The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass
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“In love You created man; in justice You condemned him; but in mercy You redeemed him.” – ICEL1970 Sacramentary, preface for weekdays II.

Introductory remarks

Last fall, I gave a presentation that touched on the teaching and governing offices of the Church’s “triple munera,” and promised that I would return to discuss the remaining office, that of sanctifying.¹

* http://www.simondodd.org. This presentation was originally delivered to Catholic Adult Fellowship, Terre Haute, Ind., on May 7, 2013.
And meeting as we do in the Easter season, it seems especially appropriate to talk about liturgy: We have recently gone through the Sacred Triduum, and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the continuing presence of the first Triduum in the life of the Church.

I intend to talk about the character and scope of the Mass. To begin with, though, I think that it may help to clarify some terminology that I think is often misunderstood, and so I will first spend some time breaking open the Church and her liturgy piece by piece, starting with the largest ecclesiological blocks, and zeroing in on the Mass. We’ll then briefly review the structure of the Mass, highlighting some differences between the old form and the new, before turning our attention to the Mass’ relationship to the Triduum.

I. Building blocks:
The history, structure, and components of the Mass.

A. Churches, Rites, and liturgies.

Let us begin at the top. The largest unit in Christendom is Christianity, comprising all those who, in one way or another, confess that Jesus of Nazareth is the messiah promised by the God of Israel. At one level of abstraction down, we find the Catholic Church, which comprises 23 sui iuris churches governed by the successors of the apostles (viz. the bishops), in communion with the successor of Peter (viz. the Roman Pontiff). The Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches defines a sui iuris church as “a group of Christian faithful united by a hierarchy according to the norm of law which the supreme authority of the Church expressly or tacitly recognizes....” By far the largest and most familiar of these churches is the Roman Catholic Church, also

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2 Cf. ibid.; CCC ¶ 834.
3 1990 CCEO Can. 27.
4 Cf. Simon Dodd, Why Roman Catholic, 1 MPA 137 (2012).
called the “latin” or “western” church, ruled immediately by the Bishop of Rome,⁵ which is joined in communion by twenty two churches that we refer to collectively as the “eastern catholic churches.”⁶

Rite distinguished from Church

This is where we start to get into the long grass, because one will sometimes hear the eastern churches called the “byzantine churches,” in contrast to our “latin church.” That is a misnomer. A church is, as we’ve just heard, a juridical grouping of the faithful.⁷ A Rite is the approved complex of “liturgy, ecclesiastical discipline, and spiritual heritage”⁸ by which a church carries out its religious functions: Not

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⁵ Among the pope’s several titles we find, until its apparent suppression by Benedict XVI, “Patriarch of the West,” in which capacity he is in charge of the western, i.e. Roman church. Cf. infra note 12. At presentation, I was asked about another papal title, the primate of Italy; primate is a vestigial title that at one time gave an archbishop jurisdiction over not only his suffragans qua their metropolitan, but all the dioceses and archdioceses of a given country. Thence, for example, the Archbishop of Canterbury was (and after a fashion remains) the “primate of all England.” Today, primates have no general and ex officio authority (although some have specific authorities granted by canon law, such as the pope’s authority qua primate to appoint the officers of the Italian Bishops’ Conference), and the title perdures as an empty honorific. See, e.g., THE CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPÆDIA, Primate, available at http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12423b.htm (last visited May 30, 2013); DONALD ATTWATER, A CATHOLIC DICTIONARY 401 (3d ed. 1957).

⁶ See post, appendix 1. Organizationally-speaking, the Roman Church breaks down further into organizational subunits, the most familiar of which is the geographical unit of the diocese, a bequeathment of the late and unlamented tyrant Diocletian. See generally SIMON DODD, AD LUCEM DEI (forthcoming 2013) (Archdiocese). There are also non-geographical canonical structures that touch persons regardless of the diocese in which they reside, the most familiar of which are religious orders. We also find personal ordinariates (the military, the Anglicans, and perhaps in the future the Lutherans) and personal prelatures (Opus Dei, and perhaps in the future the SSPX); to my understanding, which is not as firm as I would like, the chief difference is that a personal prelature is an additive jurisdiction to the normal diocesan structure, binding together individuals who are also subject to the ordinary authority of their particular churches, whereas an ordinariate is parallel to the normal diocesan structure, an ersatz particular church in itself and thus binding together individuals under its exclusive jurisdiction.

⁷ Cf. Decl. Dominus Iesus, no. 17, 92 AAS 742, 758 f. (CDF, 2000).

only liturgy, but the administration of the sacraments, blessings, devotionals, and so forth. The term predates Christianity, and then-Cardinal Ratzinger approvingly quoted Pomponius Festus’ description of a Rite (from a non-Christian perspective) as “‘an approved practice in the administration of sacrifice.’” As we shall see, it is no accident that the Church appropriated a term with cultic overtones.

At any rate, confusion arises because the dominant rite in the Roman Church is eponymous (to wit, the Roman Rite), but there is not, as symmetry might lead us to expect, a “byzantine church.” Rather, most (although not all) of the Eastern Catholic Churches use the Byzantine Rite—and so, too, do several Orthodox churches that are not in communion with Rome. Prior to the Great Schism, the Church had come to be organized under five patriarchates: Rome, i.e. the “western” Church, and the four that composed the “eastern” Church: Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. We may

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9 See, e.g., 1990 CCEO 28 (a Rite “is the liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony, culture and circumstances of history of a distinct people, by which its own manner of living the faith is manifested in each Church sui iuris”); ATTWATER, supra note 5, at 434; CONCISE CATHOLIC DICTIONARY 291 (Broderick, ed., 1943) (“The manner in which services in worship of God are conducted in the Christian Church”); THE CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPÆDIA, Rites, available at http://newadvent.org/cathen/13064b.htm (last visited May 3, 2013); cf. JAMES WATERWORTH, THE CANONS & DEGREES OF THE SACRED AND ECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF TRENT 161 (1848) (sess. 22) (bishops “shall by ordinance, and under given penalties, provide, that priests do not … employ other rites, or other ceremonies and prayers, in the celebration of masses, besides those which have been approved of by the Church”). This definition refers to Rite in what we might call the “large” sense; there is a “small” sense thereof: The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, for example, or the “last rites,” or the “communion rite.” I will try to keep them distinct by capitalizing Rite in the large sense.


11 See post, appendices 1 and 2.

oversimplify a little, for now, and say that while each began with its own distinctive liturgy, over time, the Eastern churches fell in line with the liturgy of the imperial capital, Constantinople (née Byzantium), and the Western church settled on the liturgy of its patriarchal see—whence the “Byzantine” and “Roman” Rites.13

**Rite distinguished from liturgy**

It should also be clear at this point that liturgy is a *component*, rather than a *synonym*, of Rite. Aidan Kavanagh helpfully explains that a Rite is “more than liturgical customs. It could be called a whole style of Christian life, which is to be found in the myriad particularities of worship, in canonical law, in ascetical and monastic structures, in evangelical and catechetical endeavors, and in particular ways of theological reflection.”14 Liturgy, on the other hand, is a Rite’s approved *public worship*. In the Roman Rite, it comprises the divine office, and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.15 Dom. Gaspar LeFebvre explains:

> [T]he liturgy is the public and official worship by which the Church avails herself of the priesthood of Christ and his mystery of redemption by means and formulas, rites [16,] and other external signs through which the Christian community is mercifully sanctified by God and renders filially to God the Father, through his divine Son and under the impulsion of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory.17

