

# Elements of the New Liturgical Movement

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## *Introduction*

This presentation is not an academic paper on an area of liturgical study. Rather, it is intended as a reflection on *some elements* of what is loosely grouped together under the title of “the new liturgical movement” – and not so much the important website that uses this title, as the many different initiatives throughout the world taking their inspiration from the call of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger in his seminal book *The Spirit of the Liturgy* for “a movement toward the Liturgy and toward the right way of celebrating the Liturgy, inwardly and outwardly.”<sup>1</sup>

I hope that these reflections will promote further thought and discussion on this – and indeed that we shall have time for at least some discussion together later.

Let us begin with Cardinal Ratzinger's 1997 assertion that:

The Church stands and falls with the Liturgy. When the adoration of the divine Trinity declines, when the faith no longer appears in its fullness in the Liturgy of the Church, when man's words, his thoughts, his intentions are suffocating him, then faith will have lost the place where it is expressed and where it dwells. For that reason, the true celebration of the Sacred Liturgy is the centre of any renewal of the Church whatever.<sup>2</sup>

“The Church stands and falls with the Liturgy...The true celebration of the Sacred Liturgy is the centre of any renewal of the Church whatever.” If you go away from this presentation with just two sentences, they would be good ones to take with you. “The Church stands and falls with the Liturgy...The true celebration of the Sacred Liturgy is the centre of any renewal of the Church whatever.”

Now there are plenty of people around who would say that such concern about the liturgy is too introspective, if not introverted, in an age where the Church has so much to do and so many problems to face. “What need have we of ‘sacristy-rats’ or of ‘candle-counting thurible-swingers?’” they might retort.

But let us be clear: Christianity is not humanitarian activism, it is a faith – faith in the person of God the Son incarnate, who suffered and died for our salvation and who established a Church to continue His saving ministry to the end of time. This the Church does through the Sacred Liturgy. If we think about it: original and actual sin are remitted and we are joined to the Body of Christ through the sacrament of Baptism, we are given the Gift of the Holy Spirit to strengthen us in the rite of Confirmation, our Christian initiation is completed and we are continually nourished for Christian life through the Holy Eucharist, we are healed when we fall into sin through the Sacrament of Penance, and are healed when we are sick through the Sacrament of Anointing. We are given specific graces for our particular vocations in the sacraments of Matrimony and Holy Orders. We celebrate salvation history and the triumphs of the saints in the liturgical year, in times of grief we take our beloved dead to the altar, and we continually beg God's blessing on ourselves, our homes and other created things that we use through liturgical rites.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, preface to Franz Breid, ed., *Die heilige Liturgie*, papers from the “Internationale Theologische Sommerakademie 1997” of the Priests' Circle of Linz, Ennsthaler Verlag, Steyr 1997.

*All of this is liturgical.* And it is right that we give it priority. For it is here that we encounter Christ living and acting in His Church today. For without the Sacred Liturgy we have no ecclesial connection with Christ. And without this Christianity is at risk of becoming an ideology rather than a faith—hopefully a benevolent ideology, but an ideology nevertheless—and the works of its followers, mere activism.

But a Christian who is immersed in the liturgical life of the Church is no activist. He or she goes forth into the particular circumstances of their daily life rooted in Christ, empowered to bring Him to others and to bring others to Him. This is why the Second Vatican Council taught that “the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows” (*Sacrosanctum concilium*, 10). This is the theological foundation, or better the *ecclesiological* foundation, for our concern about the Sacred Liturgy. This is why it has such priority, why “the Church stands and falls with the Liturgy” and why “the true celebration of the Sacred Liturgy is the centre of any renewal of the Church whatever.” It is also why the question of a “new” liturgical movement is of importance for the life and mission of the Church today.

### *The ‘Old’ Liturgical Movement*

Firstly, though, a word about the ‘old’ liturgical movement.

