



UBB

BABEŞ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY SERIES

DÁVID DIÓSI

# A GLIMPSE INTO LITURGICAL THEOLOGY

THE RADIANCE OF MAN-SEEKING GOD  
IN THE LITURGY

THEOLOGICAL STUDIES 1

L'Harmattan

This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>



## **A Glimpse into Liturgical Theology. The radiance of man-seeking God in the liturgy**

**Dávid Diósi**

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9371-1108>

Teológia / Theology (13036), Mítosz, rítus, szimbólumok, valláskutatás / Myth, ritual, symbolic representations, religious studies (12850)

liturgy, Christian worship, Catholicism, postmodern culture

ISBN 978-963-646-598-8 (pdf)

[DOI https://doi.org/10.56037/978-963-646-598-8](https://doi.org/10.56037/978-963-646-598-8)



<https://openaccess.pub>

DÁVID DIÓSI

**A Glimpse into Liturgical Theology**

The Radiance of Man-Seeking God in the Liturgy

## **BABEŞ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY SERIES**

Theological Studies, 1.

ISSN 3141-7469

### **EDITORS**

#### **EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Attila BODOR, PhD (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary & German Bible Society, Stuttgart, Germany)

#### **SENIOR EDITOR**

Dávid DIÓSI, PhD (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)  
Olga LUKÁCS, PhD (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

#### **MANAGING EDITOR**

László BAKÓ, PhD (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

#### **EDITORIAL BOARD**

Gábor BUZÁSI, PhD (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary)  
Emerencia KÉK, PhD (Sapientia College of Theology of Religious Orders, Budapest, Hungary)  
Ştefan LUPU, PhD (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Iaşi, Romania)  
Tobias NICKLAS, PhD (University of Regensburg, Regensburg, Germany)  
Réka SZILÁRDI, PhD (University of Szeged, Szeged, Hungary)  
Csaba TÖRÖK, PhD (Esztergom Theological College, Esztergom, Hungary)  
Joseph VERHEYDEN, PhD (KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium)  
Béla S. VISKY, PhD (Protestant Theological Institute of Cluj-Napoca, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)  
Korinna ZAMFIR, PhD (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

#### **ADVISORY BOARD**

Philippe NOUZILLE, PhD (Pontifical Athenaeum of Saint Anselm, Rome, Italy)  
Zoltán OLÁH, PhD (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)  
Attila PUSKÁS, PhD (Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest, Hungary)  
Mátyás SZALAY, PhD (Episcopal Theological College of Pécs, Pécs, Hungary)  
Xénia SZABÓ, PhD (Archives of the Transylvanian Franciscan Province, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)  
András TÖRŐ, PhD (Pontifical Hungarian Ecclesiastical Institute, Rome, Italy)

Dávid Diósi

# **A Glimpse into Liturgical Theology**

The Radiance of Man-Seeking God in the Liturgy

L'Harmattan – Babeş-Bolyai University – Faculty of Roman-Catholic Theology  
Budapest – Paris – Cluj Napoca

2026

Translated by István Szász-Köpeczy

Language editor: Lászlóné Dr. Najbauer Noémi

Original work: Diósi Dávid. 2022. *Bepillantás a liturgioteológiába. Az emberkereső Isten felragyogása a liturgiában.* Budapest: Jel Kiadó.

© Dávid Diósi, 2026

© L'Harmattan Publishing, 2026

© L'Harmattan Open Access, 2026

© Babeş-Bolyai University, 2026

ISBN 978-2-336-62976-6

ISBN 978-963-646-598-8 (pdf, open access)

ISBN 978-2-336-62977-3 (pdf, ebook)

ISBN 978-2-336-62978-0 (epub, ebook)

ISSN 3141-7469

DOI <https://doi.org/10.56037/978-963-646-598-8>

L'Harmattan France

5-7 rue de l'École Polytechnique

75005 Paris

L'Harmattan Kiadó

Kossuth Lajos utca 14-16.

H-1053 Budapest, Hungary

Volumes may be ordered, at a discount, from

L'Harmattan Könyvesbolt

1053 Budapest, Kossuth L. u. 14-16.

Phone: +36-70-554-3177

[harmattan.hu](http://harmattan.hu)

[librairie.internationale@harmattan.fr](mailto:librairie.internationale@harmattan.fr)

[www.amazon.fr](http://www.amazon.fr)

Publishing Director: Ádám Gyenes

Cover design: Igor Slemmer

Typesetting: Krisztina Csernák

Printed by: Prime Rate Zrt.

Director: Péter Tomcsányi

## Series Editors' Introduction

The Theological Studies subseries of the Babeş–Bolyai University Series (BBUS. TS) is a peer-reviewed, open-access scholarly book series in theology, with a particular focus on Central and Eastern European contexts. Rooted in the university's multicultural, multilingual, and multi-confessional academic environment, BBUS.TS focuses on theology in ecumenical and interconfessional perspective. It particularly welcomes studies on dialogue among Christian traditions, the historical and cultural forms of Christianity in the region, and the ways in which theology engages questions of communal identity, religious coexistence, and contemporary social and cultural challenges. Published jointly by L'Harmattan Publishing House, Budapest, and Babeş–Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, BBUS.TS operates under the auspices of the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology. Edited by an international and interconfessional editorial team, the series seeks to strengthen scholarly exchange between local, regional, and international theological research communities.



# Contents

Foreword . . . . .	9
Liturgy as the 'Site' of Cultic Encounter . . . . .	13
Liturgy as a Communication Event . . . . .	33
Liturgy as Sharing in the Divine Life. . . . .	47
Liturgy as the Sanctification of God's Name. . . . .	63
Liturgy as Abiding in the Attraction of God's Glory . . . . .	73
Liturgy as the 'Prelude' to the 'Final Act' of Creation. . . . .	89
Bibliography. . . . .	97



## Foreword

When the Second Vatican Council refers to the celebration of the liturgy as ‘the source and summit’ (Sacrosanctum Concilium 10), it in fact locates the insights of the liturgical movement, inspired by the Holy Spirit, at the heart of Church teaching: the power of Easter – at work both in the rites and prayers (per ritus et preces) performed by the Church community – is what keeps this same community alive, propels and enables it, constantly guiding it back to itself, to the very core of its existence. In the life of the Church and the world, worship occupies a place where every created thing and all people can regain the original meaning of their existence. It is in worship that their God-given abilities to make Him known through their lives, to receive and to carry Him shine forth, proving man’s capacity for God (capax Dei) and allowing him to take part in the divine work of salvation history. Pope Pius XII himself addresses this insight and describes the ambition of the liturgical movement as follows: ‘Thus, the liturgical movement has appeared as a sign of God’s providential dispositions for the present day, as a movement of the Holy Spirit in His Church, intended to bring men closer to those mysteries of the faith and treasures of grace which derive from the active participation of the faithful in liturgical life’ (Pope Pius XII’s Address to the International Congress on Pastoral Liturgy, 22 September 1956).

Therefore, it is no coincidence that the Council also reserves a highly prominent place for the teaching of the liturgy in the theological curriculum and expects teachers of liturgy to adopt a multifaceted approach: ‘The study of sacred liturgy is to be ranked among the compulsory and major courses in seminaries and religious houses of studies; in theological faculties, it is to rank among the principal courses. It is to be taught under its theological, historical, spiritual, pastoral, and juridical aspects’ (Sacrosanctum Concilium 16).

Until quite recently, the study of liturgy was all too often viewed as no more than a practical discipline and a task driven by an attitude of compliance

with the principle of ‘say one thing and act differently.’ Dávid Diósi’s work of liturgical theology written with a unique intellectual and spiritual approach is a welcome addition to the palette of Hungarian liturgical theology. As a teacher of theology, Father Diósi goes to great lengths to prevent the study of liturgy – source and summit – from being relegated to the ‘practical department.’

In the spirit of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, his reflections break away from the simplistic archaeologizing and sheer rubricism that characterize the ever-growing circle of those engaged in liturgical studies. Distancing himself from the tendency of liturgics scholars to content themselves with reiterations and translations and hemmed in by Central European modes of thought, the author embarks on an ambitious venture of his own. The present volume at hand restores liturgy and liturgical studies alike to their proper place at the heart of theology, and, following in the footsteps of the most authentic ambassadors of the liturgical movement, regards them as the very source of theology, in the spirit of *lex orandi, legem statuat credenda*.

Heeding Sándor Petőfi’s call addressed to his fellow nineteenth-century Hungarian poets, the author does ‘make light of plucking the strings of the lyre.’ He places his message into a wider frame of reference including the contexts of the history of religion, sociology, psychology, philosophy, and systematic theology. Drawing on an impressively wide range of academic works and operating always with an inquisitive mind, he discusses the essence of Christian worship, searching for the substance, the essence in the visible words, gestures, and symbols of the liturgy, neither disregarding them (as several renowned schools of sacramentology have been known to do) nor restricting his efforts to their human dimension. Father Diósi is passionate in his explication and rehabilitation of the concepts of *cult* and *holy*, which have come to be treated with suspicion in certain circles of late. Engaged in a conscious dialogue with the man of his age and aware of the often diffuse ritual and spiritual needs of his contemporaries, he promises no easy answer. The author accepts the theocentrism of the liturgy, speaks about its inseparability from the work of redemption and ability to encompass and sum up the past, the present, and the future, and draws our attention to the God who acts and redeems us behind the scenes and in the ‘guise’ of symbols. We learn that to meet Him, we must enter into circumstances we can neither predict nor control. The author wishes to expose man who has grown wary of the surprise inherent in such encounters and is forever attempting to reduce God to an idol ‘to measure up to his own arbitrary standards.’

Thanks are owed to Dávid Diósi whose bold and uncompromising endeavour not only stimulates further reflection among scholars of liturgical studies but is also a source of intellectual excitement and spiritual enrichment to all discerning readers wishing to deepen their faith and gain a genuine

glimpse into the true nature of liturgical celebration. Just as the Holy Spirit has never ceased to ‘blow where it will,’ the liturgical movement is far from over, and such inspired writings are exactly what make this open-endedness a reality for us.

Budapest, 13 June 2022

*Örs Jákó Fehérváry OSB*



## Liturgy as the 'Site' of Cultic Encounter

The tendency of liturgical theology to define liturgy as a cult has faded into the background over the past few decades. The obfuscation (semantic obscurity) of what the notion of cult stands for (and its use in the formulation of one-sided external criteria overshadowing its true semantic content) on the one hand and an emerging negative theological approach to the concept on the other must account for this state of affairs. Thus, from the outset, I must admit that the approach adopted herein is by no means a popular one among present-day theologians. Then again, popularity never was my aim, and I have no particular interest in playing 'bodyguard' next to a theological 'diva.'

There is a certain amount of justification for the quasi-symptomatic aversion exhibited by theologians in this matter. There is a certain logic to the emergence of the symptoms of their 'phobia of the cult concept' since the use of 'cult' as an analytical concept brings with it a great many potential pitfalls. As a matter of course, the spotlight of theological thought has been turned on the antagonism between the concept of liturgy and that of cult, the latter having recently been revived from a coma, as it were, where it had been deprived of its actual content and unfairly branded as an empty concept.

A heavily industrialized and technocentric world like ours can easily create the impression that cult is an outdated phenomenon given its non-productive nature by secular standards. Even Immanuel Kant († 1804) takes the view that any idea presuming there is more to religion than mere morality is *Religionswahn*, i.e. 'religious delusion,' and a form of 'false worship of God.' To tour churches with one's lips murmuring memorized phrases of prayer is just such false service (*Afterdienst*), since to do so is indicative of the abandonment of moral feelings, that is, of choosing externality, formality, historicity, and religious empiricism over internality.<sup>1</sup> Ludwig Feuerbach († 1872) and Karl

---

<sup>1</sup> Mezei 2004: 59–62.

Marx († 1883) expressed even more profound reservations about the concept of cult. Feuerbach, whose first book is still ‘the romantic celebration of God’s infinity, an infinity that is the ultimate foundation of human life and the immortality of the soul’,<sup>2</sup> quickly switches ‘sides’ to adopt a diametrically opposed view of divinity as in fact nothing more than the objectification of the human essence, alienated from the human self and perceived as divine, that is, the personified projection of the ‘you’ inherent in the human mind, thus equating theology with anthropology, with the object of religion becoming the divinized essence of man. Feuerbach did not anthropologize God but theologized man instead, replacing God with man.<sup>3</sup> If we do not wish to weaken and lose ourselves, we must resist bowing before this figment of the imagination. If man is the only god, we must go from being God-lovers to man-lovers, from believers to thinkers, from those who pray to those who work. Feuerbach is not intent on eradicating religion but to give it an exclusively horizontal orientation.<sup>4</sup> Unlike Feuerbach, Marx substituted the god created by the human mind through projection with society liberated from private property. The deference that had previously been due to God was now owed to this new form of society.<sup>5</sup>

The models of thought enumerated above have, to some extent, infiltrated the profane manifestations of our present-day society, and come to determine the worldview of a number of contemporary Christians. Let us call to mind but a few key phrases: the politically charged ‘personality cult’,<sup>6</sup> a feature mostly characteristic of the communist and Nazi regimes, or ‘the cult *events* taking a secular form deprived of transcendence, which have become markers of late-modern Western life cult and holiday cult’,<sup>7</sup> such as the beauty cult, the body cult, the celebrity cult, or the wellness cult attesting mostly, though not necessarily, to an off-balance and one-sided anthropological approach. In this context, we should mention a few other, mostly ‘harmless,’ ‘eternally’ recurring profane rites<sup>8</sup> that give people living in our swiftly-changing world a sense of ‘homeliness,’ the feeling of ‘being at home’. Various such rituals (mostly profane in nature) have gained increasing popularity among our

<sup>2</sup> Mezei 2004: 73.

<sup>3</sup> Mezei 2004: 72–75.

<sup>4</sup> Schmaus 1969: 101–102.

<sup>5</sup> Schmaus 1969: 102.

<sup>6</sup> Apor et al. 2004; Apor 2010: 69–75; Plamper 2004: 13–42.

<sup>7</sup> Ebenbauer 2003: 241.

<sup>8</sup> Rivière 2000: 78–95; Sirota 2000: 119–130; Doray 2000: 132–156; Fellous 2000: 158–170; Strausberg 2004: 54–61.

contemporaries.<sup>9</sup> We are 'intoxicated by rituals.'<sup>10</sup> There is hardly any segment of life devoid of these rituals, which anyone can shape to meet their personal needs, and which nourish the soul like icing on a cake<sup>11</sup> amidst the maelstrom of everyday life.<sup>12</sup> The great variety of ritual systems widely available to people today has led to a highly diverse conception of the sacred.<sup>13</sup> The mill of modernity has ground down the sacred so that it no longer has an exclusive bond with religion or even with the transcendent. In other words, the corrosion of the sacred has caused the transcendent to shrivel into the immanent.<sup>14</sup>

Cult is a much-debated concept. Its 'semantic obscurity' correlates with the diversity of its meanings, which brings with it the danger of a one-sided interpretation where the anabatic-latreutic dimension of liturgy prevails over the soteric-katabatic one.<sup>15</sup>

A comprehensive definition of cult would be 'a generic term for approaching the divine and for the fixed and structured forms of interacting with it.'<sup>16</sup> Cult is the visible, fixed, organized, and impactful form in which the community's religious experience between the divine and the human occurs and takes effect.<sup>17</sup> Cultic is the way in which man adopts an attitude marked by 'due care, sophistication, and orderliness' (as per the etymological<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> The three main characteristic features of the rituals of popular literature are individualism, creativity, and institutional independence. For an in-depth analysis of this subject, see Lüdeckens 2004: 37–53.

<sup>10</sup> Brunotte 2005: 55: 'Rausch der Rituale'.

<sup>11</sup> The title of the following book is a telling example: *Sahnehäubchen für die Seele. Wohltuende Rituale für jeden Tag und für besondere Ablässe. Versüßen Sie Ihr Leben!* (Biziou 2000).

<sup>12</sup> In addition to the volume mentioned in the footnote above, the following should be listed among the works of popular literature concerning rituals for our modern society: van Kampenhout 2000; von Weltzien 1999; Kiss 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Dücker 2007: 129.

<sup>14</sup> Höhn 2013: 62–68.

<sup>15</sup> Kunzler 2005: 22–31; Kunzler 2009: 179–188.

<sup>16</sup> Lanczkowski 1961: 659.

<sup>17</sup> Ebenbauer 2003: 241.

<sup>18</sup> The term cult is the derivative of the Latin verb *colere*, whose meaning is masterfully expounded by Hungarian music historian and ethnographer László Dobszay († 2011) in his inaugural lecture held on 13 December 2017. In what follows, we will convey his words rendered in our translation: For the Latin verb *colere*, 'The Pápai-Páriz dictionary provides such meanings as *respect, live, cultivate, possess/keep*. The various types of meaning are, of course, defined not by the word in isolation but in its context; hence, I will quote a few examples – this time only in Hungarian [English] – as given by the dictionary: "to have deep respect for someone, to cultivate the land, to live in the town, to maintain a friendship, to love the truth, and to act in one's own capacity." All corresponding Latin examples feature *colere* as the main verb. If we seek a common aspect uniting these shades of meaning, we can conclude that in the classical Roman period, this word was used for someone who showed persevering dedication towards somebody or something and was eager to serve, cultivate, or respect that other (thing or person). Living in a town does not only mean to reside therein but to take an active part in urban life, to be at the service of the town. The need to cultivate the land means,

derivation of the concept) towards the Sacred, the Absolute lived and experienced as *fascinosus* and *tremendus*.

In the context of cult,<sup>19</sup> God is the *a priori* reality that comes before man and the world, being at the same time the precondition of all created reality. This statement, however, is of importance for cult not only as an abstract logical category, but also because it has existential implications of global proportions, as this is precisely what cult intends to convey and realize, i.e.: God's Parousia in the present. For God is the ultimate source of the beginning of the world not in the sense that the world has sprung from Him as a spring flows from its source only to flow on as a river that may, on occasion, glimpse nostalgically towards its past, but finding that it has been left to its own devices, eventually leaves its source behind with deistic determination. No, the world can only have life and substance if its source returns with the power to renew again and again, if it itself is constantly regenerated by its original source, through the prism of cult. In this cultic context, man is not entrusted with outdoing the original work of God, with adding anything to it, or fixing its presumed 'design flaws' and 'covering up' its deficiencies. Man's task is to open up the world to the new divine Parousia whose purpose is to make all things new. In other words, man is called to ensure space, time, and a form for the presence of the divine primal source. This space is to be transparent and clear, so that although it mediates God in a way that is tailored to man and to the world, it does not distort Him or give a one-sided and false impression of Him, depriving Him of the fullness of His presence replete with the unexpected.

---

as is known, that the riches of the earth can be obtained only through careful cultivation. There is no official punishment for merely pretending to work the land, but the earth itself will punish us with its poor crop. Cultivating a friendship means devoting time and attention to it because we value it highly. This is especially clear in connection with divinity: the word expresses a reverence that manifests itself when we work to realize God's cause, in the visible service of God and the exact observance of liturgical norms. And we can tell the outcome of *colere* by beholding its object. According to the dictionary, *cultus* is something that has been "duly cultivated, adorned." For instance, *pinguia culta*: cultivated, fertile lands. As a noun, *cultus* is "adornment, tidiness, well-kemptness", and the corresponding examples are as follows: *cultus crinalis*: "ornament of the hair"; *cultus pastoralis*: "shepherd's clothing"; also in the Bible, *vestimentorum cultus* (1 Pet 3:3): "caring about one's clothing". However, its meaning is not confined to external, visible appearance, adornment, see, for example, *cultus animi*: "dressing the mind with science"; *affectare cultum effusioem in verbis*: "embellishing language with very choice words"; one of Isaiah's sentences as translated in the *Vulgate* reads *cultus iustitiae silentium*: "the adornment of righteousness is silence" (Is 32:16). This derivative of the verb has become the distinguished term for acting in reverence for the divinity. In Pápai-Páriz, *cultus* in a religious sense is "veneration, service of God" [Hungarian: *isteni tisztelet*], and *cultus deorum* is worship [Hungarian: *istentisztelet*].<sup>19</sup> Dobszay 2010: 432.

<sup>19</sup> The reflections to be presented in the subsequent paragraphs draw in particular on two excellent studies written by the German philosopher and Catholic theologian Schaeffler 1977: 9–50; Schaeffler 1991: 73–87.

God's action forms the basis of all human cults, meaning that cult is the true representation of a divine model in a human act by persons created in His image. The meaning and value of human action lie in its ability to recreate *in concreto* a primordial act sanctified by the gods, the ancestors, or the heroes 'in those days' (*in illo tempore*), that is, in the beginning (*ab origine*), to reproduce a certain mythical prefiguration or example. 'Every ritual has a divine model, an archetype (...)' "We must do what the gods did in the beginning" (Satapatha Brahmana VII, 2, 1, 4). "Thus the gods did; thus men do" (Taittiriya Brahmana I, 5, 9, 4). This Indian adage summarizes the theory underlying rituals across cultures. We find the theory among so-called primitive peoples no less than in developed societies.<sup>20</sup> Cult incorporates myth – i.e. the story of the deity's arrival – as the natural complement of rite. Everything that lends anamnestic meaning and present and future efficiency to the unified structure of words and actions is contained in the archetypal act, the whole substance of which is made present again in the human act. The constitutive element of cult is the archetype–image relationship.

Cultic celebration has two essential moments: anamnesis, i.e. remembering what God did *in illo tempore* for the patriarchs and what He said to them (*factum*), and ritualized action and speech (*faciendum*). The divine *factum* is made present by the human *faciendum*. This way, 'the narration of creation'<sup>21</sup> in the Holy Mass is not simply a narration in the classic sense but a *formula of actualization*, so that the narrated events actually take place again.<sup>22</sup> The ceremony of the Elevation of the Host<sup>23</sup> (*elevatio maior*), which emerged in the Middle Ages, also served to emphasize this fact, because it sought to make an invisible change (*transubstantiation*)<sup>24</sup> externally visible. Accordingly, this is not a case of subjective remembrance – i.e. taking place on a conceptual level – but one of an objective, efficient 'recollection' performed through

<sup>20</sup> Eliade 1998: 41.

<sup>21</sup> See the following passages from the first four Eucharistic Prayers in *Missale Romanum*: I. *Qui pridie*; II. *Qui cum*; III. *Ipse enim, in qua nocte*; IV. *Ipse enim, cum hora venisset*.

<sup>22</sup> For a detailed presentation on the ceremony of *elevation*, see Mayer 1938: 234–262; Kennedy 1944: 121–150; Meyer 1963: 162–217; Browe 1929: 20–66; Heinz 1982: 69–79; Diósi 2008a: 3–35; Diósi 2008b: 116–123.

<sup>23</sup> There are three aspects incorporated in the mass in relation to the institution narrative whose aim is to more powerfully express what is happening: 1. the words spoken over the bread and wine should be as similar as possible so as to optimally emphasize the parity between them; 2. liturgical wording should follow the scriptural text as closely as possible; 3. the texts of the liturgy are dressed in ceremonial finery to signify their importance and value. For more on this, see Jungmann 1977: 190–191.

<sup>24</sup> An excellent summary of the dogma of transubstantiation: Dolhai 2018: 109–112. For the discussion of specific (liturgically also relevant) issues raised concerning transubstantiation, see Lang 1998: 345–355.

action, a recollection that makes the past present<sup>25</sup> and – although hidden in liturgical symbols – ensures<sup>26</sup> a genuine presence.<sup>27</sup> This is a ‘mystical-symbolic realism’<sup>28</sup> that in a dimension beyond time connects this world perceivable with our senses with the other world and makes it clear to us that liturgy has a role to play in the context of salvation history and salvation economy.<sup>29</sup> For liturgy is not limited to making present the salvific events of the past; instead, the concrete ritual celebration happening in the now is an event in itself that enables us to experience the encounter with the transcendent.<sup>30</sup> In other words, liturgy is not a mere epiphany of a past event in the present but the sacramentally mediated presence of the living God, communicating here and now, among the people addressed by Him.<sup>31</sup> Thus, we witness more than the past visiting the present. We see the present enter into history. Experiencing the now in the form of this perceivable present<sup>32</sup> and performing this lived experience<sup>33</sup> are of particular relevance for people today – even if many consider today’s society to be a post-Christian – because the liturgy leads them to understand that God does not turn a cold shoulder to the fate of mankind but is an active agent in their lives,<sup>34</sup> a Being to whom they can confidently turn with their worries, needs, petitions, and requests.<sup>35</sup> These two dimensions of the liturgical symbol (*signum rememorativum* and *signum demonstrativum*) are accompanied by a third one that is oriented towards the future (*signum prognosticum seu praenuntiativum*), i.e. indicative of future fulfillment.<sup>36</sup> Consequently, the liturgical present is determined by remembrance and pre-celebration. Remembrance makes the salvific event of the past present and transforms this present into a life-bearing ‘time category’ for us, as grace springing therefrom opens up the future for us, acting as the pledge of our eternal life and hope of our fulfilment. In the present, we are embraced by the comforting and promising arms of the past and the future. This double embrace coming from the two chronological realms helps us to realize the soteriological weight of our present, as this present – our own present illumined by the double light beam of the present and future – is a

---

<sup>25</sup> On the connection between the sacrifice of the Cross on Calvary and the sacrifice of the Holy Mass, see Dolhai 2018: 102–106.

<sup>26</sup> Casel 1998–1999: 4.

<sup>27</sup> On Christ’s presence in the liturgy, see Eisenbach 1982; Dolhai 2002: 51–64.

<sup>28</sup> Kallis 2014: 76.

<sup>29</sup> Csanád 1975: 735.

<sup>30</sup> Schüssler 2013: 140–147.

<sup>31</sup> Menke 2012: 131.

<sup>32</sup> Seel 2011: 53.

<sup>33</sup> Winter 2011: 12–17.

<sup>34</sup> Jeggle-Merz 2004: 86.

<sup>35</sup> Jeggle-Merz 2013: 5–9.

<sup>36</sup> On the three dimensions of the liturgical symbol, see Miklósházy 1984: 42–43.

vital 'moment' of eternity that Christ's saving cross and resurrection have opened up for mankind once and for all.<sup>37</sup> This 'moment' already holds the future by the power of the past. Indeed, this 'moment' of grace is the future in the now, relying on past experience of salvation history. The present memory of past liberation paves the way for the joyful prospect of the final liberation in the future, thereby giving us life in the present.<sup>38</sup> Experiencing this triad of past, present and future in the liturgy helps us to see ourselves and our neighbour as integral parts of salvation history.

The previously mentioned human *faciendum* is necessarily ritualized, that is to say, it is a fixed, stable form which protects us from the arbitrariness of the acting and speaking person and communicates to the outside world that the celebrating community is neither listening to its own words nor performing its own actions but conveying the words and actions of God at all times. The intended purpose of the ritualized form is to help man avoid excesses and limit his licentiousness in order to make space for God. The ritualized form keeps real-symbolic acts safe from man acting at his own discretion and from being exposed to man's will and pleasure. At the same time, ritual elevates acts to the sphere of inviolability; and the ritual so created is beyond the reach of human hands and earthly sophistry. The purpose of ritualization is to preserve the structure of cult against ever-changing time and man's ever-shifting opinions and religious vagaries, and to produce effective counter-pressure against the influence of the elements mentioned above.<sup>39</sup> At the same time, the ritualized form sheds light on man's duty as a servant, which, however, should not be misunderstood and interpreted as a form of bondage but much rather as dignity conferred on man by God, whereby man, in active collaboration with God, becomes able to mediate the divine epiphany conveyed by the symbols. We could say that man's ministry consists in keeping the world open for the coming of God and guaranteeing this openness by acting in accordance with His will in the Parousia and not with what he wishes to see God do at a particular point in history.

The preservation of rite in liturgy has a symbolic power in and of itself<sup>40</sup> since by symbolically entering God's sphere through ritualization, the cultic word and act become the reflection and expression of eternity in God. Consistency over time and permanence of the cultic word and act ensure its recurrence over and over again in the very same form. This constancy, too, serves as an indication of divine eternity. This accounts for the ritualization, consolidation, and stabilization of various forms of the cult over vast historic periods, as well as its staying power. From the perspective of the cultic

<sup>37</sup> Rahner 2005: 499–501.

<sup>38</sup> Kasper 2010a: 33.

<sup>39</sup> Welte 1979: 234–236.

<sup>40</sup> Welte 1979: 235.

community, we can say that it is exactly with the help of these constantly recurring unchanged forms that it can experience itself as a 'site' of God's presence where divine eternity shines forth. For such communities, ritualized forms are tangible signs of God's eternity. For this reason, communities endeavour to collectively retain their identity for generations as clear evidence that members of the cultic community, both living and departed, the people of the present and of those of the past, are truly the community illumined by the eternal light of God despite the ever-changing and transient nature of everything in this world. 'Rite can be continuous, constant in time because it is about things that are not bound to a changing time. The creature's worship of the Creator, thanksgiving for the benefits received from God, sin, repentance, redemption, and sanctification are all realities that are neither outdated nor modern, but permanent and timeless actualities. This timelessness is of the essence for someone getting involved with cult. Worshippers expect all that awaits them in the rite and determines their external and internal behaviour to be independent of the will of the particular leader or community. It is the hope of the worshipper that it is not the convictions and ideas of the individual that are expressed in the rite, inspiring them to take a particular course of action or even manipulating them. Instead, the rite comes to them from the impersonality of ancient times, like a river they now have a chance to enter.'<sup>41</sup>

Part of cultic service is acknowledging the fact that the divine word and act – which in themselves have already been realized and have no need for man to add anything to or take away from them – are still 'on their way to man', that is, they are waiting to be unfurled in the 'microcosm' of man who lives within the time and space 'coordinates' of historicity. At the same time, cultic service also calls attention to the undeniable circumstance that the current form of cultic speech and act is no more than a transitional, temporary representation of the actualized divine word and act, a representation that needs to be surpassed. In this way cult in its current form of divine representation in fact anticipates its own effacement. This invincible transience of cultic celebration and its need to be transcended must serve as the sole driving force behind any properly understood cult reform. A correct interpretation of reform and innovation can have nothing to do with man's disposition to 'always know everything better' than his forebears; neither should reform be inspired by modern man's high-handed pretension that he is superior to the 'fathers', his ancestors in the faith, and that their form of religiousness is outdated. Modern man should beware of such narcissism, which seems to have become a contemporary reality.

---

<sup>41</sup> Dobszay 2006: 42.

Human *faciendum* adds nothing to divine *factum*, but its duty is to mediate the new presence *per manus ministri* and *per os ministri*. The selfless dignity of representation, of serving as an image of divine presence is required of a man who acts cultically. Such action is selfless because human representation is merely the form through which another reality is materialized, becomes visible and effective; and it is dignified because this form, and this form alone, is able to mediate the divine presence. Both are of a constitutive nature because if man forgets about his selflessness in the cultic role, he will easily cross over to the dark side of self-deification and self-idolatry, while if he forgets about his dignity, he will come to kneel before all that is in the heavens and on the earth and slavishly worship the elements, only to have the world itself, which is in effect the image of divine origin, become the object of his worship.

Since man acts as an intermediary, he may be tempted to believe that he has the authority to decide when, how, and in what form the divine power hidden in the presence is to take effect. He does so whenever he pursues his own goals while intoxicated by his own power, and attempts to summon divine power in a bid to achieve these goals. This is the very distinctive feature of magic that casts suspicion its shadow on all religions. Man who abuses his cultic duties by conferring a magical dimension on them displays a tendency towards self-deification. For if man proceeds so, the relationship between God and man is turned on its head, with the service of God becoming an attempt to control divine power. Where man gets the upper hand, he puts himself in God's place, albeit unconsciously (since on a theoretical level, he continues to be aware of God's sovereignty, that His indisposition cannot be 'tamed' by human action into ensuring the attainment of desired benefits), out of overzealous devotion and an urgent need for action fuelled by 'overcooked' devotion. To approach God in this manner is to take advantage of the well-meaning recipient's emotional and mental vulnerability, thereby degrading cult to a medium of compliance with consumer<sup>42</sup> demands, a deceitful kitsch. Those who choose this path – although they will hardly be seen sporting a sign saying 'I am God' and may even deny that they are doing anything wrong – virtually act as 'little gods', robbing God of his originality inherent in the polyvalence of possibilities.

For cult, the triad composed of divine causality, the cultic actions of man, and worldly effects does not align itself into a one-dimensional and irreversible causal sequence. Though cultic deeds are not merely something that carries a meaning but are themselves an impactful reality (both in the mind of those involved and in the outside world), a closer examination of the three above-mentioned points will not result in a causal structure in the

---

<sup>42</sup> Today's man is driven by consumption in almost all areas of life: 'I consume, therefore I am', and 'I am what I consume'. Lukovich 1999: 95–111.

philosophical-scientific sense. Although the inner logic of cult consists precisely in renouncing one's own power, itself a characteristic feature of magic, cult – understandably – cannot relinquish its efficiency. 'Just as a ripple produced by a stone thrown into the lake, redemptive love radiates from this central point, the liturgical act, to transform our entire life.'<sup>43</sup> A person acting in the cult must have no desire to produce any effect by his cultic act, for the world is not a 'reservoir' of matter and energy over which he has autonomous disposal but much rather 'one half of the picture,' and it is only after joining it to 'the other half' that the world is made ready for the coming and the presence of the divine. Cult confines itself to taking a form in and through which another force – God's power – can do his work. Religion properly understood and cult in its legitimacy and clarity will inevitably leave their mark on society. Liturgy must become the source of a lived diakonia, of the Church's charitable activity, to make a genuine contribution to a civilization of solidarity and reconciliation. After all, a truly authentic celebration of the presence of our Redeemer – who lives for us and among us – will necessarily transform the reality of our lives.<sup>44</sup> In his encyclical on Christian love, Pope Benedict XVI makes the following statement: 'If I have no contact whatsoever with God in my life, then I cannot see in the other anything more than the other, and I am incapable of seeing in him the image of God. But if in my life I fail completely to heed others, solely out of a desire to be "devout" and to perform my "religious duties", then my relationship with God will also grow arid. It becomes merely "proper", but loveless. Only my readiness to encounter my neighbour and to show him love makes me sensitive to God as well. Only if I serve my neighbour can my eyes be opened to what God does for me and how much He loves me.'<sup>45</sup> Therefore, the social function performed by cult must also come to light in some form – the echo stirred by the divine word and the resonance of God's work, both transmitted by cult, must in some way permeate the world. Furthermore, we must not forget that the *raison d'être* of cult cannot be called into question merely by an absence of visible effect or by reason of its deficiencies, for cult can neither be defined in terms of its function in society nor measured according to the value system thereof.

Should we observe an absence of effects, I believe that we can inquire in three directions. First of all, we need to assess whether we are dealing with a genuine lack of impact. It is virtually impossible to answer this question, however, as impact mostly occurs and takes effect at the innermost levels of the individual that can hardly be perceived by an outsider. We must also remember that such impact spreads, without exception, through a process

---

<sup>43</sup> Babos 1980: 23.

<sup>44</sup> Kasper 2010a: 70–74.

<sup>45</sup> Benedict XVI 2006: § 18.

of development and takes some time to become evident at the external, empirically detectable level, thereby rendering all negative judgments premature. We must determine whether God has the same intended effect 'in mind' as we expected to obtain, and whether the sequence of stations along the road which leads to the awaited effect is in line with our assumptions. God upholds His originality in all His actions. It is practically impossible for outside observers to establish the absence of effect, making the latter a matter of the conscience which each individual must face on his own.