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13 See ATTWATER, CHRISTIAN CHURCHES OF THE EAST, at 5 f.
14 AIDAN KAVANAGH, ELEMENTS OF RITE 44 (1982).
15 Cf. Sacrosanctum Concilium, no. 2, 56 AAS 97, 97 f. (2d Vat. Co. 1963). One could frame an argument that the the angelus, too, is liturgical rather than devotional.
16 He presumably means “rite” in the “small” sense. See supra note 9.
17 GASPAR LEFEVBRE, THE SPIRIT OF WORSHIP 11 (1959) (imp. +Bernard 1959). It is fashionable to point out that etymologically, liturgy derives from the Greek *leitourgia*, a public work of the people. The goal, one suspects, is a subtle shift of the locus of the Mass from celebrant to congregation (see infra note 157 and the post cited therein), but at any rate, the argument is true so far as it goes. There are nevertheless limits and dangers to the enterprise of defining a thing by the etymology of the name by which
The Roman Rite liturgy united

As I mentioned, there are a handful of smaller Rites within the Latin Church, most prominently the Ambrosian and Mozarabic, but most variation in Rite (and variances in usage of the Roman Rite) within the Western Church bit the dust after the Council of Trent. In *Quo Primum*, the 1570 bull that promulgated the so-called “Tridentine” Missal (more on this in a moment), Pope St. Pius V wrote:

> Let all everywhere adopt and observe what has been handed down by the Holy Roman Church, the Mother and Teacher of the other churches, and let Masses not be sung or read according to any other formula than that of this Missal.... This ordinance applies henceforth, now, and forever, throughout all the provinces of the Christian world ... [where Mass is celebrated according to] the rites and customs of the Roman Church. ... This new rite alone is to be used unless approval of the practice of saying Mass differently was given at the very time of the institution and confirmation of the church by Apostolic See at least 200 years ago, or unless there has prevailed a custom of a similar kind which has been continuously followed for a period of not less than 200 years....

And there—notwithstanding minor revisions of the missal up to and including the 1962 Missal of John XXIII—things largely stayed until the 1960s, Vatican II, the Consilium, and the Missal of Paul VI.

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we have traditionally called it. After all, “Mass,” the word by which we denominate the Eucharistic liturgy of the Roman Rite, etymologically derives from its ancient dismissal formula: *Ite, missa est*. The origin and precise meaning of this phrase is opaque, *see*, e.g., DONALD CARDINAL WUERL & MIKE AQUILINA, *The Mass* 39 ff. (2011); JOSEPH JUNGMANN, *The Mass of the Roman Rite* 129 ff, 536 f. (Brunner, trns. 1959) (imp. +Spellman, 1959); NIKOLAUS GIHR, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass* 759 ff. (1902) (imp. +Kain, 1902); [http://quidquidestest.wordpress.com/2012/08/09/what-does-ite-missa-est-really-mean/](http://quidquidestest.wordpress.com/2012/08/09/what-does-ite-missa-est-really-mean/), but *missa* appears to be a substantive meaning “dismissal,” suggesting that a literal rendering of the formula is “Go, it is the dismissal.” According to the etymologists, then, is the Mass therefore a ceremony where we gather in order that we might be dismissed? *Cf.* SCOTT HAHN, *The Lamb’s Supper* 57 (1999) (imp. +Sheldon, 1999).
A Rite divided against itself?

So far, we have seen that the Mass is a subset of the liturgy of the Roman Rite, which is in turn a subset of the Roman Rite, which is one of several Rites in the Catholic Church which are practiced by the various churches sui iuris in communion with Rome which comprise the Catholic Church. But we haven’t hit bedrock just yet; there are two more layers to deal with before we can talk about the component units of the Mass itself.

The Second Vatican Council called for revision and simplification of the liturgy. We lack the time to get into what went wrong. Suffice to say that after the turbulent decades following the Council, today’s liturgy of the Roman Rite has two “expressions.”

Regardless of what we call them, which we’ll discuss in a moment, it is straightforward to explain what they are. After the council, the task of preparing new liturgical materials was given to a working group called the Consilium ad Exsequendum Constitutionem de Sacra Liturgia, the Committee for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. But when Pope Paul VI promulgated the Consilium’s new missal, Pope Benedict XVI explains in Summorum Pontificum, he did not abrogate or suppress the older missal. Rather—call it spiritus aetatis, call it circumstance, call it a kind of infernal Gresham’s Law—the new simply drove out the old. Nevertheless, “no small numbers of

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21 SP Art. 1. It is irrelevant whether we might think this interpretation strained; the Pope is the supreme canonical legislator and supreme canonical judge, and the pope has given us an authoritative and binding judgment on the meaning of canonical legislation.
faithful adhered and continue to adhere with great love and affection to the earlier liturgical forms,” and in the ensuing years, the Holy See sought to accommodate their needs, culminating in the afore-mentioned Summorum Pontificum. Today, it is the liturgical law of the latin church that any priest who is able and so-inclined may celebrate Mass according to either the postconciliar or the preconciliar Roman Missal.

Those terms “preconciliar” and “postconciliar” are perhaps cumbersome and certainly freighted. The official terminology denominates the two expressions of the Roman Rite as its Ordinary Form, (i.e. celebrated according to the 1969 Missale Romanum and its translations and successors) and its Extraordinary Form (i.e. celebrated according to the 1962 Missale Romanum), but there are a number of names for each that are in circulation, most of which are problematic.

The extraordinary form is often called the “Tridentine Mass” or the “Latin Mass.” Neither is felicitous and both should be avoided. The term “Latin Mass” is useless: Whether meant to identify that which it denominates as the Mass of the latin church or the Mass that is in the latin language, it is overinclusive, because the ordinary form is also a “Latin Mass” by either standard. The ordinary form is just as much the Mass of the latin church, and it, too, is written (and by default celebrated) in latin, no matter how prevalent its translation into vernacular languages. Nor can one really call it the Tridentine Mass: Trent didn’t

Indeed, as footnote 17 mentioned, the name “Mass” designates the Eucharistic liturgy of the Roman (i.e. Latin) Rite specifically, insofar as the word derives from the dismissal formula of that liturgy, and thus is applied to the Eucharistic liturgy of other rites at an author’s peril. See, e.g., HAHN, supra note 17, at 6.

For several years following the promulgation of the 1969 Missal of Paul VI, a seriously-problematic English translation (“ICEL1973”) was commonly used in the Anglosphere rather than the latin of the editio typica. After the promulgation of the 2002 Missal of John Paul II, a corrected translation was prepared and came into effect on the first Sunday of Advent 2011. See generally A COMMENTARY ON THE ORDER OF MASS OF THE ROMAN MISSAL xxiii ff. (Foley et al, eds. 2011). While the liturgy is more than its words, the words matter greatly; they “link us to each other, and they link us back through the centuries in union with christians throughout the ages back to Jesus, and, through Jesus, back into our Jewish roots.” Bosco Peters, Some Thoughts on
create a liturgy, the Roman Missal published after the council scarcely differed from the one in existence before the council, and even if we could fairly call the 1570 Missal of Pius V the “Tridentine Missal,” we in any event celebrate the extraordinary form according to the missal published in 1962 Missal of John XXIII.

The ordinary form is often called the novus ordo and occasionally the ritus modernus. The former doesn’t work because the Consilium produced more than just a new ordo. The ordo (“ordinary”) of the Mass is that part which does not change from day to day, and the revisions touched the rest of the missal too! The latter is the term of Msgr. Klaus Gamber, but it strikes English speakers, I think, as contrived. Finally, it is sometimes called “the Mass of Paul VI,” but I detect derisory overtones in that term that make it inappropriate, in my view. We may refer to the Missal of Paul VI, but the Mass of Paul VI seems untenable; would we call the usus antiquior the “Mass of Pius V”? I think not.

Personally, I favor the terms usus antiquior and usus modernus: The ancient use and the modern use. The former is well-established and received the approbation of the Holy See in Universae Ecclesiæ. The latter isn’t and hasn’t, but I like symmetry, and I find the distinction elegant.