In 1841 Dom Prosper Guéranger asserted in the preface to his *L’Année Liturgique* (ET: *The Liturgical Year*): “Liturgical prayer would soon become powerless, were the faithful not to take a real share in it, or, at least not to associate themselves to it in [the] heart. It can heal and save the world, but only on the condition that it be understood.”<sup>3</sup> He then appealed: “Open your hearts, children of the Catholic Church, and come and pray the prayer of your Mother.”<sup>4</sup>

Over sixty years later a parish priest who had himself been influenced by these sentiments ascended the throne of St Peter and as pope, St Pius X wrote in the *Motu Proprio Tra le sollecitudine* of 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1903:

“It being our ardent desire to see the true Christian spirit restored in every respect and preserved by all the faithful, we deem it necessary to provide before everything else for the sanctity and dignity of the temple, in which the faithful assemble for the object of acquiring this spirit from its indispensable fount, which is the active participation in the holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church.”<sup>5</sup>

Then as now the mere words of a pope had their impact and Pius X’s exhortation gave rise to many initiatives designed to bring about “the active participation in the holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church.” These initiatives were local and national in their organisation and predominantly monastic and European at first, but gradually an international network of interested persons identified themselves as members of “the liturgical movement”. Amongst them the Belgian monk, Dom Lambert Beauduin, stands out as an early and articulate advocate of true liturgical renewal. His little book *La Piété de l’Eglise* (ET: *Liturgy the Life of the Church*),<sup>6</sup> stands to this day as an inspiring charter of its ideals.

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<sup>3</sup> Prosper Guéranger, Laurence Shepherd, trans., *The Liturgical Year: Advent*, second edition, Duffy, Dublin 1870, pp. 6-7.

<sup>4</sup> Translation from Cuthbert Johnson OSB, *Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875): A Liturgical Theologian: An Introduction to his liturgical writings and work*, Studia Anselmiana 89, Pontificio Ateneo S. Anselmo, Rome 1984, p. 350.

<sup>5</sup> Kevin Seasoltz OSB, *The New Liturgy: A Documentation 1903-1965*, Herder, NY 1966, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> L. Beauduin OSB, *Liturgy the Life of the Church*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. St Michael’s Abbey Press, Farnborough 2002.

One of Dom Beauduin's younger confreres, Dom Bernard Botte, tells us an important fact about the liturgical movement in its origins:

"We should note that the Liturgical Movement, at its beginning, was not a reformist movement. Dom Beauduin knew very well that there were some cobwebs on that venerable monument called Liturgy. One day or another these would have to be dusted away. But he did not consider this as essential and, at any rate, it was not his business...He regarded the Liturgy as a traditional given which we first of all had to try to understand."<sup>7</sup>

Certainly, we know that the question of liturgical reform arose and gained much currency in the middle decades of the twentieth century, but –it needs to be said clearly –that was not the primary aim of the liturgical movement. They remained those of Dom Guèranger, St Pius X and Dom Beauduin.

This is not the time to discuss the detail, merits or demerits of the reform that were enacted, though I would say that ritual reform cannot be excluded from liturgical tradition—development must be possible in a living organism, otherwise the liturgy is condemned to become simply an archaeological curiosity. I would also add that ritual change is not ever our first task: formation of ourselves and others in the spirit and power of the Sacred Liturgy is—as the Second Vatican Council itself asserted (cf. *Sacrosanctum concilium*, 14) and which I tried to underline in my paper last June at *Sacra Liturgia 2013*.<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, it is sadly true that not all went well—especially when the event of an Ecumenical Council and the task of implementing its provisions provided opportunities for differing liturgical ideologies to manoeuvre themselves into authority and influence the implementation of its provisions. Lest you think that I am exaggerating let the words of Cardinal Ratzinger written in 2004, not two years before his accession to the Throne of Peter, instruct us:

"The Liturgical Movement had in fact been attempting...to teach us to understand the Liturgy as a living network of tradition that had taken concrete form, that cannot be torn apart into little pieces, but that has to be seen and experienced as a living whole. Anyone who, like me, was moved by this perception in the time of the Liturgical Movement on the eve of the Second Vatican Council can only stand, deeply sorrowing, before the ruins of the very things they were concerned for."<sup>9</sup>

### *Elements of the New Liturgical Movement*

I dare to suggest that we are—or that we should be—concerned for the same things today and that that concern is at the heart of the new liturgical movement. To that end I should like to articulate five possible elements of this movement. To be sure, there may be more and they could possibly be delineated more clearly. But as I said at the beginning, they are intended to prompt further thought and as a stimulus for discussion.

1. An authentic interpretation of the Second Vatican Council's mandate for liturgical reform.

Perhaps the best way to explore this element is through a series of pithy statements that accurately reflect the content of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and then to reflect on what in fact we have today. I leave the reflection to you – or perhaps to our discussion later.

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<sup>7</sup> Bernard Botte OSB, *From Silence to Participation: An Insider's View of Liturgical Renewal*, Pastoral Press, Washington DC 1988, pp. 22-23.