The second question holds out promises of a somewhat more objective answer: is cult taking place in accordance with the appropriate principles or has man monopolized it to serve his own ends and the ideas he cherishes? Jitianu Liviu's questions prove most to-the-point: 'The anamnestic essence of Christianity is clear in terms of cult. The essence of its rites and liturgy consists in its concrete representation in history. On the other hand, we may question whether Christianity has properly attended to the anamnestic essence of its cult so as to keep historical memory truly present, resulting in a culture of remembrance that provides human identity amidst the turbulence of a developing society.'<sup>46</sup>

Our third line of questioning involves an interpellation aimed at the conscience of the faithful: are they genuine in living their faith or does cult merely serve as an alibi for a lifestyle pursued within the comfort zone of the 'old man'? One thing is certain: cult can never counteract a crooked attitude or cancel out a way of life diametrically opposed to God's will. Liturgy – particularly the Eucharist – acts much more as a standard, a criterion by which our own life can be measured, for anything that has no connection with the Eucharist and upon which a Eucharistic blessing cannot be bestowed has no justification for existence. Therefore, in actuality, when we receive the Eucharist, we need not relinquish or abandon any part of our personality or life (except for sin!). And that which the Eucharist requires to be relinquished should be shut out of our lives immediately.<sup>47</sup>

Although today's society has a growing hunger for spiritual, symbolic, and ritual experience, the demand for the liturgy of the Church – excepting the traditional ceremonies connected with major landmarks in the human lifecycle<sup>48</sup> – is gradually diminishing. Yet, in extreme situations – as in the case of natural disasters<sup>49</sup> or at (mostly ecumenical) memorial services held

<sup>46</sup> Jitianu 2009: 32.

<sup>47</sup> Bulgakov 2016: 97.

<sup>48</sup> It is puzzling to see that for the overwhelming majority of the Catholic faithful this sacral-ritual competence creates the most 'travelled' bridge linking their personal lives, even if loosely, with the Church. See Diósi 2014: 28–42.

<sup>49</sup> Meyer-Blanck 2011: 21–31.

for the victims of crime sprees or shooting rampages<sup>50</sup> – church pews fill quickly even in parts of our world purported to be secular, suggesting that there is a need<sup>51</sup> for the Church’s liturgy and its manifestations of worship when the default one-dimensional lifestyle is turned upside down by an ‘inopportune’, unexpected, sudden event that has very little to do with logic and calls the secular paradigm into question.<sup>52</sup> However, within the framework of everyday life, the individual suffering from an exorbitant thirst for autonomy and freedom apparently finds it difficult to satisfy his desire for religious- and ritual experiences. Apparently, the world of the liturgy and the world as experienced by *homo digitalis* are difficult to reconcile.<sup>53</sup> Modern man has a sensation of being swallowed up and overly regulated in the liturgy of the Church.<sup>54</sup> Nowadays, life is played out on the paradoxical axes<sup>55</sup> of autonomy and heteronomy (i.e. an attitude not derived from the individual but submitted to an external, higher purpose and superior authority) and of autonomy and authenticity (i.e. a way of life that sets the individual apart from the crowd and possibly shows forth his originality).<sup>56</sup> This is how for many of us liturgy ceases to be a source of power and joy only to be transformed into the exact opposite: a phenomenon fraught with difficulties.<sup>57</sup> And there are quite a few who – despite the seemingly growing significance of religions as public and oftentimes global actors<sup>58</sup> – think they can believe in God even without the Church, as a result of which they take advantage of the ritual offers based on their own needs and individual criteria.<sup>59</sup> Our contemporaries’ rational way of thinking has gradually given rise to a greatly diminished credibility concerning religious statements and directives in everyday life.<sup>60</sup> Nowadays, people tend overlook the fact that the liturgy is a place of ‘theonomic autonomy’ where man becomes truly free through the person of Jesus Christ.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, the liturgy is a very particular opportunity to exercise autonomy whereby participants freely accept the will and guidance

---

<sup>50</sup> Eulenberger 2011: 33–42.

<sup>51</sup> Such actions are indicative of an indirect acknowledgment of the transcendent. See Földvári and Rosta 1998: 127–137.

<sup>52</sup> Fechtner & Klie 2011: 7–19.

<sup>53</sup> Schmitz 2021: 65.

<sup>54</sup> Funke 1991: 55–61.

<sup>55</sup> Schmidt 2014: 81–82.

<sup>56</sup> The pursuit of originality is also apparent in the individual’s religious reflections. *Diósi* 2012b: 64.

<sup>57</sup> Jakobs & Oel 2021: 306–333.

<sup>58</sup> Casanova 1997: 121–143; Casanova 1994; Casanova 1996: 181–210.

<sup>59</sup> Ebertz 1998: 283–284.

<sup>60</sup> Luhmann 2002: 219–220.

<sup>61</sup> Kasper 2010a: 52.

of a specific person who has freedom and autonomy of his own – namely, Jesus Christ.<sup>62</sup>

Let us take a closer look at the matter: the human will of Jesus is the human will of the eternal Son through which the incarnate Son put into effect (in space and time and as a human being) the mutual and eternal saving plan of the Father and the Son.<sup>63</sup> Existentially speaking, we become perfect human beings by fulfilling God's plan for us of our own free will and by the power of His grace. Christ is no exception. The eternal Son becomes a perfect human being in accordance with the plan of the Holy Trinity by fulfilling this plan in His lifetime on earth through His passion, death on the cross, and glorification, doing all things under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In this earthly life, Jesus' humanity is limited in time and space, i.e. it is manifested within a given and completely 'normal' social milieu and cultural context. Jesus, who was 'born of a woman' (Gal 4:4), is hungry (cf. Mk 11:12) and thirsty (cf. Jn 4:7), eats and drinks (cf. Mk 2:15), gets tired (cf. Jn 4:7) and sleeps (cf. Mk 4:37). Accordingly, He, who 'in His own spiritual history was always on a journey to Himself',<sup>64</sup> has every physical, emotional, cognitive, and volitional act proper to man.<sup>65</sup> He, who 'laboured with human hands, thought with a human mind, acted with a human will, and loved with a human heart' (GS 22), descends 'into the perils besetting mankind, for there is no other way to lift up fallen humanity. Jesus has to enter into the drama of human existence (...); He has to penetrate it completely, down to its uttermost depths, in order to find the "lost sheep", to bear it on his shoulders and to bring it home. This lies at the heart of Jesus' mission.'<sup>66</sup> Thus, 'we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are' (Heb 4:15), that is, one who could be tempted (cf. also Mt 4:1, Heb 2:18). 'During the days of Jesus's life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered' (Heb 5:7–8). Jesus lived his divine Sonship on a human level as a mortal man, gradually and step by step, acting always upon his human choices and decisions made in freedom. His human journey was accomplished in accordance with the universal principles of human life; he grew as a human among humans.<sup>67</sup> He always listened to His Father and remained united to His will throughout his life, demonstrating obedience, renewed confidence,

<sup>62</sup> Winter 2017: 139–159.

<sup>63</sup> For more on this, see Kereszty & Puskás 2015: 445–447.

<sup>64</sup> Rahner 1964: 240.

<sup>65</sup> Müller 2004: 311.

<sup>66</sup> Benedict XVI 2008a .

<sup>67</sup> Sesboué 1997: 161–166.

and love. Like the rest of us, he built up His relationship with God and His fellow human beings little by little, gradually attaining humanity through external and internal processes. The eternal Son became completely human, in the existential sense, through His human relationships with His Father and His fellow humans and neighbours – that is, with His close (Mary, Joseph) and extended family circle, His disciples, followers, the masses, His enemies, and the entire world.<sup>68</sup>

By means of the hypostatic union (*unio hypostatica*), that is, the union of human nature with the divine person of the Son effected in Jesus Christ, we encounter a unique case of communication taking place in the God–man opposition.<sup>69</sup> This communication between God and man reached the greatest proximity possible, a proximity which, though unsurpassable, has become embedded in human history as the standard towards which we must strive. This is truly an imitation of the inimitable, since anyone who follows in the footsteps of Christ chooses an absolute singular and perfect standard for his life, which he has no hope of reaching in this earthly life.<sup>70</sup> It is in light of this communicative coexistence that the most fundamental principle of the communication between man and God is made clear to us: the greater man's unity with his God and Creator, the greater his autonomy and freedom.<sup>71</sup> It is essential to understand that human free will is not in competition with divine will, and that yielding to God's will does not threaten our human freedom or prove a stumbling block in the process of becoming ourselves. Christ did not subdue the human will either but, renewed it instead,<sup>72</sup> restoring it to its original dignity.<sup>73</sup> In Christ, union with God's will became a human way of existence.<sup>74</sup> 'Jesus, then, is the living, personal summation of perfect freedom in total obedience to the will of God.'<sup>75</sup> Hence, when the human will yields to God's will, it is not crushed but fulfilled, for man's will is perfected when assenting to the divine will.<sup>76</sup> Consequently, man does not live out his freedom and make maximum use of his freedom by opposing and resisting the divine will. Christ and His Father acting in unison are exemplary for us, too, as it is not only the utterly deified humanity of the resurrected Jesus – which is the ultimate goal of all natural and supernatural human development – that stands as a model of new creation for us, but the attitudes

<sup>68</sup> Kereszty & Puskás 2015: 413–414.

<sup>69</sup> Jesus' unique personal relationship with the Father does not follow automatically from the *unio hypostatica* but is made possible by it.

<sup>70</sup> von Speyr 2009: 24–26.

<sup>71</sup> Szabó 1996: 135.

<sup>72</sup> Schönborn 2008.

<sup>73</sup> Benedict XVI 2011: 125.

<sup>74</sup> Schönborn 2008: 141.

<sup>75</sup> John Paul II 1993: § 87.

<sup>76</sup> Benedict XVI 2011: 124–125.

of the Jesus the man that He revealed to us on His journey towards reaching this goal. For this reason, the guidance of the Son does not aim at the subjugation or 'colonization' of human will but suggests the possibility of the fulfillment of the human will for a people with free will. In the radiance of divine will, *homo liturgicus* can crown his own personal will.

As we have seen above, today our freedom is necessarily beset by certain paradoxes. Autonomous freedom becomes able to celebrate the liturgy inasmuch as it is able to perceive therein the potential to overcome its own paradoxes.<sup>77</sup> Our considerations detailed above should have made it clear that in the liturgy – which serves as the place of encounter for two independent, autonomous wills, namely the will of man participating in the cultic act and that of the eternal Son who comes among us sacramentally and acts in unison with His Father – human and divine have no aim to eliminate, or even to overcome, one another. The point here is not to have the human or the divine will vanish without a trace as a paranormal phenomenon in the Bermuda Triangle of autonomy–heteronomy–authenticity. In fact, the exact opposite is true: it is in the cultic space of the liturgy that this paradoxical triangle of autonomy–heteronomy–authenticity, inextricably interwoven with our human life, coalesces in the light of the divine will and becomes 'the harmonic triad' of our life. Liturgy is the 'hour' of the reconciliation of paradoxes. Perhaps it is the cultic context of our life that offers us the most tangible experience of how the autonomy of human freedom 'has remained standing' all along. Human autonomy is not impaired but by coming to terms with its true dignity illuminated by the Son will mature and reach its full potential. Here, in the meeting place of the liturgy, seeking Christ who is the paragon of perfect free human obedience, we apprehend that human freedom, the brightest sign of our divine likeness, is always realized in love and self-giving.<sup>78</sup> Viewed in the radiant light of this obedient free love, the autonomous freedom opposite us ceases to be frightening; the heteronomy facing us loses its intimidating, forbidding heteronomous nature. In the freedom of mutual recognition, characterized for us by our trust in God, we discern that the personal autonomous freedom we have encountered has come into our midst not to imperil our own freedom but to embrace it lovingly, recognize it as an indispensable part of our self, and elevate it onto a higher plane. As long as man refuses to crown his freedom with Christ's 'crown of thorns' and vehemently insists on placing the diadem of his ego on his own freedom, he will fail to understand the essence of liturgy whose purpose is to crown the 'self' and not to provide an 'angel-winged' backdrop for the worship of the ego.

---

<sup>77</sup> Winter 2017: 156.

<sup>78</sup> John Paul II 1993: § 87.

The 'spirituality' of our 'post-secular'<sup>79</sup> society has no interest in the substance of religion; what is more, it virtually steers clear of all aspects of morality and dogma and is rather experience- and subject-oriented, centred on the layout aesthetics of the religious phenomenon and its therapeutic side-effects. To put it differently, post-secular spirituality does not seek the substance of religion but its form, an external 'varnish' of religion, which it resuscitates from its comatose state with a graceful touch of media effects. From this standpoint, religious forms are only valuable and useful in so far as the associations they conjure up are particularly positive and pleasant (ex. a sense of safety, comfort, understanding, etc.) and as long as the actual message can be used as a 'topping' or 'side-dish' to guarantee maximum profit.<sup>80</sup> Added to this, there is an anthropological *Zeitgeist* rooted in an exaggerated concern for the individual's mental state that has led man to forget how to take an overall, panoramic view of his existence.<sup>81</sup> In other words, man has become much keener on multiplying the experiential coefficient of the *details* than searching for a harmonious perspective encompassing his *entire* existence. In the present-day cultural context, religion in general – and, undoubtedly, its cultic-liturgical 'system of codes' par excellence – has become an 'object of the individual's profit calculation', which is problematic not only because 'unchecked self-interest is foreign to the classic self-definition and social forms of most religions' but also because 'anyone who incorporates religion into their profit calculation deprives it precisely of one of its major resources, which is self-critical self-transcendence'.<sup>82</sup>

Today's society also demands that people lead a target-oriented, purposeful lifestyle, one that is in stark contrast with the world of symbols and rites devoid of purposes. To a human being who has built his life upon purposefully rational<sup>83</sup> considerations within the orbit of consumerism and productivism, the religious-ritualistic sentiment appears downright dysfunctional, yet it is precisely in the context of liturgy that man standing before God can become

---

<sup>79</sup> The adjective 'post-secular' has skyrocketed into public awareness since upon receiving the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade in 2001, the globally acclaimed German philosopher Jürgen Habermas delivered a ceremonial speech in which he termed modern society 'post-secular'. For a print version of the speech, see Habermas 2003: 249–262. See also Habermas & Ratzinger 2007.

<sup>80</sup> Höhn 2006b: 605–608; Höhn 2006a: 2–6; Pollack 2006: 6–11; Knapp 2008: 270–280; Luber 2008: 259–269. See also Volume 244 of the QD series, which is completely dedicated to the discussion of this issue: Walter 2007. For a general map of the situation in Hungary, see Pál 2007: 9–20.

<sup>81</sup> Czoborczy 2009: 3.

<sup>82</sup> Bucher 2008: 328.

<sup>83</sup> The spread of rationalism in Europe over the recent decades is an undeniable reality. For more on this, see Bruce 1992; Bruce 1999; Davie 2000.

again the 'child' who rejoices at the open-minded freshness of his youth, who has no interest in the purposeful actions so characteristic of adult life, and who takes full delight in playing in God's presence<sup>84</sup> where existence freely flows.<sup>85</sup> "The sum and substance of liturgy is "just this and nothing more": playing in the presence of God, in freedom, beauty, and holy jubilation."<sup>86</sup> Besides, rites are not designed to appeal to the rational side of man – instead, they turn our attention to the incomprehensible but nonetheless real, hoping to approach the unreachable, thereby providing us with opportunities that would otherwise remain hidden.<sup>87</sup> Perhaps the root of the problem outlined above is not to be sought in the liturgy itself but much more so in life, in people's lack of meaningful relationships. Cult is the celebration of the drama of redemption, and only those with the courage to confront the drama of their own lives, to recognize themselves as addressees of and participants in the great divine drama can duly celebrate it. Without its existential implications for the specific community and individual, cult would be reduced to rigid ritualism with no connection to reality. Given that man clings to his self-fabricated life as a private space, fears the loss of his identity, and resists immersion in the mystery play, anything that implies a need to make changes to one's life also seems to threaten it with destruction. Man today is reluctant to confront himself or God. Unable or unwilling to establish a personal relationship with God in the liturgy,<sup>88</sup> he is more comfortable with selective religiosity. He prefers to pick and choose rather than beholding his existence from the perspective of being chosen by God. He seeks a transcendental power for confirmation of the self-imposed quality standard of his own life instead of tailoring his life to the requirements of morality. He needs God only to 'sign' his 'life contract' and will not admit Him to be the 'screenwriter' of his life. He expects nothing more from God than a *nihil obstat* for his 'autobiography'. It is also true that God's voice as heard in the liturgy is easy to miss amidst the background noise generated by our pluralistic society, and the true value of the big perspective that provides ultimate meaning is misunderstood and lost in the parade of mass-produced goods.<sup>89</sup>

Also, the concept of community – strongly preferred and (over)emphasized in our day – is at odds with the realities of our individualistic society and is de facto left hanging in mid-air. The almost dictatorially excessive verbal emphasis of this (forced) sense of community applied to a group whose members would prefer distance over proximity to one another is not merely

---

<sup>84</sup> Guardini 1957: 89–105.

<sup>85</sup> Ratzinger 2002: 11.

<sup>86</sup> Kerényi 2018: 135.

<sup>87</sup> Fehérvári 2020: 113.

<sup>88</sup> Saberschinsky 2010: 108.

<sup>89</sup> Schmitz 2021: 65.

unnatural, gaudy, and syrupy but an absurd, overused cliché with heavy undertones of a ‘fabulous’ utopia that individualistic man has no intention of ever realizing, not even in his ‘wildest dreams’. If in the name of the Church we make ‘official’ and ‘public’ statements that do not actually correspond to reality, we in fact commit an act of iconoclasm against the liturgy itself, since the resulting effect is exactly the opposite of what the Church has been ‘lobbying’ for: no one will take it seriously, as – despite the important message at its heart – it has sunk to the level of hackneyed phrases, become commonplace and ordinary. Likewise, we cannot remain silent about the tendency prevailing in the Church today (perhaps because she has been losing ground in society) to use liturgy as the ‘final unconquered bastion’, an ‘ultimate weapon’, and a means to address the masses, thereby burdening it with a task it was never meant to accomplish. These days, we tend to reduce almost everything down to the liturgy and expect everything from it, much of which does not even fall within its purview. In fact, should the liturgy aim to accomplish these superfluous goals, it would cease to be what it is. With our enthusiastic assistance, liturgy has been assigned to the category of pastoral care, in many cases even becoming a ‘transit zone’, which typically results in a *veni, vidi, redii* situation (i.e. I came, I saw, I left), to rephrase Gaius Julius Caesar’s memorable *veni, vidi, vici* spoken after his swift military victory at Zela. Pastoral ‘strategies’ should be developed instead of turning the liturgy into a ‘mousetrap’. Several superiors of the cult (i.e. clergymen) who take an overly rational perspective of the world of liturgy<sup>90</sup> hardly believe (anymore) in God individually embracing our souls amid the sphinx-like silence of the symbols. So, they prefer to take matters into their own hands. Acting like a bunch of magicians, they conjure a whole series of tricks out of their top hat. Hoping that their tricks will prove attractive and impressive, they end up serving up nonsense and hot air.<sup>91</sup> The contemporary ‘wish list’

<sup>90</sup> A lovely little anecdote is due here. In Martin Heidegger’s native village (1889–1976), the parish priest noticed that the philosopher would kneel down in front of the tabernacle every time he entered the church. On one occasion, he asked him, ‘Professor, how come you always kneel down in front of the tabernacle?’ The philosopher replied: ‘A rationalist like you cannot understand this!’ (Funke 1991: 60).

<sup>91</sup> The stern words of Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–1988) bear close consideration: „Etwas Geschmackloses ist seit dem (falsch ausgelegten) Konzil in die Liturgie eingedrungen: die Jovialität, die Anbiederung des Zelebrierenden mit der Gemeinde: Diese ist zum Beten und nicht zu einem gemütlichen Austausch gekommen; seltsamerweise ist durch diese Mißdeutung der Eindruck der postkonziliaren Liturgie wesentlich klerikaler geworden als früher, da der Priester von vornherein als bloßer Diener des Gefeierten auftrat. [...] Wenn ein Geschlecht keine echten religiösen Bilder für die Kirche zu schaffen vermag, soll sie nicht sagen, leere Wände konzentrieren den Geist wirksamer auf das Wesentliche. Wenn wir kleine Leute geworden sind, sollten wir das Mysterium, das wir feiern, nicht auf unser Format zu reduzieren suchen. Und wenn wir weiterhin würdelos geworden sind, sollten wir durch unser Glaubensbekenntnis immerhin soviel Sinn für die Majestät Gottes behalten haben, das wir

covers the entire spectrum of desires regarding liturgical reform: from 'stop signs' prohibiting all change to rumours of a *tabula rasa* heralding the end of the 'hated' *status quo* inciting.<sup>92</sup>

Cult is the 'place' par excellence where man can become a human,<sup>93</sup> the medium through which he can define himself as a transcendent being who is not confined to the things and people of this world, one who seeks and hopes to find fulfilment in a Superior Being and understands the profound mystery of his human existence and the inescapable truth leading to happiness.<sup>94</sup> Those who approach cult – and the richness of its content and the unsurpassable and concise nature of its symbols – with spiritual alertness and openness come to realize that the fullness of his existence resides outside the self and is independent of the self. Such a person sighs on the horizontal plane of his existence, only to have this sigh ascend into the vertical. In cult, attitudes of 'know it all' and 'do it all' come to nothing and are brought to their knees; the purposeful view of life and proud self-consciousness pervading all structures of secular life, the belief that scientific research and technological achievements have granted man sovereignty over the cosmos hit a dead end. In cult, man is forced to lay his cards on the table and admit his helplessness in fulfilling his own existence, his powerlessness, the utter vanity of the toil and trouble of this life, and the Sisyphean nature of his efforts. He must acknowledge that he cannot fulfill his life by himself for there will always be a 'metaphysical remnant', the mystery of his own created nature, that defines and pervades his existence. On the other hand, cult resounds with the response given to man's dependence on God. In other words, man is confirmed in his belief that the transcendental openness of his existence does not fall into the category of 'vanity of vanities' and is emphatically not futile. Thus, man is reinforced in his humanity. In this sense, cult is the *mystagogy of human life*: the illumination of the mystery that defines, carries, and fulfils human existence.

---

uns dort, wo wir ihr begegnen, den Abstand noch fühlen – größere Zeitalter mögen ihn stärker gefühlt haben – und uns Gott gegenüber echt benehmen" (von Balthasar 1978: 484, 486).

<sup>92</sup> Oel & Jakobs 2021: 107.

<sup>93</sup> Schmaus 1961: 324–344.

<sup>94</sup> Schilson 1989: 220–222.



## Liturgy as a Communication Event

Liturgical communication is multifaceted, taking place on several levels. We will refrain from an exhaustive examination of all the levels, however, and direct our focus on one specific aspect, which is the communication between God and man within the framework of the liturgy. This is the most important component – one might even call it the core, focal point, and the fundament – of all liturgical communication. Liturgy is the ‘site’ of divine and human interaction where a constant connection is maintained between two partners (God and man) through the double movement of sending and receiving.<sup>95</sup> Let us begin by clarifying our starting point. The liturgy is a *locus theologicus*, meaning – in somewhat simplified terms – a place where theology ‘takes place’ or ‘happens’. We might as well call liturgy the ontological pre-condition of theology. Thus, by definition, the mission of liturgical theology is to reveal theology as it manifests itself in the liturgy of the Church.<sup>96</sup> Liturgy is ‘theology in motion’.<sup>97</sup> Its liveliness comes from the reality that the liturgy of the Church is practically a communicative event realized ‘in the here and now’, with ‘encounter’ featuring as the key element. Liturgy is more than the praise of God using externals – visible, audible, and palpable, that is, perceivable – forms ‘put into action’. For this reason, liturgy is not to be construed as a reservoir of prayers, gestures, and religious choreographies or a compendium of carefully and professionally selected verbal and non-verbal algorithms that we are to transmit to someone in strict compliance with the rules of communication. Communication is the central content of liturgy, in fact, liturgy equals communication. It is my profound conviction that anyone intending to speak about God, in other words, to practise theology, should

---

<sup>95</sup> Sólymos 1980: 8–10.

<sup>96</sup> Hoving 2009: 18.

<sup>97</sup> Kavanagh 1984: 8.

speak first of all about relationship, meeting, and communication. Revelation itself and faith are a 'result' of a relationship event: a 'condensation', as it were, arising at the intersection of (divine and human) manifestations. Faith should be thought of as a communication event symbolically mediated between God and man.<sup>98</sup> Hence, communication is basically the keyword of theology, since it is only by observing it that we gain an understanding of reality. In view of this, the question as to *where* theology takes place proves far more important than asking *what* theology is.<sup>99</sup> 'Localizing' theology along these lines should not be interpreted as a dethronement of the inscrutable God or an attempted coup but as a corollary of our anthropological 'scaling to size'. God's self-revelation is embedded in history. History itself, our history, the *here* of the *now* becomes the stage for salvation history. And there is hardly a more appropriate 'place' than the cultic event for the creature to confront his Creator, and for redeemed man to contemplate his Redeemer.<sup>100</sup>

Existing as a reality in its own right, liturgy is a 'resonance space'<sup>101</sup> mediating between the inner (experience of the personal self) and outer (the world, fellow human beings, God) realities. This 'resonance space' situated between the 'internal' and the 'external' is a powerful site for encounters (with ourselves,<sup>102</sup> our fellow human beings, the world, God) and for the inner experiences that ensue. In the world of physics (and music), resonance denotes the 'phenomenon of increased amplitude that occurs when the frequency of an applied periodic force (...) is equal or close to a natural frequency of the system on which it acts'.<sup>103</sup> Therefore, when a system/body comes into contact with the sound waves of another system/body (sound source) whose frequency is equal to the frequency emitted by its own system/body, resonance is produced. When such a concordance of sounds occurs, we say that the two systems are in resonance with each other. In the event that we can bring a particular system to produce vibrations of a frequency corresponding to its own natural frequency, minimal excitation is sufficient for the system to produce a vibration of the largest amplitude possible. Likewise, the 'resonance

---

<sup>98</sup> This is yet another reason why it is essential nowadays to go beyond passing on knowledge of the faith to children, young people, and adults. Religious education should not be limited to the acquisition of 'compulsory study material' on their part – instead, besides reflection and the correlation between experience, faith, and life, they should be encouraged not to let the symbolically coded side of their life story go to waste but to take it seriously as part of their 'self' and to develop it creatively. Roth 1997: 219.

<sup>99</sup> Hilberath & Scharer 2012: 118.

<sup>100</sup> Kavanagh 1984: 8.

<sup>101</sup> Odenthal 2018: 32–52.

<sup>102</sup> Man – viewing himself as the product of a reality completely alien to him – experiences himself as a subject and a person. For more on this, see Rahner 1998: 37–40.

<sup>103</sup> Quotation taken from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resonance>. Cf. also Erdey-Grúz 1968: 527–528.

space' of the liturgy wishes to act as a meeting place for two distinct realities except that the 'site' reserved for the cultic encounter is a space for experiencing both resonance and the lack thereof. This 'resonance space' of the liturgy cannot be separated or isolated from the 'space devoid of resonance'. Both are present here since each makes up an integral, in fact, vital part of the individual's liturgical life experience. Let us further note that – especially in this cultic context – 'resonance' is not a 'state of being but rather a mode of relationship',<sup>104</sup> meaning that its aim is not to express the individual's feelings or emotional state but to reveal his attitude to and relationship with other realities. Upon such a meeting, the two parties do not converse in the third person but address one another in the second person (i.e. they are on 'first-name terms'), even referring to themselves in the collective (i.e. we). In the fullness of their encounter – with the two persons mutually give themselves as belonging to the other and as accept the other as belonging to themselves – the two subjects experience their unity as a newly formed shared subject.<sup>105</sup> Incorporating the above physical principles into our reflections on liturgical theology brings us to the realization that the perfect resonance of ourselves with the world, our fellow human beings, and God, that is, of the inner and outer realities is available to eschatological (i.e. completely purified<sup>106</sup> and resurrected) man alone. In the process of purification after death, the fiery love immanent to the life of the Holy Trinity 'burns up' the exclusive self-narration of the 'I' and trains us in 'you-' and 'we-narration',<sup>107</sup> which will 'bring man into complete harmony with God'.<sup>108</sup> It is upon fulfilment – with 'all people experiencing their own homecoming'<sup>109</sup> – that the relationship connecting all living beings (i.e. man and God, man and his fellow humans, man and nature) is made complete, and the relationship of each individual person with himself is fulfilled to the exclusion of every trace of self-alienation.<sup>110</sup> The sequence of the Easter Mass<sup>111</sup> – *Surrexit Christus spes mea – Christ, my hope, has risen (Victimae paschali laudes)* – expresses the infallible hope of this communication encounter. Essential to seamless communication – as already mentioned – is bodily resurrection, the precondition of complete resonance. The body, on the one hand, signifies a 'boundary' that isolates or distances us from others. Also, since the bodily dimension obscures inner reality, we are unable to see through it and see into the other. The 'other'

<sup>104</sup> Hartmut 2016: 285.

<sup>105</sup> Alszeghy 1994: 85.

<sup>106</sup> For a more detailed description of the fulfilling process of purification, see Diósi 2011: 153–169.

<sup>107</sup> von Balthasar 1974: 442.

<sup>108</sup> Alszeghy 1994: 104.

<sup>109</sup> Gál 1975: 81.

<sup>110</sup> Nocke 1997b: 494.

<sup>111</sup> de Vogué 2000: 25.

facing us will always be a ‘stranger’ to us in some way. Furthermore, the same is true of us, as we cannot see into ourselves either. On the other hand, the body forms a bridge that also connects, for it is through our body that we can meet the ‘other’. We communicate with the ‘other’ who is ‘stranger’ to us<sup>112</sup> through the common material of creation. Consequently, our attitude toward our corporeal reality is defined by the aforementioned duality. We can either use our bodies to distance and withdraw into ourselves or to open up and communicate. In resurrection, the body ceases to be a ‘boundary’, and all that remains of it is communication. Jesus rose from the dead because he became the perfect gift of Himself as the Son of the Father and the Love on the Cross.<sup>113</sup> Through incarnation, the Word made flesh became somewhat ‘distanced’ from the Father since His human ‘mortal body is so cumbersome, so self-limiting that the Son is unable therein to live His divine life in its fullness. (...) The humanity of the resurrected Jesus is no longer closed and autonomously earthbound in its nature. Instead, it becomes entirely the expression of divine life.’<sup>114</sup> At the same time, the irreversibility of the eschatological promise shines from the face of the resurrected Christ.<sup>115</sup> The splendour of this countenance, which comes to us from beyond the wall of death, irradiates the goal of human fulfilment, setting before us a personal destiny that points beyond itself. This way, Christ’s resurrection becomes for all of us the sign of hope and an energetic driving force<sup>116</sup> since the Resurrected One – after re-entering the divine sphere through the Paschal Mystery – is not only the ‘One Who Lives’ but the ‘Giver of Life’ able to mediate God’s grace to us.<sup>117</sup> Man, therefore, is already God’s communication partner, but we will only see our communication ‘partner’, the Lord, *as He is* (1Jn 3:2) when our resurrected body participates in the nature of Christ’s resurrected body and we become perfectly conformed to Him.<sup>118</sup> Upon bodily resurrection, man will experience that nothing that belonged to his human essence (his being in the world, his communication with others, or his embeddedness in history) will be consigned to the dustbin of the past, but that his entire life story and all relationships developed within it will enter into fulfilment.<sup>119</sup> Upon fulfilment, when man finally comes face to face with the divine ‘You’, his dialogue with personal truth and love will be brought to perfection:<sup>120</sup> the history of the dialogue of his life will come to fulfilment. Communication – at

<sup>112</sup> Benedict XVI 2008b: 346–348.

<sup>113</sup> Benedict XVI 2008b: 348.

<sup>114</sup> Kereszty 1977: 113.

<sup>115</sup> Schneider 1979: 528.

<sup>116</sup> Schneider 1979: 528.

<sup>117</sup> Miklósházy 2022: 85.

<sup>118</sup> Kereszty & Puskás 2015: 62.

<sup>119</sup> Nocke 1997b: 477.

<sup>120</sup> Schmaus 1959: 227.

peak amplitude due to full resonance – bursts into an elevated, celebratory ‘song’. And in this song, which resounds throughout the entire cosmos, two resurrected<sup>121</sup> bodies, completely open to communication, encounter one another; for the purified soul permeates a body that has become light and free. This communion of the soul with the body transforms the tension and energy inherent to earthly man<sup>122</sup>, which had functioned as the ‘interference stations’ of worldly communication. Hence, man – by virtue of this inner reconciliation – becomes truly *one*: ‘the hidden interior becomes one with the visible exterior, and the visible exterior becomes one with the hidden interior’ (Saint Gregory of Nyssa [† after 394 AD], PG 44, 129). In this transparency, man comes to know himself as he really is and reveals himself to others as he really is.<sup>123</sup> This perfect transparency determines the landscape of the Heavenly Jerusalem as well: the beauty and splendour of the city will be identical with that of its inhabitants and vice versa.<sup>124</sup> This complete resonance is the specific, unique, and unsurpassable melodic world of the *new heaven and new earth* (Rev 21:1).

Until then, the body of the Resurrected will communicate through the sacraments<sup>125</sup> with our mortal body awaiting resurrection. This communication can be characterized by partial resonance at the very best, that is, by an imperfect correspondence between ‘frequencies’ and ‘unequal amplitudes’. Let us not forget that resonance does not denote an echo but a response relationship,<sup>126</sup> i.e. one assuming two parties, with each speaking in its own voice. Resonance recognizes the ‘other’ as a different ‘other’, autonomous from me and is facing me, and it testifies to a relationship with this different ‘other’. The ‘other’ facing me is neither a duplicate of myself (just as I am not his duplicate either), nor the manifestation of my ideas of him, and he is certainly not a blank, white ‘cavass’ onto which I am free to project myself. If that were the case, I would end up depriving the ‘other’ of his freedom and, instead of treating him as a potential respondent, I would consider him the echo of my *ego* threatening to eclipse every(thing/one). This world, which is able to produce but a partial resonance at best, abounds in a music replete with consonant and dissonant intervals and chords. Our biography is a four-part ‘score’ of alternating resonance and dissonance with ourselves, our fellow human beings, the world, and God, where the parts appearing below one another simultaneously sometimes cordially fall in place, while on other

<sup>121</sup> There is a distinction between Christ’s resurrection and our hoped-for resurrection, as by His resurrection He reached historical fulfilment in reality and was made ‘Lord’ and ‘Messiah’ for us (Rahner 1998: 226).

<sup>122</sup> Stăniloae 1997: 296.

<sup>123</sup> Stăniloae 1997: 296.

<sup>124</sup> Remete 2000: 361.

<sup>125</sup> Sesboüé 1997: 127.

<sup>126</sup> Merle 2018: 215.

occasions, incongruent elements placed side by side in an unusual, irregular manner push against and fall out with each other. How do we obtain a tetrachord? Speaking in terms of music theory, chord construction is done by placing plus one (+1) note above the trichord, that is, we add to the already existing trichord a note with a pitch different from the notes contained within it. This additional note ‘crowns’ the trichord and brings about a qualitative change. This ‘Other’ note, the tone belonging to the ‘Totally Other from beyond here’, rounds off and enframes the trichord. This ‘Other Tone’ is God. As long as the ‘ground-note’ (myself) does not form a consonant interval with each and every other note (my fellow human beings, the created world, God) separately, the chord produced will create the sensation of tension, temporality, and unresolvedness. This unsettling dissonance, which creates a feeling of incompleteness, ‘cries out’ for a comforting consonance given that the dissonant chord does not itself carry a satisfactory meaning but rather inspires feelings of anticipation. The inherent tension in dissonance, a by-product of the movement and vitality of life, necessarily seeks a resolution. The process of resolution, ‘by the operation of the dynamic, that is, by bringing the notes causing the conflict to a standstill (into consonance), requires movement’.<sup>127</sup> Liturgy undergirds this process by directing our gaze in this world which lacks complete harmony to the ‘conductor’ in charge of our life’s ‘score’, who is both ‘conductor’ *and* ‘composer’ rolled into one.

The essence of liturgy thus lies in the encounter as well as in the communication taking place during this encounter. Liturgy is the ‘span-play’ between the transcendent and the immanent, which – in the force field of the symbols – palpably manifests the tension (not stress or anxiety!) wherein man bound in by history stands before the eternal God. Liturgy mediates between these two worlds without dialectically relieving the tension between them or absolutizing any element thereof. Liturgy is the ‘site’ where the transcendent becomes available to human experience, the space in which the transcendent can manifest itself in a perceptible manner. In the Christian sense, God’s transcendence is not to be understood as a spatial distance but as the transcendence of absolute freedom, which, however, becomes available to us through the self-communication of love. In the incarnation, cross, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God definitively revealed his identity as God, which is characterized by a perfectly self-emptying, self-giving love.<sup>128</sup> And liturgy means precisely the enduring presence and closeness of our transcendent God (con)descends to us out of love. It is common knowledge that an immanent framework is necessary for humans to experience the

---

<sup>127</sup> Keszler 1952: 20.