The ars celebrandi

Finally, at whichever expression of the Roman Rite we find ourselves, we are presented with questions of what might be called “style” or “tone”—and here, alas, we must invent a lexicon to describe a difference that is readily and often perceived yet infrequently articulated. These are questions about the ars celebrandi: The way in

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24 Even the catechism that expounds that council’s teachings, also published by Pope St. Pius V, is called the Roman Catechism and not the Tridentine Catechism.
26 See Klaus Gamber, The Reform of the Roman Liturgy (Grimm, trns. 1993).
27 103 AAS 413 (PCED Inst., 2011).
which Mass is celebrated. Here is a simple illustration. In the liturgy of
the Eucharist, the Sanctus follows the preface. The location within the
Mass and the text of the Sanctus are prescribed by the missal. How it is
prayed is a question of the ars celebrandi: You might hear it sung,
chanted, or spoken; in Latin, English, or some other vernacular
language; and its focal point might be the celebrant (who may be
facing the congregation or the altar), the choir, or the congregation.
None of these things are prescribed by the missal. (All of them are
prescribed by tradition, I would suggest, and many of our problems
stem from refusal to follow that prescription.28)

The ars celebrandi of the usus antiquior are fairly straightforward and
are divided by clean and clear lines of demarcation. It may be
celebrated as a Missa Lecta (“read Mass,” usually called “Low Mass”),
Missa Cantata (“sung Mass”), or Missa Solemnis (“Solemn Mass,”
usually called “High Mass”).29 These forms are distinguished almost
entirely by the ars celebrandi: Whether there is singing, whether there
are additional ministers, and so on.30

28 That of some more than that of others. “Your task,” Paul VI told the Consilium in
1966,
demands certain qualities of mind: Reverence for sacred things, and in
particular for the forms of worship the church uses; [and] respect for
tradition, which has handed on a valuable inheritance for us to honor….
Your inquiry, then, must not be conducted in an excessively-radical spirit, as
if you were iconoclasts, with a fury to put everything “right” and leave
nothing as it was.
Paul VI, Address to the Consilium, Oct. 13, 1966, translated and reprinted in WORSHIP
29 Cf. JOSEF JUNGMANN, PASTORAL LITURGY 68 f. (1962). The forms Pontifical High
Mass and Papal Mass can be ignored for today’s purposes because they are variants of
the High Mass. If you attend the usus antiquior today, the odds are good that you will
experience the low Mass, which is an abbreviated and strikingly silent liturgy: There
is no singing and little audible speaking. Indeed, an irony for those who write off the
usus antiquior as “the Latin Mass” is that it is not usually the Latin that strikes
newcomers but the silence. See also CRITCHON, at 15-16.
30 Cf. THE NEW RUBRICS OF THE ROMAN BREVIARY AND MISSAL: TRANSLATION AND
COMMENTARY 51 §271 (Murphy, ed. 1960), available at
Haynes, Guidelines for Liturgical Services according to the 1962 Missale Romanum: Music
The *usus modernus*, by contrast, is less straightforward than it seems; the various approaches lack not only clean lines but, worse yet, widely-accepted labels.

We can simplify matters by suggesting that the differences reflect a simmering war over *ars celebrandi* between people who generally adhere to one of two general attitudes about the them: “Traditional” and “progressive.” Those who hold a traditional attitude emphasize the continuity between the ancient and modern forms of the rite. Where the traditional *ars celebrandi* are not displaced in the *usus modernus*, whether expressly or by necessary implication, we believe that the traditional forms should be observed. Those who hold a progressive attitude, by contrast, tend to emphasize the discontinuities; restless for constant change, they tend to believe that the traditional forms, except where they are expressly-preserved, can and should be set aside.

Having described two attitudes, it follows that there should be labels for the camps that adhere to them. But here, we encounter immense difficulty in articulating labels that are apropos and unambiguous. It is fair to describe the approaches adjectivally as traditional and progressive, but that implies the nouns “traditionalist” and “modernist,” which, having accreted technical meanings of their own, will not work. “Conservative” and “liberal” sound too political,
and those who favor a modern approach to liturgy are often anything but liberal in their attitude. I flirted with, but ultimately rejected, the Anglican taxonomy of “high church” and “low church.”34 One despairs! So let’s try again: I want to suggest the labels “pietorists” and “modernizers.” The latter is straightforward enough. The former originates in the observation of Dietrich von Hildebrand that the latin noun “pietas” may be understood “as comprising respect for tradition; honoring what has been handed down to us by former generations; fidelity to our ancestors and their works.”35 This seems to be an apt description of the traditional camp’s mindset.

It will also be apropos to give a simple illustration of the difference between the attitudes. In the Roman Rite, the tradition was to strike one’s chest three times while saying “mea culpa [strike], mea culpa [strike], mea maxima [strike] culpa” during the Confiteor. The usus modernus says that we should strike our chest.36 But how many times? The correct answer, pietorists would say, is three times: The instruction is not liberal about the number of strikes, it presupposes the traditional number. It takes for granted that we know how many times one strikes one’s chest during the Confiteor and tells us to get on with it. The same goes for the number of candles on the altar, among other things.37 Modernizers have a different answer. They would prefer not to strike their chest at all, if truth be told, which is why that rubric is a dead letter in so many parishes. But if the rubric insists on striking, and if it cannot be ignored, it should be read “liberally” as allowing the closest aligning with heresy. “Traditionalist,” with a capital T, has come to refer to those who adhere almost exclusively to the usus antiquior, whether from within the Catholic Church or from outside (e.g. the schismatic Society of St. Pius X).


36 Contrary to popular belief, that rubric never went away; it was never deleted from the Missal. It was just ignored—and in many parishes, continues to be. A rubric, incidentally, is an instruction printed in the missal that tells the celebrant what to do, rather than what to say. It is printed in red—hence rubric, from lat. ruber, red.

37 Cf. Renovatio Ritus Romani, supra note 18, 2 MPA, at 112 f.
number of strikes to the ideal. Since the ideal is zero and the minimum permissible number under a strict construction of the rubric is one, the correct number, modernizers would say, is one.38

B. The components of the Roman Rite.

The earliest extant description of the Roman liturgy is from Justin Martyr in AD 150. It is worth quoting at some length:

On the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray ....

Having ended the prayers, we salute one another with a kiss [of peace]. There is then brought to the president of the brethren bread and a cup of wine mixed with water; and he taking them, gives praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and offers thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive these things at His hands. And when he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all the people present express their assent by saying Amen. This word Amen answers in the Hebrew language to γένοιτο [so be it]. And when the president has given thanks, and all the people have expressed their assent, those who are called by us deacons give to each of those present to partake of the bread and wine mixed with water over which the thanksgiving was pronounced, and to those who are absent they carry away a portion.

And this food is called among us Εὐχαριστία [the Eucharist], of which no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true, and who has been

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38 The Congregation for Divine Worship was asked that question during the liturgical nadir of the 1970s, and they got it wrong: They thought just once. It is safe to say that this error is, in Justice Frankfurter’s evocative image, a derelict on the waters of law. See Lambert v. California, 355 U.S. 225, 232 (1957) (Frankfurter, J., dissenting).
washed with the washing that is for the remission of sins, and unto regeneration, and who is so living as Christ has enjoined. For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Saviour, having been made flesh by the Word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh. For the apostles, in the memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, have thus delivered unto us what was enjoined upon them; that Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, said, This do in remembrance of Me….39

This all sounds strikingly familiar, and the Mass has followed this template of early Christian worship ever since.

Whether in the old or modern use, the Mass is a game of four quarters, the introductory rites, the liturgy of the word, the liturgy of the eucharist, and the closing rites. There are countless treatments of this subject,40 so, in these remarks, I will only highlight a few differences between the two expressions.

Roman tradition denominates the book that prescribes the prayers and actions for Mass as the “Missal,” usually called (somewhat redundantly41) the Roman Missal. Some of you may not have seen this book but from afar, so it may help to describe what is in it. The prayers

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39 Justin Martyr, First Apology, cc. 65-67, http://newadvent.org/fathers/0126.htm (last visited May 27, 2013). I have taken the liberty of rearranging the text slightly for the sake of clarity, which I suppose opens me to the charge of fabricating a proof by imposing post hoc assumptions on to the text. To clarify, then: The first paragraph quoted is Justin’s chapter 67, which I then abridge and conclude with chapters 65 and 66. The reader may judge for themselves whether, in context, this rearrangement does any violence to Justin; I am of the view that it does not.