<sup>8</sup> Chapter 10 of Alcuin Reid, ed., *Sacred Liturgy: Source and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Preface to A. Reid, *The Organic Development of the Liturgy* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) Ignatius Press, San Francisco 2005, p. 11.

- i. Active participation means actual participation not activist participation.
- ii. Widespread formation and immersion in the Church's liturgical life and tradition is an essential pre-requisite to actual participation and is a far greater priority than ritual reform.
- iii. That "there must be no innovations unless the good of the Church genuinely and certainly requires them; and care must be taken that any new forms adopted should in some way grow organically from forms already existing" means exactly that.
- iv. Giving a suitable place to the vernacular does not mean totally vernacularising the liturgy to the exclusion of Latin.
- v. That the use of the Latin language is to be preserved in the Latin rites suggests that Latin should be something with which all our congregations are familiar from regular use.
- vi. Allowing the extended use of concelebration is not about forming generations of priests who do not know how or even why one would celebrate Mass privately, let alone how to behave as concelebrants.
- vii. Judging that Holy Communion may be administered under both species on certain occasions does not mandate the creation of legions of extraordinary ministers, unworthy vessels for the Precious Blood or questionable if not downright sacrilegious practices in respect of their purification.
- viii. Providing a richer fare for the faithful at the table of God's word does not mean destroying a truly ancient order or readings, nor does it authorise the excising of uncomfortable portions of Sacred Scripture from the lectionary.
- ix. Singing the liturgy, not singing at the liturgy, is what is required.
- x. Noble simplicity does not mandate simplicity being ignobly visited upon the liturgy.
- xi. Revising the liturgical books does not authorise the wholesale recasting of their calendars, the ideological purging of their proper prayers, or the insertion of liturgical texts reconstructed according to insufficiently tested scholarly fashions.

We could go on, but I am sure you get the point. The Council mandated reform, certainly, and it did so authoritatively, but what it called for was for widespread liturgical formation to facilitate actual participation in liturgical tradition moderately reformed, not a wholesale or radical ritual reformation. We need to be very clear about this distinction if we are not to deny the nature or indeed the authority of an ecumenical council of the Church.

We also need to be clear about the status of what the Constitution actually contains. Its theology, read with a hermeneutic of reform in continuity and in a true spirit of *ressourcement*, rightly takes its place amidst the currents of theological renewal of the twentieth century. It is the theology taught by an Ecumenical Council and whilst it is not *de fide definita*, one would be foolish to reject it out of hand. The Constitution's fundamental principles—of seeking a true *participatio actuosa* in the Church's liturgical life for all the faithful by means of carrying out widespread and profound formation in the Sacred Liturgy (cf. n. 14)—which are in fact those of Pius X, Pius XII and of the twentieth century liturgical movement, with roots deep in the previous centuries—are of perennial value. The general principles which flow from these (cf. nn. 22-32) reflect sound liturgical tradition. Its subsidiary principles (cf. nn. 33-46) are just that: subordinate to the greater realities preceding them and may be evaluated accordingly. The policies of the Constitution, which are found in its subsidiary principles and in the remainder of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* are and always were contingent. That the Council Fathers adopted them indicates their value in their judgment, and in the authoritative judgment of Paul VI through his promulgation of the Constitution.

So, whilst we should not deny the nature authority of an ecumenical council of the Church, we should also be clear on precisely what authority and import each of the articles of its liturgical Constitution in fact has. It is not a dogma of the Catholic faith binding under pain of mortal sin to hold that the Council Fathers needed to suppress the Office of Prime (cf. *Sacrosanctum concilium*, 89 d), or that permitting the reception of Holy Communion under both species is necessary.

2. An assessment of the implementation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* that is faithful to the Council.

Once we are clear on what the Council in fact called for, we can begin to assess its implementation. I suggest that this assessment should begin with article 14:

“Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people (1 Pet. 2:9; cf. 2:4-5), is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.

“In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else; for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit; and therefore pastors of souls must zealously strive to achieve it, by means of the necessary instruction, in all their pastoral work.

“Yet it would be futile to entertain any hopes of realizing this unless the pastors themselves, in the first place, become thoroughly imbued with the spirit and power of the liturgy, and undertake to give instruction about it. A prime need, therefore, is that attention be directed, first of all, to the liturgical instruction of the clergy...”