<sup>128</sup> Kasper 2010b: 197–198.

manifestation of the transcendent.<sup>129</sup> The transcendent, that which is ‘comes from beyond’, must be ‘converted’ into the immanent; what ‘resides’ beyond sensory modalities must be brought ‘home’ and naturalized (though not domesticated!). Liturgy can be interpreted as a ‘liminal event’, as a ‘liminal experience’ of the transcendent that is beyond our limitations. It is during the encounter at these ‘boundaries’ – of ungraspable manifestation and invisible perceptibility – that interpersonal communication occurs.

Human existence is essentially a communicative existence whose driving force is the spiritual agitation and uncertainty characteristic of human life. The intellect as a presence is a characteristic of the intermediate mode of being of human existence, of the mode of being that is continually ‘swinging’, as it were, between two stable states, between act and substance, to use the twin concepts of classical metaphysics. The intellect is, and it is not; it is not substance,<sup>130</sup> but it is not nothing either; it is leaving but not arriving yet; it is going out but not yet coming in.<sup>131</sup> This spiritual restlessness is a distinction or ‘privilege’ of our wandering, pilgrim life, and, as such, it is not a drawback, but the sign of our inquisitive, searching, and contemplative vitality, as well as the cornerstone of our existence yearning for communication.

Man’s communication needs, arising primarily from his spiritual agitation, are also fuelled by his experience of finitude. The finitude of human existence is not an evil to be overcome; it is neither the embodiment of a sunless existence lived in the shadows nor a calamity. Finitude is simply the precondition of communicative existence, the emblem of the *animal communicativum* and as such the sanctified ‘ally’ of the actualization occurring through divine communication. We might say that the experience of finitude – precisely via the ‘asymmetric interaction’<sup>132</sup> carried out in communication – becomes sanctified, loses its mortal profanity and its fatal, threatening nature since. Acting as a theological mouthpiece, it speaks about an infinity that opens itself to harbour fulfilled finitude. Finitude involved in the communicative event provides human existence with a spark of hope of being cherished in the very bosom of Existence, a hope that all that is sown by man in the loose ground of finitude will come to harvest on the ‘new earth’ (Rev 21:1). The infinite Eternal One builds upon this finitude replete with the seriousness of finality.

<sup>129</sup> Korpics & P. Szilczl 2007: 18.

<sup>130</sup> ‘Man is not a sample, a materialization of man-substance but the unique *realization* of man-substance, and this substance-realizer who raises abstract substance to the level of reality, is the person. The one-time realization of substance makes the self one-of-a-kind: what the self does with the substance and how it goes about doing it, that one-of-a-kind process of realization *is* the self.’ (Gáspár 2008b: 58).

<sup>131</sup> Gáspár 2008a: 28–30.

<sup>132</sup> Gánóczy 2003: 173.

The experience of finitude therefore has a positive ontological relevance given that it incorporates the three main conditions of communicative existence:<sup>133</sup> (1) Finite existence is limited in its finitude, and it constantly comes into contact with its environment at these interfaces, therefore it is an open existence; (2) Due to its openness, it is an existence reaching and pointing beyond itself; (3) It is an existence that transcends itself and becomes complete and fulfilled in its encounter with the 'other'. As such, it is an existence representing the dialectics of movement and action. The finite human existence that opens up towards the 'other' and experiences its own limits in relation to the 'other' gains experience of distances and differences; in brief, it develops the ability to relate.

In order to be ontologically productive, finite human existence meets the 'other' at the 'crossfire-intersection' of its relating. It is in the experience of distances and difference that a 'clef' is carved into the individual's historicity. It is through this cleft that time infiltrates human existence and 'pitches its tent' therein. The distance from the 'self' to the 'other' – in other words, the space between familiarity and unfamiliarity – is temporal.<sup>134</sup> Communication is therefore the human being's mode of existence. It unfolds on a temporal-historical plane, and, aided by the grace of God, becomes the 'means' of self-fulfilment. At this point, we, the brethren of our Church, are often led into error – at least in relation to others, as we tend to be more lenient with ourselves – and conclude that faith in God which feeds on communication should be understood as a linear development process. Accordingly, we expect this faith to grow and deepen constantly, almost visibly, and unburdened by relapses and doubts. In this way, perhaps 'not consciously or intentionally, but still we subscribe to the linear time pattern of the modern era, undergirded by the ideology of unlimited development.'<sup>135</sup> Although being on the way to meeting God provides us with a sense of direction, our progress will not necessarily be linear. Faith in God is better understood as a lifelong seeking amid the openness and freedom of communication.<sup>136</sup> Hence, it would be more appropriate to speak of 'existence time'<sup>137</sup> crowned by freedom, which expression would be reconcilable with the reality of our pilgrim life and its many twists and turns.

<sup>133</sup> Veress 2004: 180.

<sup>134</sup> Veress 2004: 181.

<sup>135</sup> Válóczy 2013: 42.

<sup>136</sup> Nolan 2011: 145–153.

<sup>137</sup> Joseph Ratzinger (1978: 188) speaks of 'existence time' (*Existenzzeit*) when discussing the temporal aspect of the purification process after death and makes it clear that its time cannot be converted into an earthly chronology. Driven by this consideration, he introduces the concept of 'existence time'. In our reflections, we use this concept as the 'hermeneutical opposite' of 'linear time', which involves our personal freedom and is the 'place' of existential and personal self-fulfilment.

It is during this act of experiencing distances and dissimilarities that God's word of invitation chimes in, and this is the 'centre' whence God's glory shines forth as the call of Existence and reveals His Logos-like and meaningful horizon. God shows us His face. The finite human contemplates the icon of the Infinite, but as the face, due to its paradoxical nature, implies the seer *and* the one seen at the same time,<sup>138</sup> man recognizes *his* God, the one who does not only call him by name but calls him to Himself.<sup>139</sup> For the 'I', the 'You' comes to be revealed,<sup>140</sup> the 'You' that calls me *His child* as soon as He appears,<sup>141</sup> and offers me a part in Divine Sonship. In this intimate encounter, in the force field of a silence that is in fact filled with the holy song of creation,<sup>142</sup> 'being the zeroeth act of creation, the infinite moment of before, [and] the source of "let there be"<sup>143</sup> –, the beholder suddenly realizes that through the icon-window of existence a gaze is fixed upon him from the infinite. The 'I' – as the observed observer – discovers 'himself' as the 'other' and as 'himself' in the 'other'. At the same time, he faces the 'stranger'<sup>144</sup> emerging from both of them, the 'stranger' that is the assurance that the face in front of me is touching me from the outside and on its own and is not merely a reflection of my 'intentionality'. As a counter-intentionality, the 'stranger' resplendent in the face across from me 'refutes my presumptions and pulverizes my calculations and expectations' and 'contradicts my intentions directly with *its own*'.<sup>145</sup> The 'stranger' captivates and fascinates us. The icon creates in us 'the distant feeling of another world's reality at the very least, just as the iodine smell of seaweed and algae herald from far away the proximity of the sea'.<sup>146</sup>

In the power of cult, the visible 'body' of the Sacred embodied in the symbol meets our physically visible 'body'. These two 'bodies' are the 'meeting ground'. At this junction, located here on earth, the Invisible calls us 'face to face' (cf. 1Cor 13:12) to offer Him our bodies – which, having become a glowing countenance, possess the gift of speaking about God – 'as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God' (Rom 12:1) since 'a Christian speaks by his body'.<sup>147</sup> Our face becomes the visible mirror of the Invisible One's gaze.<sup>148</sup>

<sup>138</sup> Gils & Guillet 1986: 81.

<sup>139</sup> Gáspár 2008b: 64.

<sup>140</sup> Buber 1994.

<sup>141</sup> Szombath 2003: 753.

<sup>142</sup> Franciscan father and painter Imre Asztrik Kákonyi's († 1990) thoughts on silence in Barsi 2010: 36.

<sup>143</sup> Dér 2017: 287.

<sup>144</sup> Máthé 2000: 68.

<sup>145</sup> Marion 2012: 154.

<sup>146</sup> Florensky 2005: 51.

<sup>147</sup> Florensky 2005: 39.

<sup>148</sup> Marion 2014: 44.

It is through reorienting itself towards the 'You' that my 'I' can truly come into its own. I have now become a true 'I', though I have been such to God, and to Him alone, for He has always given me His love and has never ceased to call me. Now that I have finally heard His call and offered Him my communicative existence, I have become 'I' to myself as well. It is through my encounter with Him that I, too, will truly and completely accept the person that God has always accepted and invited to love Him: myself.<sup>149</sup> In the communication event, the 'You' steps out of its anonymity and takes on a face for the sake of 'I'; the 'God of philosophy' is concretized in the face of the 'God of the Bible' and the abstract idea, the absolute Being, shines forth with the splendour of a vivid, acting person.

The communication encounter 'actualizes'<sup>150</sup> a quality that previously belonged to the 'I' as a mere 'potentiality'; it 'activates' the 'I's' 'genes' for 'transcending' its finitude. The 'I' thereby recognizes in the 'You' before it its own identity as an image of God. This recognition prompts the 'I' to include the 'stranger' that dwells within the Other in its history to an ever growing extent, while gradually eliminating the 'stranger' residing within itself. In this way, the human image of the 'I' becomes increasingly similar to the divine archetype. The work of salvation history is being written with it and in it, as – owing to its full (i.e. physical, mental, and spiritual) presence manifested in the communication event – the receiving 'I' has become the co-author of the work of salvation history.<sup>151</sup> Amid the euphoria of communication, the 'I' needs to keep its guard up, however, and not 'regard equality with God [given to it as a gift] something to be grasped' (Phil 2:6). The 'I' must never forget that it is 'nothing more than' the image of the divine archetype and seek somehow to dethrone God. It is only when the 'I', a creature, accepts its finitude which differentiates it from the 'You', the Creator, and distinguishes itself from the 'You' that it can conform itself to the will of God the Creator. God, the 'You' addressing the 'I', desires the 'I' as it truly is, in its finitude. Yet God shapes this finitude into something it cannot be by itself. As a gift for its loyalty to its finitude, which is a test of patience for the 'I' called by God, the 'I' receives the 'honour' of cleaving to God, which it could never achieve of its own accord. Given that ultimate humanity is manifested in the person of Jesus Christ in whom the most intimate communion and circumincision are realized, true self-fulfillment can be nothing but the realization of the Christlike within ourselves.<sup>152</sup> The human 'self', on the pilgrimage 'from Adam to Christ',<sup>153</sup> must become conformed to the image of the Son and to His *self-differentiation*

<sup>149</sup> Gáspár 1990: 24.

<sup>150</sup> Szombath 2003: 752.

<sup>151</sup> Máthé 2000: 65.

<sup>152</sup> Jitianu 2007: 58.

<sup>153</sup> Rahner 1965: 261.

from the Father, for ‘the image perfectly similar to God was realized [in the Son] not only because He made Himself equal or similar to God but because He distinguished Himself from the Father and the Father from Himself’.<sup>154</sup> There is an unbridgeable gulf between the ‘I’ and the ‘You’. For this reason, the ‘rules’ of communication advise us to keep a respectful distance, for only then can the ‘I’ take a bird’s-eye view of the ‘overall landscape’ of salvation history. Nevertheless, it proves difficult to implement this communicational ‘choreography’, which in theory appears to be extremely simple and self-evident. At any time, the ‘I’ can be tempted to engulf the ‘You’, to take control of it and ‘pocket’ it. Yet the ‘I’ is capable of real communication only in the actively passive and passively active mode of being. Consequently, developing an awareness<sup>155</sup> of *passivum divinum*<sup>156</sup> is perhaps one of the fundamental elements of approaching the ‘You’.

One of the key ‘accessories’ of liturgical communication is silent contemplation, the intimate, calm contemplation of God’s face. This silent contemplation makes us understand that God’s true image is sustained by His non-visibility.<sup>157</sup> Therein lies the iconic nature of His face. It provides us with an insight into the historicity of the incomprehensible and ‘tactfully’ teaches us to receive it with an open heart. Mere physical observation – or rather, we should say, a blank staring – fails to recognize the presence of eternity in that which is visible, thereby barring the observer from viewing the world and salvation history in its originality, leading him instead to see it as a copy of his own ideas. ‘If we are constantly navel-gazing, we will face a new version of ourselves every time.’<sup>158</sup> The subject of the cult of self-image is a ‘voyeur’ with no autonomy, a slave to his own fantasies. Its gaze is driven solely by the desire to ‘bring its own “virtuality”<sup>159</sup> into existence’ in a tangible

<sup>154</sup> Pannenberg 2006: 180.

<sup>155</sup> Höhn 2011: 8.

<sup>156</sup> Scriptural authors – consistent with the ancient Jewish way of understanding – did not pronounce God’s name out of reverence. This is how they wished to preserve it from thoughtless, disrespectful use (Young 1994: 135). Instead, they used paraphrases. This is a specific form of *antonomasia*, a paraphrase taking the place of a proper name (Bühlmann & Scherer 1973: 85). Use of the passive construction was one of the solutions adopted in such cases, referred to in the literature as *passivum theologicum/divinum*. Hence, the passive voice used in a given context would describe God’s actions. Accordingly, for instance, the original wording ‘it is said’ is understood as ‘God says’, ‘it is given’ as ‘God gives’, or ‘your sins are forgiven’ as ‘God has forgiven your sins’ (cf. Mk 2:5). The scriptural text thereby avoids naming the agent explicitly, but the context reveals that it to be God. For more on this, see Hoffmann & von Siebenthal 1990: § 296b; Blass, Debrunner & Rehkopf 2001: § 130; Zerwick 1963: § 236; Szabó 1997: § 19.1.2; Smit & Renssen 2014: 3–24.

<sup>157</sup> Zogmayer 2012: 34–37.

<sup>158</sup> Rohr 2014: 98.

<sup>159</sup> On the virtuality of the postmodern era and the virtualizing subject, see András 2014: 325–341.

form outside of itself, for what he sees is the exact likeness of what he wishes to see.<sup>160</sup> He ‘anticipates’, meaning that he knows beforehand what he will see; his gaze does not reach beyond the foreseeable but is blind to the unforeseeable nature of the visible. This unforeseeable ‘surprise’ is not generated by the ‘I’ or constituted by the seer; it is not made possible or summoned into the realm of the visible by him but it reveals itself of itself as a gift.<sup>161</sup> The ‘I’ is ‘merely’ a witness of this self-revelation.

An intentional gaze objectifies that which it beholds. On such occasions, man treats his communication partner as an object, not as a subject.<sup>162</sup> The living space of the observed becomes the field for personal gain, thereby degrading the subject to the category of consumer product housed in the self-important domain of the individual’s profit calculation. The same can happen to God, the Subject par excellence. Man has the power to degrade God Himself to become an idolatrous ‘product’.<sup>163</sup> The fixed, frozen look of the petrified heart forces the Sacred inside the periphery of the individual horizon and offers it a playground exclusively within the limits of this horizon. On this fictive playground, games are played out in a ‘controlled environment’ ensuring a predictable and only prognostically ‘surprising’ outcome. The surprising phenomenon etched into the historicity of time and space overcomes the rigidity of one-dimensional visibility. It is the fragrance of the graspability of the ungraspable. Its essence lies in the distance between the observable visibility in the ‘here and now’ and the manifesting, self-revealing, inscrutable, inexhaustible ‘elsewhere’. In the open contemplation of visibility, one that is devoid of purpose, unbiased and marked by childlike simplicity, genuine reality lying beneath shines through the conventions weighing us down.

Meeting the divine ‘You’ initiates a process in the finite human existence that extends beyond itself, a process that not only stimulates the senses but poses a challenge to one’s mental faculties. One cannot ‘rush headlong’ into liturgical communication, as its purpose far exceeds pleasing the senses. Perceiving a ‘touch without contact’,<sup>164</sup> the ‘I’ endeavours to ‘understand’, or, to be more precise, to interpret, its role in the symphony of salvation history. ‘Understanding’ is not possible in the classic sense, as the historical event of our personal existence has not yet come to an end and continues still, wherefore it cannot be comprehended within the enclosure of material existence. Understanding is the fruit of the journey from Adam to Christ, the goal of which is to mature the ‘I’ of the ‘self’ taking the journey.<sup>165</sup> This is the pilgrimage

<sup>160</sup> Ciocan 2012: 108.

<sup>161</sup> Serban 2012: 84.

<sup>162</sup> Stenger 1974: 228.

<sup>163</sup> Diósi 2018: 77–79.

<sup>164</sup> Gáspár 2006: 9.

<sup>165</sup> Gáspár 2006: 10.

of the 'self' to its own 'I', a *pilgrimage* across various landscapes, out of the fog of a precipitous-unsettling solitude to the terrifying joy of finding God. What a pilgrimage! This pilgrimage is not an expedition where the existence of the thing/treasure that the explorers set out to find remains shrouded in mystery until the very end, but a *story of faith* from the outset, where the very first step is driven by the powerful reality of the relationship. That being said, it also constitutes a true discovery, as "something" will eventually step forward that cannot "take shape" until the end of the pilgrimage: the subject of the sequence of existence, the concrete person: the pilgrim, who is to become his own most familiar surprise.<sup>166</sup> On this pilgrimage of faith, the liturgy of the church directs our gaze to God's glory<sup>167</sup>, to the radiant face of the 'You' fulfilling the 'I', to that 'resplendent face divine' (*Hungarian Catholic Hymnal* 61) that enters into dialogue with us so that it may embrace us.

May liturgy, besides being a 'site' of communication with God, become for us a 'sanctuary' of communication or even – if we take it seriously – its 'Holy of Holies'!

---

<sup>166</sup> Gáspár 2002: 643.

<sup>167</sup> Ratzinger 1996/1997b: 131.



## Liturgy as Sharing in the Divine Life

The Second Vatican Council's description of liturgy reads as follows: 'Rightly, then, the liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy, the sanctification of the (person) is signified by signs perceptible to the senses and is effected in a way that corresponds with each of these signs; in liturgy, the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and His members' (SC 7). Instead of stressing the external signs of the liturgy, this explication highlights Christ's priestly activity behind these signs. Indeed, liturgy is not limited to symbolic illustration at the cognitive level or an immanent dramaturgy with fictitious transcendental expectations. Instead, its purpose is to ensure the preconditions of a genuine religious, even ritual experience of God, which is not bogged down in pleasure-seeking of the subject but sacramentally imparts the One who is awakened in the symbols: God Himself. To use an analogy, symbols are not nouns but verbs,<sup>168</sup> full of dynamism, vigour, and vitality. The appearance of the Transcendent brings 'dead' material to life. In simple terms, the symbol is not only a mediator of life but the 'concreteness' of 'incarnate' Life itself and the transparent 'curtain' of God's presence.

Therefore, liturgy needs no audience, spectators, or visitors, only participants with a seeking, questioning, doubting, and attentive attitude,<sup>169</sup> who are willing to enter into the spirit of the communication outlined in the previous chapter. 'The Church, therefore, earnestly desires that Christ's faithful, when present at this mystery of faith, should not be there as strangers or silent spectators; on the contrary, through a good understanding of the rites and prayers, they should take part in the sacred action conscious of what

---

<sup>168</sup> Valenziano 2020: 210.

<sup>169</sup> Jeggle-Merz 2005: 50–51.

they are doing, with devotion and full collaboration [actuose], we read in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council (SC 48). Surely, we have all heard the phrase ‘full collaboration’ on numerous occasions.

Indeed, *participatio actuosa* has become conventionalized as a motto embroidered onto the flag of liturgical reform. These concepts have been the hobbyhorse of several experts, and self-proclaimed experts of liturgy<sup>170</sup> over the recent decades. It is a buzzword, an old tune, an ‘overly-chewed bone’. And, to continue the latter analogy, it is well known there is not too much flesh to be had from an overly-chewed bone, not even from a sizeable one. There is not much more to say concerning this topic, and I do not purport to effect a ‘Copernican revolution’ in the ‘universe’ of liturgical theology, yet I believe that it would be unwise for a work of liturgical theology to gloss over this concept.

Undoubtedly, there are few liturgical topics that the Church has emphasized to such an extent recently, but then again, few other topics have managed to spark so many controversies and beget such a slew of misconceptions, even ideologies. What is more, the concept underwent ‘instant mutation’ as soon as it was brought to life. While in the first moment of its creation, i.e. in Pope Saint Pius X’s *motu proprio* entitled *Tra le sollecitudini* it appeared as *partecipazione attiva* (in the original Italian), the subsequent Latin version (*versio fidelis*) simply omitted the translation of *attiva*. Later, the original Latin translation (*versio authentica*) published by the Sacred Congregation of Rites rendered *attiva* as *actuosa* instead of the more obvious *activa*.<sup>171</sup> There was, in all probability, a theological purpose for choosing the more correct of the two terms. Let us call to mind that Latin adjectives ending in *-osus* are more comprehensive, more complete in their meaning, which, if applied to our word *actuosa*, indicates that it was meant to express not merely an external activity but one that involves, engages, and appeals to the whole active person, action in its fullest sense. One need not be surprised at this given that in liturgy – pursuant to the principles of anthropology – the entire man stands before God – body and soul, mind and feelings, attention and discipline<sup>172</sup> – so that participation cannot be limited to external movement or defined as activity for the sake of activity. The conciliar constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* adds further adjectives to the noun *participio*, which again are

<sup>170</sup> In the following, reference is made only to the most relevant literature: Stuflesser 2009: 147–186; Lengeling 1961: 186–188; Hilberath 1991: 319–338; Güntner 1996/1997: 1–24; Pascher 1966: 211–229; Kohlschein 1988: 38–62; Nóda 2012: 75–84.

<sup>171</sup> It is also worth mentioning that the Latin translation of *partecipazione* is not *participatio* but *communicatio*, which most likely echoes the term Greek *koinonia*, featuring in 1 Cor 10:16. In the Roman liturgy, the term *participatio* has gained widespread acceptance, the most prominent mention of which is in the Roman canon: ‘qui ex hac altaris participatione sacrosanctum Filii tui corpus et sanguinem sumpserimus’.

<sup>172</sup> Balogh 2006: 9.

very telling of the nature of this participation: *conscia* ‘conscious’ (11, 48, 79), *plena* ‘full’ (14, 21, 41), *pia* ‘pious’ (48, 50), *interna et externa* ‘internal and external’ (19), and most importantly *fructuosa* ‘fruitful’ (11), which is the ultimate goal of all liturgical actions. We might also say that liturgical participation is only right and proper if it is also fruitful. Of course, the effects of a cultic act are difficult to measure on the basis of external criteria.<sup>173</sup> Transformation is not measurable by any human, or worldly, standard because from an earthly perspective even the life of our Redeemer would look like a series of failures.<sup>174</sup>

Over half a century has passed since the Second Vatican Council. A great deal has changed since then, including the pleasurable offerings on the ritual ‘market’<sup>175</sup>, and we are living in a time that goes far beyond the wildest dreams (or worst nightmares?) of the Council Fathers. Whereas in the past, calls for *participatio actiosa* targeted Christ’s faithful within the church walls, nowadays – when the vast majority of our congregation are far from being regular churchgoers – we would often settle for parishioners’ honouring our liturgical efforts with *participatio passiva* instead of disinclination or indifference. Is it possible that *participatio actiosa* is yesterday’s news – an overstretched string that has already snapped? This is hardly the case. However, the changes that have taken place in our society, exerting an appreciable impact on prevailing attitudes towards the Church as well as on the religiousness of modern man, call for the revision of our concept of ‘liturgical participation’. We may need to seek a definition that is at once narrower (the ideal form as per the Second Vatican Council which determines being baptized as a prerequisite for participation) and broader (where people, not particularly faithless but rather those who have drifted away from the Church, take part in the liturgy in their own way). For it is clear to all of us that there is a considerable diversity<sup>176</sup> in liturgical participation – characterized by grace and blessedness<sup>177</sup> – among people belonging either of the above categories. When approaching our contemporaries, we can no longer build our liturgical theology upon the monumental metaphysical ‘blueprints’ elaborated down to the last detail, which even in the not-so-distant past defined and permeated our everyday lives, seeing as they were widely known and mostly accepted as ‘the rules of the game’. These days we

<sup>173</sup> This has been previously discussed.

<sup>174</sup> Babos 1980: 23.

<sup>175</sup> Jörg Rüpke’s comment is noteworthy in this regard. A researcher of comparative religion, he takes the perspective of an ‘outsider’ and approaches the topic from the viewpoint of a ritual service consultant. In his work, he refrains from taking a stand regarding the objectives of his ‘client’. The only thing he is concerned about is optimizing the offer for the ‘service provider’. Cf. Rüpke 2006: 191–207.

<sup>176</sup> For more on this, see Lurz 2015: 192–205.

<sup>177</sup> Fuchs 2019: 141.

have to make do with much less if we are to avoid turning conventional encounters with God into a luxury experience of the religious élite. When it comes to the practice of religion, people today mostly live ‘off the scraps and among the ruins’<sup>178</sup> of the immense theological ‘constructions’ of the fathers. Therefore, with a view to making liturgy more appealing<sup>179</sup> to those outside the small circle of ‘initiates’ while fulfilling contemporary man’s desire for rituals<sup>180</sup> in the context of Christian experience/tradition,<sup>181</sup> the Church offers God-seeking people who are not completely indifferent to Christianity occasional ‘liturgical’ services/programmes, which require only basic competencies that may be expected of virtually anyone.<sup>182</sup> The Church, too, is facing challenges posed by these new rituals, a phenomenon that will certainly have implications both for liturgical theology and for pastoral liturgy in the long run.<sup>183</sup>

Let us take a brief look at the religiousness of the modern man.<sup>184</sup> Today, people are expected to take their lives into their own hands even in matters of religion. Accepting any formal guidance is believed to be the sign of a lack of individual willpower and a blemish on the face of man’s individuality. Today, the individual claims to have specific religious competencies that until quite recently fell exclusively within the purview of ‘professionals’. There is a tendency for ‘religious education’ itself to become part of self-help culture<sup>185</sup>, although the relevant literature rarely touches on the subject of (a specific confession of) faith but is rather centred on the sixth sense, providence, or karma. Many people feel that the old ‘beaten path’ of the previous generations has hit a dead end. We are witnessing the ‘self-empowerment of the subject’.<sup>186</sup> In the consumeristic civilization<sup>187</sup> of our experience-based society<sup>188</sup> – that in the meantime suffers from a deep sense of hopelessness<sup>189</sup> and is also a

<sup>178</sup> Salmann 1992: 11.

<sup>179</sup> These efforts do not necessarily have to be in conflict with liturgical tradition. Cf. Ruh 2016: 145–149.

<sup>180</sup> Kranemann & Post (eds) 2009; Post 2016: 298–314.

<sup>181</sup> Odenthal 2017: 213–233.

<sup>182</sup> Brüske 2010; Böntert 2013: 77–96.

<sup>183</sup> For more on this, see Kranemann 2017: 62–69.

<sup>184</sup> For more detailed discussions of contemporary religiousness, see Diósi 2012b: 33–108; Rácsok 2010: 79–92; Horváth-Szabó 2002: 238–247; Berger 2006; Tomka 2009: 64–79; Tomka 2001: 419–433; Casanova 2010; Davie 2010: 127–137.

<sup>185</sup> Molnár-Kovács 2018: 82–93.

<sup>186</sup> Gebhardt 2010: 287: „Selbstermächtigung des religiösen Subjekts“.

<sup>187</sup> Hankiss 2005.

<sup>188</sup> The concept of experience society (*Erlebnisgesellschaft*) is credited to German sociologist and Bamberg University Professor Gerhard Schulze (\*1944). Cf. Schulze 1992; Schulze 1993: 405–419; Schulze 1994a: 269–295; Schulze 1994b: 13–36.

<sup>189</sup> Hahne 2009: 142.

society of risk,<sup>190</sup> fear,<sup>191</sup> and stress<sup>192</sup> –, the prototype of postmodern religiousness is the ‘wanderer’ in search of spiritual<sup>193</sup> experiences, who charts his own course and is his own ‘pope and dogmatic teacher’<sup>194</sup> (and, ideally, no one else’s). The hegemony of reason (under the Enlightenment and in Modernism) has been succeeded by that of experience. Individual experience has become the standard for religion as well<sup>195</sup>, with its goals of experiencing earthly feelings of happiness and euphoria in the ‘here and now’. Religion is considered useful only to the extent that it makes us happy here and now, not another other world or at a later time. That being the case, contemporary man does not expect religion to render him ripe for an afterlife of happiness but to fill him – soul, mind, *and* body – with a sense of comfort, peace (of mind), and balance. Modern man is after the psychic-therapeutic effects of religion, those religious elements that positively reinforce his momentary state of mind and current life situation. For this reason, the religiousness of our contemporaries – which, to be more precise, belongs to the category of religious sentiments – is limited to self-affirmation, high-spirited self-justification, and self-reinforcement. The individual moulds his own God for himself, a peaceful, accepting (perhaps not of everything/everyone but certainly of me ‘as I am’), syrupy, and loving God.

The depth of the liturgy illuminates how banal this ‘halved God’ (*halbierter Gott*)<sup>196</sup> sought after by so many these days truly is, and how utterly unfit to answer the truly far-reaching fundamental questions of life. The God imagined by many of our contemporaries is a ‘softie God’<sup>197</sup>, one built on a foundation of romantic sentimentality and a silly, excessive desire to pamper oneself, capable of nothing but nodding sympathetically. Fortunately, no such God exists, for he is but an idol created according to people’s own conceptions. The message of the liturgy is to be taken seriously. However, the Transcendent revealing Himself beneath the veil of the symbols must find a medium to resonate with, in the absence of which He remains but an abstraction. For this reason, those desiring the liturgy to be a life-altering event must accept the vertical adventure of their own lives, or else they will never find a way out of the spiral of a life lived in the pursuit of experiences. We all need to grow up and leave behind our infantile religious attitudes, religious ignorance

<sup>190</sup> Beck 1986.

<sup>191</sup> Bude 2014.

<sup>192</sup> Fritzsche 1998.

<sup>193</sup> On the present-day vague meaning of the term ‘spirituality’, see Diósi 2011b: 173–185.

<sup>194</sup> Engelbrecht 2009: 78.

<sup>195</sup> Sudbrack 1987: 230; Enders 2010: 216–222.

<sup>196</sup> Geier 1997: 198.

<sup>197</sup> Röser 2009: 24–25.

and comfort-seeking, wherein we find ourselves following the foolish pursuit of emancipation.

Liturgy must not follow the unilateralism of postmodern rituals<sup>198</sup> limited to the problematization of worldly existence and aiming to achieve control over life in the here and now. Instead, its essence consists in rising above earthly realities, appraising their value in the light of the transcendent – thereby conferring a qualitative leap upon them – and finding their place in the flow of salvation history and the economy of salvation. It is impossible to achieve all of this within the temporal order, in an immanent manner, or with a headstrong attitude. The celebration of the liturgy is always about the representation of salvation in a concrete historical context through the power of symbols. Liturgy is the site of the subject's concrete salvation experience, and as such, it is never an abstract reality. Liturgy is always the same, yet it is different every time. This 'difference' is the work of God; it is He who brings a sense of novelty and innovative power to every liturgical celebration. No innovation affecting human existence can come from human efforts alone, for man 'does' something in the liturgy that he essentially cannot do in reality.<sup>199</sup>

At first glance, it may seem that contemporary religiousness heavily charged with subjectivity automatically assumes an individualized form. However, the need for sharing religious experiences in community persists. No social vacuum is created. Obviously, this is not to be understood in the classic sense, that is, in the sociological and ecclesiological framework we have grown used to. People today find *ad hoc* communities to be the most acceptable,<sup>200</sup> given that these demand looser ties and little commitment, and their cohesive force is no more than the common motivation of those wishing to have the same religious experience in the same place at the same time. We are dealing with communities of experience<sup>201</sup> whose characteristic features are as follows: relationships limited to a certain time and space, memberships that may come under revision at any time, and partial identification. Accordingly, being part of a community is seen as being bound by its cult, which is seen as a restrictive force rather than one that carries a person forward, a force that binds one hand and foot and limits freedom. Hence, anonymity and privacy of some sort are favoured in religious manifestations, and a religious attitude that ensures a certain distance between the individual and the community. In sum, we can distinguish two characteristics in particular with reference to

<sup>198</sup> This has already been touched upon at the beginning of our first chapter.

<sup>199</sup> Koch 1992: 107.

<sup>200</sup> This does not apply to religious communities alone, as we can find a host of secular institutions (political parties, sports associations, etc.) who find themselves in the same boat. Cf. Davie 2010: 133–136.

<sup>201</sup> Höhn 1995: 364–365.

present-day religiousness: the importance of experiences and individual quests for meaning. At the end of the day, people are looking for something that they may actually find in the Church, something that liturgy itself may be able to offer. Ergo, the Church (along with its liturgy) can hardly be described as a ‘discontinued model’ in a world where sources of meaning are running dry.<sup>202</sup> This being the case, the Church should raise greater awareness of the true gems it has in store with the power to satisfy human desires. These, however, must be presented in an authentic fashion.

Indeed, the cultic event is an experiential event, but not one that provides a superficial experience. Liturgy is an event that poses a challenge to the individual; an event that unfolds from the frailty of human existence in need of its own fulfilment and a realistic vision of the coordinates of man’s existence and opens up a horizon that is real, accessible, existentially fulfilling and not a mere utopia but ‘the shortest and most direct way’ of arriving at ourselves. Liturgy is intended to create the experience of encountering the Sacred, without whose unceasing presence cult is not cult, or, more specifically, cult is a ‘thing’ devoid of its subject. The essence of cult, as previously explained, is precisely encounter, not mere occurrence, where man living his everyday life can hide comfortably behind the ritualized form without the exertion of any considerable effort. Rite does not work as an ‘alibi’ for our earthbound lifestyle, or as the ‘amulet’ of our immanent goals. Liturgy is not ‘decorative lace’ along the edges of our lives in the world.<sup>203</sup> In liturgy, by virtue of its ritual structuredness, everything takes place with a view to ensuring the objectivity of the encounter. Liturgy is not a place for the demonstration of power, for in the presence of *Maiestas Domini*, the power relations of the social hierarchy and the power structures among people all prove relative, and self-importance is vanquished. ‘The Pharisee within who occasionally rears his head is gradually transformed into the self-effacing tax collector who leaves the leading role to God’<sup>204</sup> (cf. Lk 18:9–14). The entire *communitas liturgica* (liturgical community) opens up towards a relationship between God and man that is pervaded by God’s power (*potestas*), which is greater than any power or authority in this world.<sup>205</sup> At all times and in all of its aspects,<sup>206</sup> the liturgy is focused on the Son of God seated on the throne of heavenly glory.<sup>207</sup> This is perhaps most emphatically expressed by the introit

<sup>202</sup> Schönborn 2011: 51.

<sup>203</sup> Kasper 2010b: 199: „Die Liturgie wurde oft als Mittel zum Zweck für weltliche Ziele gebraucht, sei es [...], dass man sie zur Verbrämung der bürgerlichen Existenz herabwürdigte.”

<sup>204</sup> Fehérváry 2020: 117.

<sup>205</sup> Ebenbauer & Bruckner 2020: 65.

<sup>206</sup> The motif of Christ the King actually runs through the entire liturgical year. For an extended reflection on the topic, see Joosten 2002: 31–62.

<sup>207</sup> Herwegen 1920: 80.