40 See, e.g., Wuerl, supra note 17; Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite, supra note 17; Gihr, supra note 17; Marc Aillet, The Old Mass and the New (2010); Adrian Fortescue, The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described (1912).

41 Missal and Mass both derive from missa, the dismissal formula of the ancient Roman eucharistic liturgy. See supra, note 17. Liturgical books of other rites might be called a missal by analogy, but the usage would be imprecise.
of the Mass celebrated on any given day are a synthesis of an unchanging section called the “Ordinary” and texts appointed for particular days called the “Propers” and “Commons.” This is why you see the celebrant flipping back and forth in the book during the Mass, and I will point these flips out along the way.

**The introductory rites**

The *usus antiquior* opens with the prayers at the foot of the altar, which the *usus modernus* omits. These include this useful prayer, which I commend as a private prayer before Mass:

> Aufer a nobis, quæsumus domine, iniquitates nostras, ut ad sancta sanctorum puris mereamur mentibus introire. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

The sequencing of introductory rites are at some variance between the two uses. In the *usus modernus*, Mass begins with a Proper antiphon, the *Introit* (which is chanted or sung during the procession), the greeting, a penitential rite that typically comprises the *Confiteor* and *Kyrie,* and then the *Gloria* and the Collect. In the *usus*
antiquior, both Kyrie and Confiteor are somewhat longer,46 and are separated (the Confiteor is advanced to the prayers at the foot of the altar, which begin with an antiphonal recitation of Psalm 42 and conclude with the Aufer a nobis). These are followed by the Introit, the greeting, and then the Kyrie, Gloria, and Collect.47

Taken together, the introductory rites take the pattern of an ascending scale culminating in the Collect,48 which the Rev. Bosco Peters aptly describes as follows:

After [the other parts of the introductory rites], the presider calls us to prayer, and we all enter into deep communal silence, deep silent prayer. And then the presider collects our deep, silent, individual prayer, and prays aloud a general prayer called obviously a collect because it collects our prayers and collects us together. The presider prays this aloud, on behalf of the community … and we all make this prayer our own by saying amen.49

The liturgy of the word

Before our bodies are fed with the bread of heaven, our souls are fed by the words of everlasting life.50 In the old days (and still sometimes today in the usus antiquior), the readings were read in Latin from the altar, and then the celebrant would read them a second time in the vernacular from the pulpit before delivering a homily.51 Wisely, Summorum Pontificum eliminates the need for this useless repetition,52 and today, the celebrant typically reads from the altar in the vernacular.

46 See, e.g., GiHR, at 356 ff.
47 The missal labels it the oration, which English speakers are naturally tempted to translate as “oration.” It does mean that, but it also means prayer. See Jungmann, Mass of the Roman Rite, at 240.
48 Id., at 191.
50 Cf. Jn 6:68.
51 E.g. Crichton, supra note 25, at 15.
52 Compare Sacrosanctum Concilium, supra note 15, nos. 34, 50 with Summorum Pontificum, supra note 19, art. 6.
Aside from the absence of lay lectors, the only striking differences between the *usus antiquior* liturgy of the word and that of the *usus modernus* is the inclusion of a reading from the old testament in the latter (the former has only two readings, the epistle and the gospel), and the Gradual. The latter is what we call the “responsorial psalm.” Both involve proclamation of a psalm, but, as the Roman Rite had evolved, the gradual’s responsorial character had long ago disappeared.\(^5\) The Consilium chose to restore in fact what in theory had always been the case.\(^5\)

Speaking of the responsorial psalm, let’s introduce another piece of terminology here, although it’s not the first one that you’ll hear one during the Mass. Throughout the liturgy — indeed, throughout Catholic public prayer — one finds the call-and-response form called the preces, which comprises a “versicle,” indicated by a stylized letter \(v\), usually printed in red: \(\text{℣}\), to which is given the “response,” indicated by a stylized letter \(r\): \(\text{℟}\).

**The liturgy of the Eucharist**

The liturgy of the Eucharist, the heart of the Mass, begins with a Proper antiphon, the offertory, which is followed by the preces *orate fratres* (“pray, brethren, that my sacrifice….“), after which the priest prays the Proper prayer *superoblata*, the “prayer over the gifts.” There then follows the preces *sursum corda*, which is among the most ancient liturgical components, in constant use since at least AD 210.\(^5\)

\(\text{℣}\) The Lord be with you
\(\text{℟}\) And with your spirit
\(\text{℣}\) [Lift] upward your hearts [*sursum corda*]
\(\text{℟}\) We have, to the Lord [*habemus ad Dominum*]

\(^5\) From [JUNGMANN, MASS OF THE ROMAN RITE, at 278-80.](#)
\(^5\) See id., at 278.
\(^5\) The *Apostolic Tradition* of St. Hippolytus of Rome, which dates from that time, records its use in the liturgy. 210 is thus the upper limit, but nothing in what Hippolytus says (or what we know of him) suggests that it was a new arrival in the liturgy. It may be a century older. It may be older still.
May we express thanks to the Lord our God
It is right and just.

At this point, the celebrant will flip to—and then back from—a section of the Missal called the Prefaces. (Confident celebrants flip directly from the superoblata to the preface.) These are short prayers that are proper to particular times, seasons, and persons, which follow similar rhetorical patterns, and which bridge us from the sursum corda to the Sanctus, in which we join the company of heaven in the unending hymn of God’s glory.56

At last we come to the Eucharistic Prayer itself, in which, “the priest does what Jesus did: he takes bread, blesses it, breaks it, and declares it to be his body, that is, the body of Jesus.”57 The usus modernus offers four options.58 The usus antiquior, however, has only one: The Roman Canon; today, we call it “Eucharistic Prayer I,” and it has been the heart of the Mass since at least the sixth century if not the fourth.59 It beseemeth that holy things be administered in a holy manner, says the Council of Trent of the Canon,

and of all holy things this sacrifice is the most holy; to the end that it might be worthily and reverently offered and received, the Catholic Church instituted, many years ago, the sacred Canon, so pure from every error that nothing is contained therein which does not in the highest degree savour of a certain holiness and piety, and raise up unto God the minds of those that offer. For it is composed out of the very words of the Lord,

56 Compare Is 6:3 with Rev 4:8; see infra, part III.
57 WUERL, supra note 17, at 152.
the traditions of the apostles, and the pious institutions also of holy pontiffs.60

This is also where we find the most striking difference between the usus antiquior and the usus modernus: The canon is spoken aloud in the latter, all-but silently in the former.

### The closing rites

In either form, the Mass closes with the oratio super populum (the “prayer over the people”), the blessing, and the dismissal.61 The closing rite of the usus modernus omits the Last Gospel (a reading from the prologue of the Gospel of John) which, much like (but later than) the prayers at the foot of the altar, had become a regular fixture of the Mass before its inclusion in the Missal of Pius V.62

### II. The meaning of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

We are all now up to speed, hopefully, on the general structure of the Mass, and on the lexicon that describes what we do there and how. But to understand why the Mass matters (and thus why the arguments over “which expression” and “what ars celebrandi” are so heated), we need to understand what the Mass is.

