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Hermeneutic of Reform in the Latin Liturgy. The Theological and Historical Aspect

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Abstract

Hermeneutic of Reform in the Latin Liturgy. The Theological and Historical Aspect

The hermeneutic of reform, as a concept recalled by Benedict XVI at the outset of his pontificate with reference to liturgy, indicates the ability to explain, practice and interpret it in relation to the Tradition of the Church. However, it is necessary to look at this term a bit more broadly than it is suggested by the supporters of celebrating the Holy Mass in the extraordinary form of the Roman rite. Liturgy as performance of the public worship of God must be perceived simultaneously as a theological and canonical reality, but always in a complex historical context. This undoubtedly allows us to better understand the current form of the Eucharist performed. The renewal initiated at the Second Vatican Council and sealed with the subsequent actions of the Holy See, has resulted in the proposal of a liturgy, which is a logical expression of the Ecclesiastical Tradition, and at the same time remains understandable to the faithful of the present era.

Keywords: liturgy, public worship of God, liturgical movement, Second Vatican Council

Abstrakt

Hermeneutyka reformy w liturgii łacińskiej. Aspekt teologiczny i historyczny

Hermeneutyka reformy, jako pojęcie przypomniane przez Benedykta XVI na progu jego pontyfikatu w odniesieniu do liturgii, wskazuje na umiejętność objaśniania, praktykowania oraz jej interpretowania w odniesieniu do Tradycji Kościoła. Trzeba jednak to określenie rozumieć nieco szerzej, niż sugerują zwolennicy celebrowania Mszy Świętej w nadzwyczajnej formie rytu rzymskiego. Liturgia jako sprawowanie publicznego kultu Bożego musi być postrzegana jako rzeczywistość teologiczna i kanoniczna zarazem, ale zawsze w złożonym kontekście historycznym. To niewątpliwie pozwala lepiej zrozumieć obecny kształt sprawowanej Eucharystii. Skutkiem odnowy zapoczątkowanej na Soborze Watykańskim II i przypieczętowanej późniejszymi działaniami Stolicy Apostolskiej stało się zaproponowanie takiej liturgii, która jest logicznym wyrazem Tradycji Kościoła, a przy tym pozostaje zrozumiała dla wiernych obecnej epoki.

Słowa kluczowe: liturgia, publiczny kult Boży, ruch liturgiczny, Sobór Watykański II

Liturgy is the summoning of the people of God by Christ himself and at the same time the exercise of the public worship of God in the Church. Considering the words of the Lord Jesus: “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Mt 18:20), one can be convinced that He is truly present among His people. In addition, the Holy Spirit, who inaugurated the Christian liturgy, makes presents in them what Jesus did from his incarnation to ascension¹. Christ—as Rupert Berger pointed out—allows the faithful to actively participate in the Easter sacrament and enables them to make a thanksgiving sacrifice. For this reason, the Eucharist is always at the centre of liturgical rites. It is only around it that the celebrations of the other sacraments are centred. The liturgy itself is an activity of the whole Church, which—as a hierarchically formed assembly of God’s people—derives its power from it².

Since the very beginning, the public worship of God has been an object of interest not only to theology, but also to ecclesiastical law. Even if the participants of the liturgy sometimes lack such awareness, valid and proper celebration of the sacraments is the result of theological reflection and legal order. Although the reception initiated by the Second Vatican Council emphasized freedom in the liturgy, attaching greater value to accommodation in worship-related activities, its celebration is still in line with the Tradition of the Church and is a subject to its specific regulations, which are generally regulated by the *Code of Canon Law* (can. 834–839 CIC), while detailed rites and ceremonies—in accordance with can. 2 *Codex Iuris Canonici*—are specified in the liturgical books and in the legislation of the Holy See³. However, all the norms that define the public worship of God must be integrated with each other in such a way that they can be applied—as Benedict XVI suggested—in accordance with the hermeneutic of reform⁴.

¹ B. Nadolski, *Liturgika*, 1: *Liturgika fundamentalna*, Poznań 1989, p. 17.

² R. Berger, *Mały słownik liturgiczny*, Poznań 1990, p. 76–77.

³ T. Rincón Pérez, *La liturgia e i sacramenti nel diritto della Chiesa*, ed. A. S. Sánchez-Gil, Roma 2018, p. 45.

⁴ J. Ratzinger, V. Messori, *Raport o stanie wiary. Z Ks. Kardynałem Josephem Ratzingerem rozmawia Vittorio Messori*, trans. Z. Oryszyn, J. Chrapek, Kraków–Warszawa 1986, p. 29.

The above-mentioned wording was used by Benedict XVI in 2005 during the keynote speech given by the Pope to the employees of the Roman Curia. He wanted to make them aware, that the Second Vatican Council should not be perceived in terms of breaking with the Tradition of the Church but should be viewed as an expression of its legitimate development⁵. Moreover, in the hermeneutic of reform one should not go back only to the resolutions of the Council of Trent, but discover the richness of the Church, starting with the activity of Christ and the Apostles. In response to the achievements of the last six decades, Benedict XVI, in a letter of October 7, 2022, to the Rector of the Franciscan University of Steubenville stated that the Second Vatican Council was not only relevant but also necessary. Benedict XVI supported his thesis with the statement of Romano Guardini, who wrote after the First World War that a process of great importance had begun – the awakening of the Church in souls⁶. The belief in the mystical Body of Christ, where He is the head, and the faithful people are as its individual members, penetrated with slightly greater force also into the way of looking at the liturgy at the beginning of the 20th century. After all, it is a living reality, and as such it grows and renews itself both in terms of its reception and its final form⁷. This study is a theological and historical contribution to a greater understanding of the changes taking place in the public worship of God, which