(*introitus*)<sup>208</sup> for the Solemnity of Christ the King, which draws us into the heavenly liturgy<sup>209</sup> of the Book of Revelation and invites us to join the apocalyptic hymn of the King-Lamb.<sup>210</sup> The liturgy takes place in the presence of the *Rex gloriae* in the radiance of whose universal power man's small-mindedness, rigidity, and isolation are dissolved, so that he is freed from the fetters of the 'self' to enter the divine life.<sup>211</sup> We are 'warned' right at the church doors that the liturgy is about to remove us from our usual linear experience of time and existence and carry us into a time touched and blessed by and imbued with eternity. Indeed, the church doors, in accordance with Jacob's dream, are the gate of Paradise: 'This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven' (Gen 28:17).<sup>212</sup> As Heaven's gate (*porta coeli*) and the entrance to eternal salvation<sup>213</sup> (*porta salutis / porta vitae*), it functions as a threshold. Passing through it, Christ's faithful become 'living stones' (1 Pt 2:4 – *lapides vivi*) of the Church whose cornerstone (Eph 2:20 – *lapis angularis*) is Christ Jesus Himself. Serving as a threshold, the portal acts as a locus of transformation<sup>214</sup> transposing worshippers from the real, physical world into another one, which is the Heavenly Jerusalem. The church gate offers a glimpse into the 'other world,' which is a reality 'present' among us. The 'other world' does not lie beyond our reach; it is not 'beyond' us in any sense, but amongst us. 'Beyond' appears as something within our grasp: it is 'here'.

Amidst the unfolding cultic event, man comes to realize that his life is not an endless chain of events reducible to a soap opera but an organic part of the drama of salvation history. Therefore, it is extremely dangerous for the liturgy to break away or depart from the continuity of salvation history by overemphasizing the 'now' – more specifically, the temporal 'now'. Indeed, this is the crux of the matter and the great drama of our time. Inspired by the emancipatory concept of freedom, we take pride in dissociating ourselves from the past – our own past – and arrogantly harbour ambitions to reinvent the wheel, i.e., to free our present from the shackles of history and reshape it to fit our taste. The truth is, however, that loss of the culture of remembrance is the most imminent threat to our freedom today. Our present time, after emancipating itself from its past, is well on its way to losing its bearings and self-assuredness. We are all 'guinea pigs' in the arena of the 'now,' with its proud capacity for 'self-reliance' and self-appointed authority to shape the

<sup>208</sup> For a detailed analysis of the introit, see Diósi 2022: 69–81.

<sup>209</sup> Mowry 1952: 75–84; Delling 1959: 107–137; Läuchli 1960: 359–378; Shepherd 1960; Prigent 1964; Vanni 1991; Manunza 2012.

<sup>210</sup> Diósi 2020: 79–88.

<sup>211</sup> Kormos 1953: 118.

<sup>212</sup> Seibert 2004: 164.

<sup>213</sup> Kalbaum 2011: 140–148.

<sup>214</sup> Albrecht 2015: 282–283.

present. Without memory, we have no standards to apply to our present time, and this renders us vulnerable to the spell of the moment, the actualities of fashion, the prevailing zeitgeist, and the human penchant for sensationalism. Without the critical power of remembrance to shape the present, we have no guard against ever-changing fashions and the fickleness of contemporary aesthetics. ‘The dictatorship of the prevailing fashion [...] is the Babylonian captivity of our times.’<sup>215</sup> But the liturgical event is exactly the unceasing presence of the salvation-history event in the ‘now’. The liturgical ‘now’ is not an independent, emancipated ‘now’, i.e. it is not merely the present of the present but the divine ‘now’ descending from on high and taking up a dwelling within time. The cultic ‘now’ is the condensation of the past and future in the present; the palpability or perceptibility of the salvific past and future in the present. Therefore, the liturgical ‘now’ is ontologically more than the present that is present; it has a qualitatively higher value and shares in the heavenly ‘now’. This way, the liturgical space can be viewed as an ‘electromagnetic field’, an interregnum outside ordinary time and space that is not eternity itself but ‘its finite equivalent’, a ‘time of its own’, a source of triumph over temporal time.<sup>216</sup> The present of the liturgy is the meeting point between the (still) living past and the (already) perceptible future, a foretaste of what is to come. The present is God’s ‘time’. It is only in the present that we can meet Him, and the present alone is a fit setting for the encounter between God and man. In the liturgy, God makes sanctifies us not in a general sense, but in our current and specific living conditions. God sanctifies the man standing before Him in the concreteness of the ‘here and now’, one who yearns to and must believe in God under the conditions and circumstances of his age.<sup>217</sup> And God’s grace can fulfil its purpose only if the person receiving this gift of grace embraces it with his own particular existence and according to his own concrete nature.<sup>218</sup> Indeed, God, taking our specific biography and cultural context into account, builds a unique and distinctive relationship with every one of us.<sup>219</sup> It is only in this present of the present, sanctified by God’s unceasing presence, that we can touch the present of the past and the present of the future existentially. Without this present, which is the only possible time for the effusion of God’s grace, both the past and the future would find themselves stark naked and cut off from the rest of the universe. Without the divine hermeneutics of the present, man would experience past and future alike as something incoherent, wild, and scary. Without the meaningful nature of the present, the past and the future would utter cries

---

<sup>215</sup> Kasper 2010: 39.

<sup>216</sup> Keserű 1997: 453.

<sup>217</sup> Bärsch 2012a: 164.

<sup>218</sup> Menke 2012: 116.

<sup>219</sup> Fuchs 2012: 12.

of loneliness to the present: 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' (Mk 15:34).

When the 'now' becomes autonomous, overwrites the past, and declares its independence, it is in fact trying to escape its own 'gravity', a quality conferred upon it by God. Under these conditions, the 'now' – the present of God's unceasing presence – is no longer a point of convergence for the past and the future, stretched between the salvific past and the eschatological future, between time and eternity. Doffing its 'contextuality,' the power of its self-evident existence, it ascribes a reflexive meaning to itself. At this point, the present has no intention of becoming part of the past anymore, i.e. being integrated in man's (salvation) history, and acts as though man's life were made up of a series of long, consecutive and oftentimes incoherent 'now's. When this occurs, man refuses to accept his life story as organically embedded in salvation history and views it instead as a melodramatic 'tale of a life' without a definite resolution.<sup>220</sup> Joseph Ratzinger writes with good reason that a liturgy built on a group's autonomy and isolation 'lacks history and, on the contrary, is characterized by a defiance of history. This will always result in an artificial history, even if real historical elements are used'.<sup>221</sup> In such a liturgy, 'man creates himself and a world of his own while losing sight of God's creative work, His doings, and creation itself, going so far as to banish them from his heart'.<sup>222</sup>

This myopic present is not truly open to the future, but wishes rather to control it. For anyone subscribing to such a liturgical attitude, the present can only be of value if it 'guarantees' the predictability of a custom-made, unique future. My future, made by and for me, must be visible in the present. The 'now' wishes to dominate and incorporate the future, 'taming it' to fit my taste. No surprise (except, perhaps, of an experience-enhancing kind) can await us in the future, at least none that comes from eternity. The formula for the present is:  $1 + 1 = 2$ .

In the liturgical 'now', there is, in fact, a resonance between the 'now' already written in history, with its eternally relevant message, and the 'perpetual' now. The cosmic symphony of salvation sounds forth in the now, whose brief tunes tailored to human ears by the prism of symbols can be heard by anyone 'with whom He is pleased' (cf. Lk 2:14). In the liturgical act, God Himself is present beneath the veil of the symbols. He, the One dwelling in the eternal 'now', descends in all of His vitality into our 'now'. The liturgy, therefore, is not about 'staging' a divine attribute through human effort; it is

<sup>220</sup> Gayer 2000: 76–81.

<sup>221</sup> Ratzinger 1996/1997a: 17.

<sup>222</sup> Ratzinger 1996/1997a: 18.

not a 'site' for the presentation of a static idea is presented, but the place where the living God Himself is manifested and comes into our midst.

The embeddedness of human existence in history is threatened by yet another phenomenon, one that is in a certain sense the exact opposite of the danger just mentioned: the overemphasis of eternity. The liturgy always takes place in the force field marked by the tension between time and eternity. It is simultaneously part of history and of eternity. This simultaneity holds constitutive power with regard to liturgy. Should either of the two poles (i.e. temporality vs. eternity) gain predominance over the other, the reality of the liturgy would be impaired. Without a window on eternity, liturgy is nothing more than a product of human toil and effort, more specifically, a commodity intended as a gift to ourselves. And without its connection to history, liturgy is merely an empty fantasy only tangentially related to man's living space set within the concrete framework of history.

In the liturgy, man – along with all that constitutes his humanity – remains human, and God remains God. Neither merges with the other, but the 'moment' of the encounter that comes to be sanctified is the one that contains both the past and the future, i.e. historicity, and its development in the direction of eternity. Eternity, so to speak, crowns history, bestowing meaning and perspective upon it.

There are two – qualitatively different – aspects of experientiality. Here, the difference in quality is not determined by the intensity of what is experienced by the senses. The difference is ontological in nature. Experiential may be ground-breaking yet not earth-shattering as long as it remains within the closed horizon of the human, if it is not open to the surprise effect of Reality – the provider of true experiences –, and if man insists on controlling all aspects of the experience and expects to be surprised only at the level of the senses. Humans have a strong tendency to interpret any emotional rollercoaster as a transcendent experience. We are all too familiar with the measure of the success of our liturgy being: 'I had such a good time!', 'It was so touching!', 'It was so wonderful!' (= I liked it), 'It sure made me cry!', etc. Although the range of emotions underlying these statements is worthy of our consideration, the mystery of the liturgy cannot be limited to the heart-rending 'rhapsody' of the emotions, for it is far more than a romantic pampering of the soul. The liturgy is not meant to indulge our soul but to raise it to God. And this – based on our anthropological specifications – is done through the senses, which constitute a 'Jacob's ladder' (cf. Gen 11:4, 28:10–12; Deut 1:28) along which our soul rises to God. Our senses, therefore, are the means and not the end.

All endeavours aimed at dissolving this tension are to be rejected, for it accepts as its measuring rod not the personal encounter between God and man (i.e. one taking place in the force field of freedom) but the subject's

self-affirmation. Self-affirmation does not present man with challenges to be tackled (*metanoia*) but – to use a vulgar figure of speech – stuns him into a state of relaxation and calmness where he can rest on his imaginary laurels.

The ‘Unknown’, or, more correctly, the ‘Inscrutable’ or ‘Entirely Different’ that cannot be domesticated to fit the consumption needs of his own microcosm, invites man on the vertical adventure of his life. Only one who strives to worship ‘in the Spirit and in truth’ (Jn 4:23) and is open and willing to receive can embark on this adventure of *participatio* in divine life which holds many surprises in store. The liturgy is thus life in the Life, a sharing in God’s life. God’s *participatio activa* in our lives becomes for us a *participatio actuosa*, a ‘bathing’ in His life, a participation encompassing the entirety of our humanity. Human *participatio actuosa* is the mouthpiece of the divine *participatio activa*.

The cult event is a ‘meaning-ful’ event at the same time, carrying meaning for human life and bearing energetic and hermeneutic relevance to the existence of the cultic event as the ‘stage’ for unforeseeable possibilities of experience. The liturgy is an oasis in the quest for meaning, as its efficiency depends on the Logos itself, on Creative Reason. It is the Logos who is the meaning and basis of all life.

We should also bear in mind that all liturgies are events conveying grace. God’s presence in the liturgy surpasses all human imagination, reasoning, expectations, and possibilities. Our knowledge and efforts cannot determine how God will touch people in the liturgy, the dynamism of which does not depend either on the spontaneity or the complexity of human activities. Man’s duty in the liturgy is not to create something extraordinary but to recognize, perceive, and sense the ‘Extraordinary’ at work therein. Liturgy thrives on the ‘unusual’ and ‘surprising’ activities of God. He who merely seeks the ‘usual’ God will never encounter the surprising ‘Unusual’.<sup>223</sup> We must, at all times, be mindful of and open to the reality that God will find a way to widen the narrow-mindedness of our human expectations and possibilities. That being said, the only task and duty of participants in the cult is to perform the usual, well-known liturgy in a manner that allows the message of the ‘Unusual,’ which exceeds all expectation, to touch and permeate man’s entire inner self. We must do everything in our power to contribute to this dimension of the liturgy and must treat all that obscures or unnecessarily beclouds this as needless, or ‘Spiritless’. Spontaneously emerging ‘self-made liturgies’ claiming to be real and lifelike may appear to enrich the liturgy, when in fact all they do is dilute it and divert participants’ attention from the depth of their encounter with God. In plain English, man’s sole task is to make sure that the liturgy bears fruit for him. Man must come to understand that the

<sup>223</sup> Bärtsch 2012b: 366–368.

true essence of liturgy takes place ‘behind the scenes.’ True *actio* happens ‘in the deep.’ And this ‘depth’ is nourished by the ‘height,’ as earthly liturgy is nothing but the invisible heavenly liturgy descended into our visible world.<sup>224</sup> The liturgy is founded on God’s workings and actions. It is He who fills it with life. The liturgy is truly a lifelike – even life-altering – event, although it is not to be dragged down to the level of banality. God’s life pulsates therein, and it is man’s privilege to be present and to share in this life. Active participation, let us remember, must include openness to be fruitful. A superficial attitude that opposes change and pampers the emotions achieves no more than reinforcing and affirming the *status quo* and cannot be termed active participation. As long as we remain spiritually and emotionally dead, we cannot fully open our hearts to an encounter with God.<sup>225</sup>

The cultic-ritual act is fuelled by the symbol.<sup>226</sup> The symbol means the revelation of the Sacred, which becomes perceptible, ‘palpable,’ and appreciable by means of the senses, yet remains un-possessable. A symbol is the descent of the Sacred from the divine sphere inaccessible to the senses. As a result of the multidimensional nature of reality, the ‘invisible, background’ reality beyond the empirical realm takes a ‘physical, material’ form within the ‘visible, foreground’ reality perceptible to the senses.<sup>227</sup> This transpires, of course, without ‘immaterial’ reality becoming identical with ‘material’ reality. In the symbol, the profane and the holy meet; the immanent and the transcendent kiss. The sacred sanctifies the profane by its presence, while, from an earthly perspective, the profane is dressed in the garment of the glory of the sacred. The symbol is the place of epiphany, more particularly, of hierophany and theophany. Included in the cultic act, the symbol – being a computative action arising from presence<sup>228</sup> – speaks to us of a more real Reality and reveals to us the surplus value of perceptible reality. The symbol helps us to behold our world and our lives as they are, and not merely a mimetic copy.<sup>229</sup> Yet we cannot arrive at this recognition from afar, as outsiders. The symbol is a means of human recognition, guiding us to a recognition that would be impossible to achieve in any other way. This recognition is the gift of

<sup>224</sup> Degenhardt 1965: 77–91.

<sup>225</sup> ‘We do not come to church to while away an hour like a bunch of dead people. When we assemble for the liturgy, we are no longer what we were when we entered the church. No, we become something different, something more and wonderful, endowed with the ability to enter into conscious contact with God, the living God of the living. Yet none of this can take place as long as we are spiritually or emotionally dead. We need urgency, a desire to enter into a relationship with Jesus. This will not happen if we choose to just sit around’ (Botean 2000: 5).

<sup>226</sup> Dücker 2007: 32–37.

<sup>227</sup> Nocke 1997a: 218.

<sup>228</sup> Valenziano 2020: 210.

<sup>229</sup> Zogmayer 2012: 34–37.

participation in a live encounter.<sup>230</sup> The symbol thus enables us to enter the earthly epiphany of Reality and meet Him. In this way, liturgy becomes the site of the ‘aesthetics of faith’ (Aloys Goergen [† 2005]: *Glaubensästhetik*),<sup>231</sup> where the invisible God (as the substance behind the symbol and the character behind the sign) can be experienced, and the One that reveals Himself by hiding and remains hidden by revealing Himself can be seen.<sup>232</sup> Accordingly, the liturgy is a point of intersection for the historical present where the encounter can take place with the ‘I am who I am’ (Ex 3:14), with God who reveals Himself to be present. Every such encounter testifies to the liveliness of faith as a living connection with God and to its timeliness and relevance for the present.

One fundamental characteristic of the symbol is its moderation, its readiness to wait and to call humbly. For the symbol to speak, we need to grow silent, prick our ears, and listen attentively. As the well-known proverb warns us, ‘Much spoken, little said.’ This message has heightened pertinence in the realm of symbols. Symbols need to speak for themselves. They need not speak all at once and to everyone. It is not only naïve to think this, but all symbols speaking at once would surely overwhelm man and ‘strike him dead’. The symbol remains silent but speaks in its very silence. The symbol is speaking silence. Indeed, the liturgy gives voice to the unspeakable and renders the inaudible audible.<sup>233</sup> It takes its voice from the Word, the Logos and puts on the ‘garment of silence’ out of respect for our human freedom. ‘Silence is anything but negative,’ writes Max Picard († 1965), a German-language Swiss cultural philosopher, ‘it is not merely the absence of speech. It is a positive, a complete world in itself. Silence is great by its very presence. It *is*, and this pure existence renders it great. (...) Where there is silence, this silence contemplates man more than man contemplates the silence. It is not man who tests silence, but silence who tests man.’<sup>234</sup> If symbols do not speak, it is either because we have silenced them by speaking for them (incessantly and until they become empty) or because we have robbed them of their dignity and cast them aside, failing to use them in accordance with their intended purpose. Symbols, the free place for communicating with the Sacred, cannot be comprehended or ‘locked away in a bottle of glass’ by our intellect. After all, everything that can be ‘understood’ is, in a manner of speaking, dead, whereas something that is only partially ‘comprehensible’ challenges<sup>235</sup> and provokes, setting in motion an internal process committed to seeking answers

<sup>230</sup> Schmemmann 2001: 175.

<sup>231</sup> Goergen 2005.

<sup>232</sup> Zahner 2020: 137–138.

<sup>233</sup> Wohlmuth 2020: 39.

<sup>234</sup> Picard 1952: 17.

<sup>235</sup> Ruh 2006: 72.

to the emerging questions. We do not necessarily need to understand the symbols. Instead, we should allow them to affect us, or, to be theologically correct, allow God's message to reach us through them. Here, silence becomes the word itself.<sup>236</sup> A symbol that has been exhaustively understood is a dead symbol, a caged bird. A symbol is a theological mouthpiece: it speaks to us of God. Once man, with his dilettantism and officious speculations, begins to meddle with it, the symbol 'shatters into pieces', becomes degraded into kitsch, and turns into a false medium. Mystery 'is continuously veiled, enveloped in silence, lest an idol be created in place of God.'<sup>237</sup> If not surrounded by 'the wall of silence, the city of the mind lies open to the darts of the foe.'<sup>238</sup>

The true acting subject of the liturgy is God Himself (*participatio activa dei*). And this divine action (*actio divina*) is not performed for God, but for us humans and our salvation (*non propter Deum, sed propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem*). This is the fountainhead, engine, and framework of all human action. Any other human action in the liturgy that falls outside these considerations is an exercise in futility, a 'Sisyphean rolling of rocks'. It is therefore vital that silence make its way back into the liturgy, and this means far more than putting an end to the inflation of words. Both verbal and non-verbal 'noise' disturbs the liturgy, and often it is our behaviour that precludes the possibility of speaking about God.<sup>239</sup> The purpose of the liturgy is not to talk the hind legs off the proverbial donkey<sup>240</sup> in an effort to convince others, as well as ourselves, of our own truth, but about listening to the divine message. For mystery is not covered in silence so that it may remain hidden, but, on the contrary, in order to be revealed.<sup>241</sup> If we are unable to be silent,

<sup>236</sup> Sarah 2018: 158.

<sup>237</sup> John Paul II 1995: § 16.

<sup>238</sup> Gregory the Great 1944: 69.

<sup>239</sup> A passage by Tatiana Goricheva may prove relevant. Goricheva was born in Leningrad (now Saint Petersburg) in 1947, converted to Christianity at the age of 26 and was ordered to leave the Soviet Union in 1980 following a series of interrogations and arrests (1988: 100): 'I saw my first religious broadcast on television. I thank God that we have atheism and no religious education. What this man managed to do on the screen was more likely to drive people out of the church than all the clumsy chatter of our paid atheists. This elegantly clad and self-satisfied preacher spoke about love, but his very behaviour excluded any possibility of a sermon and would likewise have rendered private conversation with another individual impossible. He was simply an unskilled and boring actor with mechanical and studied gestures. He was faceless. For the first time I understood how dangerous it is to talk about God. Each word must brim with authenticity and be like a sacrifice. Otherwise, it is better to keep silent.'

<sup>240</sup> Nándor Gilyén's words spoken nearly 50 years ago regarding sermons are just as relevant here: 'Platitudes, verbal flourishes, and clichés are deeply disappointing, yet we have the misfortune of hearing them repeated countless times.' (Gilyén 1974: 629).

<sup>241</sup> Sarah 2018: 196.

we shall be deprived of mystery, of His light that dwells beyond darkness and of His beauty that is beyond all beauty'.<sup>242</sup> This is the only way – in this silent language spoken by the mysteries – that we can experience God in our midst. Perhaps this is exactly what the religiousness of our time can teach us, even if we do not, and cannot, agree with its outward manifestations. Its inner motivations should give us pause: the search for meaning and the desire for experiences. This insight may prove invaluable as we strive to carefully guard our values and to present them more convincingly to our fellow man. It may potentially lead us to recognize again – not only theoretically but on a practical level – the experience of meeting God. We are all too familiar with Karl Rahner's words,<sup>243</sup> 'The Christian of the future will be a mystic, or he will not exist at all.'<sup>244</sup> By mysticism, the German theologian means 'the true experiencing of God that arises from the inner structure of our existence', i.e. a Christian person who 'experiences God and God's liberating grace'. Analogously, it is safe to claim that the participants in the liturgy of the future Church will be those who will experience not only themselves, their priest, or even the community of the Church,<sup>245</sup> but God Himself. And for those who experience God's presence, power, and message in the liturgy, the *participatio actuosa* discussed at the beginning of our chapter is no longer a mere expectation, requirement, or ideology, but a silent yet telling thanksgiving rooted in their own existence, which in turn has its source in God.

---

<sup>242</sup> Sarah 2018: 193.

<sup>243</sup> Rahner 1966: 22: „Der erfahren hat, oder er wird nicht mehr sein.” Rahner 1980: 161: „daß der Christ der Zukunft ein Mystiker sei oder nicht mehr sei.”

<sup>244</sup> Rahner 2012: 896

<sup>245</sup> Ratzinger 2001: 10: 'A liturgy wherein man could only encounter the Church would be insufficient, to be sure'.

## Liturgy as the Sanctification of God's Name

A name is a summary designation descriptive of the peculiar character of the thing named. Thus, the Apostle Paul has a certain peculiar character, partly of soul which is accordingly of a certain kind, partly of intellect which is accordingly contemplative of certain things, and partly of body which is accordingly of a certain kind. It is the peculiar in these characteristics, the unique combination – for there is not another being identical with Paul – that is indicated by means of the appellation 'Paul'. In the case of men, however, whose peculiar characteristics are changed, their names also by a sound usage are changed according to scripture. When the character of 'Abram' was transformed, he was called 'Abraham'; when that of Simon, he was named Peter, and when that of Saul, the persecutor of Jesus, he was designated Paul. But in the case of God, inasmuch as He is himself ever unchangeable and unalterable, the proper name that even He may be said to bear is ever one...<sup>246</sup>

This relevant and expressive commentary was penned by Origen as a part of his exposition on the first petition of the Lord's Prayer. *Nomen est omen*, goes the adage attributed to Plautus, Roman comic playwright († 184 BC). The original meaning of the saying (i.e. the name is a sign / speaks for itself) has by now been almost completely forgotten and has come to be replaced with a new translation (i.e. the name obliges), employed as a catchy marketing slogan. For the ancients, the name did not simply designate and distinguish its bearer but formed an essential part of his/her personality: the name is, so to speak, the essence of the person, since he who has no name does not exist at all.<sup>247</sup> Accordingly, a name is not merely a conventional designation of an

---

<sup>246</sup> Origen: *On Prayer* 24,2.

<sup>247</sup> Haag 1989: 1328.

existing thing or being, but also intended to express its role in the cosmic order.<sup>248</sup>

‘Hallowed be thy name,’ the Lord’s Prayer reads. Upon listening to these words, we recall God’s name that He Himself revealed to us on Mount Horeb (or Sinai): ‘I am Who I am’ (Ex 3:14). The heavenly version of this name of God resounds in our ears, splitting this Old Testament name of God into three time zones:<sup>249</sup> ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord<sup>250</sup> God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come!’ (Rev 4:8). The *I am* is the one who *was* and *is to come!*

The Lord’s Prayer, to state the obvious, is the best-known and most recited passage in the New Testament. It is spoken at every mass, as well as in the Divine Office as a part of the morning (Lauds) and evening (Vespers) services. Of its two versions recorded in the Synoptic tradition, we pray the one found in the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 6:9–13), which is longer, incorporating seven petitions as opposed to the five featured in the Gospel According to Luke (Lk 11:2–4). In the Gospel According to Matthew, the Lord’s Prayer is embedded in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5–7). It is highly relevant that the Evangelist wants his readership to see Jesus as a Moses figure,<sup>251</sup> a ‘new Moses’. The typological relationship between Jesus (*type*) and Moses (*antitype*) can already be observed in the infancy narratives, with Mt 1–2 serving as a prologue to the Mosaic typology expanded on later in the book.<sup>252</sup> The scene of the Sermon on the Mount also fits into this typology,<sup>253</sup> as Jesus ascended that (particular) mountain (*eis to*<sup>254</sup> *oros*) that is the antitype of Mount Horeb/Sinai. Therefore, the Sermon on the Mount brings Mount Horeb/Sinai to our minds, the mountain of lawgiving and covenant-making and the mountain where God appeared to Moses in the burning bush<sup>255</sup> and revealed His name.

<sup>248</sup> Cazelles 1986: 1003.

<sup>249</sup> The hymn on the lips of the *four living creatures* in the Book of Revelation (4:8) that *they never stop saying day and night* is the explanation and specification of the divine name as given not only in the Johannine (cf. Rev 1:8, 4:8, 11:17, 16:5) texts but as revealed to Moses in the Old Testament (Exod 3:14) (Ritt 1986: 39).

<sup>250</sup> Here the term ‘Lord’ (*kyrios*) may stand for Yahweh. Likewise, in the Septuagint, the Tetragrammaton YHWH corresponds to *Kyrios* most of the time. Interestingly enough, in some of the Greek-language scriptural texts written by Jews for Jews, God’s name is not translated as *Kyrios*, but – just as in the original text – the Tetragrammaton written in Hebrew letters is retained. Translating Yahweh as *Kyrios* came to be practised by Christians when they no longer knew what to do with God’s name written in Hebrew (Haag 1989: 774).

<sup>251</sup> For more on this, see Allison 1993; Sparks 2006: 651–663.

<sup>252</sup> Bodor 2018: 7–16.

<sup>253</sup> Donaldson 1985; Allison 1993: 172–180.

<sup>254</sup> In itself, the definite article *to* – although making possible this interpretation as well (France 2007: 156–157) – does not necessarily refer here to Mount Sinai (Zerwick 1963: 53–54). Considering the multitude of typological parallels throughout the gospel accounts, we cannot, however, rule out this interpretation altogether.

<sup>255</sup> There are some who tend to trace back the name of Mount Sinai (*har sinoy*) to the Hebrew term *sēnē* ‘thorn bush’. On this matter, see Perlitt 1977: 302–322. It is equally

Jesus thus *goes up* the mountain, *sits down*, *starts speaking* (instead of reading from a scroll), and *teaches* (Mt 5:1–2). Every one of these symbolic moments highlights Jesus's authority. The new Moses speaks to the disciples. 'Hallowed be Thy name,' Jesus says in the Lord's Prayer. This mention of God's name takes us back to Mount Sinai. When we speak of God's name, we need to be aware that the name of God is a synonym for the word 'God'.<sup>256</sup> Horeb, i.e. Mount Sinai, is where – according to the Book of Exodus (cf. 3:1–15) – God appeared to Moses in the burning bush and gave Himself a name: 'I am Who I am' ('*ehyê 'ašer 'ehyê*;<sup>257</sup> Ex 3:14).

Any discussion of the sanctification of God's name must begin, for both liturgical and theological reasons, with a re-examination of the passage where God's name was revealed. It is apparent that a more in-depth analysis of the name and of the circumstances of its revelation can both enrich our insights into liturgical theology.

The name that God gave to Himself is not a pronoun, an adjective, or even a noun but a verb with a dynamic meaning. With its roots in the Hebrew verb 'to be' (*hyh*), 'to be present', the name '*ehyê 'ašer 'ehyê* expresses considerably more than the neutral fact of existence: it is not a simple *esse* but much rather an *adesse*.<sup>258</sup> This name implies a dynamic presence,<sup>259</sup> a continuously present active arrival and appearance. God is the One 'manifesting Himself as present',<sup>260</sup> the God who is constantly 'revealing Himself'.<sup>261</sup> Consequently, God's name is not a reflection here of His (static) absolute existence but of His active, relating presence.<sup>262</sup> God's name already includes His relationship with His creatures, and the very sound of His name is, so to speak, suggestive of His closeness to His people and of His arrival in their midst. He is, if you will, the presence that exists for us, or, to be even more specific: He reveals His presence *for our sakes*. In His manifestation, He reminds His creatures of the grand context, their role in salvation history. God – through the revelation of His name – declares His active presence among us, in the human

---

conceivable that the author of Exod 3:1–12, who calls the mountain Horeb, uses the term *s'enê* in a bid to suggest that it is the same mountain that is referred to as Mount Sinai in other places (esp. in the Priestly source). In this manner, he links the Second Book of Moses (Deuteronomy), which consistently uses the name Horeb to refer to the place of lawgiving, with the Priestly source.

<sup>256</sup> da Spinetoli 1998: 200.

<sup>257</sup> In the Hebrew language, the *imperfect* or *yiqtol* verb form ('*ehyê*) used here can express not only aspect (i.e. denoting incomplete/ongoing action) but also modality (e.g. possibility, command, permission). Cf. Waltke & O'Connor 1990: 506–509.

<sup>258</sup> Guillet 1986: 652–653.

<sup>259</sup> Scharbert 1986: 23.

<sup>260</sup> von Soden 1966: 177–187.

<sup>261</sup> Dijkstra 1996: 43–52.

<sup>262</sup> von Rad 2000: 148.

world.<sup>263</sup> Also, the ‘I am Who I am’ (Ex 3:14) leaves open the details of God’s active presence, offering no specific clues about its realization. In other words, God’s name carries within it the most diverse possibilities of His always-already-there presence,<sup>264</sup> and it is man’s (individual) experience that gives it concrete expression.<sup>265</sup> God’s statement brings to light a further essential aspect: man has no control over the way God is present,<sup>266</sup> so the question of ‘how’ remains open.<sup>267</sup> Hence, God retains His freedom and the element of surprise inherent in His actions.

It is interesting to note that in the Bible the first word of God’s initial utterance, ‘Let there be light!’ (Gen 1:3: *y’hi’ôr*), is the exact verb ‘to be’ that serves as the basis for His name. Thus, God discloses His name in His very first utterance. It is equally compelling and poignant that the first creation narrative (Gen 1:3–2:4a) in the Priestly source has 26 occurrences of the verb ‘to be’ (*hyh*), which equals the Hebrew numerical value of the name YHWH (in English transliteration: Yahweh): Y (10) + H (5) + W (6) + H (5) = 26.<sup>268</sup> In the Priestly source, God does not ‘officially’ reveal this name until Ex 6:2–8, but YHWH – the name of Israel’s national and liberator God – essentially mirrors the name of the God who calls all things into ‘existence’ in the first creation narrative and of the ‘One Who Exists’ who speaks in the burning bush. By implication, God’s name reveals His approach to us, His presence among us and in our history, and the modality of His appearance and manifestation. His name is the hermeneutics of all the above.

The scene on Mount Horeb illuminates further relevant connections. Since we are all familiar with the story, it is unnecessary to recall it in its entirety. Let it suffice to centre our analysis on a few essential motifs pertinent to our topic. ‘The angel of the Lord appeared to him [Moses] in flames of fire from within a bush.’ As Moses turned to look, he noticed a strange phenomenon: ‘though the bush was on fire it did not burn up’ (Ex 3:2). ‘When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look’ (Ex 3:4), He addressed him: “Do not come any closer” (...). “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground” (Ex 3:5). This short passage contains various noteworthy elements essential to our liturgical theological approach. Let us begin with one of the cardinal statements:

<sup>263</sup> Noth 1978: 31.

<sup>264</sup> Noth 1978: 31.

<sup>265</sup> Zenger 1987: 53.

<sup>266</sup> Zenger 1987: 54.

<sup>267</sup> Fischer 1989: 152–153.

<sup>268</sup> Wénin 2008: 22–23.

God calls the place where Moses comes *holy ground*. This connection between the two concepts is not to be found anywhere else in the Scriptures.<sup>269</sup> It is also remarkable that here it is God Himself who declares to Moses that this *place is a holy ground*. Indeed, as a general rule, to declare a place holy is something that man does, usually following an epiphany or theophany. Man achieves this by raising an altar (cf. Gen 12:7, 26:25; Judg 6:24) or a memorial stone (cf. Gen 28:18, 35:14) or giving the place a name (cf. Gen 16:14, 22:14). In our passage, however, it is God, not Moses, who calls the place in question *holy ground*.

The term 'ground' (or earth) also appears to be of key importance. For God created both man (cf. Gen 2:7) and animals (cf. Gen 2:19) out of the dust of the ground (Heb. *āpor min-hā'ādāmā*). The Hebrew word *'ādām* 'man' comes from the word *'ādāmā* 'earth' to constantly remind man of his origins. The *holy ground* calls to our mind the Garden of Eden, Paradise, where God placed man formed from *the dust of the ground* (cf. Gen 2:8). Written in Aramaic and dated to the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC as part of the Palestinian tradition, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (Ex 3:5), which – as the name *targum* also reveals (trgm) – is not just a translation but also an interpretation,<sup>270</sup> connects the holy ground with the law: 'the place where you stand is a holy place and on it you are to receive the Law to teach it to the children of Israel'.<sup>271</sup> It is interesting to note that according to the targum it is the 'law' that links the theophany of Ex 3:5 with the lawgiving at Sinai (Ex 19–31). In this sense, we may connect Horeb, or Mount Sinai, with the Garden of Eden – and according to the Book of Jubilees, with the ground of the 'Holy of Holies' – since this is the place where the concept of divine law/command first appears in the Old Testament: 'the Lord God commanded the man' (Gen 2:16). It is also noteworthy that the Semitic word *qādoš* 'holy' is derived from the suggestive verb *qds* 'to cut', 'to separate',<sup>272</sup> indicating the separation of the sacred from the profane. When God declares to Moses that 'the place where you are standing is holy ground', thereby 'isolating', 'carving a circle around', 'separating' the place of His appearance and of His name's revelation from the profane environment –, He 're-creates' Paradise, as it were, within the living space of humanity. Interestingly, the primary meaning of our term 'Paradise', derived from the Old Persian *paii daeza*, carries a similar meaning,

<sup>269</sup> The parallel text (Jos 5:15) does not contain the term 'ground', and Zech 2:16 uses another form of the term 'holy', whose translation causes quite a headache (e.g. 'hallowed ground' or Fischer 1989: 110: „Boden der Heiligtums"). The *Vulgata* translates it as *terra santificata* (but renders the term included in Exod 3:5 as *terra sancta*).

<sup>270</sup> Bodor 2019: 22–29.

<sup>271</sup> McNamara, Maher & Hayward 1994: 167.

<sup>272</sup> Koehler & Baumgartner 1994–2000: 1072.

‘garden’, and has come to be translated as ‘enclosed garden’ over time.<sup>273</sup> This, shall we say, ‘third creation narrative’ is what separates the sacred from the profane, a separation that constitutes the basis and the prerequisite of all cults.<sup>274</sup> It is impossible to speak about cult without a clear distinction between the sacred and the profane.

