Hence, it is the task of liturgical theology to give “voice to the *lex orandi* of the liturgy, and when it does, the Church’s *lex credendi* can simultaneously be heard, for it rises from this source”⁵⁸¹.

Moreover, in Part II the distinction between liturgy and *leitourgia* will clarify more the notion of liturgical theology.

Part II

4.2. LITURGY AND LEITOURGIA

Fagerberg opines that a clear distinction between liturgy and *leitourgia* would help in understanding the nature of liturgical theology. The distinction made above about the “thin sense” and the “thick sense” of the liturgy will be applied here. The former stands

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid., 87.

⁵⁷⁸ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 90.

⁵⁷⁹ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 91.

⁵⁸⁰ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 93.

⁵⁸¹ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 100.

for liturgy and the latter stands for *leitourgia*. The purpose, however, is not to judge whether one is better than the other but simply to emphasize why liturgical theology is more identified with *leitourgia* than with liturgy (thin sense). Fagerberg maintains that *leitourgia* is much more than decorum and turning people on. It “creates a people, a people called Church. The Church might develop liturgy, but *leitourgia* creates Church”⁵⁸². This understanding, however, underscores the claim “that *lex credendi* rests upon *lex orandi*”⁵⁸³. Thus, the magisterial teaching is understood in this light as the teaching of the Church borne out of *leitourgia* and not an expression of personal opinion.

Again, the celebration of liturgy (*leitourgia*) in the early Church was a celebration of a new dawn ushered in by Christ’s resurrection. The dichotomy created by the pagan idea of the world (sacred and profane) was overcome by *leitourgia*. Christians “assemble in order to be icon of a redeemed world, and then conform the rest of life, politics, family, and social obligation to that very image. The arena in which the life of faith is played is not determined by the boundary of the temple, but by the boundaries of world history”⁵⁸⁴.

Furthermore, *leitourgia* forms the liturgists to be what they are—liturgical theologians. It does not just capacitate them to pray or think theologically but also provides them with the grammar with which to do it. Granted that the liturgists (primary theologians) may not be able to analyze this grammar (in academic form) but the adjustment they make after their experience with God in the liturgy can be considered theological (even though not in the secondary sense).⁵⁸⁵ Therefore, “liturgical theology is not simply *theologia secunda* done devotionally. Liturgical theology is the product of the assembly’s ritualized grammar wherein the liturgists do not concoct their own ideas but celebrate what has been revealed”⁵⁸⁶.

Fagerberg sees one example of primary theologians (liturgists) in the person of “Mrs. Murphy”⁵⁸⁷. She distinguishes herself from a secondary theologian who speaks formalized theological language (i.e. systematic in nature), in the sense that she speaks a natural language (i.e. not abstract but logical) of theology.⁵⁸⁸ Hence, “[i]f theology is the search for words appropriate to God, as Schmemmann put it, then the liturgist who wants

⁵⁸² Ibid., 113.

⁵⁸³ Ibid., 113.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid., 115.

⁵⁸⁵ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 128.

⁵⁸⁶ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 128.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid., 133 (Fagerberg borrows it from Aidan Kavanagh who uses it to describe ‘a primary theologian’).

⁵⁸⁸ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 132.

to speak about God, of God, and even to God, is under the discipline of theology, too”⁵⁸⁹. It is unfortunate that Mrs. Murphy’s form of theology has not been recognized because of certain bias against popular religion. The classification of religion into “enlightened” (for the elite) and “superstitious” (for the vulgar) contributes heavily to this prejudice.⁵⁹⁰ Fagerberg maintains that this division has unfortunately influenced modern scholarship even though it does not match the reality on the ground.⁵⁹¹ Thus modern scholarship “assumes that the uneducated (read: ‘nontheological’) Christian lay person mimicked pagan practices without differentiation or transformation”⁵⁹². But this is not the case with Mrs. Murphy who has been formed by *leitourgia*. She “may not have been able to *speak about theology* before taking a university course, but she was able to *speak theologically about* God, world, and herself according to the grammar of faith imparted by liturgical theology”⁵⁹³.

Moreover, Fagerberg opines that the grammar of liturgy is theological and as such it can “be called Tradition”⁵⁹⁴. Tradition as understood here is not something in the past to be consulted but a reality that is alive and active in the life of the Church. It “is the Holy Spirit living in the Church [...]”⁵⁹⁵, which enables liturgical theologians like Mrs. Murphy “to read an icon and distinguish it from secular image; (read) scripture and distinguish exegesis from ideology [...]”⁵⁹⁶. It is Tradition that guarantees Orthodoxy, i.e. to say that if one is orthodox in icons or doctrinal formulations one is also traditional. This is an area where liturgical theology can assist in ecumenism. It reveals “how Tradition establishes a theology that is not dead-ended in propositional categories”⁵⁹⁷. This implies that the theological grammar is the same although it can be expressed in new ways. Thus, dogmatic or doctrinal formulations do not add, rather they develop or expand it.⁵⁹⁸ Propositional statements alone do not constitute the nature of religion. They are parts of the theological grammar learned in the liturgy. This grammar of faith is alive in the Church’s *leitourgia* which manifests “what the Church believes”⁵⁹⁹.

⁵⁸⁹ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 135.

⁵⁹⁰ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 135f.

⁵⁹¹ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 136f.

⁵⁹² *Ibid.*, 137.

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 149.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 150.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 151.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁵⁹⁸ Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 152.

⁵⁹⁹ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 155.

Moreover, liturgical theology can be written down as an account of “what transpires in the rite”⁶⁰⁰. Two examples of it will be discussed in Part III.

Part III

4.3. TWO EXAMPLES OF LITURGICAL THEOLOGY.

As already emphasized, liturgical theology is the faith of the Church in motion. It is the theology of the community of believers gathered in worship. Fagerberg stresses that when one writes it down in a book, one does not present one’s theology but that of the community. In this way, such a work “could be called liturgical theology in a derivative sense”⁶⁰¹. Two examples of it are: 1) *The Ecclesiastical History and Mystical Contemplation* by Germanus, patriarch of Constantinople, (ancient example). 2. *The Eucharist* by Alexander Schmemmann, (contemporary example).⁶⁰²

1. *Ecclesiastical History and Mystical Contemplation*, by Germanus, patriarch of Constantinople in the eighth century.