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- 5 Benedict XVI, *Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia offering them his Christmas greetings*, Dec 22, 2005, https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2005/december/documents/hf_ben_xvi_spe_20051222_roman-curia.html (Oct 26, 2023); Benedictus XVI, *Adhortatio apostolica Sacramentum caritatis de Eucharistia vitae missionisque Ecclesiae fonte et culmine*, Feb 22, 2007, „Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 99 (2007) no. 3, p. 106–107; W. Świerzański, *Hermeneutyka w liturgii*, „Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 24 (1971) no. 2–3, p. 131–132, <https://doi.org/10.21906/rbl.3176>; S. Zatwardnicki, *Hermeneutyka reformy – hermeneutyka wiary*, „Teologia w Polsce” 10 (2016) no. 2, p. 141–142, <https://doi.org/10.31743/twp.2016.10.2.09>.
 - 6 Benedict XVI, *Letter to the President Franciscan University of Steubenville*, Dec 7, 2022, p. 2, <http://www.fondazioneeratzinger.va/content/dam/fondazioneeratzinger/foto-news/Letter%20of%20Pope%20Benedict%20to%20Father%20Dave-steubenville-pivonka%20eng.pdf> (Dec 26, 2023); *Katolicka Agencja Informacyjna, Benedykt XVI: II Sobór Watykański był sensowny i konieczny*, <https://www.ekai.pl/benedykt-xvi-ii-sobor-watykanski-byl-sensowny-i-konieczny/> (Dec 26, 2023).
 - 7 J. Ratzinger, *Organiczny rozwój liturgii*, „Christianitas” 23–24 (2005), p. 394.

in its form cannot remain detached from the Tradition of the Church but must be its logical expression.

1. Actions of Jesus Christ and the Apostles

The origins of the Latin liturgy stem primarily from the very actions of Jesus Christ, who indicated in the New Testament that the worship owed to God is to be performed in Spirit and truth (Jn 4:24). He also specified the general indications referring to the Eucharist and the sacraments. By sending his disciples, he commanded them to go and teach all nations, “baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit” (Mt 28:19). However, instituting the Eucharist

He took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me”. And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you” (Lk 22:19–20)⁸.

The manner of celebrating the liturgy presented on the pages of the Bible is undoubtedly a prototype for the next generations. The Apostles, responsible by Christ’s own mandate for jurisdiction over Christian worship, were the creators of the first laws relating to the celebration of the Holy Mass⁹. They reminded the emerging Christian communities of what the criteria of the Church’s authenticity were. First of all—as St. Luke pointed out—it was necessary to persist “to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers” (Acts 2:42). St. Paul, on the other hand, gave clear instructions to the addressees in his letters to accept his advice, orders and prohibitions, because he only gave them what he had received from the Lord in the Eucharist (1 Cor 11:23). And the author of the Epistle to

8 A. Montan, *Liturgia—iniziazione cristiana—Eucaristia—penitenza—unzione degli infermi—ordine* (cann. 834–1054), in: *Il diritto nel mistero della Chiesa. La funzione di santificare della Chiesa. 3: I beni temporali della Chiesa. Le sanzioni nella Chiesa. I processi—Chiesa e comunità politica* (Libri IV, V, VI, VII del Codice), a cura di Gruppo italiano docenti di diritto canonico, Roma 1992, p. 24.

9 B. Esposito, *Il rapporto del Codice di Diritto canonico latino con le leggi liturgiche. Commento esegetico-sistematico al can. 2 del CIC/83, „Angelicum” 82 (2005), p. 142.*

the Hebrews pointed out from the very beginning that it is not right for Christians to leave religious gatherings, because they are a promise of a second encounter with God (Heb 10:25)¹⁰.

In the celebration of the liturgy, the first Christians applied the language used in everyday speech, namely Aramaic, Hebrew or Greek. They used unleavened or sourdough bread and fermented wine or grape juice. As part of the Eucharist they celebrated, Sacramental Communion was envisaged, which was then administered in two forms. At the beginning, the followers of Christ practiced the worship of God in two ways, referring on the one hand to the Hebrew sources of their faith, and on the other hand to the breaking of bread practiced in households (Acts 4:24–30). Therefore, they gathered for services of the word in the temple or synagogues, and also separately for the Eucharistic celebration. Eventually, they were joined together. Then they started the assembly by reading the biblical texts, reading the Law and the Prophets, later the Apostolic Epistles and Gospels were added, and Psalms were sung. Then, the gifts were prepared, a prayer of thanksgiving was said, the bread was broken, and Holy Communion was concluded, so that their meetings would retain the character of a Passover feast¹¹.

2. Liturgy in the age of the Church Fathers

Theological reflection undertaken during the patristic period resulted in the form of the liturgy, which was not only based on biblical testimony, but also on the custom. It was accepted by the Community so that it would become in consequence the binding law¹². The first Christians did not begin shaping common life by creating written legal norms. These were created later and were essentially a response to difficulties of a more practical nature. In this way, for example, a work called *Didache*

10 J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych. Zarys prawodawstwa liturgicznego*, Poznań 2004, p. 29–30; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne Kościoła łacińskiego*, Wrocław 2019, p. 44–45.

11 B. Mokrzycki, *Droga chrześcijańskiego wtajemniczenia*, Warszawa 1983, p. 413–415; T. Sinka, *Liturgika*, Kraków 1997, p. 50–53; M. Kołodziej, *Zgromadzenie liturgiczne w świetle Katechizmu Kościoła katolickiego*, Wrocław 2016, p. 26–27.

12 A. Montan, *Liturgia – iniziazione cristiana – Eucaristia – penitenza – unzione degli infermi – ordine* (cann. 834–1054), p. 21–22.

was created, the creation of which is attributed to the period of 70–150. It contains guidelines related to the pre-baptismal catechesis and the admission of new members to the Church community, the use of so-called living water when administering holy baptism, fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays, saying the *Our Father* prayer three times a day, or the necessity of gathering for a Holy Mass on Sunday. In *Didache*, it is also possible to find remarks about the structure of the Eucharist and fragments of the first Eucharistic prayers¹³.

Apart from *Didache*, the *Apology* of St. Justin from the year 150 also merits attention. The provisions it contains refer to the treatment of neophytes, as well as the character of an orderly manner of distributing Holy Communion during the liturgy and outside the Holy Mass. We must agree with the thesis that the first centuries of Christianity were a period of improvisation in the liturgy. Therefore, the texts and prayer formulas were created primarily by the priests practicing the public worship of God. This is confirmed by the indications given by St. Justin contained in *Apology*. The author, describing the ceremony of giving thanks to God for gifts, pointed out that then the priest said as many prayers as he could [*ose dynamis auto*]¹⁴. Permissible improvisation in the liturgy was also mentioned in the *Apostolic Tradition* created around AD 220, which, in addition to the text of the Eucharistic Prayer supplied in it, contained indications whereby it was not necessary to repeat the same words constantly during the Holy Mass, because each priest had the right to improvise, according to his skills¹⁵.