As I said in my introduction, the Mass is the Easter Triduum. It began in the upper room, but it is not quite correct—it is incomplete—to say, as it is often said, that “[w]hat took place there, in that room, is the mystery at the heart of every Mass.”63 The Mass is the Easter Triduum: not only the upper room, but also Calvary and the empty tomb. It’s surprising how fast one gets into the long grass if one loses sight of

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60 Waterworth, supra note 9, at 155 f.
62 See Gihr, at 768.
63 Wuerl, supra note 17, at 27; but see id., at 30 (noting that “[w]hat we remember in the Eucharist is Christ’s sacrifice at Calvary”).
We often read statements such as “[t]he Mass is the sacrifice of the new law;” \(^{65}\) that “the Eucharist is a sacrifice in the strict sense, and not only in a general way, as if it were simply a matter of Christ’s offering himself to the faithful as their spiritual food.” \(^{66}\) John Paul II reminded us that “above all else, the Eucharist is a sacrifice, one that is so decisive for the salvation of the human race that Jesus Christ offered it and returned to the Father only after he had left us a means of sharing in it as if we had been present there. Each member of the faithful can thus take part in it and inexhaustibly gain its fruits.” \(^{67}\) But what sense do these statements make if we frame the Mass in terms of the Last Supper? Only when we see the Mass as the Triduum and the fulfillment of the old testament cultus do they snap into unsettling focus. \(^{68}\)

Some background may help.

**A. Sacrifice and the old covenant: The cultus of Israel**

Although our praise and sacrifice add nothing to God, \(^{69}\) “most nations in all ages have felt the propriety of offering Him of their best, as to their highest sovereign; and they have testified to His supreme dominion over life and death by the total or partial destruction of victims in His honor.” \(^{70}\) The old testament affirms this right out of the

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\(^{65}\) DICT. DOG. THEO., supra note 59, at 177.

\(^{66}\) *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, no. 13 (emphasis in original).

\(^{67}\) Id., no. 11; cf. HAHN, supra note 17, at 26 (“Our supreme act of worship is a supreme act of sacrifice”).

\(^{68}\) “Cultus,” rather than “cult,” is how Card. Journet’s translators rendered the French *culte*. I think that there is much merit in this choice; they had different concerns in view, but we, too, must be wary of the word “cult,” which has accrued a new meaning in the last century (as a synonym for “dangerous sect”) that has almost entirely driven out the old meaning.

\(^{69}\) Cf. ICEL1970, *preface IV for weekdays* (“You have no need of our praise, yet our desire to thank you is itself your gift. Our prayer of thanksgiving adds nothing to your greatness, but makes us grow in your grace”).

gate with Cain, Abel, and Noah, and throughout the following books, we see a clear theme: Sacrifice is offered to God in atonement for our sins through a priesthood. Through *Leviticus* 17, for example, we are made witnesses to God’s commandment to Israel: “The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls. For it is blood that atones for the soul.” Indeed, “not without blood’ was the great truth taught by God from the beginning, the inscription which may be said to have been written on the gates of tabernacle and temple.”

And blood pervades the old testament. In our beginning, there was Abraham, who was tested with a command to sacrifice Isaac, his son. But, after Isaac had carried on his back the wood on which he would be sacrificed to the hill on which he would be sacrificed, and after Abraham had built an altar, God spared Isaac, and instead gave Abraham something else to sacrifice: “A male lamb. And so representative sacrifice is established by divine command. God gives the lamb, which Abraham then offers back to him.” The angel of death later *passes over* the houses marked with the blood of the sacrificed lamb. Moses having built an altar, the old covenant was sealed in the blood of sacrificed oxen. And so on.

The idea in most of this (Passover excepted) is what Christian theology would later describe as “substitutionary atonement.” “The record shows,” says T. Ernest Wilson, that “God had revealed to men the fact that they were sinners, and that the only way to approach Him was by means of a substitutionary sacrifice. Death as the penalty of sin

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72 Compare Gen 22:6 with Jn 19:17; see HAHN, at 17 f.
73 Gen 22:9.
74 RATZINGER, supra note 10, at 38.; see Gen 22.
75 Ex 12:3-13; see HAHN, at 20.
76 See Ex 24:8.
77 See, e.g., HAHN, at 21 f.; GIHR, at 36 ff.
must be exacted. This was done by means of an innocent substitute dying in the place of the sinner.”79 The wage of sin is death,80 and we are stained through ex utero with what the tradition of the Church calls “original sin.” Sin cries out for blood, but sin can be covered up by the blood of sacrifices offered in the place of the one who deserves to have his blood shed.

B. Sacrifice in the new covenant: The fulfillment on Calvary and its presence in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

Christ at Calvary.

But all this was futile, because, “it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.”81 The “sacrifices of the old law were offered up in order to foreshadow this one individual and paramount sacrifice—the imperfect forecasting the perfect,” says St. Thomas Aquinas.82

The problem is that our sacrifice can never truly be expiatory, because we have nothing to offer to God that God has not already made.83 How, then, can we make our peace with Him? God solved this dilemma for us by offering Himself as a sacrifice in the person of His Son, begotten not made.84 Charles Card. Journet writes: “Christ’s sacrifice was primarily propitiatory, a sacrifice for our sins, since it would never have been offered if man had not sinned.”85 This adds up to a staggering notion: The incomprehensibly-mighty creator of a universe that is incomprehensibly large resolved to die at the hands of

80 Rom 6:23; Ez 18:20.
81 Heb 10:4 (emphasis added).
82 1 SUMMA THEOLOGICA, supra note 70, at 1058; cf. GIHR, at 39; HERBERT LOCKYER, ALL THE DIVINE NAMES & TITLES IN THE BIBLE 168 (1975) (“The constant work of the [levitical] priests in their daily application of blood that was shed at the altar is symbolic of the efficacy of the shed blood of Christ”).
83 Cf. RATZINGER, supra note 10, at 36.
84 Cf. 2 BENEDICT XVI, JESUS OF NAZARETH 232 (2011); HAHN, at 24.
85 CHARLES CARDINAL JOURNET, 1 THE CHURCH OF THE WORD INCARNATE 54 (Downes, trns. 1955) (Imp. +Myers, 1954); cf. GIHR, at 60.
His creations in order to repair our relationship with Him. What *wondrous*, incomprehensible love is this! As the heavens are higher than the earth, so, truly, is His love greater than we can imagine.86

In the sacrifice of Calvary, Christ, our one true high priest, offered himself as sacrificial victim for our redemption.87 The New Testament is explicit in identifying Christ not only as a teacher, but as the fulfillment of the old testament cultus. We tend to hear John the Baptist out of context—as if his words were spoken in that affected and detached posh eccentricity of Eddie Izzard.88 “Behold the lamb of God! Behold him who takes away the sins of the world!”89 But think about it; John the Baptist knew what a lamb was for.90 Think what he must have realized to make that statement! Think how astonished that man must have been by what had just been spoken through his mouth! Think of the emotional impact of being the first witness to see all that had been promised! Think of being perhaps the first man to realize what *all this has always been about*.

But John was only the first.91 St. Paul writes to the Ephesians that in Christ “we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace”; to the Romans that while “all have sinned,” we are redeemed by Christ “whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through his blood”; to the Corinthians that “Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us,”92 And St. Peter: “you were not redeemed with corruptible things … but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”93 That’s almost

87 *Cf.* DICT. DOG. THEO., supra note 59, at 250; HAHN, at 23; GIHR, at 52 f.
88 *Hear*, e.g., Eddie Izzard, GLORIOUS (Vision Video, 1997).
89 Jn 1:29.
90 *See* GIHR, at 50 f.; *cf.* MARTHALER, supra note 78, at 149 ff.; LOCKYER, supra note 82, at 184 f.
91 This paragraph focuses on the new testament authors, but other extant Christian writings, including the late first century Didache and the early second century Ignatius of Antioch evince the same conviction that the Eucharist is a sacrifice. *See*, e.g., HAHN, at 30 f., 33 f.
92 Eph 1:7; Rom 3:23-25; 1 Cor 5:7.
93 1 Pet 1:18-19.
a direct quote from the Passover narrative. And again: “[Christ] bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.”\textsuperscript{94} St John, to the seven churches of Asia: “Grace be unto you … from Jesus Christ, … [who] loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.”\textsuperscript{95} And again: The beasts and elders sung to the Lamb who stood as slain, “you are worthy to take and open the book because you were slain, and have redeemed us to God by your blood.”\textsuperscript{96} The author of the letter to the Hebrews goes the furthest, naming Jesus as high priest of the new covenant and connecting the action of the high priests in the old covenant to that of Christ, who entered the holy of holies not as did the old high priests, sprinkled in the blood of animals, “but by his own blood …, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”\textsuperscript{97}