To put this into sharper relief, let us ask: would an assessment of the last 50 years of liturgical renewal and reform reveal that all of the faithful—and not simply those who still frequent our churches—have been led to that fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations? Have our pastors become thoroughly imbued with the spirit and power of the liturgy? Have they themselves undertaken to give instruction about it? If the answer is: “Well, er, maybe not entirely...” then I submit that this is where we must first focus our energies. These cornerstones of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* are the cornerstones of the new liturgical movement just as they were those of the old: and they are very sound indeed.

Certainly, we need to assess the policies of the liturgical Constitution and be prepared to ask: “Are those policies of value today, fifty years later?” There is no shame or heresy in asking whether or not the Council’s wish to remove what it called “useless repetitions” may in fact have taken away rites which, when prayed with devotion, in fact accentuate the mystery at hand in a manner which have ritual and indeed psychological value.

The Constitution decrees the restoration of “the prayer of the faithful” on Sundays and major feasts so that “by this prayer, in which the people are to take part, intercession will be made for holy Church, for the civil authorities, for those oppressed by various needs, for all mankind, and for the salvation of the entire world” (n. 53).

This reform is reasonable: it does no violence to liturgical tradition and indeed could be said to be a legitimate development of the rite in response to the needs of the time. Yet this reform’s implementation has varied widely and has given rise to anything from local news broadcasts to the espousing of anone’s ideology at the heart of the Mass in the name of prayer, whether these prayers are pre-written or ‘spontaneous’. Where such subjectivism reigns in the liturgy it must be excised.

There is a larger consideration about the prayers of the faithful, though, which has perhaps escaped attention over recent decades. Intercession for the Church, for the civil authorities, for those oppressed by

various needs, for all mankind, and for the salvation of the entire world is *already made* in the rites and prayers of the Mass, particularly in the collects and pre-eminently in the Roman Canon. Prayers of the faithful are something of a duplication of what is already present in the liturgy. When the Eucharistic prayer is prayed in the vernacular, intentions are often repeated. Whether this duplication is of value today and in the future, or whether it is something which we should examine further, is an open question which now, fifty years after the Council, we are more than entitled to consider.

So too we are entitled to re-examine those things piled onto the reform as it moved along following the Council: celebrating Mass facing the people, additional Eucharistic prayers, distributing Holy Communion on the hand, extraordinary ministers of the Blessed Eucharist, altar girls, etc. Not one of these innovations is called for by *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Fidelity to the Council involves none of these innovations—unless we hold that the Fathers of the Council wrote a blank cheque for liturgical change, which they did not. Certainly, they were authoritatively introduced, but they are not the fruits of the deliberations of an Ecumenical Council and whether the good of the Church genuinely and certainly required them (cf. *Sacrosanctum concilium*, 23) is a pertinent question to ask. So too is the question of whether they are or are not of value to the Church's life and mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

A new liturgical movement must ask these questions and address the issues they raise honestly and openly, with charity but in truth.

### 3. An ongoing consideration of the value of a possible reform of the reform.

The idea of a "reform of the reform" arose in a period when the older rites were more or less proscribed and out of a desire to implement *Sacrosanctum Concilium* more faithfully. In a post-*Summorum Pontificum* and post-the pontificate of Benedict XVI world, some have decreed or celebrated the death of the "reform of the reform". History will tell us whether this is in fact the case; nevertheless, at this point, I would offer two considerations.

The reformed liturgical rites—the *usus recentior*—are here to stay. That is a reality and an important pastoral one which the new liturgical movement cannot ignore. If we can assert—as I think serious scholarship allows us to—that the rites promulgated following the Council are not what the Council intended and that there are substantial innovations in more than questionable continuity with the Church's received liturgical tradition, then these reformed rites are lacking in some important areas, even if we can assert that there are at the same time some good developments (perhaps the richness of some of the new prefaces, for example). That is all to say that as the *usus recentior* is not going away any time soon, we should, for the sake of the large numbers who have recourse to it, work for it to be enriched and corrected where indeed it is lacking.

How this will happen is at this time difficult to see. But then, only a few years before *Summorum Pontificum* few if any could predict that it would appear or what it would bring about. Patience, prayer and work are our task at this time. We shall see what Almighty God's Providence brings.

The second consideration I would offer in respect of the reform of the reform is that it is nothing less than a matter of justice to the Council and to liturgical Tradition itself. This is not a question of mere academic speculation, but a cry for the correction of an ecclesial, liturgical and pastoral "divergence" that is simply too great.

Where to start with a reform of the reform? Do we take the modern books and correct them, or do we re-start, as it were, and get the Council's reform right starting over from scratch? I recommend Father Thomas Kocik's article on this question which was posted on the New Liturgical Movement site in February 2014. His observation that the modern liturgical books contain too much intrinsic discontinuity with received tradition to be corrected is a powerful one indeed.