In the first half of the 4th century, the liturgy in Rome was celebrated in the everyday language of the inhabitants, being Latin, which generally completely replaced Greek. Pope Damasus I (366–384) contributed to this process. In addition to the introduction of the liturgical language understood by all the faithful, the Pope undertook efforts to maintain

¹³ J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych*, p. 30–31; Ł. Korporowicz, *Prawo liturgiczne Kościoła łacińskiego a Kodeks prawa kanonicznego z 1983 roku. Wybrane zagadnienia*, „*Studia Prawno-Ekonomiczne*” 41 (2014) no. 1, p. 26; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 45.

¹⁴ Justyn, *Apologia* I, 67, 5, quoted after: J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych*, p. 31.

¹⁵ Hipolit, *Prex eucharistica* in „*Traditio apostolica*”, quoted after: J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych*, p. 31; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 45–46.

a common discipline in the Church¹⁶. This way of thinking was undoubtedly influenced by the historical context. When Christianity became not only an accepted religion (313), but also a state religion (381), and thus the number of believers greatly increased, the hierarchy in the Church also grew, so more legislation in the field of liturgical law was necessary¹⁷. It was then that the process of transitioning from the period of improvisation to the practice of approving texts at episcopal synods began¹⁸.

The era when the transition from improvisation to the codification of liturgical regulations took place is well reflected in the maxim of *lex orandi – lex credendi*, whose author was Prosper from Aquitaine, living in the 5th century. He pointed to the necessity of maintaining the correct relationship between dogma and liturgy, as well as between theory and practice. According to him, priestly rites and invocations – passed down by the Apostles – are to be carried out in the same way throughout the world, because *legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi* [the law of what is prayed [is] the law of what is believed]¹⁹. This formulation by Prospero of Aquitaine was first used in the letter of Pope Celestine I to the bishops of Gaul. It was also known to the creator of *Sacramentarium Veronese*, wrongly attributed to Pope Leo the Great. And what followed from it was that the Church must pray in the way it believes, and the liturgy itself should be a constitutive element of its entire Tradition. Therefore,

16 R. Civil, *La Liturgia e le sue leggi*, in: *Anamnesis, 1: La liturgia, momento nella storia della salvezza*, Casale Monferrato 1983, p. 186; J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych*, p. 32; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 46–47.

17 R. Civil, *La Liturgia e le sue leggi*, p. 185; J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych*, p. 31; Ł. Korporowicz, *Prawo liturgiczne Kościoła łacińskiego*, p. 26; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 46.

18 B. Esposito, *Il rapporto del Codice di Diritto canonico latino con le leggi liturgiche*, p. 143; J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych*, p. 32–33; Ł. Korporowicz, *Prawo liturgiczne Kościoła łacińskiego*, p. 28–29; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 47.

19 *Prosperi Aquitani, De gratia Dei et libero voluntatis arbitrio*, in: *Sancti Prosperi Aquitani, Opera omnia, tomus unicus, accurante J.-P. Migne, cap. 7, c. 275, Parisiis 1844–1855*, p. 209 (*Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Latina*, 51); P. De Clerck, *Zrozumieć liturgię*, trans. S. Czerwik, Kielce 1997, p. 62; M. Kołodziej, *Zgromadzenie liturgiczne jako rzeczywistość teologiczno-kanoniczna w ministerialnym posługiwaniu Kościoła*, Wrocław 2012, p. 283; R. Civil, *La Liturgia e le sue leggi*, p. 186; J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych*, p. 35; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 47–48.

in order to preserve the unity of faith, it is also necessary to observe the unity of liturgical forms²⁰.

3. The period of the Roman liturgy development

Emperor Charlemagne was a supporter of unifying the liturgy, which was initiated by Pope Damasus I. In the 9th century, this ruler set himself the goal of building a *civitas Dei* in Europe based on the Sacramentary of Rome whereby each country would follow one and the same liturgy, and all in accordance with the principle: *that there would be no difference in praising God among those who share one faith*²¹. During the era of Charlemagne, many rules were created to impose discipline in liturgical issues. This was clearly visible in the liturgical books, in which the copyists began to apply colour marking. And so, the words spoken during the liturgy were written in black [*niger*] ink, while the rules of its performance in red [*ruber*] ink. Thus, in the liturgy, alongside the black, *nigric* columns, red columns²² were introduced in liturgical books.

In the assessment of Bogusław Nadolski, the uniform texts and mass formulas created during the times of Charlemagne also had a negative impact on the shape of the performed liturgy. This inhibited the development of prayers at the level of nascent Romance languages. Consequently, it led to the gradual clericalization of the liturgy. It was dominated primarily by one participant – the priest²³. The priest's specific acting, as Stefan Cichy called it, was the opposite of what took shape during the patristic period and the beginnings of the so-called dominance of Roman liturgy. Already in the 10th century, the individualism and subjectivism of the priest became discernible, and the Eucharist was increasingly

²⁰ M. Kołodziej, *Zgromadzenie liturgiczne jako rzeczywistość teologiczno-kanoniczna*, p. 283; J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych*, p. 35-36; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 48.

²¹ *Caroli Magni, Libri Carolini*, in: *Caroli Magni, Opera omnia*, tomus secundus, accurate J.-P. Migne, I, cap. 6, Parisiis 1846, p. 1020–1022 (*Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Latina*, 68), quoted from: J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych*, p. 36; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 48.

²² Ł. Korporowicz, *Prawo liturgiczne Kościoła łacińskiego*, p. 29; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 48.

²³ B. Nadolski, *Liturgika*, 1: *Liturgika fundamentalna*, p. 49.

commonly celebrated without the folk, at numerous constructed side altars, with the back turned to the faithful. This seriously affected the community character of the liturgy. Its former wealth expressed, for example, in the numerous and proprietary liturgical books of individual participants of the Holy Mass, gave way to *missalia plenaria*, in which the priest had all the texts to be read during the liturgy. He therefore did not need the help of his community. He possessed a kind of monopoly, and the Holy Mass which he celebrated was more the liturgy of the priest himself than the liturgy of the whole Church²⁴.