Written in the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC and still considered a canonical book by the Ethiopian Jews (*Beta Israel*) as well as the Christian Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the Book of Jubilees (Jub; *Lesser Genesis*) writes the following: ‘Noah recognized that the Garden of Eden was the Holy of Holies and the dwelling of the Lord, and Mount Sinai was in the midst of the desert, and Mount Zion was in the midst of the navel of the earth. The three of these were created as holy sanctuaries, one facing the other.’<sup>275</sup> As can be seen, the author identifies the Garden of Eden with the Holy of Holies, Mount Sinai with the Tabernacle, and Mount Zion with the Temple in Jerusalem. All of these places are made holy by God’s presence. After ‘God banished him (Adam) from the Garden of Eden (...) He placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim (...) to guard the way to the tree of life’ (Gen 3:23–24; cf. Ezek 28:14.16). Figures of the cherubim could be found not only in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle and of the Temple, but the curtains enclosing the Holy of Holies were in both cases decorated with cherubim motifs woven directly into the fabric ‘by a skilled worker’ (cf. Exod 26:31, 36:35; 2 Chr 3:14). They have a clearly outlined purpose in this case as well, which is to guard the Holy of Holies and indicate God’s presence. In connection with the cherubim, we should mention the four living creatures standing, according to the Book of Revelation, around God’s throne in the heaven and singing the *Trisagion*.<sup>276</sup> The passage quoted from the *Book of Jubilees* is worthy of further consideration because it promises further interesting discoveries. In both of our texts, the Holy of Holies constituted the innermost part of the aforementioned sanctuaries, i.e. the Tabernacle and the Temple in Jerusalem. Even though ‘these were created as holy sanctuaries, one facing the other’, a ‘piece’ of Eden ‘escaped’ into history in both the Tabernacle and the Temple in Jerusalem. The Holy of Holies of the divine sanctuary is Paradise among us, that is to say, the ‘place’ where God and man nurture a unique, quasi-familial relationship. The Paradise of the Holy of Holies wishes to restore the previous status quo, at least on a cultic level, that man lost by committing the original sin. The Fall of Man caused the harmony between God and man to be disrupted and ushered in the age of ‘disharmony’. The cultic space is

<sup>273</sup> Haag 1989: 1423.

<sup>274</sup> Splett 1971: 130–134.

<sup>275</sup> Translation based on: Rießler 1928: 564.

<sup>276</sup> The description of the four creatures included in Rev 4:7–9 is in fact the combination of Ezek 1:5–14, Ezek 10:12 (cherubim), and Isa 6:2–4 (seraphim) (cf. Schick 1971: 70).

essentially at the service of man who is willing to leave the fallen state of 'disharmony' behind in an effort to restore a 'harmonious' relationship with God. Cult, therefore, is the bridge spanning Mount Sinai and Mount Zion. There was, however, yet another way 'available' to the early Jewish community to achieve the theological unification of the two mountains: they simply expanded the borders of the city of Jerusalem, so it would often outgrow its conceptual scope as a topographical unit. The world is the 'expanded Jerusalem' (cf. Acts 7:7, Exod 3:12). This is the 'centrifugal perspective'<sup>277</sup> acting as a point of convergence for Mount Sinai and Mount Zion. In the embrace of the two mountains, lawgiving and judgement come to be united, the beginning and the end converge, and the arc of Israel's story is made complete.

For us humans, Jesus's person is the bridge connecting Mount Sinai with Mount Zion. He is the 'new Moses' on Mount Sinai. Likewise, in Jesus Christ, Mount Calvary is the new Mount Zion (Rev 14:1), the one anticipated by Mount Tabor (Mt 17:1–8). On 'Golgotha (which means "the place of the skull")' (Mk 15:22) – where tradition has it that Adam's body lies resting in the rocks<sup>278</sup> –, the old Adam awaits the new Adam, 'the firstborn of all creation' (Col 1:15). Golgotha thus becomes the Garden of Eden. The expectation of Adam, 'son of the earth', is fulfilled in the moment when Jesus 'bowed His head and gave up His spirit' (Jn 19:30). The 'land of oblivion' (Ps 88:13), shrouded in darkness (cf. Lk 23:44), 'shook' (Mt 27:51) while the bleeding flesh-and-blood face slowly lost its vitality, became tranquil, and was covered in perfect silence. Golgotha 'takes' the Garden of Eden 'by the hand' and begins its journey towards Mount Zion. It is to become the threshold of the New Jerusalem. Mount Calvary becomes a place of worship, the noblest, purest, and most magnificent mountain of the communication between God and man. Jesus's 'It is finished' causes Golgotha to come alive. Henceforth, this mountain of death, the spine-chilling, ghostly 'place of the skull' becomes the mountain of the victory of divine love, and its altitude reaches far beyond the storm clouds: the mountain of expectation turns into the mountain of divine invitation. It is no longer a place of horror but one of pilgrimage for the new people of God. Golgotha is the new Mount Zion, the Lord's 'holy mountain, beautiful in its loftiness, the joy of the whole earth' (Ps 48:1–2), 'established as the highest of the mountains' (Isa 2:2); 'the mount of assembly' (Isa 14:13) where the Lamb 'comes to dwell'. The sacrifice of the cross on Calvary is the 'pinnacle' of Christ's work of redemption that the Father crowns with the resurrection of His Son. Henceforth, Zion is no longer simply 'the navel of the earth' (Ezek 38:12), the mountain is no longer the place where the City

<sup>277</sup> Kim 2016: 137.

<sup>278</sup> Kroll: 463.

lies (cf. Ezek 40:2), but an elevated observation point from where we can view 'Jerusalem coming down out of heaven' (Rev 2:10). 'Theological geography' enters into the service of the eschaton and is transformed into eschatological topography. Although the cultic space of the New Testament continues to imply the Garden of Eden, this no longer happens out of a nostalgia for the beginnings but in anticipation of the eschatological Paradise. Let us merely recall Jesus's utterance on the cross: 'you will be with me in Paradise' (Lk 23:43). 'To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God' (Rev 2:7).

'Take off your sandals', God calls upon Moses. Joshua receives the same admonition from 'the commander of the Lord's army' (Josh 5:15). In both Scriptural passages, taking off one's sandals is justified by the holiness of the place. This act can mean several things (even simultaneously) in our context. We know that if in Israel someone cast his sandals on something, he took possession of it (cf. Ps 60:10).<sup>279</sup> Moses cannot take possession of this particular 'place' because he is not the master of it. Only barefoot, showing due respect, can he set foot on the holy ground,<sup>280</sup> which is the sovereign territory of God's presence. Wearing sandals, which man uses to protect himself from dirt or injuries while walking, may appear as offensive to a holy place,<sup>281</sup> wherefore it is more appropriate for man to cast off his earthly shell<sup>282</sup> together with his sandals so that he can surrender himself completely to God's presence. It appears to be a human tendency to 'cast our sandals' even on God as He is drawing near to us. This is what we do every time when we fail to respect God's freedom and the element of surprise inherent in His very name and 'domesticate' it instead to fit our needs. We carve an idol out of the living God. We turn God into an idol whenever we enclose Him with walls of rock, whenever we roll a large stone in front of the 'tabernacle' (cf. Mt 27:60) and stamp it with the seal (cf. Mt 27:66) of theological ideologies. We do so every time we confine God and his power within the walls of 'temples (from the Latin *temno*, *-ere* = 'cut out', 'rip out'; 'enclosure') built by human hands' (Act 17:24) that we believe to be sacred (from the Latin *sacrum*, *sacer* = 'enclose', 'protect'). We dance around the 'enclosed' God (cf. Ex 32:19), and our entire existence is defined by an image of God that suits our conceptions and can be shrunk to fit into our understanding. Bare feet are an inherent characteristic of *homo liturgicus* who rejoices in God's presence, who knows and is aware of his coordinate system as a creature. He does not acknowledge the divinity of his Creator in principle only but expects God's actions to be made manifest in the concrete. Man must have an ear not only for the acoustic resonance of

<sup>279</sup> Deissler 1984: 235; Fischer 1989: 109; Haag 1989: 1564.

<sup>280</sup> Greenberg 1969: 72.

<sup>281</sup> Ohlmeyer 1957: 98–111.

<sup>282</sup> Weiss 1911: 21.

'ādām 'man' with 'ādāmâ 'earth', but he must experience it too. He must come into direct contact with the earth, the 'raw material' of his existence, and feel the dust of the ground under his feet. Only after having first identified with his origins can he stand before the Lord (cf. Gen 18:22, 19:27). Only then will he truly sense and understand that God 'stoops down to look on (...) the earth, He raises the poor from the dust' (Ps 113:6–7). '[Y]ou, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand' (Is 64:7). The Lord's reply can be heard as follows, 'Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand' (Jer 18:6). Once man sets foot on the soil of the Garden of Eden, seemingly 'deserted' but now made holy by God's presence, it will be transformed into the garden of 'delight' and 'bliss'.<sup>283</sup>

'There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire' (Ex 3:2), we read. Upon coming across God's angel in this passage,<sup>284</sup> however, we need not immediately assume that this a creature resembling an angel in the conventional sense. Instead, in this particular verse, the word 'angel' is a reference to God Himself and identical with Him.<sup>285</sup> Likewise, *Vulgata* simply translates the term as 'Dominus'. This narrative 'technique' takes into consideration the human perceptual horizon and presents God's visible form from a human perspective. The angel just mentioned here is, if you will, God's 'mask'<sup>286</sup> that lends a face to God who manifests Himself. Behind this 'mask',<sup>287</sup> God enters the historical dimension where the power of the light of the countenance is indispensable to human recognition and communication. Thus, the angel acts here as a medium of God's self-manifestation by which He enters history in a way perceptible to us, His creatures. The angel – as a visible representation of God abiding with us – illustrates at the same time the distance between God and man.

The Son of Man – who, as per the meaning of this complex and mysterious phrase, is not only the eschatological representative of God and His kingdom, but of humanity as well<sup>288</sup> – descends sacramentally to the *old* Adam to dress him in the clothes of the *new* Adam by His grace. Christ – the new Adam –

<sup>283</sup> The Hebrew term for 'Eden' incorporates both meanings: 'desert' and 'delight'/'bliss' (cf. Haag 1989: 269).

<sup>284</sup> Hilbrands 2006: 92–93.

<sup>285</sup> Gross 1959: 28–42.

<sup>286</sup> Eichrodt 1961: 9.

<sup>287</sup> The original function of the mask does not carry the negative connotation that we tend to associate it with nowadays. In today's usage, a mask is something that we seek to take off to finally become our true selves. The mask – although necessarily a means of concealment since time immemorial – is actually a means of establishing contact between the being wearing it and the one representing it. By means of the mask, one turns into the other and as such is the instrument of *unifying transformation*, or, more anciently, of *transforming unification*. Cf. Kerényi 1995: 83–101.

<sup>288</sup> Kasper 1996: 121.

goes in search of the *still old* Adam: 'Where are you?' (Gen 3:9). The liturgy is the Garden of Eden of this act of searching and addressing, the Holy of Holies of the Earth.

What does 'hallowed be Thy name' mean in the context of the liturgy? Our discussions so far have hopefully made it clear that the sanctification of God's name is a communicative event, a game of grace. The petition of 'hallowed be Thy name' is about the encounter between God and man and about their communicative presence before and for each other.

In the Garden of Eden, man walks not only barefoot but fully 'naked' (cf. Gen 3:7), awaiting the day when he will put on 'fine linen, bright and clean' (Rev 19:8). The Bride dons the wedding dress received as a gift<sup>289</sup> and, giving herself completely, lets the Groom weave the garments of eschatological man onto her. Man puts on the *new man* (cf. Eph 4:24). The new Adam is born within us, too, and eschatological man finds himself a home. It is at this moment that the prayer 'hallowed be Thy name' switches genres: the prayer of petition and anticipation becomes a prayer of fulfilment. The 'It is finished' (Jn 19:30) is now truly finished! Man himself becomes a doxology.

---

<sup>289</sup> The *passivum theologicum* used here refers to the divine action (cf. Takács 2000: 383).

## Liturgy as Abiding in the Attraction of God's Glory

It may be said that there are four dimensions of God's glory:<sup>290</sup>

First of all, glory refers to His divine goodness, greatness, perfection, and utter preciousness. God, 'who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see' (1Tim 6:16), reveals Himself as 'the glorious Father' (Eph 1:17).

Secondly, it indicates Christ who 'is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being' (Heb 1:3). God's internal glory shone forth perfectly from the face of Christ. In Logos incarnate, the glory of God's only begotten Son becomes a visible, observable empirical fact. 'We have seen His glory' (Jn 1:14), declares the Apostle John. He, who is 'very God of very God' (*Nicene Creed*), is the perfect image of the Father, therefore whoever beholds Jesus sees the Father (cf. Jn 12:45).

Thirdly, God's glory concerns man, who, curiously enough, is the glory and image of God. As the crown of creation, man has a special relationship with God. His identity as the image of God is an ontological gift received from the Creator, which incorporates the mystery of man's potential for holiness, i.e. his capability of observing and following Christ, the exceptional and perfect image of the Father. It is by contemplating and emulating Christ that man comes to 'depict' God's image in himself, in particular by 'reconciling' and 'uniting' the earthly and the heavenly worlds.<sup>291</sup> Man thus becomes capable of transforming his whole empirical personality – with all of its components – into God's image by manifesting the image of God on his face.<sup>292</sup> The explanation regarding the image of God in man<sup>293</sup> given by a former teacher of mine (Erich Zenger, † 2010) proves highly helpful. Professor

---

<sup>290</sup> Puskás 2006: 206.

<sup>291</sup> Lepahin 2010: 35.

<sup>292</sup> Florensky 2005: 32.

<sup>293</sup> Zenger 1985: 44; see also Zenger 1983: 84–96.

Zenger was a Bible scholar who took the Hebrew term *tselem* (*eikon, imago*) as the starting point of his interpretation according to which man must act in this world as a living image or live statue of God. In the Ancient East, especially in ancient Egypt, images (simulacra) and statues of idols functioned as representatives of the deities they portrayed. Such statues marked the place where a particular deity operated. It was through them that the particular deity was present in this world. Therefore, people approached these images and statues of idols and behaved towards them as if they were living beings. These connections shed light on biblical man's existential duty as well: as the living image of God, man must become the 'medium' of God the Creator, or, to put it simply, where man is present, God is there also! In this sense, man is the reflection of God's glory to the extent that he is in relationship with Christ.

Lastly, God's glory abides in each and every creature. Man perceives the created world around him and apprehends it with his senses in very concrete terms. He can see, hear, taste, smell, and touch the realities 'emerging' in his environment. This is how he becomes aware of them empirically and comprehends them. In addition, people of faith recognize the panoply of realities surrounding them not merely as the multitude of diversities, as things more or less foreign to them that are (or can become) available to them, but as gifts of the Creator to whom they also owe their existence. God's glory is revealed in the created world and in nature primarily to inspire man to enter into a relationship with God. It is safe to say that God's glory has a primarily communicative character at this level.

Interpersonal communication in the spatio-temporality of this world is possible on condition that there is a 'go-between' who enables the communicating parties to be 'present' for each other.<sup>294</sup> This 'go-between' is the site where communication takes place: people communicate with each other through the material reality that exists between them as spiritual subjects or beings. Creation is 'between' God and man and serves the relationship between them as a 'go-between'. The world, therefore, acts as a medium for the communication between God and man, who both make use of the same creation as the expression of themselves. Therein consists the dignity of the created world. Seen from God's perspective, the world is in effect the continuation of His self-communication within the context of His divinity; God's visible self-expression. The world, however, is not absorbed by God but becomes the 'site' of His self-expression. Of His own free will, God leaves behind the unapproachable light of His divinity, steps outside Himself, in order to enter into a relationship with His creatures. This way, the world is the 'sacrament' of God's self-revelation (and at the same time of man's self-expression, which is, however, less relevant to us in the present context).

---

<sup>294</sup> Rahner 1967: 395–408; Kunzler 2005: 45–48.

For us humans, God's revelation and presence do not take place directly but in an indirect manner.<sup>295</sup> Accordingly, God reveals Himself to man through people and events whose characteristic features remain intact: man does not cease to be man, and the historical event in question does not cease to be an event accomplished by humans. Nevertheless, they become 'sites' of God's self-communication.

Therefore, it is through symbols that God actualizes His presence. The linguistic structure of the symbol is neither informative nor argumentative, but narrational,<sup>296</sup> though not in the sense that it describes or relates something but in that it draws attention to a meeting point in *this* world – which is, de facto, the essence of the symbol – where two presences encounter one another. The symbol speaks to man in the language of eternity condensed into the present and foreshadowing his prospective future. The symbol is always *autoimplicative* and *performative*, meaning that it incorporates the person of the observer, who must be characterized by a certain affinity – a specific attachment and affection –, while also inspiring the addressee to change, conversion, and immersion. By calling (*con-vocare*) man to an encounter with God, the symbol addresses him, presents him with a challenge (*pro-vocare*), and calls upon him (*e-vocare*) to surpass himself. For the sake of humans, God 'contracts' to fit the dimensions of the symbol, whereby the latter – without ceasing to be an integral part of immanence – grows into an icon and is enriched to become a reality that is both a 'window' and a 'door' to eternity.<sup>297</sup> As a window, it is a means of extrasensory, ontological cognition, while as a door it opens to admit the Sacred into our presence. In other words, the symbol is the meeting 'place' of the immanent and profane and the transcendent and Sacred, an ontological 'crack' in reality through which 'this world' and the 'other world' can embrace each other. The sacred sanctifies the profane by its presence, while from an earthly perspective, the profane is clothed in the garment of the glory of the sacred. It is only by this encounter that the symbol comes to exist, or, to put it differently, the symbol bears witness to this encounter.

The symbol, therefore, is the site of epiphany, more particularly of hierophany and of theophany; what is more, it is the place of denial and affirmation: the profane world denies its mere immanent significance, its vital importance, whereas the sacred, by its parousia and appearance, affirms the profane, thereby lending it a power that transcends itself. The symbol forms a bridge between two worlds, between the expressible and the inexpressible, life and faith, experience and revelation.<sup>298</sup> This bridge building,

<sup>295</sup> Vorgrimler 1992: 19–23.

<sup>296</sup> Boff 1976: 15–18.

<sup>297</sup> Lepahin 2010: 37.

<sup>298</sup> Weidinger 2009: 177.

however, takes place in the deep, where it connects the apparently opposite poles by following the principle of integration instead of 'stepping over'. Hence, the symbol does not lead us in the liturgy from the visible into the invisible, neither does it make use of physical realities to guide us into the material sphere. Instead, it shows us the invisible in the visible, the untouchable in the touchable.<sup>299</sup> In the symbol, the transcendent revealing itself remains incomprehensible to the observer (yet another inherent characteristic of the symbol), meaning that it does not turn into an actual empirical reality that would enable us to gain a first-hand experience thereof.<sup>300</sup> The symbol makes the Sacred perceptible, not visible.

Mere objects and their outward appearance do not satisfy the conditions of presence. It would never occur to anyone to claim that a thing, an object is present; all that can be said is that it exists and is here. Presence always presumes a relation,<sup>301</sup> some level of relationship between two entities. Those who would speak of presence must necessarily speak of relationship at the same time. The sign is an inherent feature of relationship, as connections are established through signalling. All the same, interpersonal communication between God and man takes place via ordinary objects, everyday physical realities, and earthly events. Sacramental objects, however, call for a bilateral approach. Coming from eternity, God Himself approaches earthly reality and makes it the object of His presence.<sup>302</sup> In this way, He removes the chosen reality from its surrounding environment, isolating it, as it were, from the multitude of other similar phenomena. This removal, however, is metaphysical in nature given that God separates the mundane from the ordinary in such a way that it remains an extraordinary mundane reality. God's presence, however, remains undisclosed to the passing glance that will find nothing extraordinary about it, so much so that not even careful scrutiny or minute and meticulous examination (even chemical or a physical analysis) could detect anything peculiar or point out any change. Of course, we are well aware that what happens in the liturgy reaches far beyond the scope of analytical observation. From the other side, the approach of man becomes perceptible. The changes he affects are visible. Moreover, these changes have no purpose but to raise awareness. As we have discussed earthly reality sanctified by the transcendent, i.e. sanctity in itself is indistinguishable from its immediate environment in any way, which is why man surrounds it with

---

<sup>299</sup> Bonaccorso 2020: 72.

<sup>300</sup> Korpics & P. Szilczl 2007: 18.

<sup>301</sup> Claverie 2015: 88–90.

<sup>302</sup> Even the verbal and non-verbal ritual attitude and behaviour of the liturgical community itself – as directly experienced by an outsider – becomes empirical evidence of faith in God's presence, since participants in the liturgy speak to God (in prayers, intercessions, petitions), stand before Him, bow and kneel to Him, etc. Cf. Rentsch 2020: 130.

ceremonies and rites, covering naked prosaic reality with external, eye-catching ornaments. The transcendent, contracted to fit the ordinary, parades in the ceremonial clothes of this world so that the earthly and ordinary may come in the future to shine in the garment of grace of celestial glory. More broadly speaking, man creates the site for cult, a 'fixed and organized form'<sup>303</sup> in which the community's religious experience between God and man is realized. In order for God's Parousia, with its relevance for the present time, to become a reality for man in the cultic space, man not only decorates the 'place' chosen and designated by God for this encounter but seeks to include other natural materials that help prepare this encounter, albeit on a lower level. Let us take Holy Mass as a concrete example. Besides the bread and wine, which were granted the privilege of divine election, man enhances the liturgy with other objects taken from nature, such as incense, flowers, or liturgical vestments.

God's future is already present in the created world through the Son.<sup>304</sup> In the incarnate Logos, the Son of the Father, who is Christ, takes a visible form (cf. Jn 1:14), and man is called to participate in the glory revealed by God in Christ (cf. Rom 8:18, 20, 30; 2 Cor 3:18, 4:4–6). '[L]ife only becomes real life when it receives its form from looking towards God',<sup>305</sup> while liturgy as 'a look on God's glory'<sup>306</sup> is meant to 'convey this look and give life by serving the veneration of God'.<sup>307</sup>

The 'Totally Other from beyond here' 'is embodied' in the immanent; the One who is 'at home' outside the sensory modalities comes into 'that which was his own' (Jn 1:11). The liturgy, as discussed previously, is a 'liminal event', i.e. a 'liminal experience' of the manifestation of the transcendent that is beyond our limits. This *limes* or 'boundary' is the site of interpersonal communication and the place where God shines forth His glory. 'Glory' and 'beauty' denote the same divine emanation but from different perspectives: from God's viewpoint, we call it glory, while man perceives it as beauty. It is in beauty that God puts on the 'garment of glory'.

In what follows, we must explore the concept of beauty in order to advance our understanding of its communicative power. Indeed, the aesthetic dimension of liturgy is also concerned with communication, and emphasizing this dimension is of paramount importance nowadays for two reasons.

On the one hand, the aesthetic hunger of our contemporary society is a well-known fact, to be discussed in greater detail in what follows. This implies that man living in this age is open to the aesthetic message of things and

<sup>303</sup> Lanczkowski 1961: 659.

<sup>304</sup> Pannenberg 2006: 294.

<sup>305</sup> Ratzinger 2002: 15.

<sup>306</sup> Ratzinger 1996/1997b: 131.

<sup>307</sup> Ratzinger 2002: 75.

events even if it seems that for individuals with a preference for *lite* products, reorientation from the horizontal dimension to the far more demanding vertical one is not 'lite' at all. Such a transfer is far from easy because 'vertical aesthetics' is about our encounter with God, which holds up a mirror to man, a mirror that directs our attention beyond the superficial to reveal to us the contours of our true self, which is hardly appealing or delightful. This recognition comes as a 'wake-up call' to remove us from our all too familiar comfort zone of horizontal loitering, and such calls are rarely met with enthusiasm. Yet we can say that the hunger for aesthetics prevalent in our time is a reliable foundation stone for us to build on. It is a foundation awaiting its cornerstone (i.e. Christ). Let us remember, 'God arrives before the missionary,<sup>308</sup> but the 'missionary' *must* arrive, for it is his duty to shed light on God and – by urging, agitating, and perfectly consoling his people – to bring into the light of consciousness the One who is searching for us, His creatures.<sup>309</sup>

Second – and this is of fundamental importance (especially) in our days –, the Church cannot manifest herself exclusively through the prism of dogmatics and moral theology. Not only because modern man is downright allergic to dogma and sweeping moral claims, but because these modes of self-expression are, by their very nature, unilateral and can easily arouse the impression that faith exists only to stimulate our mind and rouse us to action. In our extremely fast-paced<sup>310</sup> society characterized by continual clamour and an eerie background noise beyond description, many are searching for quiet and peace of mind,<sup>311</sup> that is, an 'oasis of silence' where individuals are not exposed – against their own will – to the relentless stimulation of their 'brainwaves' and endless chatter. Helping us to forget about time in the midst of time and showing us the true beauty of life as the symbol of eternity, the liturgy conveys hope and peace in the areas of our lives that are determined by desperation and a frantic pace,<sup>312</sup> which result from our understanding of life as performance and not as a gift. This way, the liturgy transcends the dispersion of time and sets us on the road towards a centre where people no longer approach the material world and each other simply from the perspective of functionality and purposefulness, but they are able to abide in the cohesive power of silence. Yet liturgy cannot be called the 'relaxation haven' of the chaotic world, as man does not 'drop by' this 'place' to take a breather. Although the liturgy is excellent for taking a very deep breath away from the

---

<sup>308</sup> This is the German title of Leonardo Boff's book (1991): *Gott kommt früher als der Missionar. Neuevangalisierung für eine Kultur des Lebens und der Freiheit.*

<sup>309</sup> Röser 2019: 276.

<sup>310</sup> Rosa 2002: 267–302; Rosa 2005; Rosa 2013.

<sup>311</sup> Klöckener 2009: 252.

<sup>312</sup> Schilson 1997: 187.

hustle and bustle of our environment and perfect as a rest stop for contemplation amidst the frenzied competition of our world, it is only through our encounter with God that the liturgy becomes an experience of the 'other world' which transcends our usual one. Indeed, only through the worship of God can the liturgy be of service to humanity.<sup>313</sup>

By the same token, the liturgy is not merely an informative and motivational proclamation of the Word conveyed within a ceremonial framework, in the specific life situation of the participants, that is to say, it is not simply a lesson in (social) pedagogy or multimedia catechesis whose main value resides in its educational potential and whose objective is to inspire people to love one another and do good. Neither is the liturgy something that man can renounce once he is no longer in need of the motivating, stimulating effects of *cultus purus* in the above sense, which would thus become the exclusive domain of the spiritually undernourished.<sup>314</sup> The Church is far too willing to take refuge in preaching morality, which – although important and absolutely necessary – is far from enough. If our focus is limited to ethics alone, and our preaching boils down to this single aspect, we will soon find ourselves boring people to death.<sup>315</sup> Our presence will prove tiresome and unstimulating, and we will fail to offer anything extraordinary, new, surprising, or refreshing to the Zacchaeuses<sup>316</sup> around us, men and women 'small in stature' (cf. Lk 19:1–10), who, curious about Jesus's coming, climb the nearest sycamore tree and wait for the Son of Man to call them by name. Besides the dogmatization and moralization of faith, the liturgy must attach greater importance to the aesthetics of faith, a dimension that goes beyond transmitting the faith through speech and hearing to engage all the senses in the process of transmission. It is the aesthetics of faith that highlight the iconic nature of cultic speech and action<sup>317</sup> and present the great Unknown, our mysterious God, in His concreteness. Such a focus will provide a greater opportunity for participants in the cultic event – whether they are 'bearers of the liturgy', i.e. church-integrated persons of faith, or people<sup>318</sup> visiting the liturgy (in the case of major religious celebrations, baptisms, First Communions, confirmations, weddings, funerals, and other milestone events in a person's life) on an occasional basis<sup>319</sup> – to have a real and truthful experience of God touching their lives in the present. 'No longer will they call you Deserted, or

<sup>313</sup> Kasper 2010a: 53: „Dienst am Menschen ist er [= der Gottesdienst] nur als Gottesdienst.“

<sup>314</sup> Kunzler 2009: 173–178; Müller 1989: 158.

<sup>315</sup> Röser 2019: 276.

<sup>316</sup> Halík 2014: 23.

<sup>317</sup> For more on this, see Lepahin 2010: 70–79.

<sup>318</sup> Haunerland 2000: 185–187; Haunerland 2009: 592–594.

<sup>319</sup> In today's world, many tend to see the Church as a social organization providing religious services (cf. Kehl 2003: 271).

name your land Desolate. But you will be called Hephzibah [my delight is in her], and your land Beulah [married]; for the Lord will take delight in you, and your land will be married' (Is 62:4). In the case of the liturgical act, which is a symbolic act, as shown above, we must not conceive of form and content as two separate, mutually distinguishable domains, but as partners revealing a common 'message'.<sup>320</sup>

We realize, of course, that writing about beauty is no easy undertaking in our time, especially considering that aesthetics – in our secular world – most often amounts to aestheticization: reality undergoes a process of beautification, a facelift, so to speak. This process, serving mainly economic purposes, is little more than coating of the real with the veneer of the imaginary, and a sprinkling of glitter. Form is no longer a medium that conveys content. What is more, content becomes something negligible, irrelevant. Form has taken on a life of its own and has emancipated itself from content, only to turn its own sparkling into the new content.<sup>321</sup> This circumstance has a dramatic influence on the religiosity of our contemporaries.<sup>322</sup> This is not the 'beauty' we wish to consider, however. The concept of 'beauty' under discussion is ontological in nature and not merely a reality subject to the whims and pleasure of a more or less authoritarian subject. The foundation of beauty, then, is *a priori* existence. In fact, beauty is the energy of Existence, Existence *ad extram*. It is through beauty that Existence invites, addresses, and calls upon man to perceive it as it is. Beauty transports man to another world, a pure and timeless world that exists outside the coordinates of time and space. Given its dual nature, beauty is able to mediate between two different worlds: *this* world existing in the 'clutches' of death and the *other* world that knows no death. This mediation takes place in the service of truth and goodness.

Beauty speaks of the true and the good, which become beautiful, that is, a brightly shining, delightful, and inviting manifestation. Beauty speaks so that truth and goodness – as abstract realities – may not sink into oblivion and so as to save what is worth saving and what we need to see and to physically perceive in our world for our life in this world to be fulfilled.<sup>323</sup> Beauty speaks about the true and the good that are humbly, even imperceptibly, present in Existence. Beauty is, if you will, the 'embodiment' of truth and goodness, their 'emanation' into the outer world. It is the perceptible form of the truth and goodness visible to the naked eye, the guarantee at the same time that what we have before us is true goodness and pure truth. The elements of this triad of Existence are organically interconnected, and none of them can be separated from the others without necessarily compromising and

<sup>320</sup> Klöckener 2009: 243–246.

<sup>321</sup> For more details, see Diósi 2012c: 101–110.

<sup>322</sup> Diósi 2011c: 722–730; Máté-Tóth 2011: 731–740; Diósi 2011b.

<sup>323</sup> Afloroaei 2008: 236–238.

distorting its ontological identity. Goodness separated from truth and beauty is nothing more than a vague impression, an illusion; truth that disregards goodness and beauty is fanaticism or an empty word at best, a sputtering and demagogue verbosity; finally, beauty emancipated from truth and goodness is an energy demanding idolatrous worship.<sup>324</sup> Truth and goodness culminate in beauty, which is the visibility of God's gratuitous emanation.

In the attraction of beauty, being meets Being, immanent being meets the transcendent Being, and contingent being meets the Absolute Being. From a human perspective, this encounter takes place in the form of worship, which is the obedience of (our) being to God's being. To worship means to live in truth.<sup>325</sup> In worship lies the truth of our existence and man's true dignity, for man – who is a creation of God – finds his true greatness and liberating magnificence precisely when he kneels down and makes himself small before God. Worship is the act of the highest order in the process of man becoming man.<sup>326</sup> Truth is root of the true contours of his face. By the power of worship, man's vague contours take a solid form. A liturgy that is beautiful – or authentic – is a path to an existence rooted in truth. Worship is the very first response of man whom God has called by name, i.e. personally and as a person, a response that comes before anything else and serves as the basis for everything else. By responding to God, man declares with his entire being, not just his lips, the most fundamental axiom of the communication between God and man: 'You are God, and I am your creature', that is to say: 'God is God, and man is man!' As a matter of fact, worship is an existential act, the basic orientation of human existence towards its source and fulfilment, which is God. The worship of God is beautiful because divine beauty, which proclaims divine goodness and truth, is reflected through it, and divine beauty captivates man and guides him to truth and goodness.

Beauty, however, is not purely the immanent radiance or earthly echo of truth and goodness but a valid reality in its own right. Although it shines on its own strength<sup>327</sup> with a splendour that is neither borrowed nor deceitful but comes from Beauty itself, its purpose can never be self-aggrandizement. Its self-existence is an existence destined for others and at the same time representing another Reality in the world which we perceive: it is an immanently concretized pro-existence.

Between the Uncreated and the created, between God and man, the concept of beauty transcends the phenomena associated with correspondence and harmony: it is a sacramental reality and as such a 'theological mouthpiece'; in other terms, it represents God in the 'absolute otherness' of

<sup>324</sup> Rupnik 2007: 519–520.

<sup>325</sup> Guardini 1923: 19–32; Ratzinger 1985: 135; Brüske 2009: 103–104.

<sup>326</sup> Kasper 2010a: 52.

<sup>327</sup> Afloroaei 2008: 239.

His unsurpassable, inimitable perfection. Beauty is, therefore, not simply equal to perfection for it is precisely in the imperfection of immanent beauty that the inviting power of Existence lies. Consequently, however real a symbol might be and no matter how perfectly it enables us to participate in the spiritual reality it conveys, its function is not to quench our thirst but to stimulate, excite, and increase it.<sup>328</sup> No earthly liturgy is perfect, flawless, or complete, for every liturgy practiced by man carries within it the fragmentary, imperfect nature of humanity. The differences between the realities of divine compassionate presence and human receptive participation, cultic presence and eschatological fulfilment, liturgical symbol and the experience of grace, and rite and salvation are preserved even in the most solemn of liturgies.<sup>329</sup> At the same time, participants in the liturgical event can sense and experience Someone approaching them from the divine sphere of perfection and wholeness. Therein lies the transformative power of the cultic act or event. What is essential is not outward appearances but the inner, dynamic, life-shaping, and transformative power emanating from the liturgy.<sup>330</sup> Indeed – despite their possible deficiencies and fragmentary nature –, rituals do convey value, enabling participants to see and experience otherwise invisible norms, thereby governing and interpreting the created world and human relationships. They bring together history, present, and future, and enable continuity and change as well as the experience of transition and transcendence.<sup>331</sup>

Beauty is the anticipated immanence of the transcendent Existence fitted to the needs of man. It is the transposition into this world of the existential communication between Creator and creature, which is to take place in the eschatological future, for man in his current – *in statu viatoris* – stage of salvation history. Beauty is the translation of the Absolute into human ‘language’.

Beauty – as the earthly visibility of God’s glory – is the ‘space’ where the transcendent and the immanent realities dramatically collide in the force field of Existence, and where man experiences his contingent existence. Beauty reminds man of his vertical orientation. Its purpose is not to impress the individual but to declare the transcendent Being to be true and good. For it is beauty that makes man understand that he is not to measure himself by his own standards but by the goodness and truth revealed through the beautiful. With the help of beauty, the individual receives the message of *a priori* objective Existence, of the transcendent Being who declares itself to be true and good. Beauty is not the reflection of the individual’s subjective projection but the mirror in which man can contemplate the image of God

<sup>328</sup> Schmemann 1993: 45.

<sup>329</sup> Ebenbauer 2019: 31.

<sup>330</sup> Szabó 2010: 74–76.

<sup>331</sup> Wulf & Zirfas 2004: 7–8.

inherent in him. Therefore, the encounter with beauty evokes ambivalent feelings in man: it attracts and repels, fascinates and rouses, delights and awakes, soothes the soul and demands change at the same time. It is in touching another, transcendent world illuminated by beauty that man meets his true self. That is why beauty is primarily unsettling.