So: \textit{What} did Christ do? “We are reconciled to God by the death of His Son.”\textsuperscript{98} \textit{How} did he do it? “He delivered himself up for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God.”\textsuperscript{99} Thus, as Horatio Bonar says, “[t]he very essence of Christ’s deliverance is the substitution of Himself for us, His life for ours. He did not come to risk His life; He came to die!”\textsuperscript{100} Jesus of Nazareth is not a saint or martyr, a man who showed us an example of how to live and who was killed for his beliefs, but rather the Christ, the messiah of God; the high priest and sacrificial lamb.\textsuperscript{101} No one took His life from Him; He gave it freely and took it back up.\textsuperscript{102}

\textsuperscript{94} 1 Pet 2:2:24.
\textsuperscript{95} Rev 1:5.
\textsuperscript{96} Rev 5:9
\textsuperscript{97} Heb 4-10.
\textsuperscript{98} Rom 5:10; cf. GIHR, at 39.
\textsuperscript{99} Eph 5:2.
\textsuperscript{100} BONAR, supra note 71, at 60.
\textsuperscript{101} Cf. Heb 5:5; JOURNET, supra note 85, at 52; GIHR, at 42; LOCKYER, supra note 82, at 184. This helps distinguish the literal priesthood of Jesus, and what the Catholic Church calls the “ministerial” priesthood through which He acts sacramentally, from the common priesthood of the faithful. \textit{Sec}, e.g., GIHR, at 31-35.
\textsuperscript{102} Jn 10:18; see JOURNET, at 53 ff.;
Blood, then, pervades the new testament, too. Preface V for Easter of the usus modernus puts it well: “By the oblation of his Body, he brought the sacrifices of old to fulfillment in the reality of the Cross, and, by commending himself to you for our salvation, showed himself [to be] the Priest, the Altar, and the Lamb of sacrifice.” But now there is a change: In the old covenant, “[t]he sinner deserves destruction, and he offers the victim in his own stead.”103 In the new covenant, the sinner still deserves destruction, but God now offers His beloved Son as the victim in my stead.

My stead, by the way. To digress for a moment: We cannot lose sight of just how personal is this personal salvation—that, although Jesus was brutally tortured and executed for the salvation of many, he was nevertheless brutally tortured and executed for my salvation. Old-fashioned Catholics are sometimes faulted for making people feel guilty. Well, shouldn’t we feel guilty? It follows from what has been said that the crucifixion is, in a certain sense, an ongoing event right now. If all the sins of the saved were laid on Jesus’ shoulders, that must include all the sins that, from our perspective, we have yet to commit; each new sin we commit must therefore add to the weight that was then on Jesus’ shoulders.104 Keep that in mind. “The blood-stained cross remains planted forever at the centre of the true religion”105 in order that we should always remember the terrible price at which our salvation was purchased.106

Finally: In both the old covenant and the new, blood is the price of sin, and a substitute is given to us such that the blood of another takes the place of our own. But whereas that blood merely covered sin, this blood washes us clean, as we read in Revelation.107 How so? In a sense, as St. Paul tells us, we do not escape. We deserve death and we get it:

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103 COPPENS, at 195; cf. JOURNET, at 51 f.
104 This insight, which I credit to Scot Longyear, had a profound impact on me during my conversion.
105 JOURNET, at 61.
106 1 Cor 6:19-20.
107 Cf. 2 BENEDICT, supra note 84, at 230.
Do you not know that in baptism into Christ, you were baptized into His death? But Christ has conquered death! In this season above all, we cry out: Alleluia, He is risen! And we with him! For as we died with Him through baptism into Calvary, in like manner we rose with Him through baptism into the empty tomb.

The old covenant could only cover our sin with blood, just as the blood covered the houses of the Hebrews. The new covenant pays the full price and in uniting us to Christ—whose blood is not on but in us—saves us by the blood of Calvary and the water of baptism. After a fashion, we are incorporated into Christ, and suffer corporately that which we cannot stand corporally. In this way, as Isaiah prophesied, the punishment that brings us peace was on Him at Calvary, and by His wounds on the cross, we are healed.

You and me at Calvary

In the Mass, that which Christ did at Calvary is “perpetuated down the ages,” making it present to the faithful in the form that Christ instituted at the Last Supper, and thus making possible what He told us in John chapter 6. “The Mass is the sacrifice of the New Law in which Christ, through the ministry of the priest, offers Himself to God in an unbloody manner under the appearances of bread and wine ...

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108 Rom 6:3.
109 Cf. 2002MR Preface I for Ascension (“For the Lord Jesus … [is] the King of glory, conqueror of sin and death”).
110 Rom 4-6.
111 Cf. GIHR, at 38.
112 Jn 6:53-54; HAHN, supra note 17, at 26.
114 Is 53:5.
115 Ecclesia de Eucharistia, supra note 64, no. 11; cf. 2002MR, Preface I of the Holy Eucharist: [Jesus] is the true and eternal priest, who instituted the pattern of an everlasting sacrifice, and was the first to offer himself as the saving victim, commanding us to make this offering as his memorial. As we eat his flesh that was sacrificed for us, we are made strong, and, as we drink his Blood that was poured out for us, we are washed clean.
116 Cf. 2 SUMMA THEOLOGICA, supra note 70, at 2518 (The Mass is “the celebration of the mystery, which is both offered as a sacrifice and received as a sacrament”); Encyc. Mysterium fidei, no. 28, 57 AAS 753, 759 (Paul VI, 1965).
[and] The Mass is the same sacrifice as the sacrifice of the cross because in the Mass the victim is the same, and the principal priest is the same, Jesus Christ.”

It is not the sacrifice done again, as some critics charge; we do not crucify Christ anew. Rather, the one sacrifice is made present upon the altar, and in this miraculous thing, “we not only receive something from the past but become contemporaries with what lies at the foundation” of the Mass. “It was to multiply not the supreme sacrifice, but its presence among men” that Our Lord instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and in the Mass, as our High Priest accordingly to the order of Melchizedek, He continues to offer it “upon the altar, by the hands of His duly-authorized ministers.” In the Mass, Archbishop Fulton Sheen tells us,

Christ’s sacrifice on Calvary is renewed on our altars as each human being is brought in contact with it at the moment of consecration; but the sacrifice is one and the same despite the multiplicity of Masses. The Mass then is the communication of the Sacrifice of Calvary to us under the species of bread and wine.

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117 BALT. CAT. A. 357; cf. Encyc. Mediator Dei, no. 20, 39 AAS 521, 528 f (Pius XII, 1947) (footnote omitted); JOURNET, supra note 85, at 62 (“the bloody sacrifice is brought to each one of us by the renewal of the bloodless rite instituted at the last supper”); GIHR, at 73, 78 f. It should be readily-apparent that liturgy and ecclesiology are deeply intertwined; the Eucharist is a sacrifice, and “[s]acrifice and priesthood are inseparably connected: no sacrifice can exist without a priesthood, and no priesthood without a sacrifice.” GIHR, at 30. Thus, to deny any part of this complex is to invite reconsideration either of that which is denied, or those things to which the denied thing is connected. If one denies the sacrifice, one denies the ministerial priesthood, and vice versa.

118 Cf.KARL KEATING, CATHOLICISM AND FUNDAMENTALISM 246, 248 ff. (1988) (imp. +Mahony, 1988); Ecclesia de eucharistia, no. 12 (“The Mass makes present the sacrifice of the Cross; it does not add to that sacrifice nor does it multiply it”).