The erosion of the communal character of the liturgy gave rise to various practices, which later undermined the proper vision of the public worship of God for a long time. The so-called *missae siccae* [dry masses] can be given as an example. They were deprived of the offertory, consecration and the Holy Communion. They confined themselves to reciting the prescribed prayers, while the mass itself was accompanied by the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. *Missa sicca* was held when the liturgical law forbade celebrating a proper Holy Mass, for example in the case of weddings or funerals that took place in the afternoon. Special types of dry mass were *missa navalis vel nautica* and *missa venatoria vel venatica*. In the first case, it was a mass celebrated on a ship or at sea. It took such shape due to the risk of spilling the Blood of the Lord or dropping the consecrated bread as the waves rocked the ship. In turn, *missa venatoria vel venatica* referred to the celebration of mass during public hunts. In this case, hunters were always in a rush before going hunting, which made a slightly shorter form of liturgy appropriate during this kind of event²⁵.

The Carolingian era was also the time when an allegorical interpretation of the Holy Mass was developed by Alcuin, or rather by his disciple – Amalarius of Metz, which was rightfully criticized by some authors primarily due to its detachment from the historical context²⁶. The latter

²⁴ S. Cichy, *Zgromadzenie podstawowym znakiem odnowionej liturgii*, „Śląskie Studia Historyczno-Teologiczne” 11 (1978), p. 46.

²⁵ J. Wierusz-Kowalski, *Liturgika*, Warszawa 1956, p. 63; D. Bialic, *Niektóre zboczenia liturgii mszalnej w świetle reformy Soboru Trydenckiego*, „Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 2 (1949), p. 51–52, <https://doi.org/10.21906/rbl.2353>.

²⁶ B. Nadolski, *Liturgika*, 1: *Liturgika fundamentalna*, p. 48–49; J. Stefański, *Adaptacje liturgiczne przyszłością odnowy liturgicznej*, „Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 43 (1990) no.

assigned important mysteries of the history of salvation to individual moments of the Holy Mass. The rite of *fermentum* can be given as an example. The confusion of consecrated figures indicates *de facto* local and horizontal unity. It expresses the union of the Pope, priests and the entire Church in one Eucharistic mystery. However, according to Amalarius of Metz, in this place of the liturgy, in the act of breaking the host in three parts, one should imagine the Lord Jesus dying on the cross and the warring Church, glorified and suffering, while the *fermentum* itself is supposed to symbolize the resurrection of Christ. In view of such interpretations, Florus of Lyon (†860) in *De expositione Missae* accused Amalarius of Metz of *useless garrulousness*. Paschasius Radbertus (†850), another outstanding theologian of this period, stated, however, that the author in question does not conform to theological realism in the explanations of liturgical rites²⁷. In turn, Antoni Julian Nowowiejski wrote that the elucidation given by Amalarius of Metz is *often fanciful*. It should be noted that although the interpretation of this writer was never universally accepted, it survived by a peculiar stroke of fortune in the catechization of the Church to modern times²⁸.

4. The liturgy of the post-Trent era

The Council of Trent, which lasted from 1545 to 1563, was primarily a response to the difficult situation in which the Church found itself in the 16th century. It was a concrete response to the Reformation. The council was convened by Pope Paul III and concluded by Pius IV. A reaction to the theses of Martin Luther and the issue of church discipline were undertaken during its discussions. The Council defined the teaching with regard to the Scriptures and the Church Tradition, original sin, justification and the character of the sacraments. In the course of the

1–2, p. 24, <https://doi.org/10.21906/rbl.2201>; J. Stefański, Redakcja „Konstytucji o liturgii świętej” przełomem odnowy życia religijnego w Kościele (1963–2003), „Seminare” 21 (2005), p. 199, <https://doi.org/10.21852/sem.2005.21.14>.

27 B. Nadolski, *Liturgika*, 4: *Eucharystia*, Poznań 1992, p. 54.

28 A. J. Chupungco, *L'adattamento della liturgia tra culture e teologia*, Casale Monferrato 1985, p. 10; B. Nadolski, *Liturgika*, 1: *Liturgika fundamentalna*, p. 49; B. Nadolski, *Liturgika*, 4: *Eucharystia*, p. 246–249; A. J. Nowowiejski, *Msza Święta*, vol. 1, Płock 1993, p. 934–935.

Council's work, liturgical issues received much attention. On the one hand, this was due to the critical attitude towards the Church from the Protestantism, as the emerging new religion questioned, inter alia, the actual presence of Christ in the Eucharist and its sacrificial character. On the other hand, there was no shortage of misuse concerning the Holy Mass, which had been accumulating in recent centuries, because some Catholic priests modified the course of Eucharist on their own. They also used missals and breviaries which were not approved by the Church authorities in the celebration of the Liturgy. Moreover, the liturgical books published by reformed communities were wrong in doctrinal terms in relation to the teaching of the Catholic Church and introduced chaos in the public worship of God²⁹. The matters of the liturgy and the participation of the faithful in it were discussed at the last session of the Council over the years 1562–1563. At that time, the attention was drawn to two tables present in the space of the holy place: the table of the Word of God and the Lord's Supper³⁰. With regard to the table of the Word of God, the Council resolved to not only explain the texts read during the Holy Mass to the faithful, but also to interpret some truth concerning the Eucharist as a part of proclaiming. Meanwhile, in reference to the table of the Lord's Supper, the faithful were encouraged to receive Holy Communion with faith and piety frequently³¹.

The objections to the Council of Trent include a belief whereby it initiated an exceptional period of stagnation and strict adherence to rubrics in the field of liturgy. However, according to Hubert Jedin and Theodor Klauser this peculiar centralism – due to the Reformation events – was in some sense a historical necessity³². Two different views clashed in the discussions undertaken by the participants of the Council of Trent. Some advocated a reform authorising pluralism of the liturgical celebrations, while others called for an absolute unity. Due to the historical context, the Pope was in favour of the latter solution. Therefore, the

29 J. Wierusz-Kowalski, *Liturgika*, p. 66; M. Kołodziej, *Zgromadzenie liturgiczne w świetle Katechizmu Kościoła katolickiego*, p. 53.