An aesthetically literate person whose existence has been shaken by an earnest encounter with God through beauty will sense that the aesthetic reality comes from the world of pure values. The aesthetic reality involved in a symbolic act surpasses the practicalities of common life and is more than a simple or 'ordinary' faculty. Reality becomes beautiful through a gift bestowed from above. This is the gift of Existence to existence. Beauty, therefore, being the result of existence sharing in transcendence, cannot be crafted or produced, so it is never product of human ingenuity. Beauty has an essentially theological nature. Reality, drawn into the symbolic act – from 'syn-ballein' (Greek for 'to throw together') – and played out in the 'magnetic field' of beauty 'proclaims' a Reality that is free from all contingencies, one that is more real than itself. Transcendent Reality, in its undiminished transcendent otherness, is objectified, becoming objective (or object-like) at some level so that it may become subjective for man because 'Christian life needs, gradually and in every detail, to become the epiphany of God's glory'.<sup>332</sup> The Reality objectified from transcendence into immanence can become subjective only inasmuch that man ventures to play the holy game taking place between members of the man–world–God triad. The most fundamental axiom of this game lies in the sacramental power of matter, which when illumined by beauty is essentially more than the concrete propagated by Marxist materialism, and more than the object to be manipulated or possessed. In the liturgy, matter becomes a 'God-bearing' reality and the site of a real and authentic encounter with God.<sup>333</sup>

In cult, the primary concern of beauty is neither its appearance, nor aesthetic delight or pleasure. The driving force behind beauty is the aspiration after an existential encounter with transcendent and absolute Beauty, which man cannot create, mould, or 'knock together' on his own. Man does not turn to beauty in an effort to spruce up himself and his environment, and, what is more, not even the beauty that is to be existentially realized by us humans – which is basically the goal of all cults – can follow the classic guidelines of the makeup trade (which are to highlight attractive features and hide or do away with imperfections). In a cultic context, the beautiful is only beautiful if it is and remains the transparent window of eternity. Therefore, man's duty within the framework of a cultic act is not to 'serve up'

---

<sup>332</sup> Bourgeois 1999: 236.

<sup>333</sup> Boff 1976: 11–15.

a beauty marked with his own fingerprint but to open up the world to the divine beauty that comes among us to rejuvenate man. In essence we are called to make room for God's glory and beauty.

Beauty speaks of another world. This other world hides within the first one and discreetly shines forth as beautiful. This is no self-serving act on the part of beauty but a striving to save life from the one-dimensionality of finitude. The leitmotif of beauty is the perspective of human existence, for it thematizes man's life as it lies open to the transcendent. It seeks to make man's dependence on God the heart of discourse and to direct each and every step of the quest for meaning into the appropriate theological channels. Indeed, what is beautiful is only beautiful in the theological sense. To put it differently, we can only speak of beauty if it is rooted in Beauty with a capital letter, meaning God. Anything else we may term 'beautiful' is deceitful, pointless glamour and glitter, existence mirage or false vision. Beauty is of assistance to man in exploiting the meaning-making possibilities in his life;<sup>334</sup> it is destined to pull man out of the simplicity of his earthbound nature and attune him to 'floating' between the two ontological levels: the earthly and heavenly. It raises the gaze of a down-to-earth humanity to celestial heights.

The 'soul' and criterion of authenticity of the symbol is the immanent beauty of Beauty.<sup>335</sup> For reality becomes a symbol, a reality that points beyond itself, with the help of the beautiful that is rooted in Existence. When we speak of beauty, we speak, in fact, of the sacramentality of immanent, visible, palpable existence. Beauty becomes a sacramental dimension and represents God in the transcendence of His inimitable perfection.<sup>336</sup> It opens the gates of heaven for man and reveals the true perspective of his life. Becoming beautiful is our mission in life, a mission that we have received from the Beauty that resides beneath the veil of the symbol, with the materialized soul of the symbol, beauty itself, serving as our guide.

In what follows, let us discuss three dangers that (can) make liturgical communication with God who descends into our world extremely difficult:

We have already touched upon how communication with God in the liturgy takes place, if you will, through banal, ordinary, or common things. Consequently, it is very easy for man to gloss over these. There are three reasons for this problem. The first is a lack of the 'eye of faith'. There is no need, however, to theologically 'overload' this expression. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to speak of man's openness, that is, his readiness to open himself up to God. If we are honest with ourselves, we must admit that the vision even of the sharpest 'eye of faith' is still quite blurry. There is the

<sup>334</sup> Larcher 2011: 4–11.

<sup>335</sup> For more on this, see Diósi 2011a: 211–218; Diósi 2012a: 47–55.

<sup>336</sup> Bourgeois 1999: 236.

problem of false faith, which is 'the attitude when man is oriented towards himself instead of God'.<sup>337</sup> Then, there is the threat of indifference in faith, which entails the ritualization of rites, the routine, even soulless, performance of ceremonies.<sup>338</sup> This soullessness also threatens our prayer life, causing us to mumble 'anaemic' words and to dutifully recite texts which prove ephemeral. We may be uttering prescribed words, yet everything creates the impression that we are 'reciting a speech in an empty room, partly talking to [ourselves], partly addressing the objects around [us]'.<sup>339</sup> In such cases, the liturgical system of symbols stands in danger of being degraded, depreciated until its value is covered in dust.<sup>340</sup> People ensnared in the pitfall of routine and suffering from a spiritually 'sedentary' lifestyle no longer perceive God's presence in the 'moment'. In this context, the following words from a letter by the Austrian poet Rainer Maria Rilke's († 1926) to the young Timișoara-born writer Franz Xaver Kappus († 1966), an ethnic German from the Banat region, remain valid: 'If your everyday life seems poor, do not blame it; blame yourself and admit to yourself that you are not enough of a poet to recognize its rich significance.'<sup>341</sup>

The second danger is to diminish the meaning of beautiful, until it merely signifies 'appealing' (i.e. something 'easy on the eyes'). The liturgy takes place within the three-dimensional paradigm of subjectivity, inter-subjectivity, and objectivity.<sup>342</sup> Consequently, it is an occurrence where the subject and other fellow subjects encounter an objective reality outside of them that calls out to them. This Reality addressing the individual presents him with a challenge, inviting him to transform his life and to repent, i.e. to undergo a process that involves pain and resignation on man's part. These are requirements that our present-day 'positive society'<sup>343</sup> with its 'instant mentality'<sup>344</sup> is reluctant to face. Contemporary society, where the urge to escape into positive-only realities is overwhelming and promises to eliminate all negativity (e.g. pain, suffering, or even dialectics creating negative tension), lacks 'black bread spirituality'<sup>345</sup> (Fulbert Steffensky [\* 1933]:

<sup>337</sup> Halász 2021: 37.

<sup>338</sup> For more on this, see Diósi 2014: 97–100.

<sup>339</sup> von Speyr 2009: 19.

<sup>340</sup> This is what the fasting of the eyes and the ears seeks to avoid in the liturgy. For more on this, see Diósi 2015: 97–107.

<sup>341</sup> Rilke 2014: 13–14.

<sup>342</sup> Cornehl 2002: 252–253.

<sup>343</sup> Han 2014: 59–69.

<sup>344</sup> The characteristic of 'instant mentality' is that man wants to take possession of or use everything instantly, 'right this second', with the smallest investment of time possible. Cf. Höhn 1991: 260–261.

<sup>345</sup> The expression suggests that the 'consumption' of spiritual food takes time, just as in the case of black bread, which cannot be consumed quickly. Black bread needs time. It requires intensive and lengthy chewing to fully unlock its flavours.

*Schwarzbrot-Spiritualität*)<sup>346</sup> To cater to those with an aversion to the unfamiliar, Holy Mass and every liturgical act that transpires within the church should be nice and cosy, reminiscent of the atmosphere in one's living room.<sup>347</sup> The communication of *homo digitalis*,<sup>348</sup> marked by unlimited transparency and total measurability, perceives mystery, strangeness, and otherness as burdensome.<sup>349</sup> Consequently, postmodern man prefers the category of *event*,<sup>350</sup> that is, a 'celebration' which places the main emphasis on the first – transcendent – one. Such events pander to subjects endlessly absorbed in themselves. 'Sanitized' and properly disinfected against all traces of God, the beauty – in the sense of 'that which is appealing' – revealed here is merely a cheap imitation of real, divine Beauty,<sup>351</sup> serving only to satisfy the subject's need for experiences. Looking in the deathly mirror of the 'appealing', man encounters nobody but himself.

The third and final danger to be discussed is the problem of virtual reality. We live in an age where virtual realities are being created all the time and in every area of our lives. In this shallow world centred around superficiality and glorifying narcissism, a world where 'love is dead'<sup>352</sup> and beauty parades as obscene pornography in the subjectivity of 'autoeroticism', a shop-window existence devoid of all intimacy has come to be equated with existence itself and all of its aspects. Only the visible surface matters. What is important is the plain, unbroken, shallow, and smooth outward appearance that our eyes can easily pick up.<sup>353</sup> Recently, our living space has come to be inhabited by a great many good-looking faceless<sup>354</sup> and just as many boldfaced 'zombies',

<sup>346</sup> Steffensky 2005.

<sup>347</sup> Steffensky 2005: 34.

<sup>348</sup> Nevertheless, it is interesting to note how the anonymity of the Internet – at least in specific situations – influences the online prayer practices of people living in a digital time and space, significantly reducing their inhibition threshold in performing a prayer or making connection with God (Berger 2018: 37).

<sup>349</sup> Huizing 2017: 124.

<sup>350</sup> For more on *event*, see Dücker 2009: 27; Hitzler 2000: 401–411; Knoblauch 2000: 33–49.

<sup>351</sup> Harnoncourt 2011: 29.

<sup>352</sup> Hillenkamp 2009.

<sup>353</sup> Han 2015.

<sup>354</sup> 'Today's computer communication cuts the physical face out of the communication process. Computers stick the windows of the soul behind monitors, headsets, and data suites. Even video conferencing adds only a simulation of face-to-face meeting, only a representation or appearance of real meeting. The living, non-representable face is the primal source of responsibility, the direct, warm link between private bodies. Without directly meeting others physically, our ethics languishes. Face-to-face communication, the fleshly bond between people, supports a long-term warmth and loyalty [...] The face is the primal interface, more basic than any machine mediation. The physical eyes are the windows that establish the neighbourhood of trust. Without the direct experience of the human face, ethical awareness shrinks and rudeness enters' (Heim 2001: 209).

whose human personalities and bodily boundaries have been absorbed by virtual reality. Bodies have been transformed into information.<sup>355</sup> Here 'the heart is struggling in the /body/ of a world that hates the body'.<sup>356</sup> In this fast-paced,<sup>357</sup> captivating, 'realistic' 'realm of illusion'<sup>358</sup> clearly dominated by 'time as wealth'<sup>359</sup> and a 'civilization of the spectacle'<sup>360</sup> and of 'narcissism',<sup>361</sup> where the injurious<sup>362</sup> addiction to consumption<sup>363</sup> oozes from the 'cathedrals'<sup>364</sup> of shopping malls<sup>365</sup> promising an 'all-round experience',<sup>366</sup> the 'I' is the pigeon-hearted 'lion king' of the cosmos. This cowardly despot clings to the value-based existence of the 'you' almost desperately, with a godly fear, as it were, for the 'you' proves of value to the 'I' only when it deigns to 'like' this (cosmetically enhanced) 'I' who makes its appearance as a 'unique' character on the 'stage' of the ego's celebration. In this pseudo-ontological hyperreality universe where the boundaries between them have been completely blurred, actual and virtual reality sprawl inextricably across our contemporary living space. 'Launched as fireworks' into the visible, pictures, signs, and simulacra<sup>367</sup> – as artificially created images lacking originals – no longer refer to anything but themselves,<sup>368</sup> thereby taking on an autonomous reality of their own that has become emancipated from actual reality. In this world, which worships

<sup>355</sup> Heim 2001: 202.

<sup>356</sup> Stănescu 2004, 310–322.

<sup>357</sup> Höhn 1991: 245–264; Höhn 1994: 1–5; Rinderspacher 1985.

<sup>358</sup> Hedges 2009.

<sup>359</sup> In the present-day context, the concept of well-being is not limited to having sufficient material goods for our survival, but it also implies having enough time to lead a life of high quality. While we are witnessing an increase in well-being in terms of material goods, time is becoming increasingly scarce. Accordingly, time has become a commodity of particular value whose supplies are 'running out'. The prosperity of contemporary society can be measured, therefore, not solely by the possession and availability of material goods but by the extent to which individuals possess time as well, which is a significant factor contributing to quality of life and well-being. In his attempt to describe this social phenomenon, German publicist Rinderspacher (\* 1948), a social scientist and researcher of time usage and time economics, introduced the concept of 'time wealth' (*Zeitwohlstand*) (cf. Rinderspacher 2012: 11–26).

<sup>360</sup> Vargas Llosa 2014.

<sup>361</sup> Lasch 1984.

<sup>362</sup> For a more in-depth read, see Péter 2009: 50.

<sup>363</sup> Diósi 2014: 57–80.

<sup>364</sup> Duttweiler 2017): 141–148.

<sup>365</sup> Further details on the world of malls: Gottdiener 2009: 30–38; Crawford 2009: 8–21; Demetrovics & Dúll 2009: 39–46.

<sup>366</sup> Lázár Kovács 2003: 255.

<sup>367</sup> Baudrillard 2009; Baudrillard 1988b: 166–184; Baudrillard 1988a: 153–162.

<sup>368</sup> Ropolyi 2006: 98.

the universe of celebrities<sup>369</sup> and is ruled by appearances, life adapted for the screen is the hallmark of success.<sup>370</sup>

The alien nature of this world from the viewpoint of cult is abundantly clear, for the ontological 'location' of the liturgy is reality, in all of its tangibility. The concrete sphere of action of the liturgy testifies that God, who descends the realm of eternity through the icon-window of cult to 'become incarnate' once again is not merely an (theoretically or practically) indispensable part of our reality. God is the Infinite who appears within the reality of the finite and comes among us as an otherworldly being of this world, as a transcendent immanent and 'the most realistic Reality'.<sup>371</sup> The image of God in man that is nourished by God's glory and at the same time serves His glorification points to man's real and particular calling, namely to be the sign in the world of the only Reality and, as representations of God's image, to build up a true culture of Real Reality founded on E(e)xistence instead of appearances, a culture that does not wish to become the stage of the illusory 'reality' of the 'I' but of its genuine fulfilment in God Himself. In *this* reality lies the *possibility* that has ontological priority over reality,<sup>372</sup> for only a future that 'matures' from *this* reality can avoid the pitfall of becoming an illusion or phantasmagoria.

---

<sup>369</sup> Török 2014: 28–29.

<sup>370</sup> Török 2015: 76–78.

<sup>371</sup> Küng 1975: 74.

<sup>372</sup> Jünger 1977: 289–292.

## Liturgy as the 'Prelude' to the 'Final Act' of Creation

God created man in His own image and likeness (cf. Gen 1:27). The divine image in man is indicative of two important aspects: man's particular relationship with God on the one hand and, founded on this truth, his privileged position within creation on the other.<sup>373</sup> This special relationship is essentially man's divine gift received at creation and an inherent characteristic of his humanity, for it is precisely through this relationship that he can achieve personal fulfilment. God elevated man to a level where he can have a direct relationship with Him; He created man as one 'facing' Him, with whom He can speak as with a 'fully fledged' 'you'. Man is a person who does not merely listen to God but answers Him. This communication with God brings self-fulfilment and establishes man as God's partner and co-creator in the culture of creation. The divine image in man means the person's being-before-God, in particular in his availability and capacity to respond.<sup>374</sup> Therefore, when speaking of the divine image in man, we give prominence to his attitude towards and relationship with God. The image of God in man means – at least in my reading – this relationship and more: it signifies the sum total of humanness specifically received from God that presupposes and ensures this relationship. Over its history, man's humanity surpasses itself by virtue of man's relationship with God and is thereby fulfilled.

Man's divine image means a share in the divine Existence, which assumes grace,<sup>375</sup> that is, God's free act born of love by which the Creator establishes a personal relationship with His creature, man, for the sake of his salvation in the 'here and now' of his history. This is God's turning affectionately to

---

<sup>373</sup> Langemeyer 2004: 302.

<sup>374</sup> Scheffczyk 1995: 875.

<sup>375</sup> Lossy 2017: 146.

man, to whom the Creator grants certain external, free, and specific gifts of grace that shape him internally, affecting his core essence.<sup>376</sup> Thus, we ‘are being transformed into His image’ (2 Cor 3:18). This gradual assimilation and inner transformation will attain its fullness in eternal life.<sup>377</sup> The image of God in man also signifies man’s receptivity to this deifying energy, his capability of making it his own and thus – while retaining his identity and not through hypostatic union (in the sense of subject)<sup>378</sup> – becoming a ‘created god’, a ‘god by grace’.<sup>379</sup> The objective foundation of man’s divine image – through its dynamic structure and openness – grows towards subjective, personal similarity.<sup>380</sup> Through (*per*) the Son, who is the new eschatological man and in whose incarnation God becomes the man who makes us more human<sup>381</sup>, the Father does not terminate our creaturely, personal lives *in* the Holy Spirit in the existential communication developed with us, but neither does He leave it untouched. The Father transforms our personal lives internally to help us achieve our transcendent purpose.<sup>382</sup> The initiator of God’s approach to man is clearly the Father, in Whom the revelation and sanctification performed by the Son and the Holy Spirit find their origin. At the same time, the Father is also the goal (*terminus*)<sup>383</sup> of God’s approach to man. Our human experience verifies these truths, for we come to know the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit, and it is through the Son we come to the Father. This is the path, the ‘order and rhythm’<sup>384</sup> of approaching God by which man can participate in ‘the embodied movement of God’s passionate love’.<sup>385</sup> The Sacraments start us down this path – either communally as one body or as separate members of the community of believers<sup>386</sup> – leading to participation in the divine life, and it is by following these steps that we come to share in the life of the Triune God and to ‘participate in the divine nature’ (2 Pt 1:4). The Son is the perfect image of the Father and the uncreated prototype of all creatures at the same time. Having no trace in His behaviour of the ‘mask’ so typical of us humans,<sup>387</sup> Jesus fulfilled to perfection the divine image meant for man, and therefore He Himself is the ‘example’, the model of re-creation. Christ’s identity as an ‘image,’ however, does not only express His relationship

<sup>376</sup> Kraus 2004: 350, 356.

<sup>377</sup> Emery 2015: 160.

<sup>378</sup> Meyendorff 1996: 220–221.

<sup>379</sup> Lossy 2017: 155.

<sup>380</sup> Evdokimov 1996: 92.

<sup>381</sup> Kessler 1996: 469.

<sup>382</sup> Puskás 2007: 266.

<sup>383</sup> Emery 2015: 26.

<sup>384</sup> *Adversus haereses* V,36,2. See Irenaeus of Lyon 1969: 461.

<sup>385</sup> Kessler 1996: 469.

<sup>386</sup> Chupungco 2020: 26.

<sup>387</sup> Kereszty 1977: 216.

with the Father but also implies a resemblance to us human beings created in the image of God: Christ is man's ideal icon. "The good news of the Old Testament is that man is the icon of God, and the good news of the New Testament is that the God-man is the icon of man"<sup>388</sup>, writes the Serbian Orthodox theologian and Archimandrite Justin Popović († 1979). In other words, the Old Testament proclaimed man's origin, vocation, and his vertical orientation, while the New Testament showed in the person of the God-man – who is 'the One sent and given for us'<sup>389</sup> – what a true man should be like. The divine image in man also informs our attitude toward the entire cosmos, an attitude that must be permeated by the spirit of service and humility so bountifully present in the person of Jesus.<sup>390</sup> After all, creation, of which we form an integral part, is the 'arena' of our salvation history.

Furthermore, the image of God in man, as discussed previously, is also an expression of his privileged position relative to all other earthly creatures. It is interesting to note, however, that man is privileged over angels as well. Let us reflect for a moment on the *qadosh hymns* (from the 6th century AD)<sup>391</sup> in the *Hekhalot literature*, which is a prime representative of Jewish *Merkabah mysticism*.<sup>392</sup> These hymns, all of which – as their names suggest – culminate in the solemn Isaianic *Trisagion* (*Thrice Holy*), echo the heavenly liturgy with their great and imposing poetry.

One of the hymns explains that no creature's eyes are capable of beholding so much as the garment of the Lord, let alone the Lord Himself: neither the *eyes of flesh and blood* (i.e. man) nor the *eyes of His servants* (i.e. angels).<sup>393</sup> The hymn goes on to enumerate the terrible punishments that may afflict the one who catches sight of the Lord.<sup>394</sup> While the above-quoted hymn focuses on man, another relevant hymn touches upon the angels:

He that beholdeth Him is at once torn in pieces,  
 And he that glimpseth His beauty at once poureth himself out as a vessel.  
 They who serve Him to-day  
 Serve Him not to-morrow,  
 And they who serve Him to-morrow  
 Serve Him never again.  
 For their strength grew feeble and their faces darkened,

<sup>388</sup> Qtd. in Lepahin 2010: 64.

<sup>389</sup> Kasper 1996: 293.

<sup>390</sup> van Huyssteen 2015: 209–211.

<sup>391</sup> *Hekhalot Rabbati* 2009.

<sup>392</sup> Schäfer 2011.

<sup>393</sup> *Hekhalot Rabbati*, III: 102–103.

<sup>394</sup> *Hekhalot Rabbati*, IV: 104.

Their hearts wandered and their eyes were obscured  
 After [the vision of] His majesty, the splendour of the beauty of their  
 King.<sup>395</sup>

From more than a millennium earlier, we are confronted with similar descriptions in the prophet Isaiah's<sup>396</sup> story of his divine vocation (cf. Isa 6:1–11). For during his vision,<sup>397</sup> Isaiah gains insight into the invisible celestial ceremony surrounding God in heaven. The seraphim – who have three pairs of wings – behave in a peculiar manner: 'With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying' (Isa 6:2). The seraphim did not cover their faces merely as a sign of deep respect, but they did so 'in self-defence', to ensure their own safety,<sup>398</sup> for they were aware of the ontological distance between God and themselves.<sup>399</sup>

Man is in a privileged position compared to angels since it is God Himself who comes among us: 'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son' (Jn 1:14). The absolute God – to use Guardini's wording – became a 'human' God, and while the angels cannot but cover their eyes, we humans are granted the vision of the glory of the Lord. God reveals Himself to us in a manner 'tailored' to our capabilities. Just imagine, God making all this 'fuss' for man alone! What is more, through His incarnation, the Son of God was made 'a little lower than the angels' (Heb 2:7).<sup>400</sup> And this was done only so that God's glory – which is fully present in the person of Jesus because He is the Son of God and 'the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being' (Heb 1:3) – may be 'displayed in the face of Christ' (2 Cor 4:6) in a manner compatible with man's existential framework and that it may shine upon us human beings. Thus, likewise, 'we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit' (2 Cor 3:18).

<sup>395</sup> *Hekhalot Rabbati* VIII: 159–160.

<sup>396</sup> On Isaiah's person, activity, teaching, and book, see Jüngling 1996: 303–318; Rendtorff 1988: 201–212; Weber 1948: 42–62; Rózsa 1996: 82–121; Soggin 1999: 272–286; Zamfir 2008: 134–150; Kaiser 1987: 636–658.

<sup>397</sup> As a rule, exegetes treat Isa 6:1–11 as a personal narration of the prophet Isaiah's calling, but we can also come across some counterarguments claiming that this pericope – given that it lacks certain motifs that are present in other Old Testament stories of divine vocation – cannot be regarded as anything more than a description recording an assignment to perform a specific task (cf. Kaiser 1987: 646).

<sup>398</sup> Diósi 2009/2010: 9–24.

<sup>399</sup> This is not in contradiction with Mt 18:10, where the figure of speech 'see[ing] the face of my Father in heaven' was borrowed from the language of oriental court ceremony, and it translates simply as serving 'before the throne of God' (cf. Gnllka 1988: 132).

<sup>400</sup> Galopin & Grelot 1986: 64.

The Word is made flesh and becomes a fact visible to the eyes, observable, palpable, a fact of experience (cf. 1Jn 1:1–4), a physical reality insomuch that '[w]e have seen His glory' (Jn 1:14), the glory that 'outshines [in the Son] all salvation history distinction',<sup>401</sup> a splendour that is unique and unsurpassable. 'Celestial reality enters human reality. The inconceivable appears in the tangible moment; it will have a history and fate of its own.'<sup>402</sup> The one who looks upon Jesus sees the Father (cf. Jn 12:45), and the one who listens to Him hears God, for Jesus does not only speak about God, but God Himself speaks to us through Him. Nevertheless, this glory made incarnate on Earth does not blind us with its glare but is a divine glory revealing itself in human everydayness, and it calls to us gently. Incarnation is simultaneously the revelation and manifestation as well as the covering and obscuring of God; it is a divine epiphany 'transposed' into a human 'musical key'. Our distant, unapproachable, and hidden God enters our history and 'looks at us with a human face, speaks to us with human words'.<sup>403</sup> This 'human' God who has come among us is also the greatest impediment to our faith. After all, it seems incredible and unacceptable that this ordinary, unexceptional human life – not so very different from yours or mine – unfolding before our very eyes can be the bearer of the Eternal. In the end, that which reveals Him – his common humanity – is also what hides Him. It is only with the eyes of faith that one can recognize Jesus who walked among us. Therefore, being a contemporary of Jesus did not necessarily constitute an advantage, and the exact same 'parameters' of faith are valid for us living today, since what the humanity of Jesus was for His contemporaries the Sacraments are for us. 'What was to be seen of our Redeemer', writes Pope Saint Leo the Great († 461), 'has passed over into the Sacraments.'<sup>404</sup>

The cultic-ritual acts of the Sacraments are the 'action forms of symbols',<sup>405</sup> which implies that they come to life not as a result of their static meaning content but owing to the ritual *performance* itself. In the symbol, the Sacred manifests itself in a perceptible manner, exiting the divine sphere inaccessible to the senses to become part of our human world and history. The message conveyed by the Sacred, therefore, turns into a specific historical event by the workings of the symbol.

True to its etymological meaning (Gr. *syμβάλλειν* 'compare', 'unify', 'put together', 'join up'), the symbol joins or connects two realities sharing a common element. Accordingly, the symbol presupposes a disconnected state but at the same time the possibility of joining the two part(i)es together due

<sup>401</sup> Gál 1987: 35.

<sup>402</sup> Guardini 2006: 286.

<sup>403</sup> Guardini 2006: 287.

<sup>404</sup> *Sermones* 74,2. See Leo the Great 1973: 457.

<sup>405</sup> Soeffner 2004: 165.

to their compatibility. One of the two fragments – namely the symbolizing component of the symbol, the conveyor of the meaning – is practically there, i.e. in our possession, while the other – that is not in our possession but without which the first fragment has no authentic relevance – is ‘elsewhere’, beyond the periphery of our senses, i.e. in the transcendent ‘other world’.<sup>406</sup> The ‘everydayness’ of the fragment we possess is the problem, since its ordinariness and the human fingerprint clearly recognizable on it can become a ‘stumbling block’ for many<sup>407</sup> who, upon beholding God coming among us in the ‘tabernacle’ of the symbol (cf. Jn 1:14) – just as those who once saw the Incarnate Word face to face –, confusedly ask, ‘Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, “I came down from heaven”?’ (Jn 6:42). Emerging from itself, the Sacred appears in the ordinary, rises shining from the dullness of the habitual, and ‘conjures’ brilliant colour out of our everyday routine. As we can see, the symbol in itself is not distinguishable from the surrounding environment. Therefore, in her effort to prepare the way for God’s Parousia on Earth, the Church adorns the everyday symbol with festive ornaments, surrounding it with ceremony and conferring upon it beautiful signs whose essential function is to act as an ‘index finger’<sup>408</sup> pointing out the heavenly calling of the symbol.

The unseeable reveals itself through faith, and invisible Light becomes visible in the ‘spotlight’ of faith.<sup>409</sup> By the power of perception, awakened to faith from the sometimes lonely grave of doubt,<sup>410</sup> the invisible takes on visible form. Thus, it is faith that uncovers the earthly component of symbol in our possession, the reality wherein the invisible takes on an external form to come among us in this specific time and space. This way, God Himself appears in the symbol, but as a God whom we can contemplate (just as in His incarnation in the flesh 2000 years ago (cf. Jn 1:14)).<sup>411</sup> The illuminating power of faith is what makes it possible for the cultic event – as a complex metaphysical-empirical phenomenon that can fulfil its mission by this complexity alone – that enlivens the world of symbols to be the conscious source of grace for us.

<sup>406</sup> Trías 2007: 197.

<sup>407</sup> This is particularly valid for our postmodern era where the horizontalization of the vertical is such a frequent experience in the religious context (cf. András 2017: 89–95) and our contemporaries are characterized by a peculiar religiousness (cf. Diósi 2018: 24–45).

<sup>408</sup> Florensky 2015: 186.

<sup>409</sup> Florensky 2015: 46.

<sup>410</sup> In his study entitled *„Du hast uns geschaffen, doch wir kennen dich kaum“*. *Gottesdienst feiern im Angesicht des Zweifels* (2017: 69–90), Stefan Böntert explains how liturgical celebration creates a space, in a verbal as well as a non-verbal sense, for the reality of doubt and offers some starting points for enabling us to experience, on a practical level as well, the tension between doubt and trust, petition and confidence.

<sup>411</sup> Diósi 2017: 255.

The symbol embedded in the cultic event – as a 'site' of interpersonal communication – acts as an iconic 'force field', a 'magic' 'empty' frame – namely, one that is autonomous from our intentionality – in which two 'gazes' – the divine and the human – meet. For the icon is *per definitionem* more than itself: it is a heavenly revelation. The icon gives birth to the gaze of Christ, whose 'home' is eternity and from whose countenance the perfectly accomplished divine image invitingly shines forth. Christ's gaze opens for us the perspective of eternity.

Incarnation includes immanence, that is, the 'eternal' law of the communication between 'the first heaven and the first earth' (Rev 21:1), which will only be overwritten but not abolished by the *new heaven and new earth* (Rev 21:1), namely the new 'communications act' of the heavenly Jerusalem. The principles of incarnation are also valid for cult.

In the liturgy, too – as for the contemporaries of Jesus –, God who is approaching us, touching us, and moving us is at the same time the distant One, for no matter how close we get to Him, we can sense a wall rising up between us.

'Adam! Where are you?' (Gen 3:9), cries the new Adam. The liturgy is the sanctuary of this searching and addressing. Here, 'at the intersection of time and eternity'<sup>412</sup>, the glory of the new Adam's face lights up again visibly. Thereby, God's glory, which from an earthly perspective is usually termed as beautiful and understood to be the emanation of eternal, absolute, transcendent Beauty and its extension into immanence, reaches out to man. In the meaningful silence of its pure radiance, it speaks to him and as a transparent road sign calls him to itself. Cult is the most transparent 'site' for God's glory to shine forth. Upon looking in the eyes of the fulfilled divine image, man gives himself to the great Painter, God, hoping that He will use him to paint a masterpiece that is a 'rare commodity' in the 'gallery' of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Thereby the 'transfiguration on Mount Tabor' is fulfilled in us, becoming a unique, indelible, permanent, and integral part of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Here, in the Heavenly Jerusalem, our humanity shines with the purity of sacred perfection, our entire redeemed and fulfilled being resonates with the *carmen angelicum*, and so, with our help, an age-old song permeates the cosmos once again. This song filled the universe at the genesis of creation and, despite all human cacophony, has never ceased to resound owing to the faithful ministry of the angels.<sup>413</sup> We are all called to become part of the 'polyphonic' 'final chord' that God has in store for us at the end of history, a chord that will perfect creation and will be sustained infinitely!

<sup>412</sup> Kereszty 2007: 338.

<sup>413</sup> Schipperges 1979: 168.



## Bibliography

- Afloroaei, Ștefan. 2008. *Metafizica noastră de toate zilele. Despre dispoziția speculativă a gândirii și prezența ei firească astăzi*. Bucharest: Humanitas.
- Albrecht, Stephan. 2015. Das Portal als Ort der Transformation. Ein neuer Blick auf das Bamberger Fürstenportal. In Stephan Albrecht (ed), *Der Bamberger Dom im europäischen Kontext*, 243–295. (Bamberger Interdisziplinäre Mittelalterstudien: Vorträge und Vorlesungen 4). Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press.
- Allison, Dale C., Jr. 1993. *The New Moses. A Matthean Typology*. Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Alszegehy, Zoltán. 1994. *Az ember jövője*. (Teológiai Zsebkönyvek 6). Szeged: Agapé.
- András, István. 2014. A virtualizálódó szubjektum (helyzetjelentés; morfondírozás). *Studia Theologica Transsylvaniensia* 17: 325–341.
- András, István. 2017. Horizontálódás, avagy a szent mai kultuszáról. *Korunk* 27 (8): 89–95.
- Apor, Balázs. 2010. Kommunikáció és rítusnyelv: „személyi kultusz” és kommunista nyelvhasználat. *Korunk* 21 (3): 69–75.
- Apor, Balázs, et al. (eds). 2004. *The Leader Cult in Communist Dictatorship: Stalin and the Eastern Bloc*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Babos, István. 1980. Liturgia és élet. Mit akar a liturgia? *Szolgalat* 46 (2): 15–24.
- Balogh, Piusz. 2006. Mi a liturgia a liturgiában, avagy: a jelenlét kérdése az istencsereiben. In Ágnes Dobszay (ed), „*Inter sollicitudines*”. *Tudományos ülészek X. Pius pápa egyházzenei motu propriojának 100 éves évfordulóján*. Budapest, 2003. december, 9–13. Budapest: Magyar Egyházzenei Társaság.
- von Balthasar, Hans Urs. 1974. Eschatologie im Umriß. In Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Pneuma und Institution. Skizzen zur Theologie IV*, 410–455. Einsiedeln: Johannes.
- von Balthasar, Hans Urs. 1978. Die Würde der Liturgie. *Internationale Katholische Zeitschrift* 7: 481–487.
- Barsi, Balázs. 2010. *Krisztus békéje. Egy ferences novíciusmester naplójából*. Kecskemét: n.p.

- Baudrillard, Jean. 1988a. Die Simulation. In Wolfgang Iser (ed), *Wege aus der Moderne. Schlüsseltexte zur Postmoderne-Diskussion*, 153–162. Weinheim: VCH, Acta humaniora.
- Baudrillard, Jean. 1988b. Simulacra and Simulations. In Mark Poster (ed), *Selected Writings*, 166–184. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Baudrillard, Jean. 2009. *The Transparency of Evil. Essays on Extreme Phenomena*. London: Verso.
- Bärsch, Jürgen. 2012a. Liturgie und Lebenswelt. Beziehungen und Spannungen zwischen Gottesdienstlicher Feier und alltäglicher Wirklichkeit. *Bibel und Liturgie* 85: 163–173.
- Bärsch, Jürgen. 2012b. Unvertraute Liturgie? Wenn Gewohntes reformiert wird. Beobachtungen zur Liturgiereform des Zweiten Vatikanums. *Theologisch-Praktische Quartalschrift* 160: 357–368.
- Beck, Ulrich. 1986. *Risikogesellschaft*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Benedict XVI, pope. 2006. Encyclical Letter *Deus caritas est* (25.12.2005). *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 98: 217–252.
- Benedict XVI, pope. 2008a. *A Názáreti Jézus I: A Jordánban való megkeresztelkedéstől a színeváltozásig*. Zoltán Rokay (trans). Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Benedict XVI, pope. 2008b. Eucharistie – Mitte der Kirche. In Joseph Ratzinger, *Theologie der Liturgie. Die sakramentale Begründung christlicher Existenz*, 305–358. (Joseph Ratzinger Gesammelte Schriften 11). Freiburg: Herder.
- Benedict XVI, pope. 2011. *A Názáreti Jézus II: A jeruzsálemi bevonulástól a feltámadásig*. Levente Balázs Martos (trans). Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Berger, Peter L. 2006. A vallás és a Nyugat. Kiss Anna (trans). *Beszélő* 11 (1). Online: <http://beszelo.c3.hu/cikkek/a-vallas-es-a-nyugat> (10.03.2026).
- Berger, Teresa. 2018. *@Worship. Liturgical Practices in Digital Worlds*. (Liturgy, Worship and Society Series). London: Routledge.
- Biziou, Barbara. 2000. *Sahnehäubchen für die Seele. Wohltuende Rituale für jeden Tag und für besondere Ablässe. Versüßen Sie Ihr Leben!* Munich: Goldmann.
- Blass, Friedrich, Albert Debrunner & Friedrich Rehkopf. 2001. *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Bodor, Attila. 2018. Máté gyermeksége evangéliuma (Mt 1–2). A zsidó–keresztény párbeszéd tipológikus megjelenése. In József Szécsi (ed), *Keresztény – Zsidó Teológiai Évkönyv 2018*, 7–16. Budapest: Keresztény-Zsidó Társaság.
- Bodor, Attila. 2019. Istenképiség az arámi targumokban. In Attila Puskás & László Perendy (eds), *Istenképiség, átistenülés, emberi méltóság. Teológiai tanulmányok: In memoriam Ványó László*, 22–39. (Varia Theologica 10). Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Boff, Leonardo. 1976. *Kleine Sakramentenlehre*. Düsseldorf: Patmos.
- Boff, Leonardo. 1991. *Gott kommt früher als der Missionar. Neuevangolisierung für eine Kultur des Lebens und der Freiheit*. Horst Goldstein (trans). Düsseldorf: Patmos.