Fagerberg opines that two traditions could be identified in the 4th century because of their different approaches to liturgical commentary: (1) The Alexandrian tradition focuses on the eschatological dimension of Jesus’ saving events in such a way that “liturgy is perceived as an ascent from material to the spiritual realm”⁶⁰³. (2) The Antiochene tradition on the other hand “emphasizes a typological approach, which, when applied to liturgy stresses connection of the rites with the historical Jesus [...]”⁶⁰⁴ Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople (715-730), belongs to the Antiochene tradition. It was through him that Theodore of Mopsuestia’s allegory “interpretation from the early fifth century enters the Byzantine tradition in the eighth”⁶⁰⁵. However, Germanus’ liturgical commentary was borne out of pastoral necessity namely, 1) a great number of converts, the new liturgical piety (fear and awe towards the Eucharist), etc led to a reduction in the number of communicants; 2) the nature of the situation then, i.e. the

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid., 155.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid., 162.

⁶⁰² Cf. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 162-163.

⁶⁰³ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 163.

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid., 163.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid., 171.

issue of iconoclasm⁶⁰⁶, necessitated “a new estimate of liturgy [...]”⁶⁰⁷. So, he felt the need to synthesize the liturgical theology being worked out by the community. Thus, through the application of “the representational symbolism of Antioch, Germanus’ commentary presents a liturgy absorbed into ‘mystical contemporaneity’ with events in the life of Jesus, yet without dissecting the mystery. In addition to the liturgy’s anagogical character, a typological character of the rite is emphasized without splintering the unified mystery”⁶⁰⁸. This is an attempt to harmonize the historical events in Jesus’ life and the liturgical arts that represent them. The commentary which is made of 43 chapters treats in allegory form “the structure and furnishing of the Church [...], prayer action [...], vestments worn by priests [...], Liturgy of the Word [...] and [...] liturgy of the Eucharist [...]”⁶⁰⁹. Fagerberg maintains that Germanus use of allegory “is biblical and traditional and multivalent”⁶¹⁰. This is borne out of the natural language he employed which “does not fix predetermined principles onto liturgical actions by means of allegory”⁶¹¹. His theology has its source in liturgy because “his commentary exegetes the natural language of liturgical theology”⁶¹². Hence, his commentary shows the marks with which liturgical theology has been identified: (1) “it is the community’s *theologia prima*”. (2) “It comes from rite, and it is not imposed from without. This means that liturgical theology is communal and not personal to the commentator (or theologian)”⁶¹³.

2. *The Eucharist*, by Alexander Schmemmann

Fagerberg stresses that the treatment of liturgical theology in this book is based on Schmemmann’s reflections on the Eucharist or better on the faith of the Church in motion, i.e., one “read off the Divine Liturgy of his own Orthodox tradition”⁶¹⁴. Schmemmann sees the liturgy, though made up many parts, as one sacrament. This explains why he begins each chapter of his book with “The Sacrament of...”, an opposition to the later

⁶⁰⁶ A prohibition and destruction of icons that took place during the 8th and 9th centuries in the Byzantine Empire.

⁶⁰⁷ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 172.

⁶⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 178.

⁶⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 179.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁶¹² *Ibid.*, 181.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*, 183.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 189.

scholastics who treated different parts of the liturgy individually, thereby disrupting the unity between the “assembly, eucharist and the Church”⁶¹⁵.

The book has twelve chapters and can be divided into two major parts: Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Eucharist. Under the former, the Sacraments of the Assembly, the Kingdom, Entrance, the Word and the Faithful were treated and under the latter, the Sacraments of the Offering, Unity, Anaphora, Thanksgiving, Remembrance, the Holy Spirit and Communion were treated. Schmemmann applies his understanding of the function of liturgical theology (as we noted above) in his reflection and tries to explain the meaning of worship and its connection with the Church. Thus, his approach satisfies the two marks “of my definition of liturgical theology”. (1) “It is theology”. (2). “The meaning of the Eucharist which liturgical theology bespeaks must derive from rite. If liturgical theology is fundamentally the community’s adjustment to its existential encounter with God, then the only way for someone to write it down is to examine the rite in motion, just as the only way to understand a top is to spin it”⁶¹⁶.

Fagerberg maintains that the two examples of “derivative liturgical theology” from Germanus and Schmemmann show that both authors were giving “a commentary that is derived from the primary liturgical theology residing in the liturgical coefficient of ritual words and act committed by the Church”⁶¹⁷.

In conclusion, Fagerberg invites the reader to join him in the task of liturgical theology. This is because “(t)he consequences that liturgical theology has upon our understanding of liturgy, theology, and asceticism cannot be treated in their entirety at one sitting, by one person,[...].”⁶¹⁸. He presents his thoughts in one hundred paragraphs which I take as “a summary of his work” and invites the reader to join and complement where necessary. The first evaluation of his work is part of my response to this call.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid., 190.

⁶¹⁶ Ibid., 213.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid., 214.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid., 218.

4.4. FIRST EVALUATION OF HIS WORK

It will be based on some of the positions of Fagerberg in line with the above summary. The rest will be done in Chapter Five where a general comparison will be made.

1. The two attributes of liturgical theology: 1) “it is genuine theology, although it is *theologia prima* and not *theologia secunda*, 2) and it is *lex orandi*” help him to justify the claim that the liturgical community can theologize and its theology is a real one.
2. Again his treatment of liturgy, theology and asceticism as interconnected assists him to drive home his point. A liturgist is a person who performs liturgy just like a builder is a person who builds.
3. His distinctions between liturgy and *leitourgia* help to position the latter as the ontological condition of theology.
4. I appreciate the contribution of liturgical theology to ecumenism although still much needs to be said about this topic.
5. His arguments to justify the theology of “Mrs. Murphy” are very interesting, but it would have been helpful to explain any likely transition from primary to secondary theology. I do not think Mrs. Murphy and other liturgical theologians like her can do what Schmemmann and Germanus did in their commentaries. Yet what they accomplished is liturgical theology though “derivative” in nature.
6. Again, I think his derivative liturgical theology applies more to Schmemmann than to Germanus. Germanus worked out a liturgical theology based on the evolving situation of his flock. What Schmemmann did could also be likened to a good theology of/from worship.
7. There is no clear distinction between liturgy (*leitourgia*) as an act of theology and liturgical theology. Sometimes liturgical theology is presented as the basis of theology or primary theology. Is it possible to study liturgical theology as a theological discipline?
8. One observes that he makes some repetitions in his effort to emphasize his points. These appear more in Part II where he treats liturgy and *leitourgia*. I think it was difficult for him to avoid this because the books and articles of Schmemmann constitute the heart of his materials.