30 B. Nadolski, *Liturgika*, 1: *Liturgika fundamentalna*, p. 54.

31 M. Kołodziej, *Zgromadzenie liturgiczne w świetle Katechizmu Kościoła katolickiego*, p. 54.

32 J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych*, p. 39–40; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 49.

outcome of the Council of Trent was the first publication of uniform liturgical books for the Western Church: *Breviarium Romanum* (1568) and *Missale Romanum* (1570), which contained rubrics. They were accompanied by two bulls of Pope St. Pius V: *Quod a nobis* and *Quo primum tempore* prohibiting any changes to official texts under the threat of criminal sanctions. In addition, *Pontificale Romanum* (1596) and *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* (1600) were also published. The last item related to this Council was the *Rituale Romanum* published in 1614, closing the process of publishing new liturgical books³³. According to B. Neunheuser, the reform initiated at the Council of Trent was undoubtedly an admirable feat. Admittedly, it contributed to separating the worship of God from the real life and inhibiting the piety of the faithful, although – through its juridical approach – it effectively saved the liturgy from the emerging 16th century crisis³⁴.

Maintaining the liturgical centralism required the establishment of an appropriate authority. Therefore, Pope Sixtus V with the bull *Immensa aeterni Dei* dated January 22, 1588 created the Sacred Congregation of Rites, which he also entrusted with the supervision over the performance of sacred practices. It ensured the continuation of the reform initiated at the council. Initially, it was divided into two sections devoted to canonization and liturgy. The first section addressed the canonization processes. The other one, in turn, issued three types of judgements: explanations of rubrics, decrees and answers. On January 13, 1631, the Sacred Congregation of Rites was entrusted with matters related to the introduction of the celebrations of saints to the liturgical calendar³⁵. The establishment of this institution, whose purpose was to supervise the performance of sacred rituals, strengthened the functioning of the

33 J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych*, p. 39–40; Ł. Korporowicz, *Prawo liturgiczne Kościoła łacińskiego*, p. 29–30; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 49.

34 B. Neunheuser, *Storia della liturgia attraverso le epoche culturali*, Roma 1983, p. 118–119; J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych*, p. 40; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 49–50.

35 S. Kujawa, *La competenza in materia liturgica. Analisi storico-giuridica*, Poznań 2009, p. 126–140; M. Kołodziej, *Zgromadzenie liturgiczne jako rzeczywistość teologiczno-kanoniczna*, p. 72; J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych*, p. 41–42; Ł. Korporowicz, *Prawo liturgiczne Kościoła łacińskiego*, p. 30.

liturgical law in the Church, which, with some minor changes, lasted until the middle of the 20th century³⁶.

Within the context of the hermeneutic of reform, it is worth noting that the participants of the Council of Trent also discussed the issue of using the national language in liturgical celebrations. In the Tradition of the Church—considering the cultural sensitivity shifting throughout the history—the creation of an understandable worship of God was a recurring issue, which is confirmed not only by giving liturgical symbolism a proper meaning, but also by switching first from Hebrew to Greek, and then from Greek to Latin. Also, a good example is furnished by the subsequent missionary activity of Saints Cyril and Methodius, who not only drew attention to the fact that the mirroring of particular structures is commonly present within the universal Church, but also pointed to the necessity of addressing people in their own language. In this case it was manifested in the translation of the Scriptures and liturgical texts into the early Slavic language using the Cyrillic alphabet. This method was not only permitted by the Church, but it was also positively evaluated in the encyclical *Slavorum apostoli* of June 4, 1985, in which St. John Paul II recognized that the evangelistic activity of these two saints—allowing the real people to celebrate the mysteries of God in their native language—revealed the *de facto* Catholic sense of the Church [*sensus Ecclesiae*]³⁷. Finally, considering the complex situation in which the community of the Church found itself in the 16th century, it should be noted that even if the Council of Trent did not decide to introduce the Holy Mass in national languages, it did leave a clear incentive for priests—either themselves or by someone else—to explain some texts

³⁶ M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 50.

³⁷ John Paul II, Encyclical letter *Slavorum apostoli*, June 2, 1985, no. 16–20, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_19850602_slavorum-apostoli.html (Oct 26, 2023); P. A. Muroi, *Tra tradizione e traduzione dalla dinamica della liturgia alla sua codificazione. Una riflessione da Sacrosanctum Concilium a Magnum principium*, „Urbaniana University Journal” 71 (2018) no. 2, p. 36–37; C. Girardo, *Magnum principium e l’inculturazione liturgica nel solco del concilio*, „La Civiltà Cattolica” 4018 (2017), p. 311.

and to elucidate some mysteries of this Holy Sacrifice, especially on Sundays and holidays³⁸.

5. Liturgical movement

Grassroots studies on the development of the Latin liturgy at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries used to be called the liturgical movement. It covered the actions that aimed at the renewal of the liturgy. The creators claim that moving away from what is subjective in religiosity and concentrating on the properly understood public worship of God was indispensable for the implementation of liturgical life³⁹. The liturgical movement is considered to be initiated by the Benedictine monk Prosper Gueranger—the Benedictine abbot in Solesmes. His concept of the liturgy in which the Holy Spirit is present, was intended to be an effective defence against the currents of individualism, Jansenism and Protestantism. He was not an enthusiast of animating the liturgy by the faithful laity, but he certainly attached importance to their mature formation⁴⁰. A stance opposing Gueranger was represented by Lambert Beauduin. He was an advocate of the maximum involvement of the faithful laity in liturgical celebrations. This was because he did not recognize liturgy for the sake of the liturgy itself. He wished to democratize it by allowing a wide group of lay people to contribute to its creation. In his opinion, the liturgy was a prayer of the whole Church, which can maintain its specific dynamics only in so envisioned format⁴¹.

In practice, the liturgical movement developed in two branches. The first one of them is termed monastic. Its centre was located in the abbey of Maria Laach in Germany. Thanks to outstanding theologians such as

38 Sobór Trydencki, *Nauka o najświętszej ofierze Mszy Świętej*, 17.09.1562, no. 458, in: *Breviarium fidei. Wybór doktrynalnych wypowiedzi Kościoła*, ed. I. Bokwa, Poznań 2007, p. 223; C. Giraudo, *Magnum principium*, p. 311–312; K. Konecki, *Główne założenia teologiczne konstytucji o liturgii świętej*, „*Liturgia Sacra*” 19 (2013) no. 2, p. 248.