4. The integral celebration of the *usus recentior* with an optimal *ars celebrandi* (cf. *Sacramentum Caritatis*, 38-42).

But whilst a reform of the reform is not on the horizon, what are we to do with the modern rites? I believe that the answer here is the integral celebration of the *usus recentior* with an optimal *ars celebrandi*. Pope Benedict XVI explained this in his 2007 Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis*. The *ars celebrandi* is the “fruit of faithful adherence to the liturgical norms *in all their richness*,” he teaches (n. 38; emphasis added). He underlines the role of the Bishop as “chief steward of the mysteries of God in the particular Church” (n. 39), of respect for the liturgical books and of fostering “a sense of the sacred and the use of outward signs which help cultivate this sense” (n. 40), of the importance of liturgical art and architecture (n. 41) and of liturgical singing (n. 42).

These components of the *ars celebrandi* reflect the fact that the Sacred Liturgy is not primarily a cerebral or intellectual experience—it is not a text to be studied. No; it is a sensual, ritual experience, involving our mind, body and spirit and we must allow the riches of our liturgical tradition to form us by connecting us to Christ through by means of these portals. This is one area in which our modern, literate and rational culture has impacted adversely: a mentality (educated and perhaps middle-class) that treats the liturgy as a discourse and reduces its forms to the prosaic rather than respecting its nature as multivalent ritual radically reduces the possibility of such connection.

I spoke of the integral celebration of the modern rites. That is, they must be celebrated in a way which respects their integrity as a rite. The modern liturgical books are not resources from which we can construct a liturgy suited to a particular group or community. They are liturgical rites. Their norms and rubrics must be respected.

I spoke also of an optimal *ars celebrandi*. Benedict XVI speaks of observing the liturgical norms “in all their richness.” Liturgical minimalism is the enemy of the spirit of the liturgy and is a cancer to true liturgical formation. Certainly, some circumstances limit how much we can do, but even then we are called to give all that is possible as did the widow at the treasury (cf. Mk 12: 41-43). Less is not more when celebrating the Sacred Liturgy.

The *usus recentior* may pose many problems in its origins and in its local application, but it *is not* going anywhere soon. For the glory of Almighty God and for the Salvation of His people, when we celebrate it we must do so as well as we can.

5. An openness to the value and riches of the *usus antiquior* in the Church today.

The new liturgical movement must include an openness to the value and riches of the *usus antiquior* in the Church today.

I may justly be accused of understatement here. But I think that we must take a realistic approach. Most Catholics today do not know these rites and many who have experienced them don’t want anything to do with them. That may be for many reasons, and it may not be what should be the case, but it is a reality. But that gives those of us who know, love and cherish the *usus antiquior* and appreciate its pastoral value a job to do: to demonstrate to and share the real value of its riches with our contemporaries.

I suggest that this is best done through the *via pulchritudinis*. If our celebrations of the *usus antiquior* are marked with a true *ars celebrandi*, if they are opportunities for real *participatio actuosa*, their value will become apparent. Certainly such participation requires formation and effort, as does their beautiful celebration. It is not good enough—indeed it is a liturgical abuse—to celebrate the old rites without sufficient preparation and knowledge or to take ‘short-cuts’ because the ceremonial is complex. These rites too must be celebrated integrally. We owe it to Our Lord whom we worship and to his people to ensure that everything is as perfect as is humanly possible. And that requires study of the ceremonial manuals,

practising the ceremonies, learning and practising the chant. This takes time and effort, but these are but small sacrifices when compared to the Sacrifice of Salvation at which we assist.

More and more of our bishops are—through choice or necessity—celebrating rites according to the *usus antiquior*. Such pontifical ceremonies can be daunting, but putting in the effort to learn and celebrate them correctly is more than worth the effort—above all for the bishop. The Sacred Liturgy forms us. It forms bishops in what it means to be a bishop—most especially through the reverence he is given in the older rites. If you have anything to do with pontifical ceremonies, please: prepare them correctly, fully, respecting the limits they place on bishops who are not ordinaries of the place or otherwise “greater prelates”, and allow the rites to do their work.