119 See DICT. DOG. THEO., supra note 59, 178; WUERL, supra note 17, at 31.

120 Ratzinger, supra note 10, at 57.

121 JOURNET, at 63.

122 GIHR, at 78.

The Church’s dogmatic formulation of this great mystery was supplied by the Council of Trent:

In this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the mass, that same Christ is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner, who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross; the holy Synod teaches, that this sacrifice is truly propitiatory and that by means thereof this is effected, that we obtain mercy, and find grace in seasonable aid, if we draw nigh unto God, contrite and penitent, with a sincere heart and upright faith, with fear and reverence. For the Lord, appeased by the oblation thereof, and granting the grace and gift of penitence, forgives even heinous crimes and sins. For the victim is one and the same, the same now offering by the ministry of priests, who then offered Himself on the cross, the manner alone of offering being different.124

Is the point sufficiently clear? We are not just in the upper room at Mass; we are in that terrible place on that terrible day. “The Mass is at the same time, and inseparably, the sacrificial memorial in which the sacrifice of the Cross is perpetuated and the sacred banquet of communion with the Lord’s body and blood.”125 “The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice.”126

It is in this sense especially that the Rev. Peters is correct when he says that that no matter where we are in the world—or, one might add, when we are127—we all gather around one altar.”128 There is only one altar: Calvary. There is only one priest: Christ, the High Priest. There is only one victim: Christ, the Lamb of God. Even in private Masses, the

124 WATERWORTH, supra note 9, at 154-55; cf. Mysterium fidei, supra note 116, no. 5.
125 Ecclesia de Eucharistia, supra note 64, no. 12 (quoting CCC ¶ 1382).
126 Ibid (quoting CCC ¶ 1367).
127 Cf. USCCB, Happy Are Those Who Are Called to His Supper, http://old.usccb.org/doctrine/Eucharist.pdf, at 12 (2006) (last visited May 26, 2013) (“The Mass is not simply a private encounter between an individual and Jesus Christ. In a mystical manner, the whole Church is present in every celebration of the Mass, including the angels and the martyrs and saints of all ages”).
entire Church is present around the one altar. In the Liturgy of the Eucharist, there is only one sacrifice offered by one priest, just as there is, in the end, only one bread. “It is the same offering, no matter who offers it, be it Peter or Paul. It is the same one that Christ gave to His disciples and the same one that priests now perform: the latter is in no way inferior to the former, for it is not men who sanctify the latter, but He who sanctified the former. For just as the words which God spoke are the same as those that the priest now pronounces, so too the offering is the same.”

III. Consequences.

I concluded my last talk by talking about some practical implications of what I had discussed, and shall do so again today.

In his talk about liturgy cited above, the Rev. Peters told an allegory of the Abbot’s Cat. The abbot had a cat who insisted on making a pest of itself while the abbot addressed the congregation, and so they came up with a solution: Before the abbot spoke, they tied the cat to a tree. I’m a cat lover, so I urge people not to take this story too literally! Anyway, the abbot died, they got a new abbot, and before he gave talks, the cat was tied to the tree. Then that abbot died—apparently it’s a risky business being an abbot—they got a new abbot, and before he gave talks, the cat was tied to the tree. Then the cat died. But the

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129 Cf. Mysterium fidei, no. 32; see also post, appendix 3.
130 Cf. 1 Cor 10:17.
131 Mysterium Fidei, no. 38 (internal quotation mark deleted) (quoting Chrysostom, Homily 2 on 2nd Timothy). Interestingly, Paul here either omits a clause that other translations have, or translates it differently: “The Offering is the same, whether a common man, or Paul or Peter offer it.” See, e.g., http://newadvent.org/fathers/230702.htm. In the original Greek, available at http://www.documentacatholicamnia.eu/02g/0345-0407,_Iohannes_Chrysostomus,_In_epistolam_II_ad_Timotheum,_MGR.pdf, line 547, the sentence appears to read: Ἡ προσφορά ἡ αὐτή ἔστι, κἂν ὁ τυχων προσενεγκῃ, κἂν Παύλος, κἂν Πέτρος, but I am not qualified to do more than flag the issue.
tradition of this community is now that before the abbot speaks, the cat must be tied to a tree. Indeed, the abbot cannot speak until the cat is tied to the tree. So they got a new cat. The point is that liturgy can become cluttered with things that were once responses to practical problems, and which have now ossified into empty ritual.

There are some Abbot’s Cats in the usus antiquior; indeed, I think that’s a wonderful summary of what the Council wanted to fix. One of the great tragedies of the postconciliar era is that the Consilium’s decision to synthesize a new Mass rather than heeding the council’s call to renovate the old one has left us today with an usus antiquior missal that still has too many cats running around in it. We still hear the last gospel; the celebrant still frets about his maniple knocking something over; and so on. The leonine prayers were originally added while the pope was the “prisoner of the Vatican,” a kind of petition that the situation be resolved, yet they persist. This is likely to go unresolved for a number of decades.

I do not think that the ordinary form has a cat problem. But it has other problems.

In 1998, Cardinal Ratzinger pointed out that the average layman might be hard-pressed to distinguish between a Missa Cantata and the usus modernus sung in latin, as pietorists might say it ought to be. Those things that we tend to think of as distinctive to the latter, such as the direction of the priest, in fact have nothing to do with the council or the usus modernus. Yet, said Ratzinger, “the difference between a liturgy celebrated faithfully according to the Missal of Paul VI and the reality of a vernacular liturgy celebrated with all the freedom and creativity that are possible can be enormous.” How true that is!

Many of the problems we see are inevitable if we lose sight of what I have talked about above: That the Mass is fundamentally sacrificial in

133 Cf. Renovatio Ritus Romani, supra note 18, 2 MPA, at 109 f.
character, and that it is the entire Easter Triduum (not one part of it) in scope. Fixation on the last supper, in particular, has led to an excessive emphasis on action rather than meaning, on the form of a “communal meal” rather than its awesome mystical and ontological content.\textsuperscript{135} Cardinal Wuerl is assuredly correct that, for many Catholics, “every Mass is the same event as the Last Supper.”\textsuperscript{136} But it isn’t. We naturally flinch at facing the cross; how much easier to set the heart our worship in the cozy upper room than windswept Golgotha.\textsuperscript{137} Yet “[t]he Mass is not a dramatization of the Last Supper, and the notion that it is has led to all sorts of unhappy deviations.”\textsuperscript{138}

The Mass needs to be celebrated with ars celebrandi that reflect what we believe about its substantive content, and to my mind, this strongly suggests that we should return to the traditional ars celebrandi to the extent that they have neither been abrogated nor become subject to necessary modification. The usus antiquior liturgy was the stoic guardian of orthodoxy for centuries; in only a few decades of the usus modernus, we have seen a widespread collapse in orthodoxy and thus Mass attendance.\textsuperscript{139} We must infer that souls are being lost. This does not mean that we must abandon the usus modernus and return to the usus antiquior; I doubt that the problem is in the Missals of Paul VI and John Paul II, and I am certain that the Missal of John XXIII is not without problems of its own. Rather, I think it’s in the ars celebrandi. And it therefore does mean that we should celebrate the usus modernus in organic continuity with the liturgical tradition of the Roman Rite.