39 B. Nadolski, *Liturgika*, 1: *Liturgika fundamentalna*, p. 56.

40 J. Wierusz-Kowalski, *Liturgika*, p. 69; B. Nadolski, *Liturgika*, 1: *Liturgika fundamentalna*, p. 56–57; M. Kołodziej, *Zgromadzenie liturgiczne w świetle Katechizmu Kościoła katolickiego*, p. 56.

41 B. Nadolski, *Liturgika*, 1: *Liturgika fundamentalna*, p. 57–58; M. Kołodziej, *Zgromadzenie liturgiczne w świetle Katechizmu Kościoła katolickiego*, p. 57.

Ildefons Herwegen, Leo Cunibert Mohlberg, Odo Casel, Odilo Heiming, Arnold Meyer, the centre radiated not only culturally and economically, but also liturgically. In the abbey, a periodical *Ecclesia Orans* was published, discussing the assumptions for the revision of the community prayer of the Church. Also there, after World War I, Holy Masses were conducted by the priest facing the people, enriched with singing and prayers in the mother tongue. The second, more pastoral, trend of the liturgical movement was represented by P. Parsch, whose activity was associated with the Klosterneuburg Abbey in Austria. He was famous for his pastoral commitment. As part of his activity, he encouraged admiration for the Scriptures among the faithful and published prayer books used by the members of the liturgical assembly⁴².

The activities of the liturgical movement were supported by the popes of that period. St. Pius X, who published the motu proprio *Inter pastoralis officii sollicitudines* in 1903, proved to be a saviour. In his work he recognized that among numerous tasks undertaken by the supreme authority in the Church, its greatest concern is the solicitude for the magnificence of the Lord's House, in which the divine mysteries dwell, and in which the faithful gather to benefit from the sacraments, to participate in the Holy Mass, to adore the Blessed Sacrament and to participate in the prayers of the Church during the public and solemn liturgical service⁴³. He recognized the value of the Gregorian chant, and also issued new norms regarding the breviary and the missal. It was this Pope, who reminded us that Holy Communion is an extremely effective means of achieving holiness. Therefore, under the decree of *Quam Singulari* of August 8, 1910, he adapted the ecclesiastical legislation so that it could be received every day, and clearly defined the age of children fully participating in the Holy Mass for the first time⁴⁴.

Pius XII was also an advocate of developing the liturgical movement. During his pontificate, two encyclicals were published: *Mystici Corporis*

42 B. Nadolski, *Liturgika*, 1: *Liturgika fundamentalna*, p. 58; M. Kołodziej, *Zgromadzenie liturgiczne w świetle Katechizmu Kościoła katolickiego*, p. 58.

43 Pius X, *Inter Sollicitudines*. Motu Proprio on Sacred Music.

44 B. Nadolski, *Liturgika*, 1: *Liturgika fundamentalna*, p. 57; M. Kołodziej, *Zgromadzenie liturgiczne w świetle Katechizmu Kościoła katolickiego*, p. 57.

Christi (1943) and *Mediator Dei* (1947)⁴⁵. Especially the latter deserves attention here, because after the promulgation of the Code of Canon Law of 1917, the actions taken by the representatives of the liturgical movement were still alive. These actions, skilfully initiated and then introduced in the same way, were undoubtedly accepted by the Church. It does not mean, that activities which negatively influenced the orthodoxy of the faith⁴⁶ were absent. Therefore, on account of the latter, Pope Pius XII recalled in *Mediator Dei*, that the order, direction and form [*ordinatio, moderatio ac formatio*] of the Holy Liturgy depends only on the appropriate ecclesiastical authority, which is the Holy See (can. 1257 CIC/17), while the bishops in the dioceses entrusted to them are obliged to ensure that the ecclesiastical regulations concerning the worship of God are carefully observed (can. 1261 § 1 CIC/17)⁴⁷.

6. Renewal of the Second Vatican Council

The Second Vatican Council was seen as a kind of passage of the Holy Spirit through the Church (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 43). St. John XXIII himself explained the idea of convening this assembly as follows: The news that we intend to convene the Ecumenical Council and the Roman Synod, adapt the Code of Canon Law to today's needs and announce a new Code for the Church of the Eastern Rite, this message was appreciated by many and gave birth to the universal hope that all minds will thus be effectively stimulated to a broader and deeper knowledge of the truth, to the salvific renewal of Christian customs, and to the restoration of unity, harmony and peace⁴⁸. The image of the Church

45 B. Nadolski, *Liturgika*, 1: *Liturgika fundamentalna*, p. 59.

46 Ł. Korporowicz, *Prawo liturgiczne Kościoła łacińskiego*, p. 31–32; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 52.

47 Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*. Encyclical on the sacred liturgy; J. Nowak, *Prawo w służbie wydarzeń zbawczych*, p. 45; Ł. Korporowicz, *Prawo liturgiczne Kościoła łacińskiego*, p. 31–32; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 52; A. Montan, *Liturgia – inizione cristiana – Eucaristia – penitenza – unzione degli infermi – ordine* (cann. 834–1054), p. 25; F. Bączkiewicz, J. Baron, W. Stawinoga, *Prawo kanoniczne*, vol. 2, Opole 1958, p. 427.

48 Ioannes XXIII, *Litterae encyclicae Ad Petri Cathedram de veritate, unitate et pace caritatis afflatu provehendis*, June 29, 1959, „*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*” 51 (1959), p. 497–531; W. Góralski, *Inicjatywa papieża Jana XXIII dotycząca reformy prawa kanonicznego na tle Soboru Watykańskiego II*, in: *Sobór Watykański II. Inspiracje i wpływ na Kodeks pra-*

as a complex and diverse community, permeated by the presence of God, emerged from the documents of the Council. On the one hand, it is a spiritual community, and, on the other hand, it is a visible assembly of the faithful (*Lumen gentium*, 8). Therefore, it should have legislation which, as it were, arises from within itself and takes into account all aspects of ecclesiastical life⁴⁹. Thus, at the Second Vatican Council, a slightly newer view of the law of the Church was born, which was to perceive more clearly legal awareness within religious consciousness and assume the need to confront this law with contemporary ecclesiology and pastoral assumptions. Such a conciliar vision guaranteed the transformation of the codex norms of 1917 into a more effective medium of the transmission of faith⁵⁰.