9. I find his invitation for a combined effort in the task of liturgical theology laudable, but it gives the impression that his categorical statements about the nature and meaning of liturgical theology are weak or still incomplete.

CHAPTER FIVE
5. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Our effort has been to summarize the different views of the above-mentioned authors on the topic of liturgical theology. The focus now will be to compare their positions i.e. showing where they agree or disagree on this topic.

The first observation will be to point out that they have different primary audiences. Vagaggini and Irwin have primarily the Roman Catholics. The Orthodox Church is the primary audience of Schmemmann, hence his focus on the Ordo. It is difficult, however, to identify the particular audience of Fagerberg since he has his feet in both traditions, even though more in the East. We shall do our comparison in line with the following headings, namely:

1. Methods

Vagaggini maintains that the world of revelation is both the world of liturgy and theology. Revelation as sacred history written in the Scriptures is realized in “a certain way”⁶¹⁹ in the liturgy of the Church. That explains why he stresses the need for the integration of liturgy in the systematic (dogmatic) theology, since all the treatises it handles find their fulfillment in the liturgy. He sets out to realize this in a theological science that consists “of two integral moments: the empirical-historical inductive moment and the ontological properly deductive moment”⁶²⁰.

For Schmemmann, it involves an exposition of the content of worship as reflected in the Ordo. He advocates a historical and theological method which will help to elucidate the philosophy behind the Ordo. This will help to reestablish the link between the Church and her worship, thereby restoring theological tradition to liturgy. He advocates not an integration of liturgy as Vagaggini opines but a total separation of the liturgical science from dogma in order to enable it to concentrate on the liturgical tradition. He draws out a tentative plan⁶²¹ which he tries to expatiate in his book.

Irwin maintains that the liturgy as a concrete action (event) is to be understood in the following ways, namely 1) the rites as the constituent elements of liturgy can only be understood theologically in their celebrated contexts (ecclesial and cultural); 2) the

⁶¹⁹ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 3.

⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*, 631.

⁶²¹ Cf. Chapter Two above.

appreciation of these rites as they are celebrated in their different contexts helps to shape the life of the community both individually and collectively. It leads to doxological praise which shapes the theology and spirituality of the community of believers. Thus his couplet *context is text – text shapes context* and “the interrelationship among *lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi*”⁶²² serve as explanations of his method for liturgical theology.

For Fagerberg, the method of liturgical theology begins with the “Church’s worship in motion”, i.e. the actual celebration of the liturgy. Also, it involves the expansion of “the grammar by which one speaks about liturgy” to include theology and asceticism. The capacity to speak meaningfully (theologically) is made possible by liturgical asceticism. Hence, he maintains that liturgy, theology and asceticism are so intimately united that they cannot be separated from one another. Thus, liturgy gives birth to theology (*theologia prima*) so that theology can speak concretely and not abstractly for liturgy (Church).

2. Liturgy

The authors identify liturgy as the privileged place of encounter between God and man. The liturgy is for them a concrete action (event) and as such involves the active and full participation of the worshipping community, priests and the lay faithful alike. Liturgy does not exhaust itself only in the Eucharistic celebration (Vagaggini and Irwin) but in other extra-eucharistic activities. For Schmemmann and Fagerberg, it is the Eucharist that characterizes the liturgy since all the activities of the Church derive from it. It creates the Church and that explains why both of them prefer the Greek word *leitourgia* to “liturgy” which, for them, has lost its ecclesiological and eschatological meanings in the modern usage. However, all the authors agree that the Church has only one liturgy, i.e. Christ’s liturgy. Vagaggini and Irwin treated in detail some elements of the liturgy, to wit, Mass, sacraments and sacramentals, liturgical signs/symbols, arts, etc. Only Vagaggini gives a specific definition of liturgy.

3. Theology

The authors agree that theology is a science that helps one to find appropriate/ suitable word/s with which to speak to and about God. They all criticize a theology that is abstract i.e. one that does not lead to a deeper understanding of God and man. For

⁶²² Irwin, *Context And Text*, 311.

Vagaggini, theology remains the “supreme science”⁶²³ which consists “of two integral moments: the empirical-historical inductive moment and the ontological properly deductive moment”⁶²⁴. Irwin opines that the language of theology is effective when it describes rather than prescribes. He maintains that the provisional nature of theology makes it to cede to the reality it tries to describe, i.e. the reality of the Kingdom of God. Schmemmann and Fagerberg understand theology to be at the service of liturgy (*lex orandi*); hence, it should lead to a deeper understanding of the mysteries celebrated. Fagerberg stresses the interconnection among theology, liturgy and asceticism. Vagaggini makes no distinction between *theologia prima* and *theologia secunda*. Irwin makes a distinction and adds a third: *theologia tertia*. Schmemmann makes no clear distinction but speaks about school theology (scholastic theology) which is different from his own understanding of theology. Fagerberg makes distinctions between *theologia prima* and *theologia secunda*.

4. Relationship between liturgy and theology

We have pointed out above that the liturgy for them is the privileged place of encounter between God and man. They underscore also the theological content or value of liturgy but differ in the way how liturgy and theology relate to each other. Vagaggini opines that liturgy expresses the dogmas of the Church and helps to make some implicit dogmas explicit. That is to say that one can receive instinctively in the liturgy through the action of God (actual grace) the knowledge of divine truth. This truth, according to Vagaggini, though infallible, remains private because it cannot be communicated conceptually to others. Through the action of the Holy Spirit, who diffuses this truth to all (i.e. “*sensus Catholicus* in action”⁶²⁵), the competent teaching authority can then define it as “divine and Catholic faith”, so that it is no longer private but official for all. Hence, for him, liturgy can assist in making an implicit divine truth explicit. There is a mutual relationship between *lex orandi* and *lex credendi* or liturgy and theology, even though he gives more weight to theology, since liturgy according to him “is less precise conceptually than other means [...]”⁶²⁶ in manifesting the teachings of the magisterium. He traces the relationship between liturgy and theology from Prosper of Aquitaine through positive-scholastic theology. His conclusion as we have hinted above is a

⁶²³ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 545.

⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*, 631.

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*, 540.

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*, 518.

theological science that has two aspects— ontological and empirical-historical. The term *liturgical theology* means for him an exposition of “the theological structure of liturgy [...]”⁶²⁷, hence the title of his book: “*Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy. A General Treatise on the Theology of the Liturgy*”.

Irwin maintains that liturgy is an event which involves an act of theology. He distinguishes between *primary* theology— “the experience of liturgy (that) concerns direct address to God and encounter with God” from *secondary* theology—a “reflection on the act of liturgy as primary theology”⁶²⁸. There is a third distinction he calls “*theologia tertia*, which underscores the essential relatedness of liturgy to living Christian life”⁶²⁹. These three distinctions correspond respectively I would suppose⁶³⁰, to *lex orandi*, *lex credendi* and *lex vivendi*. With the dialectical relationship between *text* and *context* he underscores the mutual relationship between liturgy and theology. Liturgy is for him *locus theologicus* in two ways, namely, 1) it manifests *orthodox doxology* and 2) there “is the *integral vision* of the theological enterprise and the *genetic vision* of reality that is disclosed in”⁶³¹ it. He advocates an integral theology (i.e. a unitive discipline) which will “appropriate this maxim (*lex orandi, lex credendi*) in a way that avoids a ‘fideism’ in theology as well as a mere ‘philosophy of religion’ approach to theology”⁶³². This integral theology (i.e. liturgical theology) is also provisional and as such will cede to the reality of the Kingdom it tries to describe when it manifests itself. He traces the relationship between liturgy and theology from the precedents of Prosper of Aquitaine through Vatican II. For Irwin, the term *liturgical theology* “comprises the interrelationship among *lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi*”⁶³³.

Schmemmann opines that the maxim “*lex orandi lex est credendi*” (sic) explains the relationship between liturgy and theology. It makes the liturgy—understood as *leitourgia*—the basis of theology. This explains, according to him, why the Ordo is not just a set of rules but presupposes a theological content. The search for the meaning of Ordo constitutes the task of liturgical theology. The term *liturgical theology* means for

⁶²⁷ Ibid., 899.

⁶²⁸ Irwin, Context And Text, 45.

⁶²⁹ Ibid., 46.

⁶³⁰ He presents sometimes *lex orandi* as “larger” than *primary* theology because it involves the other two parts (*lex credendi* and *lex vivendi*).

⁶³¹ Irwin, Context And Text, 270-271.

⁶³² Ibid., 273.

⁶³³ Ibid., 311.

him restoring again to liturgy its theological status which according to him has been separated especially by school (scholastic) theology.

Fagerberg shares almost all the views of Schmemmann concerning the relationship between liturgy and theology. In his distinction between *theologia prima* and *theologia secunda* he makes it clear that *theologia prima* is real theology and must not depend on *theologia secunda* in order to possess this status (i.e. real theology). In contrast to Vagaggini who maintains that instinctive knowledge cannot be communicated conceptually, Fagerberg stresses that those who do *theologia prima* (i.e. those who participate in the liturgy like Mrs. Murphy) can theologize even though not in the secondary sense. They use a different language (natural language) which is open-ended and not specialized language that is more restrictive. He differs also from Irwin who identifies *secondary theology* with *liturgical theology*. For Fagerberg, *liturgical theology* has two characteristics, namely, “1) it is genuine theology, although it is *theologia prima* and not *theologia secunda* 2) and it is *lex orandi*”⁶³⁴.

5. “Ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi” - (the phrase credited to Prosper of Aquitaine)

Vagaggini and Irwin try to explore the meaning of this phrase in its original context. They agree that it does not say the whole truth about the relationship between liturgy and theology. Schmemmann and Fagerberg apply only the abridged form of the phrase *lex orandi, lex credendi* or “*lex orandi est lex credendi* (sic), (Schmemmann)” which they take to be the summary of how the early Church understands the relationship between liturgy and theology. They do not explore the original meaning of the entire phrase as it is reflected in *Indiculus*- a compilation credited to Prosper of Aquitaine.

6. Theology *of* liturgy and theology *drawn* from liturgy (Irwin); theology *of* worship and theology *from* worship (Fagerberg).

In their efforts to differentiate their own methods of liturgical theology from other methods, Irwin and Fagerberg maintain as follows, namely:

Irwin stresses that both approaches (theology *of* liturgy and theology *drawn* from liturgy) involve theological reflections on the liturgy that can help in developing liturgical theology, if the theologians allow liturgy to inform or shape their lives. That

⁶³⁴ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 41.

explains why he includes *lex vivendi (theologia tertia)* as part of the equation *lex orandi, lex credendi*.

Fagerberg considers the above approaches (theology of worship and theology from worship) as quite different from his own method since they deal with liturgy from outside. He assumes that the systematic theologian's sole purpose is to use liturgy to achieve his objectives. Thus, his own method of liturgical theology is different from the two methods since it begins with actual liturgies and does not necessarily require an outsider (secondary or school theologian).

However, as already noted, liturgical theology (*secondary* theology) is the reflection on the act of liturgy as *primary* theology (Irwin) and liturgical theology is *theologia prima* done in the actual celebration of the liturgy (Fagerberg). However, the subtle difference lies on the "act of reflection". For Irwin it is *secondary theology* and for Fagerberg it is *primary theology*. But from their expositions both perceptions do not exclude each other. While Irwin makes a transition from primary to secondary theology (implying that there are other sources of theology outside the concrete liturgy) Fagerberg remains at the primary (concrete liturgy i.e. where theological sources originate) and needs transition to secondary theology only when it is necessary; otherwise the primary level satisfies his notion of liturgical theology. Moreover, Vagaggini and Schmemmann (in his *Introduction*)⁶³⁵ do not make these distinctions but from their expositions they seem to be closer to Irwin than to Fagerberg.

7. Liturgy, Word of God and Tradition

All the authors agree that the Word of God finds its actualization in the liturgy. It is in the celebration of the liturgy that it is interpreted theologically according to the mind of the Church. Vagaggini and Irwin, especially, treat in detail the relationship between liturgy and the Word of God.