- Bonaccorso, Giorgio. 2020. Ästhetik und Ritus. In Melanie Wald-Fuhrmann, Klaus Peter Dannecker & Sven Boenneke (eds), *Wirkungsästhetik der Liturgie. Transdisziplinäre Perspektiven*, 41–76. (Studien zur Pastoralliturgie 44). Regensburg: Pustet.
- Botean, John-Michael. 2000. A liturgia: Isten országának megjelenítése. Márta Bodó (trans). *Keresztény Szó* 11 (3): 5.
- Bourgeois, Daniel. 1999. *Az egyház pasztorációja*. (AMATECA – Katolikus teológiai kézikönyvek 11). Gabriella Somorjai (trans). Szeged: Agapé.
- Böntert, Stefan. 2013. Gottesdienste „in der zweiten Reihe”. Einige Perspektiven für Liturgiewissenschaft und Praxis angesichts neuer Feierformen. In: Birgit Jeggle-Merz & Benedikt Kranemann (eds), *Liturgie und Ökumene. Grundfragen der Liturgiewissenschaft im interkonfessionellen Gespräch*, 77–96. Freiburg: Herder.
- Böntert, Stefan. 2017. „Du hast uns geschaffen, doch wir kennen dich kaum”. Gottesdienst feiern im Angesicht des Zweifels. *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 6: 69–90.
- Browe, Peter. 1929. Die Elevation in der Messe. *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* 9: 20–66.
- Bruce, Steve (ed). 1992. *Religion and Modernization. Sociologists and Historians Debate the Secularization Thesis*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Bruce, Steve (ed). 1999. *Choice and Religion. A Critique of Rational Choice Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brunotte, Ulrike. 2005. Ritual und Kritik. Ein kleiner Blick in die Wissenschaft(en). In Ina Hartwig (ed), *Kursbuch 160: Die neuen Rituale*, 47–56. Berlin: Rowohlt.
- Brüske, Gunda. 2009. Spiel oder Anbetung? Romano Guardini und Joseph Ratzinger über den Sinn der Liturgie. In Rudolf Voderholzer (ed), *Logos gemäße Gottesdienst. Theologie der Liturgie bei Joseph Ratzinger*, 91–110. (Ratzinger-Studien 1). Regensburg: Pustet.
- Brüske, Gunda. 2010. *Offene Türe. Feiern mit Menschen auf der Suche nach Gott: Eine Arbeitshilfe zu niederschweligen Gottesdiensten*. Fribourg: Paulusverlag.
- Buber, Martin. 1994. *Én és Te*. Budapest: Európa.
- Bucher, Rainer. 2008. Teológia és „posztszekuláris” kor. Marcell Mártonffy (trans). *Mérleg* 44: 324–332.
- Bude, Heinz. 2014. *Gesellschaft der Angst*. Hamburg: Hamburger Edition.
- Bulgakov, Serghei. 2016. Euharistia și problemele sociale ale societății moderne. Tit Simedrea (trans). In *Dogma eucharistică*, 77–102. Bucharest: Paideia.
- Bühlmann, Walter & Karl Scherer. 1973. *Stilfiguren der Bibel*. (Bibische Beiträge 10). Fribourg: Schweizerisches Katholisches Bibelwerk.
- Casanova, José. 1994. *Public Religions in the Modern World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Casanova, José. 1996. Chancen und Gefahren öffentlicher Religion. Ost- und Westeuropa im Vergleich. In Otto Kallscheuer (ed), *Das Europa der Religionen. Ein Kontinent zwischen Säkularisierung und Fundamentalismus*, 181–210. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer.

- Casanova, José. 1997. Globalizing Catholicism and the Return to a “Universal” Church. In Susanne Hoeber Rudolph (ed), *Transnational Religion and Fading States*, 121–143. Boulder: Westview.
- Casanova, José. 2010. A vallás helye a szekuláris Európában. Éva Petra Verebics (trans). 2000. *Irodalmi és Társadalmi Havi* 2010/September: 1–9. Online: [https://ketezer.hu/2010/09/jose-casanova-a-vallas-helye-a-szekularis-europaban/\(10.03.2026\)](https://ketezer.hu/2010/09/jose-casanova-a-vallas-helye-a-szekularis-europaban/(10.03.2026)).
- Casel, Odo. 1998–1999. Krisztus misztériumos jelenléte a miseliturgiában. László Dobszay (trans). *Magyar Egyházzene* 6: 3–9.
- Cazelles, Henri. 1986. Név. In Xavier Léon-Dufour (ed), *Biblikus teológiai szótár*, 1003–1006. Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Ciocan, Cristian. 2012. A látható és a láthatatlan között: a kép három paradigmája Jean-Luc Marionnál. Sándor Sajó (trans). In Sylvain Camilleri & Ádám Takács (eds), *Jean-Luc Marion – kartezianizmus, fenomenológia, teológia*, 98–121. (A Francia Intézet Filozófiai Füzetek). Budapest: Gondolat.
- Chupungco, Anscar J. 2020. A liturgia mibenléte. In István Pákozdi & Ádám Somorjai (eds), *A liturgiatudomány kézikönyve*, 23–30. (Szent István Kézikönyvek 17). Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Claverie, Pierre. 2015. *Mic tratat despre întâlnire și dialog*. Monica Broșteanu (trans). Bucharest: Humanitas.
- Cornehl, Peter. 2002. Erlebnisgesellschaft und Liturgie. *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 52: 234–253.
- Crawford, Margaret. 2009. Világ a plázában. *Korunk* 3 (12): 8–21.
- Czoborczy, Bence. 2009. A legfontosabb feladat: az élet és a család szolgálata. Karácsonyi beszélgetés Erdő Péter bíborossal. *Keresztény Élet* 17 (51–52): 3.
- Csanád, Béla. 1975. Misztérium és liturgia. *Vigilia* 40 (11): 734–741.
- Davie, Grace. 2000. *Religion in Modern Europe. A Memory Mutates*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Davie, Grace. 2010. *A vallás szociológiája*. (Napjaink Teológiája Sorozat 15). Anna Wessely (trans). Pannonhalma: Bencés.
- Degenhardt, Hans-Joachim. 1965. Irdische und himmlische Liturgie. In Paul Bormann & Hans-Joachim Degenhardt (eds), *Liturgie in der Gemeinde II*, 77–91. Paderborn: Salzkotten.
- Deissler, Alfons. 1984. *Die Psalmen*. Düsseldorf: Patmos.
- Delling, Gerhard. 1959. Zum gottesdienstlichen Stil der Johannes-Apokalypse. *Novum Testamentum* 3: 107–137.
- Demetrovics, Zsolt & Andrea Dúll. 2009. A bevásárlóközpontok környezetpszichológiai ambivalenciái. *Korunk* 3 (12): 39–46.
- Dér, András. 2017. A gesztus csendje. *Vigilia* 82: 286–287.
- Dijkstra, Meindert. 1996. Yahweh-El or El Yahweh? In Augustin, Matthias & Klaus-Dietrich Schunck (eds), „Dort ziehen Schiffe dahin...“. *Collected Communications to the XIVth Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old*

- Testament, Paris 1992*, 43–52. (Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des antiken Judentums 28). Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2008a. Die „heilige und heilbringende Schau“. Spätmittelalterliche Elevationsfrömmigkeit. *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Theologia Catholica Latina* 53 (2): 3–35.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2008b. Teológiai és gyakorlatbeli hangsúlyeltolódások a középkor liturgikus életében és szemléletében. *Studia Theologica Transsylvaniaensia* 11: 99–131.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2009/2010. A Sanctus-ének ószövetségi gyökerei. Az Is 6,1-4 perikópa liturgikus szempontú elemzése. *Magyar Egyházzene* 17: 9–24.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2011a. A szimbólum lelke: a szép, avagy A szép mint sakramentális valóság. *Studia Theologica Transsylvaniaensia* 14 (2): 211–218
- Diósi, Dávid. 2011b. Posztmodern spiritualitás? Egy divatfenomén az egyház szolgáltatásban? *Studia Theologica Transsylvaniaensia* 14 (2): 173–185.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2011c. Posztmodern vallásosság. *Vigilia* 76 (10): 722–730.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2011d. Quo vadis (post mortem), homo? A tisztulás reményteli állapotáról. In Dávid Diósi (ed), *A halálbiztos halál. Tanulmányok az elmúlás és a halál kultúrájáról*, 153–169. Budapest: Szent István Társulat; Cluj-Napoca: Verbum.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2012a. A szimbólum hitelesítő kritériuma: a szép. *Vallástudományi Szemle* 8 (3): 47–55.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2012b. *Egyház és posztmodern. Korunk vallásossága és esztétizáló hajlama*. Budapest: Szent István Társulat; Cluj-Napoca: Verbum.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2012c. Időzés a Szép vonzásában. A liturgia az esztétizálás és az esztétika tükrében. *Vigilia* 77: 101–110.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2014. *Egyházam a posztmodernben. A dialógus-„kényszer” ideje*. Budapest: Vigilia.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2015. A szem és a fül böjtje a katolikus liturgiában. Egy kissé másfajta magyarázat. In József Marton & Dávid Diósi (eds), *Katolicitás és etnocentrizmus Erdélyben. Katolikus identitásunk*, 97–107. Budapest: Szent István Társulat; Cluj-Napoca: Verbum.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2017. Húsvét misztériuma. *Ars moriendi et resurgendi*. *Vigilia* 82: 253–258.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2018. „A te arcodat keresem, Uram” (Zsolt 27,8). *Puzzle-darabok posztmodern korunk intenkeresőiről/-nek*. Budapest: Vigilia.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2020. Liturgiateológiai „dallamvariációk” Krisztus Király ünnepére. *Communio* 28 (3–4): 79–88.
- Diósi, Dávid. 2022. A Dignus est Agnus introitus szöveg- és dallamelemzése. *Praeconia* 17: 69–81.
- Dobszay, László. 2006. A „tridenti” rítus és a „Novus Ordo” különbségéről. In János Pánczél Hegedüs (ed), *A jó harc. Tanulmányok az ősi római rítusról és a katolikus szent hagyományról*, 41–65. Poggibonsi: La Magione; Budapest: Miles Christi.

- Dobszay, László. 2010. Kultusz és kultúra. In Andrea Kovács (ed), *Dobszay László válogatott írásai 1995–2010 II: Liturgia – kultúra – közélet*, 431–440. Budapest: Liszt Ferenc Zeneművészeti Egyetem.
- Dolhai, Lajos. 2002. *A liturgia teológiája*. Budapest: Jel.
- Dolhai, Lajos. 2018. *Az Eucharisztia teológiája*. Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Donaldson, Terence L. 1985. *Jesus on the Mountain*. (Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement series 8). Sheffield: JSOT.
- Doray, Marie-France. 2000. Rituri familiale și începerea anului școlar. In Monique Segré (ed), *Mituri, rituri, simboluri în societatea contemporană*, 131–156. Beatrice Stanciu (trans). Timișoara: Amarcord.
- Duttweiler, Stefanie. 2017. Shopping-Malls und Fußballstadien – Kathedralen der Moderne? *Theologisch-Praktische Quartalschrift* 165: 141–148.  
<https://doi.org/10.82519/thpq.v165i2.60580>
- Dücker, Burckhard. 2007. *Rituale. Formen – Funktionen – Geschichte. Eine Einführung in die Ritualwissenschaft*. Stuttgart: Metzler.
- Ebenbauer, Peter. 2003. Kult. In *Lexikon philosophischer Grundbegriffe der Theologie*, 241–243.
- Ebenbauer, Peter. 2019. Die Chance in der Krise. Liturgie im Kontext spätmoderner Welterfahrung. In Peter Ebenbauer & Basilius J. Groen (eds), *Zukunftsraum Liturgie. Gottesdienst vor neuen Herausforderungen*, 27–38. (Österreichische Studien zur Liturgiewissenschaft und Sakramententheologie 10). Wien: LIT.
- Ebenbauer, Peter & Isabella Bruckner. 2020. „Throne und Herrschaften, Mächte und Gewalten“? Zur Frage der ästhetischen Inszenierung von Machtverhältnissen in der Liturgie. In Gregor Maria Hoff, Julia Knop & Benedikt Kranemann (eds), *Amt – Macht – Liturgie. Theologische Zwischenrufe für eine Kirche auf dem Synodalen Weg*, 57–70. (Quaestiones Disputatae 308). Freiburg: Herder.
- Ebertz, Michael N. 1998. *Erosion der Gnadenanstalt? Zum Wandel der Sozialgestalt von Kirche*. Frankfurt am Main: Knecht.
- Eichrodt, Walther. 1961. *Theologie des Alten Testaments 2/3*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Eisenbach, Franziskus. 1982. *Die Gegenwart Jesu Christi im Gottesdienst. Systematische Studien zur Liturgiekonstitution des II. Vatikanischen Konzils*. Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald.
- Eliade, Mircea. 1998. *Az örök visszatérés mítosza, avagy a mindenség és a történelem*. Péter Pásztor (trans). Budapest: Európa.
- Emery, Gilles. 2015. *A Szentháromság. Teológiai bevezetés a katolikus szentháromságtanba*. Ráhel Szabó (trans). Budapest: Kairosz.
- Enders, Markus. 2010. Ist der Mensch von Natur aus religiös? Zur Aktualität und Wiederkehr der Religionen. In Markus Enders, *Postmoderne, Christentum und Neue Religiosität. Studien zum Verhältnis zwischen postmodernem, christlichem und neureligiösem Denken*, 207–234. Hamburg: Dr. Kovac.

- Engelbrecht, Martin. 2009. Die Spiritualität der Wanderer. In Winfried Gebhardt, Christoph Bochinger & Martin Engelbrecht, *Die unsichtbare Religion in der sichtbaren Religion. Formen spiritueller Orientierung in der religiösen Gegenwartskultur*, 35–81. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
- Erdey-Grúz, Tibor. 1968. *Természettudományi lexikon*. Budapest: Akadémiai.
- Eulenberger, Klaus. 2011. „Der Boden unserer Herzen ist aufgebrochen”. Trauerfeiern nach den Amokläufen in Erfurt (2002) und Winnenden (2009). In Kristian Fechtner & Thomas Klie (eds), *Riskante Liturgien. Gottesdienste in der gesellschaftlichen Öffentlichkeit*, 33–42. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
- Evdokimov, Paul. 1996. *Ortodoxia*. Irineu Ioan Popa (trans). Bucharest: Institutul Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române.
- Fechtner, Kristian & Thomas Klie. 2011. *Riskante Liturgien. Gottesdienste in der gesellschaftlichen Öffentlichkeit*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
- Fehérvári, Jákó. 2020. *Hogy szívünk megegyezzék szavunkkal. Szempontok egy élhető liturgiához*. Pannonhalma: Bencés; Budapest: Magyar Kurír.
- Fellous, Michèle. 2000. Noi rituri de trecere și ciclul de viață. In Monique Segré (ed), *Mituri, rituri, simboluri în societatea contemporană*, 157–170. Beatrice Stanciu (trans). Timișoara: Amarcord.
- Fischer, Georg. 1989. *Jahwe unser Gott. Sprache, Aufbau und Erzähltechnik in der Berufung des Moses (Exod 3–4)*. (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 9). Fribourg–Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Florensky, Pavel. 2005. *Az ikonosztáz*. Ilona Kiss (trans). Budapest: Typotex.
- Florensky, Pavel. 2015. *A kultusz filozófiája*. Ilona Kiss (trans). Budapest: Typotex.
- Földvári, Mónika & Gergely Rosta. 1998. A modern vallásosság megközelítési lehetőségei. *Szociológiai Szemle* 8 (1): 127–137.
- France, R. T. 2007. *The Gospel of Matthew*. (New International Commentary on the New Testament). Michigan: Eerdmans.
- Fritzsche, Karl Peter. 1998. *Die Stressgesellschaft. Vom schwierigen Umgang mit den rasanten gesellschaftlichen Veränderungen*. Munich: Kösel.
- Fuchs, Ottmar. 2012. Was ist Evangelisierung? Eine Konzentration auf das Reich Gottes. *Anzeiger für die Seelsorge* 121 (10): 11–14.
- Fuchs, Ottmar. 2019. Liturgie: Eine geheimnisvolle Einheit in der Vielfalt der Erlebnisse. In Peter Ebenbauer & Basilius J. Groen (eds), *Zukunftsraum Liturgie. Gottesdienst vor neuen Herausforderungen*, 125–144. (Österreichische Studien zur Liturgiewissenschaft und Sakramententheologie 10). Wien: LIT.
- Funke, Dieter. 1991. Sind wir heute noch symbol- und liturgiefähig? In Helmut Erharder & Horst-Michael Rauter (eds), *Liturgie zwischen Mystik und Politik. Österreichische Pastoraltagung 27. bis 29. Dezember 1990*, 55–61. Wien: Herder.
- Galopin, Pierre-Marie & Pierre Grelot. 1986. Angyalok. In Xavier Léon-Dufour (ed), *Biblikus teológiai szótár*, 61–65. Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Gayer, Zoltán. 2000. Szappanoperák. *Médiakutató* 1: 76–81.

- Gál, Ferenc. 1975. *Az örök élet reménye*. Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Gál, Ferenc. 1987. *János evangéliuma*. Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Gánóczy, Sándor. 2003. *Bevezetés a katolikus szentségtanba*. Balázs Dávid Palkó (trans). (Napiaink Teológiája Sorozat 3). Pannonhalma: Bencés.
- Gáspár, Csaba László. 1990. Martin Buber: Én és Te. *Múlt és jövő* 1990/1: 23–26.
- Gáspár, Csaba László. 2002. A gondolkodás zarándoklata. Az istenbizonyításról. *Vigilia* 67: 595–601, 642–646.
- Gáspár, Csaba László. 2006. Emberi méltóság – filozófiai gondolkodás. *Korunk* 17 (12): 4–13.
- Gáspár, Csaba László. 2008a. A szellem nyugtalanságáról. *Korunk* 19 (4): 28–33.
- Gáspár, Csaba László. 2008b. Isten – ember – személy. Gondolatok az elgondolhatatlan Istenről. *Pannonhalmi Szemle* 16 (1): 56–65.
- Gebhardt, Winfried. 2010. „Die eigene spirituelle Erfahrung zählt”. *Herder-Korrespondenz* 64: 286–290.
- Geier, Richard. 1997. De arte celebrandi et vivendi. „One-Man-Show” und Sonntagstreue. In Anselm Bilgri & Bernhard Kirchgessner (eds), *Liturgia semper reformanda. Für Karl Schlemmer*, 193–207. Freiburg: Herder.
- Gils, Felix & Jacques Guillet. 1986. Arc. In Xavier Léon-Dufour (ed), *Biblikus teológiai szótár*, 81–83. Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Gilyén, Nándor. 1974. Egy hívő a liturgiáról. *Vigilia* 39: 629–630.
- Gnilka, Joachim. 1988. *Das Matthäusevangelium II*. (Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 1/2). Freiburg: Herder.
- Goergen, Aloys. 2005. *Glaubensästhetik. Aufsätze zu Glaube, Liturgie und Kunst*. (Ästhetik – Theologie – Liturgik 34). Münster: LIT.
- Gottdiener, Mark. 2009. Visszafoglalt központ. A plázák szemiotikája. *Korunk* 3 (12): 30–38.
- Greenberg, Moshe. 1969. *Understanding Exodus*. (Heritage of Biblical Israel 2,1). New York: Behrman House.
- Gregory the Great. 1944. *A lelkipásztorság törvénykönyve*. (Keresztény Remekírók). József Félegyházy (trans). Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Gross, Heinrich. 1959. Der Engel im Alten Testament. *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 4: 28–42.
- Goricheva, Tatiana. 1988. *Von Gott zu reden ist gefährlich: Meine Erfahrungen im Osten und im Westen*. Luzern: Rex.
- Guardini, Romano. 1923. Vom Sinn des Gehorchens. In Romano Guardini, *Auf dem Wege. Versuche*, 19–32. Mainz: Matthias Grünewald.
- Guardini, Romano. 1957. *Von Geist der Liturgie* (Herder-Bücherei 2). Freiburg: Herder.
- Guardini, Romano. 2006. *Az Úr Krisztus. Elmélkedések Jézus Krisztus személyéről és életéről: Peregrinantibus et iter agentibus*. Áron Márton (trans). Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Guillet, Jacques. 1986. Jahve. In Xavier Léon-Dufour (ed), *Biblikus teológiai szótár*, 651–654. Budapest: Szent István Társulat.

- Güntner, Diana. 1996/1997. Das Prinzip der Participatio und die Strukturen der Lebenswelt. Eine soziologisch-theologische Studie. *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* 38/39: 1–24.
- Haag, Herbert. 1989. *Bibliai lexikon*. Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Habermas, Jürgen. 2003. Glauben und Wissen. Friedenspreisrede 2001. In Jürgen Habermas, *Zeitdiagnosen. Zwölf Essays*, 249–262. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Habermas, Jürgen & Joseph Ratzinger. 2007. *A szabadelvű állam morális alapjai. A szekularizálódás dialektikája az észről és vallásról*. Károly Horváth (trans). Budapest: Gondolat.
- Hahne, Peter. 2009. *Schluss mit lustig. Das Ende der Spaßgesellschaft*. Lahr/Schwarzwald: Johannis.
- Halász, Piusz. 2021. *Eucharisztia. Elmélkedések hitünk szent Titkáról*. Budapest: Betegápoló Irgalmasrend.
- Halík, Tomáš. 2014. *Geduld mit Gott. Die Geschichte von Zachäus heute*. Freiburg: Herder.
- Han, Byung-Chul. 2014. Societatea pozitivă. In Byung-Chul Han, *Agonia erosului și alte eseuri*, 59–69. Viorica Nișcov (trans). Bucharest: Humanitas.
- Han, Byung-Chul. 2015. *Die Errettung des Schönen*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer.
- Hankiss, Elemér. 2005. *Az ezerarcú én. Emberlét a fogyasztói civilizációban*. Budapest: Osiris.
- Harnoncourt, Philipp. 2011. A túlvilág jele. Miért kell a liturgiának „szépnek” lennie? Péteri Attila (trans). *Praeconia* 6: 28–32.
- Hartmut, Rosa. 2016. *Resonanz. Eine Soziologie der Weltbeziehung*. Berlin: Suhrkamp.
- Hauerland, Winfried. 2000. Träger und Gäste. Zu unterschiedlichen Rollen von unterschiedlichen Mitfeiernden. *Gottesdienst* 34: 185–187.
- Hauerland, Winfried. 2009. Participatio actiosa. Programmwort liturgischer Erneuerung. *Internationale Katholische Zeitschrift* 38: 585–595.
- Hedges, Chris. 2009. *Empire of Illusion. The End of Literacy and the Triumph of Spectacle*. New York: PublicAffairs.
- Heim, Michael. 2001. A kibertér erotikus ontológiája. Tamás Sajó (trans). *Replika* 39 (1): 197–213.
- Heinz, Andreas. 1982. Schwerpunktverlagerung in der Meßfrömmigkeit. Von der Elevations- zur Kommunionfrömmigkeit. *Heiliger Dienst* 36: 69–79.
- Hekhalot Rabbati. The Greater Treatise Concerning the Palaces of Heaven*. 2009 edition. Don Karr (ed). Morton Smith (trans). Online: <http://www.digital-brilliance.com/kab/karr/HekRab/HekRab.pdf> (10.03.2026).
- Herwegen, Ildefons. 1920. Das Königtum Christi und die Liturgie. In Ildefons Herwegen, *Alte Quellen neuer Kraft. Gesammelte Aufsätze*, 78–114. Düsseldorf: Schwann.
- Hilberath, Bernd Jochen. 1991. „Participatio actiosa”. Zum ekklesiologischen Kontext eines pastoralliturgischen Programms. In Hansjakob Becker, Bernd Jochen Hilberath & Ulrich Willers (eds), *Gottesdienst – Kirche – Gesellschaft. Interdisziplinäre*

- und ökumenische Standortbestimmungen nach 25 Jahren Liturgiereform, 319–338. (Pietas Liturgica 5). St. Ottilien: EOS.
- Hilberath, Bernd Jochen & Matthias Scharer. 2012. *Kommunikative Theologie. Grundlagen – Erfahrungen – Klärungen*. Ostfildern: Matthias-Grünewald.
- Hilbrands, Walter. 2006. Das Verhältnis der Engel zu Jahwe im Alten Testament, insbesondere im Buch Exodus. In Riemer Roukema, et al. (eds), *The Interpretation of Exodus. Studies in Honour of Cornelius Houtman*, 81–96. (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis & Theology 44). Leuven: Peeters.
- Hillenkamp, Sven. 2009. *Das Ende der Liebe. Gefühle im Zeitalter unendlicher Freiheit*. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta.
- Hitzler, Ronald. 2000. „Ein bißchen Spaß muß sein!“ Zur Konstruktion kultureller Erlebniswelten. In Winfried Gebhardt, Ronald Hitzler & Michaela Pfadenhauer (eds), *Events. Soziologie des Außergewöhnlichen*, 401–411. (Erlebniswelten 2). Opladen: Leske + Budrich.
- Hoffmann, Ernst G. & Heinrich von Siebenthal. 1990. *Griechische Grammatik zum Neuen Testament*, Riehen: Immanuel.
- Hoping, Helmut. 2009. Kult und Reflexion. Joseph Ratzinger als Liturgietheologe. In Rudolf Voderholzer (ed), *Der Logos-gemäße Gottesdienst. Theologie der Liturgie bei Joseph Ratzinger*, 12–25. (Ratzinger-Studien 1). Regensburg: Pustet.
- Horváth-Szabó, Katalin. 2002. Az én és a vallás a posztmodern korban. *Távlatok* 56 (2): 238–247.
- Höhn, Hans-Joachim. 1991. Im Zeitalter der Beschleunigung. *Jahrbuch für christliche Sozialwissenschaften* 32: 245–264.
- Höhn, Hans-Joachim. 1994. Signale der Zeit – Spuren des Glaubens. *Lebendige Seelsorge* 45: 1–5.
- Höhn, Hans-Joachim. 1995. Sinnsuche und Erlebnismarkt. *Theologisch-Praktische Quartalschrift* 143: 361–371.
- Höhn, Hans-Joachim. 2006a. Postreligiös oder postsäkular? Wo heute religiöse Bedürfnisse aufleben. *Herder-Korrespondenz. Spezial Renaissance der Religion. Mode oder Megathema?* 2006/10: 2–6.
- Höhn, Hans-Joachim. 2006b. Renaissance der Religion. Klärendes zu einer umstrittenen These. *Herder-Korrespondenz* 60: 605–608.
- Höhn, Hans-Joachim. 2011. Inszenierte Ergriffenheit? Über Risiken und Nebenwirkungen ritueller Glaubenskommunikation. *Bibel und Liturgie* 84: 4–11.
- Höhn, Hans-Joachim. 2013. Soziologie in der Theologie – oder: Der Blick von außen auf den Blick nach außen. In Ansgar Kreuzer & Franz Gruber. *Im Dialog. Systematische Theologie und Religionssoziologie*, 56–72. (Quaestiones Disputatae 258). Freiburg: Herder.
- Huizing, Klaas. 2017. Deus und homo medialis. In Ilon Nord & Hanna Zipernovszky (eds), *Religionspädagogik in einer mediatisierten Welt*, 119–130. (Religionspädagogik innovativ 14). Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.

- van Huyssteen, J. Wentzel. 2015. *Singuri pe lume? Unicitatea omului în știință și teologie*. Mihnea Gafiță (trans). Bucharest: Curtea Veche.
- Irenaeus of Lyon. 1969. *Adversus haereses*. In Adelin Rousseau, Louis Doutreleau & Charles Mercier (eds), *Sources Chrétiennes* 153, 461. Paris: Cerf.
- Jakobs, Christoph & Kathrin Oel. 2021. Gottesdienstpraxis, pastorale Identität und ekklesiologische Visionen. Eine empirische Pilotstudie mit jungen Seelsorgenden. In Stefan Kopp & Benedikt Kranemann (eds), *Gottesdienst und Kirchenbilder. Theologische Neuakzentuierungen*, 306–333. (Quaestiones Disputatae 313). Freiburg: Herder.
- Jeggle-Merz, Birgit. 2004. Zwischen 'Ausverkauf' und 'Rigorismus'. Zur Chance gottesdienstlicher Feiern in nachchristlicher Gesellschaft. *Diakonia: Internationale Zeitschrift für die Praxis der Kirche* 35: 82–87.
- Jeggle-Merz, Birgit. 2005. „Die Kirche ist immer eine Kirche der Gegenwart” (Johannes Paul II). Zur Feier der Liturgie in unseren Zeiten. *Theologisch-praktische Quartalschrift* 153: 47–56.
- Jeggle-Merz, Birgit. 2013. Den heutigen Menschen im Blick. Wie Kirche liturgiefähig wird. *Herder-Korrespondenz Spezial* 2013 (1): 5–9.
- Jitianu, Liviu. 2007. Krisztus, az abszolút üdvösséghez. Karl Rahner krisztológiája. In Liviu Jitianu, *Krisztus, az Isten-ember. Krisztológiai tanulmányok*, 51–90. Cluj-Napoca: Kolozsvári Egyetemi Kiadó.
- Jitianu, Liviu. 2009. A kulturális anamnézis sodrása ellen. *Studia Theologica Transylvaniensia (Supplementum)* 12: 21–35.
- John Paul II, pope. 1993. Encyclical Letter *Veritatis splendor* (06.08.1993). *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 85: 1133–1228.
- John Paul II, pope. 1995. Encyclical Letter *Oriente Lumen* (02.05.1995). *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 87: 745–774.
- Joosten, Christoph. 2002. *Das Christkönigsfest: Liturgie im Spannungsfeld zwischen Frömmigkeit und Politik* (Pietas Liturgica 12). Tübingen: Francke.
- Jungmann, Josef Andreas. 1977. *A szentmise. Történelmi, teológiai és lelkipásztori áttekintés*. Máté Sántha (trans). Eisenstadt: Prugg.
- Jüngel, Eberhard. 1977. *Gott als Geheimnis der Welt. Zur Begründung der Theologie des Gekreuzigten im Streit zwischen Theismus und Atheismus*. Tübingen: Mohr.
- Jüngling, Hans-Windried. 1996. Das Buch Jesaja. In Erich Zenger et al. (eds), *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, 303–318. (Kohlhammer-Studienbücher Theologie 1,1). Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
- Kaiser, Otto. 1987. Jesaja/Jesajabuch. *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 16: 636–658.
- Kalbaum, Ulrike. 2011. *Romanische Türstürze und Tympana in Südwestdeutschland. Studien zu ihrer Form, Funktion und Ikonographie*. (Studien zur Kunst am Oberrhein 5). Münster: Waxmann.
- Kallis, Anastasios. 2014. *Orthodoxie. Was ist das?* Münster: Theophano.
- van Kampenhout, Daan. 2000. *Heilende Rituale. Verbesserung der Lebensqualität*. Freiburg: Bauer.

- Kasper, Walter. 1996. *Jézus a Krisztus*. (XX. Századi Keresztény Gondolkodók 11). Attila Németh (trans). Budapest: Vigilia.
- Kasper, Walter. 2010a. Aspekte einer Theologie der Liturgie. Liturgie angesichts der Krise der Moderne – für eine neue liturgische Kultur. In Walter Kasper, *Die Liturgie der Kirche*, 15–83. (Walter Kasper Gesammelte Schriften 10). Freiburg: Herder.
- Kasper, Walter. 2010b. Ein Leib und ein Geist werden in Christus. Kommentar zum Schreiben von Papst Johannes Paul II. über die Eucharistie. In Walter Kasper, *Die Liturgie der Kirche*, 187–205. (Walter Kasper Gesammelte Schriften 10). Freiburg: Herder.
- Kavanagh, Aidan. 1984. *On Liturgical Theology*. New York: Liturgical.
- Kehl, Medard. 2003. Perspektiven für den priesterlichen Dienst. Theologische Zeitdiagnose. In George Augustin & Johannes Kreidler (eds), *Den Himmel offenhalten. Priester sein heute*, 269–284. Freiburg: Herder.
- Kennedy, Vincent L. 1944. The Moment of Consecration and the Elevation of the Host. *Mediaeval Studies* 6: 121–150.
- Kereszty, Rókus. 1977. *Krisztus* (Teológiai Kis Könyvtár 2/4–5). Rome.
- Kereszty, Rókus. 2007. Az Eucharisztia. Az idő és örökkévalóság metszőpontjában. *Vigilia* 72 : 338–342.
- Kereszty, Rókus & Attila Puskás. 2015. *Jézus Krisztus. Krisztológiai alapvetés*. Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Kerényi, Károly. 1995. Ember és maszk. In Károly Kerényi, *Az égei ünnep. Tanulmányok a 40-es évekből*, 83–101. Éva Kocziszky (trans). Budapest: Kráter Műhely Egyesület.
- Kerényi, Lajos. 2018. *Misztikus élmény és liturgia Nagy Szent Gertrúdnál és Avilai Szent Teréznel*. Budapest: Kairosz.
- Keserű, Katalin. 1997. Liturgia és rituálé a kortárs magyar művészetben. *Ars Hungarica* 25: 449–460.
- Kessler, Hans. 1996. Krisztológia. László Orosz (trans). In Theodor Schneider (ed), *A dogmatika kézikönyve I*, 251–472. Budapest: Vigilia.
- Keszler, Lőrinc. 1952. *Összhangzattan. A klasszikus zene összhangrendjének elmélete*. Budapest: Zeneműkiadó.
- Kim, Young Ho. 2016. *Die Parusie bei Lukas. Eine literarisch-exegetische Untersuchung zu den Parusieaussagen im lukanischen Doppelwerk*. (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 217). Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Kiss, Kathrin. 2001. *Zur Feier des Tages. Neue Feste und Rituale*. Kiel: Königsfurt-Urania.
- Klößener, Martin. 2009. Rückkehr in die Vergangenheit oder Aufbruch in die Zukunft? Wohin geht die Liturgie der Kirche? In Martin Klößener & Albert Urban (eds), *Liturgie in Wendezeiten. Zwischen konstantinischem Erbe und offener Zukunft*, 222–253. Trier: Deutsches Liturgisches Institut.
- Knapp, Markus. 2008. Glauben und Wissen bei Jürgen Habermas. Religion in einer „postsäkularen“ Gesellschaft. *Stimmen der Zeit* 133: 270–280.