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* emphasized that “liturgical services are not private functions, but are celebrations of the Church, which is the ‘sacrament of unity’, namely, the holy people united and ordered under their bishops” (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 26). Therefore, the concept proposed by the Second Vatican Council was not intended to minimize the liturgical law at the expense of promoting the pastoral approach, but to establish the provisions for the public worship of God in such a way that they take into account both the fundamental principles of the liturgy and the true nature of the whole Church⁵¹. The renewal of the liturgy “both texts and rites should be drawn up so that they express more clearly the holy things which they

wa kanonicznego z 1983 roku. Materiały z Ogólnopolskiej Konferencji Naukowej zorganizowanej 8 grudnia 2005 roku z okazji 40. rocznicy zakończenia Soboru Watykańskiego II, ed. K. Burczyk, Lublin 2006, p. 25; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 53.

49 R. Sobański, *Kościół – prawo – zbawienie*, Katowice 1979, p. 54–70; J. Gręźlikowski, *Odnowa prawa kanonicznego w perspektywie aggiornamento*, in: *Sobór Watykański II. Inspiracje i wpływ na Kodeks prawa kanonicznego z 1983 roku. Materiały z Ogólnopolskiej Konferencji Naukowej zorganizowanej 8 grudnia 2005 roku z okazji 40. rocznicy zakończenia Soboru Watykańskiego II*, ed. K. Burczyk, Lublin 2006, p. 38.

50 W. Góralski, *Od kodeksu Piusa X i Benedykta XV do kodeksu Jana Pawła II*, 2, „*Ateneum Kapłańskie*” 76 (1984) no. 2, p. 177; J. Gręźlikowski, *Odnowa prawa kanonicznego w perspektywie aggiornamento*, p. 38; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 54.

51 F. R. MacManus, *Il diritto liturgico*, in: *Scientia liturgica. Manuale di liturgia*, 1: *Introduzione alla liturgia, a cura di A. J. Chupungco*, Casale Monferrato 2003, p. 428–429; A. Montan, *Il “diritto liturgico”: significato e interpretazioni*, “*Rivista Liturgica*” 98 (2011) no. 5, p. 748; M. Kołodziej, *Prawo liturgiczne*, p. 42.

signify; the Christian people, so far as possible, should be enabled to understand them with ease and to take part in them fully, actively, and as befits a community” (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 21). Following this interpretative line in Art. 36 § 1–4 and Art. 63 of the document in the second half of the twentieth century, it was recognized that the faithful of the Catholic Church have the right to speak with God in their own language during individual liturgical gatherings and during the celebration of the sacraments and sacramentals⁵².

However, the opening of these doors proceeded gradually. In Art. 36 § 1, the preservation of the Latin language in the Latin rites was generally indicated, but there was a reservation whereby a specific law may treat this matter differently (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 36 § 1). In what situations? When the use of the mother tongue can be very useful for the faithful during the celebration of the Holy Mass and the sacraments and sacramentals (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 36 § 2; 63a). It did not make much sense in the assessment of the Council Fathers to discover the mystery experienced in the liturgy by means of a language which was no longer spoken by the people, and which no longer was comprehensible to them. Therefore, the decision to accept and extend the use of the national language in the public worship of God was left to the competent ecclesiastical authority, that is, to the conferences of bishops (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 22 § 2), taking into account that such decisions require approval [*probatis seu confirmatis*] by the Holy See (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 36 § 3; 63b)⁵³.

The Second Vatican Council not only appreciated the liturgical assembly as an essential space for the public worship of God as it also indicated that it is the subject of the celebration and is the centre of the Church’s pastoral activity. However, in order to ensure the fruitfulness of these arguments, it was necessary to carry out a general reform of the

52 P. A. Muroi, *Tra tradizione e traduzione dalla dinamica della liturgia alla sua codificazione*, p. 37; C. Giraudo, *Magnum principium*, p. 312; M. R. Francis, *Liturgy and Inculturation since Vatican II: Where Are We? What Have We Learned?*, „Worship” 91 (2017) no. 1, p. 29; G. Incitti, *Magnum principium: per una migliore mutua collaborazione tra Curia Romana e conferenze episcopali*, „Notitiae” 53 (2017) no. 2, p. 122.

53 C. Giraudo, *Magnum principium*, p. 312; P. A. Muroi, *Tra tradizione e traduzione dalla dinamica della liturgia alla sua codificazione*, p. 37–38; G. Incitti, *Magnum principium*, p. 122.

liturgical books⁵⁴. Each of them, issued after the Second Vatican Council, was preceded by an introduction [*praenotanda* or *institutio generalis*], which, apart from theological and pastoral content, also contained specific normative indications. The structure of the liturgical book consists of texts of readings, chants and prayers called *nigrics*, as well as indications regulating attitudes, conduct, rites, and the selection and use of appropriate texts, known as rubrics. *Nigrics* are printed in black, and rubrics are in red. In order to perform liturgical activities in accordance with the norms of the Church, one needs to be guided by the rubrics⁵⁵. At the same time, following the suggestion of Joseph Pascher, who said that paying attention to words printed in red should not lead to forgetting about the ones in black, one should also make efforts to understand those activities which are performed during the liturgy. Because in the texts and in a given liturgical act there are much greater postulates than in the rubrics⁵⁶. The same problem was pointed out by Joseph Ratzinger, who stated: It is not enough to stick to the rubrics, i.e., external rules of rites, the *nigrics* are much more important, i.e., internal postulates of what was printed in black fonts, i.e., the liturgical text itself, which by its very nature calls for a bilateral relationship of listening and answering with prayers, acclamations and singing⁵⁷.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was not so much to showcase the chronological development of the liturgy, as can be read in theological textbooks, but rather to demonstrate that at all stages of the development of public worship there was a search for a way of prayer which, without violating the essence of the liturgy, would lead people to a more fruitful encounter

54 S. Cichy, *Zgromadzenie podstawowym znakiem odnowionej liturgii*, p. 44–45; C. Krakowiak, *Zgromadzenie liturgiczne jako podmiot celebracji*, „*Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny*” 42 (1989), p. 168–169, <https://doi.org/10.21906/rbl.2144>.