Furthermore, the authors agree on the importance of Tradition (or Holy Tradition as Schmemmann calls it) for the understanding of liturgy and theology of the Church. While Vagaggini and Irwin, on one hand, appreciate the "good" handed down by the early Church which is normative for any new development in the life of the Church, on the other hand, they do not see it as "a fixed corpus" which has been thought out fully by the Fathers. Thus, "tradition is something not in the past but the present shaped by past

⁶³⁵ Schmemmann distinguishes between liturgical theology and theology of liturgy in *Liturgy and Tradition. Theological Reflections of Alexander Schmemmann*, Thomas Fisch, ed., Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press 2003, 11f.

experience”⁶³⁶. Schmemmann and Fagerberg maintain that the Tradition is the measure of orthodoxy. Even though they do not advocate an “imitation of the Fathers”, they stress that the early Church or the Fathers have set a given standard on which other novelties could rest. For Fagerberg dogma does not add but only expand and elaborate the living Tradition, which he identifies with the Holy Spirit. This explains why both (Schmemmann and Fagerberg) emphasize the necessity of understanding again the *leitourgia* of the Church which will help to restore the theological status to liturgy (*lex orandi*) as basis of theology (*lex credendi*).

8. Liturgy: cosmological, ecclesiological and eschatological

Vagaggini maintains that liturgy is cosmological because it takes not only the human person seriously but also the infrahuman and angelic worlds. Incarnation as the realization of the sacred history in time, according to him, encompasses and unifies the whole universe. It is in the liturgy, i.e. in the celebration of the paschal mystery that the world is made anew. Irwin opines that the use of creation in liturgy shows how the liturgy appreciates and reveres creation as symbol of God’s knowledge and love. This leads, according to him, to an environmental ethics since liturgy or liturgical theology based on creation cannot but appreciate and care for the environment. Schmemmann and Fagerberg maintain that the essence of liturgy (*leitourgia*) is to declare the new Kingdom ushered in by Christ’s resurrection. Christians participate in the liturgy as ‘cosmological priests’ in order to return the praise of the world back to God. The world is redeemed by Christ and should no longer be seen in the categories of ‘sacred’ or ‘profane’.

Also, the ecclesiological dimension of liturgy is viewed by all the authors from different perspectives. Vagaggini and Irwin maintain that the liturgy does not exhaust itself in the Eucharist but in other extra-eucharistic activities of the Church. Even though they cite the Vatican II Council’s explanation of liturgy in SC 7 and 10 to buttress their arguments, they refrain from identifying it (liturgy) with the Church. Schmemmann and Fagerberg, on the other hand, opine that liturgy (*leitourgia*) creates and manifests the Church. In short, the liturgy as the celebration of the Eucharist, in which other sacraments are united, is identical with the Church. It is here, according to them, that the Church and her theology are born.

⁶³⁶ Irwin, Context And Text, 62.

Finally, with reference to the eschatological dimension of the liturgy, all the authors stress that liturgy reveals the redeemed world in Christ. In this way, the celebration of the liturgy manifests the foretaste of the heavenly Jerusalem yet to be realized fully, i.e. in the Parousia. But Schmemmann emphasizes more the necessity of returning to the early Church's understanding of the Church and the world based on this eschatological framework. He maintains that as the result of Christ's redemption the dichotomy between 'sacred' and 'profane' ceases to exist.

9. Liturgy and Ecumenism

Vagaggini maintains that the interest in the liturgy, occasioned by liturgical movements, has made some Churches to reevaluate their theologies and as a result helps to restore relationships among individual Churches. Irwin opines that one of the advantages of liturgical theology is that it provides a doxological language that is not abstract but rooted in the liturgy. Hence, it is a language of worship and can assist in ecumenism since the Churches believe what they celebrate in worship. Fagerberg opines that the grammar of faith that comes from liturgy (*leitourgia*) can be expressed in different forms provided that they are in line with Orthodoxy/ Tradition which guarantees their authenticity. The authors agree that the liturgy as an event that expresses the faith of the individual Churches can assist in ecumenical dialogue. Schmemmann does not treat this topic in his book, "*Introduction...*"

10. Liturgy: pastoral and spiritual aspects

All the authors stress the pastoral necessity of liturgy but it is only Vagaggini who tries to elaborate on this topic. They agree also that liturgy and life are intimately related, hence the spirituality of liturgy. While Schmemmann and Fagerberg treat it in general, Vagaggini and Irwin elaborate on the topic of liturgical spirituality. Fagerberg also emphasizes the importance of asceticism (prayer) in doing liturgical theology.

11. The Jewish roots of Christian liturgy

All the authors agree on the Jewish roots of the Christian worship but the manner each author tries to differentiate it (Jewish worship) from Christian worship differs. Vagaggini is more emphatic in presenting the inferiority of the Jewish worship to Christian worship. Schmemmann maintains the transcendence of the Christian worship over the Jewish worship based on the theology of time (eschatological understanding of

time) which the Jews and the Christians interpret differently. Irwin and Fagerberg do not treat this topic as detailed as Vagaggini and Schmemmann. They refer simply to the differences without making the Jewish worship appear inferior.

12. General

Vagaggini emphasizes in detail the whole of liturgy as “the complexus of the sensible and efficacious signs of the Church’s sanctification and of her worship”.

Irwin maintains that liturgical inculturation is imperative for full and active participation in the liturgy. He recommends especially the revision of the euchological texts that are suitable to the situation of the Christians in southern hemisphere. He introduces “critical liturgical theology” which will help to cast a critical eye on the theological meaning of the celebrated rites and not only on the liturgical texts.

Schmemmann maintains that liturgical theology or the science of liturgics should be a separate discipline with “its own special subject—the liturgical tradition of the Church [...]”⁶³⁷. The secondary layer of Ordo, according to him, does not obscure the structures of Ordo which are based on the early Church’s understanding of the Eucharist and the Liturgy of Time (which of course have Jewish roots).

Fagerberg maintains that the liturgical community can theologize because it has been capacitated by the theological grammar it learned from liturgy (*leitourgia*).

The next chapter will focus on the general evaluation of the authors and on the conclusion that closes the whole presentation.

⁶³⁷ Schmemmann, Introduction to Liturgical Theology, 19.