One aspect of celebrations of the *usus antiquior* is of concern. In some places aspects of these rites are subjected to a ‘pick and choose’ mentality whereby such things as the number of confiteors, the calendar used, the version of the ceremonies Holy Week celebrated, and so on, are decided by private judgement rather than by the authority of the Church. I am perhaps myself reasonably qualified to argue for or against some of these things: and indeed many people are well read and informed on such questions, which is good. But that is not the point. We celebrate the rites of the Church as she gives them to us—even if, in our private opinion, elements of those rites should be reformed in one way or another. I do not pretend that the missal of 1962 (or indeed that of 1970) are the apotheosis of liturgical history—far from it. But as far as the *usus antiquior* is concerned it is the liturgical books in force in 1962 which are ours to use. It may be that other editions may be approved, say for Holy Week, but until they are it is difficult to see on what legitimate authority they can be used. I submit that we do our cause no good service when we have such disunity if not disobedience. I suggest that we employ patience and humility in abundance here, and work where we can for what is necessary through legitimate channels.

Through *Summorum Pontificum* Pope Benedict gave the Church back a great treasure. There is much more one could say about this, but there is no question that the *usus antiquior* is anything other than one of the pillars of the new liturgical movement.

### *Sacra Liturgia*

The five elements of the new liturgical movement I have outlined:

1. An authentic interpretation of the Second Vatican Council’s mandate for liturgical reform.
2. An assessment of the implementation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* that is faithful to the Council.
3. An ongoing consideration of the value of a possible reform of the reform.
4. The integral celebration of the *usus recentior* with an optimal *ars celebrandi* (cf. *Sacramentum Caritatis*, 38-42).
5. An openness to the value and riches of the *usus antiquior* in the Church today.

were reflected at *Sacra Liturgia 2013* last June in Rome, the proceedings of which have been published in May by Ignatius Press (and I should here pay tribute to Fr Fessio and his team at Ignatius for their interest in this book, their willingness to prioritize it in their publishing schedule, and their unfailing professionalism in its production). I commend the book to you as a resource for liturgical formation.

*Sacra Liturgia* did not seek to approach the question of the Sacred Liturgy as a matter of polemics or controversy. Rather, it sought to underline the centrality of sound liturgical formation and celebration for the mission and life of the Church of our day. In this approach rigorous academic study is important, certainly, and we need young men and women to engage in serious liturgical study. But that quiet formation that one receives from the habitual celebration of the Church’s liturgy celebrated according to the mind of the Church—that is what is necessary. For the liturgy forms a Christian, and a Christian formed by the Sacred Liturgy is in no doubt about their mission in the world.



It seems that *Sacra Liturgia 2013* was not a one off event. I am happy to say that there are plans for future events continuing its momentum, including one on the East Coast of the USA in June 2015 and in the UK in September 2015. We need your support: we need people to register and come, and of course we need significant benefactors in order to make these event happen. Other events are planned, and details and links will be posted in due course at [www.sacraliturgia.org](http://www.sacraliturgia.org)

### *Conclusion*

One hundred years ago Dom Lambert Beaudin wrote in his little book *Liturgy the Life of the Church*:

“It is impossible...to overemphasise the fact that souls seeking God must associate themselves as intimately and as frequently as possible with all the manifestations of the hierarchical priestly life [the Liturgy] which places them directly under the influence of the priesthood of Jesus Christ Himself.

“That is the primary law of the sanctity of souls. For all alike, wise and ignorant, infants and adults, lay and religious, Christians of the first and Christians of the twentieth century, leaders of an active or of a contemplative life, for *all the faithful of the Church without exception*, the greatest possible active and frequent participation in the priestly life of the visible hierarchy, according to the manner prescribed in the liturgical canons, is the *normal and infallible path* to a solid piety that is sane, abundant, and truly Catholic, that makes them children of their holy mother the Church in the fullest sense of this ancient and Christian phrase.”<sup>10</sup>

In the hundred years since these words were written much has been done in the name of liturgical renewal for good and for ill. Unfortunately the vision of Dom Beaudin, of St Pius X and of many other worthy apostles of the Sacred Liturgy, or indeed of the Second Vatican Council’s liturgical Constitution, has not been realised.

My brothers and sisters, that apostolate is now ours, each according to our gifts and our particular vocations. Upon our efforts depends the Christian life and formation of our fellow Christians and of the generations to come depend. Confident that “the Church stands and falls with the Liturgy” and that “the true celebration of the Sacred Liturgy is the centre of any renewal of the Church whatever,” let us ask Almighty God to give us His strength for that work.

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<sup>10</sup> Beaudin, *Liturgy the Life of the Church* (2002 edition) pp. 15-16.