55 B. Nadolski, *Leksykon liturgii*, Poznań 2006, p. 1218; A. Słowikowska, *Uczestnictwo wiernych świeckich w liturgii Kościoła łacińskiego. Studium kanoniczne*, Lublin 2014, p. 55–56.

56 J. Pascher, *Eucharistia. Gestalt und Vollzug*, Münster-Krailing 1947, p. 8.

57 J. Ratzinger, *Teologia liturgii. Sakramentalne podstawy życia chrześcijańskiego*, eds. K. Gózdź, M. Górecka, transl. W. Szymona, Lublin 2012, p. 338–339 (*Opera Omnia*, 11).

with God. The Christian liturgy has, in principle, been an object of interest for both theology and ecclesiastical law since its inception. Even although it seems to some that the Second Vatican Council deprived it of the pertinent regulations that organise the public worship of God, in reality its shape is still the result of the in-depth theological reflection and the canonical norms established by the legislator. The latter, now contained in the Code of Canon Law (can. 834–839 CIC) of 1983 and detailed—based on can. 2 *Codex Iuris Canonici*—in the liturgical books and extra-code legislation of the Holy See, have undergone certain changes over the centuries. It is highly likely that they will also undergo some modifications in the future. However, it is essential that in this process—as Benedict XVI has reminded us—the hermeneutic of the reform is followed.

For any changes taking place in the liturgy, the point of reference cannot only be the Council of Trent and the changes that subsequently occurred in the Church as a result of implementing its resolutions. For the liturgy must have more such points of reference. At its root lies first the very action of Jesus Christ, who decreed that the true worship due to God should be done in spirit and in truth (Jn 4:24). Although the manner of celebrating the liturgy developed gradually, it was based on the general indications for the celebration of the Eucharist and the sacraments that Christ Himself specified. Although the language used in divine worship has changed over time, the criterion for the authenticity of the Church—according to St Luke—was to abide in the teaching of the Apostles and in fellowship and in the breaking of bread and prayers (Acts 2:42). The rites of the Mass have evolved since apostolic times while retaining their foundation, consisting of the reading of biblical texts and instruction in the faith, and the preparation of the gifts and the prayer of thanksgiving, culminating in the distribution of Holy Communion.

It was not only the words and deeds of Christ Himself that gave shape to the cultic action of the Church. In the patristic era, this process also included what is now called legal custom. The community accepted it with the aim that it would consequently become a binding law. Confirmation of this thesis can be found in works from the first centuries of Christianity, such as the *Didache*, the *Apology of St Justin* and the *Apostolic Tradition*. It is in these, among other things, that a period of

permissible improvisation was known in the history of public divine worship. As the number of the faithful increased, so did the hierarchy within the Church, which automatically necessitated a deeper development of liturgical law. This codification referred naturally, as it were, to Prospero of Aquitaine's maxim *lex orandi—lex credendi*, recognised in and by the Church, which ultimately meant that the truths of the professed faith should be rendered through an appropriate mode of prayer.

Towards the end of the first Millennium, emperors became patrons of the creation of public divine worship. This was because they wanted to build a strong empire based on a single liturgy. Although the alliance between the throne and the altar does not usually favour the Church, at the time—especially under Charlemagne—the Church benefited, as liturgical discipline could develop effectively. This is reflected, for example, in the rubrics and nigrics that are known and still present in liturgical books today. The standardisation of the texts and formulas of the Mass also had, in the opinion of some, a negative effect, as it inhibited diversity in the liturgy and opened the way to its gradual clericalisation. A manifestation of this in the later history of worship was the *missalia plenaria*, or forms of Eucharistic celebration such as *missae siccae*. Nor can the liturgical catechesis of the Carolingian era be a model for later mystagogy, thanks above all to Alcuin and Amalarius of Metz, who proposed an allegorical interpretation of the Mass detached from its historical context.

The Council of Trent was an important event in the history of the Church, as it was a specific response to the Reformation. At that time, the important truth that the Eucharist is the space of Christ's real presence and the place where his sacrifice is actualised, was once again recalled. Although the Council of Trent began a unique period of stagnation and rubricism in liturgy, its provisions were, in a sense, a historical necessity. In turn, the liturgical books that were subsequently prepared, i.e., the Missal and Breviary, as well as the creation of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, had a long-term positive impact on the shape of public divine worship. In the context of the hermeneutics of the reform, it is notable that the Council of Trent was not a good moment in history to introduce a national language into the liturgy based on its demands, but it had already given some impetus for this when it encouraged pastors

to explain certain biblical texts or the mystery of the Eucharist to their faithful when celebrating Mass.

The grassroots study of the development of the liturgy, which came to be known as the liturgical movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was a mobilising element for the active participation of Christians in the Mass. The liturgical movement, supported by the popes of the time, developed in two currents: monastic and pastoral. It had the right dynamics. He assumed not only a revision of the Church's community prayer, but also saw the need to revitalise the parish as a pastoral centre. Those involved in the liturgical movement, above all in the pastoral dimension, promoted a love of Scripture among the faithful and offered them the use of specially prepared prayer books during the liturgy, which in turn helped to revive participation in the Mass.

Complementing the development of the public worship of God in the perspective of the hermeneutics of the reform was the Second Vatican Council, which, according to Benedict XVI, was not only sensible but necessary. The concept of liturgical law proposed by this assembly of bishops was by no means to minimise it at the expense of promoting a pastoral approach, but to legislate on the liturgy in such a way that it took into account both its fundamental principles and the true nature of the whole Church. For this reason, the rubrics and nigrics have been maintained in the renewed liturgical books, ensuring that words printed in red do not lead to black being forgotten. Complementing the conclusions of the above can be the demand to constantly read the indications contained in the Council documents skilfully, guided by the conviction that liturgical actions are never of a private nature, but are the worship of the Church, which, as a sacrament of unity, is a holy people, united and organised under the authority of the bishops (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 26).

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