CHAPTER SIX
6. EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

One can easily observe from the summaries and from Chapter Five (on similarities and differences) that the authors have different understandings of the notion of liturgical theology. The task before us is to evaluate their positions, part of which we have tried to do above (i.e. at the end of each summary on the authors), and then draw some conclusions.

I appreciate Vagaggini's definition of liturgy as "the complexus of the sensible and efficacious signs of the Church's sanctification and of her worship"⁶³⁸. It is a definition that bridges the dichotomy between symbol/sign and reality. By so doing, he presents God as the 'brain' behind the liturgy. God decides out of His own free will on how to relate to man and allows man to relate to Him through the conditions He deems necessary and appropriate. For Vagaggini, liturgy should be seen primarily as the privileged place of encounter between God and man and not as the *didascalia* of the magisterium or an essential part of tradition that provides "a historical proof of the apostolicity of the doctrine of the Church"⁶³⁹. However, this notion of liturgy enables him to position it as central for the understanding of the sacred history (revelation) that is realized in the paschal mystery of Christ. It is, therefore, not surprising when he opines that "the question of the relations between liturgy and theology must be considered essentially as a theological question and not as a liturgical question [...]"⁶⁴⁰. It is theological in the sense that the treatises handled by dogmatic theology find their home in liturgy. Therefore, theological science must consist "of two integral moments: the empirical-historical inductive moment and the ontological properly deductive moment"⁶⁴¹. This approach helps him to balance the theology of the Fathers (who viewed it as gnosis or wisdom) and the scholastics—represented by Thomas Aquinas (who considered it "as science of the entitative aspect of revelation"⁶⁴²) and the positive-scholastics (who viewed it in apologetic-historical and entitative aspects) in their efforts to integrate liturgy in their theological enterprise.⁶⁴³

⁶³⁸ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 27.

⁶³⁹ *Ibid.*, 570.

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 545.

⁶⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 631.

⁶⁴² *Ibid.*, 626-627.

⁶⁴³ Cf. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 626f.

Another area of interest is on the topic of “Liturgy and Life” where he elaborates on the spiritual and pastoral dimensions of liturgy. Again he presents liturgy as the end and goal of liturgical spirituality and liturgical pastoral. However, even though he emphasizes the centrality of liturgy in the understanding of revelation (sacred history) as realized in the paschal mystery he seems to give more weight to theology in their interrelationship. He maintains that liturgy “is less precise conceptually than other means [...]”⁶⁴⁴ in manifesting the faith of the Church. It behooves the theologian to give a theological judgment at the end of “philological and critical-historical research”⁶⁴⁵ on the elements of liturgy. This will help to determine what is to be believed and what not to be believed in the liturgy. In this way, the doctrinal aspect of liturgy appears to be more important than the actual encounter which informs the lives of the faithful. This can also offer some explanations why he does not elaborate on the action of the Holy Spirit in the whole liturgy, the action that he invokes always in conjunction with the teaching authority of the Church.

I find Schmemmann’s definition of liturgical theology as “the elucidation of the meaning of worship”⁶⁴⁶ very useful for the method he employs in his book. This enables him to trace the two parts of Ordo—the Eucharist (which includes other sacraments) and the Liturgy of Time—down to the Jewish worship. Even though the understanding of Christians is different from Jewish conception of time and cult he believes that the Jewish root of Christian worship is not debatable. He acknowledges the influence of the pagan mystery cult or religion on the Christian worship but insists that the two cults are different. It is here that I find his treatment of the “religious piety” very interesting since it helps to explain why some changes occur in the forms of worship.

Schmemmann stresses the importance of liturgical tradition or Holy Tradition in the understanding of liturgical theology. However, it is not clear what this tradition is, especially when one invokes it as an authority. He cites the early Church as standard, especially in its eschatological understanding of worship, but one is not sure whether this understanding is still tenable for the modern mind. The task of liturgical theology, I suppose, is not limited to discovering the riches of the past as if the present has little to contribute, but more in interpreting it (the past) according to the signs of the times

⁶⁴⁴ Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy*, 518.

⁶⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 519.

⁶⁴⁶ Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, 16.

(present and future). From the title of his book “*Introduction...*” one can assume that it is only a beginning of his expositions on the topic of liturgical liturgy.

Irwin uses his method to offer a broader view of liturgy. His application of the couplet: *context is text—text shapes context* enables him to drive home his point. Firstly, the component elements of liturgy can only be understood theologically in their celebrated contexts (ecclesial or cultural). Secondly, liturgy considered as enacted rites helps to shape the life of the participants (individually and collectively). Hence, “liturgy leads to a kind of theology and spirituality that permeates the believing community’s whole life in such a way that liturgy necessarily (re)creates and (re)shapes both theology and spirituality derived from liturgy”⁶⁴⁷. Thus the distinctions he makes between *primary theology* and *secondary theology* as well as between *theology of liturgy* and *theology drawn from liturgy* are meant to show different parts of one reality: liturgical theology. This explains why his understanding of liturgical theology is more comprehensive, i.e. —“interrelationship among *lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi*”. Again, there is a practical aspect of his liturgical theology i.e., involvement of the believer in the act of liturgy in order to enable him to appreciate the riches of liturgy which in turn shapes his life (theologically and spiritually). There is also a theoretical aspect which involves a transition from *primary theology* to *secondary theology* in which the language of theology derived from liturgy—doxological in nature— is descriptive and not prescriptive or abstract. Irwin maintains that this kind of theological language can assist in ecumenical dialogue since it is derived from liturgy. Again, his emphasis on the provisional nature of liturgy and theology helps to position them as ‘human efforts’ to explain what is inexplicable and therefore must cede to the reality they try to explain. Irwin acknowledges as “elusive”, the task of developing “liturgical theology based on the multifaceted *event* called liturgy”⁶⁴⁸.

However, his application of so many terminologies namely “*lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi, theologia prima, theologia secunda, theologia tertia, lex agendi, doxological theology, orthodox doxology*” which he uses to argue his way through are not easily understandable. Again the couplet: *context is text—text shapes context* sometimes appear confusing. The *text* can mean rites and liturgy as enacted rites. The *context* can mean liturgy, or ecclesial/ cultural contexts or the life of the believers. It is not easy to understand how the “ongoing dialectical relationship between *text* and

⁶⁴⁷ Irwin, *Context And Text*, 276.