- Knoblauch, Hubert. 2000. Das strategische Ritual der kollektiven Einsamkeit. Zur Begrifflichkeit und Theorie des Events. In Winfried Gebhardt, Ronald Hitzler & Michaela Pfadenhauer (eds), *Events. Soziologie des Außergewöhnlichen*, 33–49. (Erlebniswelten 2). Opladen: Leske + Budrich.
- Koch, Kurt. 1992. Menschliche und kirchliche Schönheit der Liturgie. Gottesdienst als soteriologisches und ekklesiologisches Ereignis. In Alois Schifferle (ed), *Miteinander. Für die vielfältige Einheit der Kirche. Festschrift für Anton Hänggi*, 103–121. Basel: Herder.
- Koehler, Ludwig & Walter Baumgartner. 1994–2000. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Leiden: Brill.
- Kohlschein, Franz. 1988. Bewußte, tätige und fruchtbringende Teilnahme. Das Leitmotiv der Gottesdienstreform als bleibender Maßstab. In Theodor Maas-Ewerd (ed), *Lebt unser Gottesdienst? Die bleibende Aufgabe der Liturgiereform. Festschrift für Bruno Kleinheyer zum 65. Geburtstag*, 38–62. Freiburg: Herder.
- Kormos, Ottó. 1953. Tanúságtételünk a liturgia tükrében. *Vigilia* 18 (3): 113–119.
- Korpics, Márta & Dóra P. Szilczl. 2007. Miért kommunikáció, miért szakrális? In Márta Korpics & Dóra P. Szilczl (eds), *Szakrális kommunikáció. A transzcendens mutatkozása*, 11–36. (Társadalmi Kommunikáció 3). Budapest: Typotex.
- Kranemann, Benedikt. 2017. Rituale in der Postmoderne als pastorale Herausforderung für die kirchliche Ritual- und Kasualpraxis. In Markus-Liborius Hermann (ed), *Postmoderne Rituale als Herausforderung für die kirchliche Kasualpraxis*, 53–69. (Katholische Arbeitsstelle für missionarische Pastoral kompakt 5). Erfurt: Katholische Arbeitsstelle für missionarische Pastoral.
- Kranemann, Benedikt & Paul Post (eds). 2009. *Die modernen Ritual Studies als Herausforderung für die Liturgiewissenschaft*. (Liturgia Condenda 20). Leuven: Peeters.
- Kraus, Georg. 2004. Kegyelem. In Wolfgang Beinert (ed), *A katolikus dogmatika lexikona*, 350–359. Budapest: Vigilia.
- Kroll, Gerhard. 1982. *Jézus nyomában*. István Diós (trans). Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Kunzler, Michael. 2005. *Az egyház liturgiája*. Katalin Szabó (trans). (AMATECA – Katolikus teológiai kézikönyvek 10). Szeged: Agapé.
- Kunzler, Michael. 2009. Die kosmische Dimension der Eucharistiefeier. Zu Fragen ihrer liturgischen Gestalt bei Joseph Ratzinger. In Rudolf Vorderholzer (ed), *Der Logos-gemäße Gottesdienst. Theologie der Liturgie bei Joseph Ratzinger*, 172–204. (Ratzinger-Studien 1). Regensburg: Pustet.
- Küng, Hans. 1975. *Christsein*. Munich: Piper.
- Lanczkowski, Günter. 1961. Kult. *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* 6: 659–660.
- Lang, Bernhard. 1998. *Heiliges Spiel. Eine Geschichte des christlichen Gottesdienstes*. Munich: Beck.
- Langemeyer, Georg. 2004. Istenképesség. Attila Puskás (trans). In Wolfgang Beinert (ed), *A katolikus dogmatika lexikona*, 302. Budapest: Vigilia.

- Larcher, Gerhard. 2011. „Zu schön, um wahr zu sein...!“ Theologische Anmerkungen zur Rolle der Künste für den Glauben. *Theologisch-Praktische Quartalschrift* 159: 4–11. <https://doi.org/10.82519/thpq.v159i1.59836>
- Lasch, Christopher. 1984. *Az önimádat társadalma*. Pál Békés (trans). Budapest: Európa.
- Läuchli, Samuel. 1960. Eine Gottesdienststrukturin der Johannesoffenbarung. *Theologische Zeitschrift* 16: 359–378.
- Lázár Kovács, Ákos. 2003. Esztétikum, erkölcs és a medializált társadalom. *Távlatok* 60 (2): 253–261.
- Lengeling, Emil J. 1961. Was besagt „aktive Teilnahme“? *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 11: 186–188.
- Leo the Great. 1973. *Sermones*. In Antoine Chavasse (ed), *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* 138A. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Lepahin, Valerij. 2010. *Ikon és ikonikusság*. (Katekhón Monográfiák 1). Budapest: L'Harmattan.
- Lossy, Vladimir. 2017. *A keleti egyház misztikus teológiája*. Sándor Verdes (trans). Budapest: Zöld-S Stúdió.
- Luber, Markus. 2008. Ende der Säkularisierung? Neue Einsichten vom 29. Kongreß der Internationalen Gesellschaft für Religionssoziologie. *Stimmen der Zeit* 133: 259–269.
- Luhmann, Niklas. 2002. *Die Religion der Gesellschaft*. (Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Wissenschaft 1581). Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Lukovich, Tamás. 1999. Fogyasztók (és kommunikálók), tehát vagyok. Konzumpolisz a hálózatok társadalmában. In János Csontos & Tamás Lukovich (eds), *Urbanisztika 2000*, 95–111. Budapest: Akadémia.
- Lurz, Friedrich. 2015. Das Paradigma der tätigen Teilnahme angesichts der heutigen kulturell-religiösen Bedingungen. *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 65: 192–205.
- Lüddeckens, Dorothea. 2004. Neue Rituale für alle Lebenslagen Beobachtungen zur Popularisierung des Ritualdiskurses. *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 56 (1): 37–53. <https://doi.org/10.1163/157007304772697221>
- Manunza, Carlo. 2012. *L'Apocalisse come "actio liturgica" cristiana*. *Studio esegetico-teologico di Ap* 1,9–16; 3,14–22; 13,9–10; 19,1–8. (Analecta Biblica 199). Rome: Gregorian & Biblical.
- Marion, Jean-Luc. 2012. *Az erotikus fenomén*. Hat meditáció. Zsigmond Szabó (trans). Budapest: L'Harmattan.
- Marion, Jean-Luc. 2014. *Gott ohne Sein*. Alwin Letzkus (trans). Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh.
- Mayer, Anton L. 1938. Die heilbringende Schau in Sitte und Kult. In Odo Casel (ed), *Heilige Überlieferung: Ausschnitte aus der Geschichte des Mönchtums und des heiligen Kultes. Dem hochwürdigsten Herrn Abte von Maria Laach Ildelfons Herwegen zum silbernen Abtsjubiläum*, 234–262. Münster: Aschendorff.
- Máté-Tóth, András. 2011. Vallásértelmezések. *Vigilia* 76 (10): 731–740.

- Máthé, Andrea. 2000. Csendes befogadás. *Pannonhalmi Szemle* 8 (4): 61–69.
- McNamara, Martin, Michael Maher & Robert Hayward. 1994. *Targums Neofiti 1 and Pseudo-Jonathan: Exodus*. (The Aramaic Bible 2). Collegeville: The Liturgical Press.
- Menke, Karl-Heinz. 2012. *Sakramentalität. Wesen und Wunde des Katholizismus*. Regensburg: Pustet.
- Merle, Kristin. 2018. *Religion in der Öffentlichkeit. Digitalisierung als Herausforderung für kirchliche Kommunikationskulturen* (Praktische Theologie im Wissenschaftsdiskurs 22). Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Meyendorff, John. 1996. *Teologia bizantină. Tendințe istorice și teme doctrinare*. Alexandru I. Stan (trans). Bucharest: Institutul Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române.
- Meyer-Blanck, Michael. 2011. Tsunami. Ökumenischer Gottesdienst im Berliner Dom anlässlich der Flutkatastrophe in Südostasien (2005). In Kristian Fechtner & Thomas Klie (eds), *Riskante Liturgien. Gottesdienste in der gesellschaftlichen Öffentlichkeit*, 21–31. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
- Meyer, Hans Bernhard. 1963. Die Elevation im deutschen Mittelalter und bei Luther. *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 85: 162–217.
- Mezei, Balázs. 2004. *Vallásbölcsélet. A vallás valósága*. Máriabesnyő-Gödöllő: Attraktor.
- Miklósházy, Attila. 1984. *Benedicamus Domino – Áldjuk az Urat! A liturgikus megújulás teológiai alapjai*. Eisenstadt: Prugg.
- Miklósházy, Attila. 2022. A keresztény liturgia története. *Praeconia* 17: 83–90.
- Molnár-Kovács, Dorottya. 2018. Nemzetközi hagyományok és kortárs diszkurzusok a magyar önfejllesztő kultúrában. *Alföld: Irodalmi, művészeti és kritikai folyóirat* 69 (8): 82–93.
- Mowry, Lucetta. 1952. Revelation IV–V and Early Christian Liturgical Usage. *Journal of Biblical Literature* 71: 75–84.
- Müller, Alois. 1989. Bleibt die Liturgie? Überlegungen zu einem tragfähigen Liturgieverständnis angesichts heutiger Infragestellungen. *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 39: 155–167.
- Müller, Gerhard Ludwig. 2004. Jézus embersége. Tibor Görföl (trans). In Wolfgang Beinert (ed), *A katolikus dogmatika lexikona*, 311–313. Budapest: Vigilia.
- Nocke, Franz-Josef. 1997a. Általános szentségtan. József Varga B. (trans). In Theodor Schneider (ed), *A dogmatika kézikönyve II*, 195–233. Budapest: Vigilia.
- Nocke, Franz-Josef. 1997b. Eszkatológia. József Válóczy (trans). In Theodor Schneider (ed), *A dogmatika kézikönyve II*, 397–496. Budapest: Vigilia.
- Nolan, Albert. 2011. Christsein heute. *Concilium* 47: 145–153.
- Noth, Martin. 1978. *Das 2. Buch Mose. Exodus*. (Das Alte Testament Deutsch 5). Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Nóda, Mózes. 2012. *Élő liturgia. A II. vatikáni zsinatot megelőző liturgikus megújulás és hatása az erdélyi egyházmegye liturgikus életére*. Budapest: Szent István Társulat; Cluj-Napoca: Verbum.

- Odenthal, Andreas. 2017. Menschheitsalte Religiöse Rituale im Raum der Kirche? Überlegungen zur „Rituellen Erfahrung“ im Spannungsfeld von Religiosität und Christianität. In Hans Gerald Hödl, Johann Pock & Teresa Schweighöfer (eds), *Christliche Rituale im Wandel. Schlaglichter aus theologischer und religionswissenschaftlicher Sicht*, 213–233. (Wiener Forum für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft 14). Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Odenthal, Andreas. 2018. Resonanz-Raum Gottesdienst? Überlegungen zu einer zeitsensiblen Liturgiewissenschaft im Anschluss an Hartmut Rosa. *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 68: 32–52.
- Oel, Kathrin & Christoph Jakobs. 2021. Mensch, wer bist du? Liturgische Identität in der Krise. In Stefan Kopp & Stephan Wahle (eds), *Nicht wie Außenstehende und stumme Zuschauer. Liturgie – Identität – Partizipation*, 101–120. (Kirche in Zeiten der Veränderung 7). Freiburg: Herder.
- Ohlmeyer, Albert. 1957. Der Erlösergott im brennenden Dornbusch. *Bibel und Kirche* 12: 98–111.
- Pannenberg, Wolfhart. 2006. *Rendszeres teológia II*. Tibor Görföl (trans). Budapest: Osiris.
- Pascher, Josef. 1966. Das Wesen der tätigen Teilnahme. Ein Beitrag zur Theologie der Konstitution über die Hl. Liturgie. In Giacomo Lercaro (ed), *Miscellanea liturgica in onore di sua eminenza il cardinale Giacomo Lercaro arcivescovo di Bologna*, 211–229. Rome: Desclée.
- Pál, Tamás. 2007. Poszt-szekularizmus Magyarországon. Az egyházak és a politika kapcsolatának új erőteréről (tézisek). *Vallástudományi Szemle* 3 (2): 9–20.
- Perlitt, Lothar. 1977. Sinai und Horeb. In Herbert Donner, Robert Hanhart & Rudolf Smend (eds), *Beiträge zur alttestamentlichen Theologie. Festschrift für Walther Zimmerli zum 70. Geburtstag*, 302–322. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Péter, László. 2009. A mallok negatív társadalmi hatásáról. *Korunk* 3 (12): 47–53.
- Picard, Max. 1952. *The World of Silence*. South Bend, Indiana: Gateway.
- Plamper, Jan. 2004. Introduction. Modern Personality Cults. In Klaus Heller & Jan Plamper (eds), *Personality Cults in Stalinism – Personenkulte im Stalinismus*, 13–42. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Pollack, Detlef. 2006. Die Wiederkehr des Religiösen. Eine neue Meistererzählung der Soziologen. *Herder-Korrespondenz. Spezial Renaissance der Religion. Mode oder Megathema?* 2006/10: 6–11.
- Post, Paul. 2016. Liturgiewissenschaft – Ritual Studies. Chronik und Perspektive eines Zwischenraumes. In Kim de Wildt, Benedikt Kranemann & Andreas Odenthal (eds), *Zwischen-Raum Gottesdienst*, 298–314. (Praktische Theologie Heute 144). Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
- Prigent, Pierre. 1964. *Apocalypse et Liturgie*. (Cahiers Théologiques 52). Neuchâtel: Delachaux et Niestlé.
- Puskás, Attila. 2006. *A teremtés teológiája*. Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Puskás, Attila. 2007. *A kegyelem teológiája*. Budapest: Szent István Társulat.

- von Rad, Gerhard. 2000. *Az Ószövetség teológiája I: Izrael történeti hagyományainak teológiája*. Tibor Görföl (trans). Budapest: Osiris.
- Rahner, Karl. 1964. Dogmatische Erwägungen über das Wissen und Selbstbewusstsein Christi. In Karl Rahner, *Schriften zur Theologie V. Neuere Schriften*, 222–248. Einsiedeln: Benziger.
- Rahner, Karl. 1965. *Betrachtungen zum ignatianischen Exerzitienbuch*. Munich: Kösel.
- Rahner, Karl. 1966. Frömmigkeit früher und heute. In Karl Rahner, *Schriften zur Theologie VII. Zur Theologie des geistlichen Lebens*, 11–31. Einsiedeln: Benziger.
- Rahner, Karl. 1967. Die Gegenwart des Herrn in der christlichen Kultgemeinde. In Karl Rahner, *Schriften zur Theologie VIII. Theologische Verträge und Abhandlungen*, 395–408. Einsiedeln: Benziger.
- Rahner, Karl. 1980. Zur Theologie und Spiritualität der Pfarrseelsorge. In Karl Rahner, *Schriften zur Theologie XIV. In Sorge um die Kirche*, 148–165. Einsiedeln: Benziger.
- Rahner, Karl. 1998. *A hit alapjai. Bevezetés a kereszténység fogalmába*. Zoltán Endreffy (trans). (Katolikus Teológiai Kézikönyvek 27). Szeged: Agapé.
- Rahner, Karl. 2005. Theologische Prinzipien der Hermeneutik eschatologischer Aussagen. In Karl Rahner, *Sämtliche Werke 12: Menschsein und Menschwerdung Gottes. Studien zur Grundlegung der Dogmatik, zur Christologie, Theologischen Anthropologie und Eschatologie*, 489–510. Freiburg: Herder.
- Rahner, Karl. 2012. A jövő egyházának spiritualitása. Tibor Görföl (trans). *Vigilia* 77: 891–899.
- Ratzinger, Joseph. 1978. *Eschatologie – Tod und ewiges Leben*. (Kleine Katholische Dogmatik 9). Regensburg: Pustet.
- Ratzinger, Joseph. 1985. Von der Liturgie zur Christologie. Romano Guardinis theologischer Grundsatz und seine Aussagekraft. In Joseph Ratzinger (ed), *Wege zur Wahrheit. Die bleibende Bedeutung von Romano Guardini*, 121–144. (Schriften der Katholischen Akademie in Bayern 117). Düsseldorf: Patmos.
- Ratzinger, Joseph. 1996/1997a: A világ és az ember képe a szent zenében I. József Török (trans). *Magyar Egyházzene* 4: 11–18.
- Ratzinger, Joseph. 1996/1997b. A világ és az ember képe a szent zenében II. József Török (trans). *Magyar Egyházzene* 4: 131–137.
- Ratzinger, Joseph. 2001. Újra megtalálni a liturgia lelkét. Török József (trans). *Communio* 9 (2): 3–17.
- Ratzinger, Joseph. 2002. *A liturgia szelleme*. György Heller (trans). Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Rácsok, Gabriella. 2010. Posztmodern vallásosság és médiatelítettség. *Sárospataki Füzetek* 2010/3: 79–92.
- Remete, George. 2000. *Dogmatică ortodoxă*. Alba Iulia: Reîntregirea.
- Rendtorff, Rolf. 1988. *Das Alte Testament. Eine Einführung*. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener.

- Rentsch, Christian. 2020. Ritualität und Selbstwahrnehmung. Liturgie als Ritual und die liturgische Praxis. In Melanie Wald-Fuhrmann, Klaus Peter Dannecker & Sven Boenneke (eds), *Wirkungsästhetik der Liturgie. Transdisziplinäre Perspektiven*, 127–134. (Studien zur Pastoralliturgie 44). Regensburg: Pustet.
- Rießler, Paul (ed). 1928. *Altjüdisches Schrifttum außerhalb der Bibel*. Augsburg: Benno Filser.
- Rilke, Rainer Maria. 2014. *Levelek egy ifjú költőhöz*. Csaba Báthori (trans). Budapest: L'Harmattan.
- Rinderspacher, Jürgen P. 1985. *Gesellschaft ohne Zeit. Individuelle Zeitverwendung und soziale Organisation der Arbeit*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus.
- Rinderspacher, Jürgen P. 2012. Zeitwohlstand. Kriterien für einen anderen Maßstab von Lebensqualität. *Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitische Zeitschrift* 35 (1): 11–26.
- Ritt, Hubert. 1986. *Offenbarung des Johannes*. (Neue Echter Bibel – Kommentar zum NT 21). Würzburg: Echter.
- Rivière, Claude. 2000. Structură și antistructură în riturile profane. In Monique Segré (ed), *Mituri, rituri, simboluri în societatea contemporană*, 77–96. Beatrice Stanciu (trans). Timișoara: Amarcord.
- Rohr, Richard. 2014. *Az elengedés szabadsága*. Magda Révész M. (trans). Kecskemét: Korda.
- Ropolyi, László. 2006. *Az Internet természete. Internetfilozófiai értekezés*. Budapest: Typotex.
- Rosa, Hartmut. 2002. Zwischen Selbstthematierungszwang und Artikulationsnot? Situative Identität als Fluchtpunkt von Individualisierung und Beschleunigung. In Joachim Renn & Jürgen Straub (eds), *Transitorische Identität. Der Prozesscharakter des modernen Selbst*, 267–302. Frankfurt: Campus.
- Rosa, Hartmut. 2005. *Beschleunigung. Die Veränderung der Zeitstrukturen in der Moderne*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.
- Rosa, Hartmut. 2013. *Beschleunigung und Entfremdung. Entwurf einer kritischen Theorie spätmoderner Zeitlichkeit*. Berlin: Suhrkamp.
- Roth, Rainer A. 1997. Soll (muß) Gottesdienst „Spaß“ machen?! In Anselm Bilgri & Bernhard Kirchgessner (eds), *Liturgia semper reformanda. Für Karl Schlemmer*, 208–222. Freiburg: Herder.
- Rózsa, Huba. 1996. *Az Ószövetség keletkezése. Bevezetés az Ószövetség könyveinek irodalom- és hagyománytörténetébe II*. Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Röser, Johannes. 2009. Die neue Frage nach Gott. Glaubensprobleme – Glaubenssehnsucht. *Heiliger Dienst* 63: 14–25.
- Röser, Johannes. 2019. Glaubensbekenntnis. *Christ in der Gegenwart* 71: 275–276.
- Ruh, Ulrich. 2006. „Das Christentum neu entdecken“. Ein Gespräch mit dem Germanisten Hermann Kurzke. *Herder-Korrespondenz* 60 (2): 70–74.
- Ruh, Ulrich. 2016. Ein Fremdkörper? Christlicher Gottesdienst in einer säkularen Gesellschaft. *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 66: 137–149.

- Rupnik, Marko Ivan. 2007. Pornind de la frumusețe. In Tomáš Špidlík & Marko Ivan Rupnik, *Teologia pastorală. Pornind de la frumusețe*, 519–542. (Colecția Teologia 11). Ioan Milea (trans). Târgu-Lăpuș: Galaxia Gutenberg.
- Rüpke, Jörg. 2006. Liturgie im Kontext der Gesellschaft. Religionswissenschaftliche Anmerkungen. In Martin Klöckener & Benedikt Kranemann (eds), *Gottesdienst in Zeitgenossenschaft. Positionsbestimmungen 40 Jahre nach der Liturgiekonstitution des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils*, 191–207. Fribourg: Academic Press.
- Saberschinsky, Alexander. 2010. Liturgie und Lebenswelt. Anfrage an das gottesdienstliche Leben in Folge der Sinus-Milieu-Studie. *Pastoralblatt für die Diözesen Aachen, Berlin, Essen, Hildesheim, Köln, Osnabrück* 62 (4): 105–110.
- Salmann, Elmar. 1992. *Der geteilte Logos. Zum offenen Prozeß von neuzeitlichem Denken und Theologie*. (Studia Anselmiana 111). Rome: Centro Studi S. Anselmo.
- Sarah, Robert. 2018. *A csönd ereje. A zaj diktatúrájával szemben*. Balázs Barsi (trans). Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Schaeffler, Richard. 1977. Kultisches Handeln. Die Frage nach Proben seiner Bewährung und nach Kriterien seiner Legitimation. In Richard Schaeffler & Peter Hünermann (eds), *Ankunft Gottes und Handeln des Menschen. Thesen über Kult und Sakrament*, 9–50. (Quaestiones Disputatae 77). Freiburg: Herder.
- Schaeffler, Richard. 1991. Kultur und Kult. Vortrag anlässlich des 50jährigen Bestehens der Liturgiekommision der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz. *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 41: 73–87.
- Scharbert, Josef. 1986. *Exodus*. (Neue Echter Bibel – Kommentar zum AT). Würzburg: Echter.
- Schäfer, Peter. 2011. *Die Ursprünge der jüdischen Mystik*. Berlin: Weltreligionen.
- Scheffczyk, Leo. 1995. Gottebenbildlichkeit IV: Systematischtheologisch. In *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* 4: 875.
- Schick, Eduard. 1971. *Die Apokalypse*. (Geistliche Schriftlesung.NT 23). Düsseldorf: Patmos.
- Schilson, Arno. 1989. Liturgie und Menschsein. Überlegungen zur Liturgiefähigkeit des Menschen am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts. *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 39: 206–227.
- Schilson, Arno. 1997. Leben aus der Mitte der Zeit. Über die Feier der Liturgie im Zeitalter der Beschleunigung. In Anselm Bilgri & Bernhard Kirchgessner (eds), *Liturgia semper reformanda. Für Karl Schlemmer*, 172–192. Freiburg: Herder.
- Schippersges, Heinrich. 1979. *Die Welt der Engel bei Hildegard von Bingen*. Salzburg: Otto Müller.
- Schmaus, Michael. 1959. *Katholische Dogmatik IV/2: Von den Letzten Dingen*. Munich: Hueber.
- Schmaus, Michael. 1961. Der Kult als Erfüllung echten Menschentums. In Michael Schmaus & Karl Forster, *Der Kult und der heutige Mensch*, 324–344. Munich: Hueber.
- Schmaus, Michael. 1969. Kult. In *Sacramentum Mundi* 3: 101–106.

- Schmemmann, Alexander. 1993. *Euharistia. Taina Împărăției*. Boris Răduleanu (trans). Bucharest: Sophia.
- Schmemmann, Alexander. 2001. *Pentru viața lumii. Sacramentele și Ortodoxia*. Aurel Jivi (trans). Bucharest: Editura Basilica a Patriarhiei Romane.
- Schmidt, Thomas M. 2014. Autonomie und Verbindlichkeit. Paradoxien der Moderne. In Klaus Viertbauer & Reinhard Kögerler (eds), *Das autonome Subjekt? Eine Denkform in Bedrängnis*, 81–93. (Ratio Fidei: Beiträge zur philosophischen Rechenschaft der Theologie 54). Regensburg: Pustet.
- Schmitz, J. Daniel H. 2021. *Liturgie 4.0. Anforderungen des Homo digitalis in liturgischer Theorie und Praxis*. (Theologie der Liturgie 18). Regensburg: Pustet.
- Schneider, Stefan. 1979. *Die „kosmische“ Größe Christi als Ermöglichung seiner universalen Heilswirksamkeit an Hand des kosmogenetischen Entwurfes Teilhard de Chardins und der Christologie des Nikolaus von Kues*. (Buchreihe der Cusanus-Gesellschaft 8). Münster: Aschendorff.
- Schönborn, Christoph. 2008. *Isten elküldte Fiát. Krisztológia*. József Buzás (trans). (AMATECA – Katolikus teológiai kézikönyvek 7). Szeged: Agapé.
- Schönborn, Christoph. 2011. *Idegen test vagy gyökér? A kereszténység és jelentősége Európa számára*. Csaba Török (trans). *Communio* 19 (3–4): 37–52.
- Schulze, Gerhard. 1992. *Die Erlebnisgesellschaft. Kultursoziologie der Gegenwart*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus.
- Schulze, Gerhard. 1993. Entgrenzung und Innenorientierung. Eine Einführung in die Theorie der Erlebnisgesellschaft. *Gegenwartskunde* 42: 405–419.
- Schulze, Gerhard. 1994a. Auf der Suche nach dem schönen Leben. In Jörg Huber & Alois Martin Müller (eds), „Kultur“ und „Gemeinsinn“, 269–295. Basel: Stroemefeld.
- Schulze, Gerhard. 1994b. Projekt des schönen Lebens. Zur soziologischen Diagnose der modernen Gesellschaft. In Alfred Bellebaum & Klaus Barheier (eds), *Lebensqualität. Ein Konzept für Praxis und Forschung*, 13–36. Opladen: Westdeutscher.
- Schüssler, Michael. 2013. *Mit Gott neu beginnen. Die Zeitdimension von Theologie und Kirche in ereignisbasierter Gesellschaft*. (Praktische Theologie Heute 134). Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
- Seel, Martin. 2011. Inszenieren als Erscheinenlassen. Thesen über die Reichweite eines Begriffs. In Josef Früchtel & Jörg Zimmermann (eds), *Ästhetik der Inszenierung*, 48–62. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Seibert, Jutta (ed). 2004. *A keresztény művészet lexikona*. Anikó Harmathné Szilágyi (trans). Budapest: Corvina.
- Serban, Claudia. 2012. A lehetetlen és a fenomenológia a Certitudes négatives alapján. Ullmann Tamás (trans). In Sylvain Camilleri & Ádám Takács (eds), *Jean-Luc Marion – kartezianizmus, fenomenológia, teológia*, 77–97. (A Francia Intézet Filozófiai Füzetek). Budapest: Gondolat.
- Sesboué, Bernard. 1997. *Krisztus pedagógiája. Az alapvető krisztológia elemei*. Mihály Kránitz & Jakab Várnai (trans). Budapest: Vigilia.

- Shepherd, Massey Hamilton. 1960. *The Paschal Liturgy in the Apocalypse*. (Ecumenical Studies in Worship 6). London: Lutterworth.
- Sirota, Régine. 2000. Procesul de socializare și deprinderea a bunelor maniere, legat de un ritual: Aniversarea. In Monique Segré (ed), *Mituri, rituri, simboluri în societatea contemporană*, 119–130. Beatrice Stanciu (trans). Timișoara: Amarcord.
- von Soden, Wolfram. 1966. Jahve, „er ist, er erweist sich”. *Die Welt des Orients* 3 (3): 177–187.
- Soeffner, Hans-Georg. 2004. Überlegungen zur Soziologie des Symbols und des Rituals. In Christoph Wulf & Jörg Zirfas (eds), *Die Kultur des Rituals. Inszenierungen, Praktiken, Symbole*, 149–176. Munich: Wilhelm Fink.
- Soggin, J. Alberto. 1999. *Bevezetés az Ószövetségbe I: A kezdetektől az alexandriai kánon lezárásáig*. Béla Hoffmann & István Víg (trans). Budapest: Kálvin.
- Sólymos, Szilveszter. 1980. A liturgia: istentisztelet vagy isten- és emberszolgálat? Gondolatok a liturgia lényegének megragadásához. *Szolgálat* 46 (2): 7–15.
- Sparks, Kenton L. 2006. Gospel as Conquest. Mosaic Typology in Matthew 28:16–20. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 68: 651–663.
- von Speyr, Adrienne. 2009. *Az Istennel találkozó ember*. Tibor Görföl (trans). (Megközelítések 6). Budapest: Sík Sándor.
- da Spinetoli, Ortensio. 1998. *Máté. Az egyház evangéliuma*. (Scriptura 1). Alfréd Turay (trans). Szeged: Agapé.
- Smit, Peter-Ben & Toon Renssen. 2014. The passivum divinum. The Rise and Future Fall of an Imaginary Linguistic Phenomenon. *Filologia Neotestamentaria* 27: 3–24.
- Splett, Jörg. 1971. Sakral – Profan – Das Heilige. Philosophische Bemerkungen. *Concilium* 7: 130–134.
- Stănescu, Nichita. 2004. În grădina Ghetsimani. In Alexandru Condeescu (ed), *Opera magna. Volumul II*, 310–322. Bucharest: Editura Muzeul Literaturii Române.
- Stăniloae, Dumitru. 1997. *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă III*. Bucharest: Institutul Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române.
- Steffensky, Fulbert. 2005. *Schwarzbrot-Spiritualität*. Stuttgart: Radius.
- Stenger, Hermann. 1974. Az elfelejtett dimenzió – Az emberi kapcsolatok empirikus teológiája felé. *Mérleg* 10: 217–232.
- Strausberg, Michael. 2004. Reflexive Ritualisationen. *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* 56: 54–61. <https://doi.org/10.1163/157007304772697221>
- Stuflesser, Martin. 2009. Actiosa Participatio – Zwischen hektischem Aktionismus und neuer Innerlichkeit. Überlegungen zur »tätigen Teilnahme« am Gottesdienst der Kirche als Recht und Pflicht der Getauften. *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 59: 147–186.
- Sudbrack, Josef. 1987. *Neue Religiosität. Herausforderung für die Christen*. Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald.
- Szabó, Ferenc. 1996. *Jézus Krisztus. Bevezetés a krisztológiába*. (Teológiai Zsebkönyvek 12). Szeged: Agapé.

- Szabó, Lajos. 2010. A liturgia, az egyházi rítusok, a szimbolikus funkciók és a tömegkommunikáció kapcsolata. *Médiakutató* 11 (3): 69–79.
- Szabó, Mária. 1997. *Bevezetés az újszövetségi görög nyelvébe*. (Katolikus Teológiai Kézikönyvek 26). Szeged: Agapé.
- Szombath, Attila. 2003. A vallási tapasztalat metafizikai értelmezéséről. *Vigilia* 68: 657–665, 747–754.
- Takács, Gyula. 2000. *Jelenések könyve*. Budapest: Paulus Hungarus-Kairosz.
- Tomka, Miklós. 2001. Hagyományos (vallási) értékek a modern társadalomban. *Educatio* 2001/3: 419–433.
- Tomka, Miklós. 2009. Vallásosság Kelet-Közép-Európában. Tények és értelmezések. *Szociológiai Szemle* 19 (3): 64–79.
- Török, Csaba. 2014. Az értelmiségi lét illúziója. *Communio* 22 (1–2): 26–46.
- Török, Csaba. 2015. Látszat és valóság. *Communio* 23 (3–4): 73–86.
- Triás, Eugenio. 2007. Gondolatok a vallásról: a szimbólum és a szentség. Krisztina Dorn (trans). In Márta Korpics & Dóra P. Szilczl (eds), *Szagrális kommunikáció. A transzcendens mutatkozása*, 191–202. (Társadalmi Kommunikáció 3). Budapest: Typotex.
- Valenziano, Crispino. 2020. Liturgia és szimbólum. In István Pákozdi & Ádám Somorjai (eds), *A liturgiatudomány kézikönyve*, 204–219. (Szent István Kézikönyvek 17). Budapest: Szent István Társulat.
- Vanni, Ugo. 1991. Liturgical Dialogue as a Literary Form in the Book of Revelation. *New Testament Studies* 37: 348–372.
- Vargas Llosa, Mario. 2014. *A látványcivilizáció*. László Scholz (trans). Budapest: Európa.
- Válóczy, József. 2013. Az idő kérdésének posztmodern kori kihívása a kereszténység számára. *Sapientiana* 6 (2): 36–44.
- Veress, Károly. 2004. Sokféleség és egység a kommunikációban. In Imre Ungvári Zrínyi (ed), *Pluralitás és kommunikáció*, 177–191. (Műhely 11). Cluj-Napoca: Pro Philosophia.
- de Vogué, Adalbert. 2000. *Kívánd az örök életet. A remény tegnap és ma*. Gabriella Somorjai (trans). (Bencés Lelkiségi Füzetek 21). Pannonhalma: Bencés.
- Vorgrimler, Herbert. 1992. *Sakramententheologie*. (Leitfaden Theologie 17). Düsseldorf: Patmos.
- Walter, Peter (ed). 2007. *Gottesrede in postsäkularer Kultur*. (Quaestiones Disputatae 224). Freiburg: Herder.
- Waltke, Bruce K. & Michael Patrick O'Connor. 1990. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Weber, Otto. 1948. *Bibelkunde des Alten Testaments. Ein Arbeitsbuch II: Prophetenbücher und „Schriften“: Jesaja bis zum Schluß des Alten Testaments*. Tübingen: Furcht.
- Weidinger, Norbert. 2009. Symbole, Rituale und sakramentale Handlungen: Didaktische Aspekte. Sakramentale Symbol-Zeichen – mehr als willkommene Dekoration. In Helmut Hoping, et al., *Heil erfahren in den Sakramenten*, 154–206. (Theologische Module 9). Freiburg: Herder.

- Weiss, Johann. 1911. *Das Buch Exodus*. Graz–Vienna: Styria.
- Welte, Bernhard. 1979. *Religionsphilosophie*. Freiburg: Herder.
- von Weltzien, Diane. 1999. *Rituale neu erschaffen. Elemente gelebter Spiritualität*. Munich: Heyne.
- Wénin, André. 2008. *Da Adamo ad Abramo o l'errare dell'uomo*. Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna.
- Winter, Stephan. 2011. Am Grund des rituellen Sprachspiels. Notwendige Klärungen zu 'Performance' und 'Performativität' in liturgiewissenschaftlichem Interesse. *Bibel und Liturgie* 84 (1): 12–17.
- Winter, Stephan. 2017. „Seid nicht gleichförmig...“ (Röm 12,2). Das Widerständige der Liturgie als Quelle christlicher Spiritualität. *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 67: 139–159.
- Wohlmuth, Josef. 2020. Liturgie und kritische Ästhetik. In Melanie Wald-Fuhrmann, Klaus Peter Dannecker & Sven Boenneke (eds), *Wirkungsästhetik der Liturgie. Transdisziplinäre Perspektiven*, 23–40. (Studien zur Pastoralliturgie 44). Regensburg: Pustet.
- Wulf, Christoph & Jörg Zirfas. 2004. Performative Welten. Einführung in die historischen, systematischen und methodischen Dimensionen des Rituals. In Christoph Wulf & Jörg Zirfas (eds), *Die Kultur des Rituals. Inszenierungen, Praktiken, Symbole*, 7–45. Munich: Wilhelm Fink.
- Young, Richard A. 1994. *Intermediate New Testament Greek. A Linguistic and Exegetical Approach*. Nashville: B&H Academic.
- Zahner, Walter. 2020. Ästhetik des Glaubens als Proprium in Werk und Wirken von Aloys Goergen. Eine biografisch-liturgietheologische Annäherung. *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 70: 119–139.
- Zamfir, Korinna. 2008. *Ószövetségi exegézis*. Cluj-Napoca: Kolozsvári Egyetemi Kiadó.
- Zenger, Erich. 1983. *Gottes Bogen in den Wolken. Untersuchungen zu Komposition und Theologie der priesterlichen Urgeschichte*. Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk.
- Zenger, Erich. 1985. Das Geheimnis der Schöpfung als ethische Vor-Gabe an Juden und Christen. In Wilhelm Breunung & Hanspeter Heinz (eds), *Damit die Erde menschlich bleibt. Gemeinsame Verantwortung von Juden und Christen für die Zukunft*, 36–60. Freiburg: Herder.
- Zenger, Erich. 1987. *Das Buch Exodus*. (Geistliche Schriftlesung.AT 7). Düsseldorf: Patmos.
- Zerwick, Maximilian. 1963. *Biblical Greek. Illustrated by Examples*. (Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici 114). Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico.
- Zogmayer, Leo. 2012. If you celebrate it. Ästhetik und Spiritualität. *Herder-Korrespondenz.Spezial* 2012/1: 34–37.