⁶⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 32.

*context*⁶⁴⁹ plays itself out. In general, I find his work very interesting and enriching especially in his broader understanding of liturgy.

Fagerberg has a mission and that is to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the community of believers who participate in the liturgy (*leitourgia*) has been capacitated to theologize through the theological grammar it learned from the liturgy. He calls this type of theology, *theologia prima* and not *theologia secunda* since it is done in actual liturgies and not in the universities. He maintains that *theologia prima* is possible because of the interrelationship among liturgy, theology and asceticism. He opines that the dichotomy which has been made to exist between them has contributed in reducing liturgy to the field of pious people (non- theologians) and theology to the field of the elite (theologians). I find the way he identifies every baptized Christian as a ‘liturgist’ or a ‘liturgical theologian’ very appropriate. It is an acknowledgement that the liturgical community is not passive but active in the liturgy. A liturgical theologian like Mrs. Murphy “may not have been able to *speak about theology* before taking a university course, but she was able to *speak theologically about* God, world, and herself according to the grammar of faith imparted by liturgical theology”⁶⁵⁰. Again, his distinction between the ‘thick sense’ and ‘thin sense’ of liturgy enables him to position the latter (of human origin) as subordinate to the former (of divine origin).

Fagerberg continues to speak about a definition of liturgical theology, but one discovers that he makes effort to give his own understanding of it. It is not clear whether there is a distinction between liturgical theology, the theological grammar of liturgy and *leitourgia*. It seems that liturgy or *leitourgia* exhausts itself in *theologia prima* and can only need *theologia secunda* for some purposes. Hence, his “derivative liturgical theology” could mean an attempt by secondary theologians like Schmemmann and Germanus to explain the *theologia prima* of the community.

An attempt to synthesize the views of these authors

The views of these authors, however, are only a cross-section of some notions of Catholic and Orthodox theologians on the topic of liturgical theology. As we indicated in the introduction, it has not been easy for the theologians to elucidate the relationship between liturgy and theology. The debate whether there is a mutual relationship between liturgy and theology or whether liturgy or theology should be given priority is

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid., 56.

⁶⁵⁰ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 138.

still ongoing. I highly appreciate the efforts of these authors since they have given us some insights into the topic. Their different approaches help us to understand that the task of liturgical theology is not as easy as one would think. In spite of all, I see a possibility of synthesizing their viewpoints with regard to shedding more light on the relationship between liturgy and theology. This explains, however, why it is no longer necessary to present other contrary views since Irwin (in Part One of his book above) and Fagerberg (in his distinction between “theology *of* worship and theology *from* worship”) have furnished us with a good analysis of them. Nevertheless, the notion of liturgical theology among Protestant theologians requires a different master thesis. Most of them maintain that theology (doctrine) should determine the manner in which worship is conducted, even though some see a mutual relationship between liturgy and theology (e.g. Wainwright).

If we begin with what is common to the four authors, we can say that none of them is in doubt about the theological value or content of liturgy. That is to say that liturgy is a milieu where the content of the sacred history is reenacted. Sacred history, no doubt, involves the activities of God and man; hence liturgy presents a divine and a human dimension. If we assume that the divine aspect of the liturgy (because God initiates this relationship) takes precedence over the human aspect, then, it may not be out of place to conclude that the human aspect is at the service of the divine aspect. Man cooperates with God in realizing certain aspects of salvation history. Thus, man’s theology can be said to be man’s effort (of course with the assistance of divine grace) to understand this relationship in a deeper way. Therefore, there appears to be a kind of “incarnational” relationship between God and man because man, cannot without God (we may say liturgy) understand (we may say theology) this (relationship) fully.

However, there is no doubt that the tendency is always there to argue whether liturgy or theology should take priority, but in reality it is God who is operative in His Church (liturgy and theology). Schmemmann maintains that *leitourgia* or the Church is “the ontological condition of theology, [...] because it is in the Church, of which the *leitourgia* is the expression and the life, that the sources of theology are functioning as precisely ‘sources’”⁶⁵¹. However, we may not get into the intricacies of explaining the theological meaning of the Church because of the limited nature of this master thesis. But if we assume that the Church is the people of God as the Second Vatican Council

⁶⁵¹ Fisch, Thomas (ed.): *Liturgy and Tradition. Theological Reflections of Alexander Schmemmann*, Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press 2003, 18.

explains, then it is possible that the people of God at worship experience sanctification from God and also speak theologically to and about God in and outside the liturgical act. Furthermore, if theology means speaking about God not only intellectually but also doxologically, where else can the people of God achieve this ultimate end if not in the Church? I do not mean here only the physical structure but wherever the people of God gather to worship God and receive sanctification from Him. As the privileged place of encounter there is what Kavanagh describes as “deep change in the very lives of those who participate in the liturgical act. [...] It is the *adjustment* which is theological in all this. I hold that it is theology being born, theology in the first instance. It is what tradition has called *theologia prima*”⁶⁵². There is no doubt that this “deep change” as well as the “*adjustment*” will be experienced by the people of God according to their intellectual, moral and spiritual capabilities. But does it justify the strict distinction between *theologia prima* and *theologia secunda* or *liturgy and theology*? We acknowledge the fact that faith grows or develops both in the act of liturgy and outside the liturgical act (Vagaggini/Irwin). But development or growth here should not be seen as a radical change or an addition of foreign elements but a gradual and systematic involvement of all parts. Thus, according to Vogel, “[o]nce one begins to talk about primary theology, it becomes secondary theology. [...] The primary experience itself can be enriched and enlivened through reflection and analysis”⁶⁵³.

I understand the fact that it is necessary sometimes to differentiate when the theologians (‘secondary theologians’ especially) are defending the doctrine of the Church and when they are at worship. In their defense of the Church they use the knowledge and experience they acquired both in the liturgy and outside of liturgy to do it. But it does not mean that the ‘primary theologians’ do not defend the Church either. They do so more with their lives than with ‘scholarly’ explanations. For instance, the words of Christ to his disciples: “and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth”⁶⁵⁴ (Acts 1:8) means simply “you” (the apostles and when extended- the Church i.e. all the baptized Christians). Again Peter’s admonition to the Christians of his time: “[a]lways be prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence”⁶⁵⁵ (1 Pt. 3:15), does not distinguish between primary and secondary theologians. Finally, in

⁶⁵² Kavanagh, Aidan: *On Liturgical Theology*, Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press 1992, 74.

⁶⁵³ Vogel, Dwight W. (ed.): *Primary Sources of Liturgical Theology*, Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press 2000, 8.

⁶⁵⁴ The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition, San Francisco: Ignatius Press ²2006.

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

one of his addresses, Paul VI stresses that "[m]odern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses"⁶⁵⁶. Therefore in the words of Chan, "[i]n whatever way we understand the relationship, belief and worship are so inextricably linked that separation can only undermine the integrity of both doctrine and worship"⁶⁵⁷. Hence, the people of God are active both in the liturgy and outside the liturgical act. That means that there is no mutual relationship in the sense of a liturgy 'out there' and a theology 'out there' trying to enriching one other. The Church or *leitourgia* as already indicated is where "the sources of theology are functioning as precisely 'sources'". Hence, when there are problems regarding belief or the act of worship in the Church, they are deliberated upon and the theologians as members of the community (Church) examine the problems and redirect the community (i.e. themselves) to its source (Christ). Hence, it is less a question of doctrinal control than more of the liturgical community reforming itself. This explains why Schmemmann maintains that "[t]he problem of the relationship between liturgy and theology is not for the Fathers a problem of priority or authority"⁶⁵⁸. It is the Church that reforms and updates herself.

Furthermore, when the Church—the people of God—carries out some reforms, it is not as if the members of the clergy (magisterium, theologians) were reforming the 'abuses' of the laity (pious people, maybe nontheologians). The Church reforms herself! She reads simply "the signs of the times" and interprets "them in the light of the Gospel [...]"⁶⁵⁹. However, I do not think the Church does it because of some superstitious or syncretistic attitudes of the laity as if to say that the clergy is immune from such things. I do not wish to take sides but to state the fact of history. It is on record that many of the so-called "heretics" were all educated theologians. Most of them were members of the clergy. They were not "ordinary Christians" or "simple laity" if I may use the terms. Even before the Reformation, many abuses that found their way into the Church's liturgy were not introduced by the laity. I do not exclude them either. Therefore, the fact of theology critiquing liturgy and vice versa should not be understood as something which occurs outside of the Church. The people of God (the Church) are reforming themselves. The point I wish to make is that there is no need for this rigid distinction

⁶⁵⁶ Paul VI. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 1975, 41.

⁶⁵⁷ Chan, Simon: *Liturgical Theology. The Church as Worshiping Community*, Madison: Inter Varsity Press, 2006, 52.

⁶⁵⁸ *Liturgy and Tradition*, 18.

⁶⁵⁹ Flannery, A. (ed.): *Vatican Council II. The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, Bandra, Mumbai: ST PAULS 2001, GS, 4.

between primary and secondary theologians or between liturgy and theology. If the people of God are liturgists (Fagerberg) who have learned the theological grammar, then they are no less active theologians in the Church. Again, if “liturgy necessarily (re)creates and (re)shapes both theology and spirituality” of the believer (Irwin), then when the theologians are carrying out reforms in the liturgy, for example, they are not doing it, as if they were employed to do so or as if they are doing it simply *for* the Church. The theologians (both primary and secondary) are reforming themselves in the Church. They are trying to adjust themselves to the “signs of the times”. If we accept this fact to be true, then the words of Evagrius of Pontus find their justification: “If you are a theologian you truly pray. If you truly pray you are a theologian”⁶⁶⁰.

However, our effort has been to synthesize the positions of the above authors towards understanding better the notion of liturgical theology. None of the authors has the whole truth about this relationship, but as we noted above, they have made some important contributions that can help in developing further this understanding. If we regard the Church as the people of God, then everything happens in the Church. Liturgical theology, I would suppose, is not merely a way of returning to the past (i.e. trying to find out when the dichotomy between liturgy and theology actually started) but more of a way of reforming the Church, i.e. by being aware of the present changes around and interpreting them according to the mind of Christ. Again, it is not necessary to tread cautiously when one is speaking about “liturgy” just because of the historical past (i.e. several Reformers and some modernists who consider/ed liturgy as superstitious and product of fickle-minded people respectively). The abuse of a thing, as we all know, does not destroy its use. Liturgy remains the “summit” and “fount” of Church’s life. Thus, liturgical theology should be seen as how the Church, i.e. the people of God, lives daily (liturgically and theologically or theologically and liturgically). Therefore, if we accept the fact that each individual experiences God in a personal way, and that the liturgy we participate in, is the liturgy of Christ, who is the High Priest of God, then there is need to exercise some restraint in the manner we make some distinctions. God is at work in His Church as well as in each individual Christian. I echo the views of some theologians who maintain that the liturgical reform should be more of the reform of the hearts than of the structures in the church. This is the task of liturgical theology which is in the final analysis the task of the Church (the people of God). I agree with both Irwin who maintains that the task of developing liturgical theology from liturgy is

⁶⁶⁰ Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima*, 6.

‘elusive’ and Fagerberg who opines that the difficult task of liturgical theology cannot be done “at one sitting by one person”⁶⁶¹. The task continues to demand more imputes from the people of God. True, the Church does not exhaust itself in the liturgy but in other extra-eucharistic activities of the Church. This implies that there is no substantial break with liturgy considered as “the most common, ordinary and accessible manifestation of the Church”⁶⁶². Hence, it is necessary to elucidate more the relationship between the Church and her liturgy especially with regard to statement of the Constitution on the Liturgy which says: “Nevertheless, the liturgy is the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the fount from which all her power flows”⁶⁶³. Maybe, at the end, it would appear that the task of liturgical theology means another thing than what one usually takes it to be. I assume that the outcome might turn out to be that the whole effort to explain the notion of liturgical theology has been another way of trying to understanding “what the Church simply means for us (the people of God)”.

⁶⁶¹ Ibid., 218.

⁶⁶² Martimort, A.G et al. (ed.): *The Church At Prayer. An Introduction to the Liturgy*, transl. Matthew J. O’Connell [Principles of the Liturgy. Vol. I], Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press 1987, 94. [The quotation is part of the foot note (25) commentary of A.G Martimort on the Chapter: The Liturgical Assembly Manifests The Church]

⁶⁶³ Austin Flannery, Vatican II, SC 10.

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