“What is sacred in the Mass … is the saving mystery of Christ which is made present by the celebration. It is this that gives, or should be

\textsuperscript{135} At the same time, however, it is also possible to become so wrapped up in Calvary that one loses sight of the empty tomb, and, at least in theory (although less likely in practice, I suspect), the upper room. Cf. GIHR, supra note 17, at 238; CHARLES DAVIS, LITURGY AND DOCTRINE 95 ff. (1960).
\textsuperscript{136} WUERL, supra note 17, at 34.
\textsuperscript{137} Cf. 1 Cor 1:18 et seq.
\textsuperscript{138} CRICHTON, supra note 25, at 70.
\textsuperscript{139} See infra, note 165.
allowed to give, tonality to the whole celebration however simple.”\textsuperscript{140} Does it? For example, if we in fact believe that when we sing the \textit{Sanctus} we join with angels, archangels, saints, and all the choirs and the whole company of heaven in singing the unending hymn of God’s praise,\textsuperscript{141} can we really sing:

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{marty_haeger_morning_mass.png}
\end{center}

If the choirs of angels sound like \textit{that}, we’re in a lot of trouble. But \textit{this}:

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{marty_haeger_mass.png}
\end{center}

\textit{That} we can believe, can’t we? One of these settings calls to mind the mystery and splendor of the eternal God; the other calls to mind the theme song of the 1980s children’s animation \textit{Bananaman}.\textsuperscript{142} Which, do you suppose, is more appropriate and fitting for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass?

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{140} CRICHTON, at 55.
\textsuperscript{141} Cf. 2002MR, Prefaces of Epiphany, Lent I, and Common III.
\textsuperscript{142} Hear YOUTUBE, \textit{Bananaman Intro}, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hq2KXudEjkI (last visited May 25, 2013).
\end{flushright}
To be clear, this is not to say that the Mass must exclude anything that is mediocre or shoddy. The Mass must exclude anything that is inconsistent with its character and scope, even things that are good (wonderful, even) in another context. Chris Tomlin’s popular song *Holy is the Lord God Almighty* is excellent, yet it has absolutely no place in the Mass—hence Pius XI’s complaint against “performing in church certain works which, however excellent, should never have been performed there since they were entirely out of keeping with the sacredness of the place and of the liturgy.” The reason that, for example, Sanders’ *Reproaches* or Lauridsen’s *O magnum mysterium* feel so moving and right and authentic is their artistic conformance to the content of the text. Music like this connects us directly and immediately to the underlying content, especially the emotional content of the text, whether it be the cold horror of the crucifixion, or the beatific wonder of the Christ-child, which can then short and ground through us, engaging our whole being beyond our capacity to control it. If you’ve ever stuck your fingers in a lightbulb socket, you understand the figure that I’m offering. This is what liturgical music must do.

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146 The *Reproaches*, i.e. the *Improperia*, are part of the *usus antiquior* liturgy for Good Friday. “O my people, what have I done to you? How have I offended you? Answer me!” *O magnum mysterium* is part of the divine office for the nativity of the Lord. “O great mystery and wonderful sacrament, that animals should see the new-born Lord, lying in a manger!” Note that both of the settings cited above, Sanders and Lauridsen, were composed in the last quarter-century. The problem with much modern liturgical music is not that it is “modern” in the sense of the date of its composition, but rather that it is “modern” in the sense of its style, *à la* “modern” art or “modern” architecture.

147 While writing this paper, I actually did precisely this, by accident, and a lightbulb (figuratively) turned on over my head, in the fashion of a Looney Tunes cartoon.
What we have said about the character and scope of the Mass also answers a lot of the experimentation that is proposed. David danced and praised God on the lyre—so why not liturgical dance? Why not guitars in the Mass? Jesus used the simple cup one might expect of a carpenter leading a band of fishermen.148 So why not glass chalices? The answer is straightforward in view of what I have said. This is not simply a Sunday worship service, or “mass,” lower-case m, but the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. No one danced at Calvary. No one played a lyre at the foot of the cross. Nothing we do on Earth is more awesome than this, our participation in the Triduum. We should bring it our best and treat it with the sober awe that it deserves.

It must be said that not everything that I want to fix in the liturgy follows directly from the sacrificial character of the Mass. But there are nevertheless good pastoral reasons for them, which connect indirectly thereto. The Canon of the Mass (“Eucharistic Prayer #1”) is “the first authentic teaching of the Church about the Holy Eucharist” and “the original theology of the Church regarding the Eucharistic mystery.”149 There is no theological defect in the trio of new Eucharistic prayers, of course, but have they been effective from a pastoral and catechetical standpoint? In his antediluvian tome Pastoral Liturgy, Father Josef Jungmann was able to say, when the Canon was the Eucharistic prayer, rather than one option, that “Every Catholic Christian has always understood quite plainly that in the Holy Mass a sacrifice is offered.”150 Is that still so?

Moreover, even Fr. Jungmann said that it’s always necessary to observe and recognize the law of continuity in liturgy:

And this not merely from psychological considerations, out of regard for those who will take part in nothing and count nothing valid which is not of long-standing custom. Of its nature, liturgy is conservative. Man is caught up in constant

149 GASSNER, supra note 59, at 12.
150 JUNGMANN, PASTORAL LITURGY, supra note 29, at 282.
change, but God never changes and his revelation, too, which is committed to the church, and the scheme of redemption, given in Christ, is always the same. Prayer and worship are a constant flowing back and homecoming of the souls of restless, wavering men, to the peace of God.\(^{151}\)

The liturgy *ought* to feel old.\(^{152}\) If it has a literal smell, it ought to be incense; if a figurative smell, that of old books. It ought to feel separate from the world. It should not feel like a part of people’s everyday experience; it should be a pair of wings on which we rise out of the world, not an anchor keeping us grounded therein.\(^{153}\) It should feel as though we are participating in precisely that in which we are participating: A worship that has neither end nor beginning. Jesus is present with us either way, but in the Mass we should “meet Christ by soaring up to Him, … [not] by dragging Him down into our workaday world.”\(^{154}\)

St. Thomas Aquinas wrote that, because “the whole mystery of our salvation is comprised in this sacrament, therefore it is performed with greater solemnity than the other sacraments.”\(^{155}\) That’s a good working principle. Accordingly, where I disagree with Rev. Peters—fancy that, a Catholic and an Anglican disagree on something!—is in what we *ought* to do. He objects that some kiwi parishes “continue to run … New Zealand Prayer Book services in a *Book of Common Prayer* style.”\(^{156}\) He says (to Anglican presiders) that everything in the missal that is optional should be left out, absent a specific, articulable reason for using it. I might suggest that celebrating the *usus modernus* in a *usus*

\(^{151}\) Id., at 92.

\(^{152}\) But see *Mediator Dei*, supra note 117, no. 61.

\(^{153}\) Cf. *Divini cultus*, supra note 144, at 44; Hildebrand, supra note 35, p.2. (“Does the new Mass, more than the old, bestir the human spirit—does it evoke a sense of eternity? Does it help raise our hearts from the concerns of everyday life—from the purely natural aspects of the world to Christ? Does it increase reverence, an appreciation of the sacred?”).

\(^{154}\) Ibid.

\(^{155}\) 2 *SUMMA THEOLOGICA*, supra note 70, at 2517.

\(^{156}\) Peters, supra note 23, at 22:00-22:09; cf. id., at 18:22-18:52.
antiquior style is precisely what we ought to be doing, and I might propose (to Catholic Celebrants\textsuperscript{157}) that everything in the Missal of John Paul II that gives an option to depart from the tradition of the Roman Rite should be ignored, absent a specific, articulable reason to deviate. For example, the traditional components retained in the \textit{usus modernus}' penitential rite are the (latin) \textit{Confiteor} and the (greek) \textit{Kyrie}. The \textit{usus modernus} alters the wording of each, and allows two other options as substitute penitential rites. The wording changes must be followed, but there is no reason why celebrants must choose the non-traditional options and every reason why they should choose the option that aligns most closely with tradition.\textsuperscript{158} Moreover, while there is probably good reason for the \textit{Confiteor} to be said in English translation, the \textit{Kyrie} should undoubtedly be said in its original Greek.\textsuperscript{159}

Another example might be the Eucharistic Prayer and the orientation of the celebrant while he prays it. Enough has been said already about the Roman Canon to imply that it should be preferred over the

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\textsuperscript{157} What we ought to call the priest is another controversial question, over which I passed earlier. In light of what has been said, it would stand to reason that, left to our own devices, we should call him the “offerant,” but this is not a question of first impression, and two more-or-less traditional terms have come down to us: “Presider” and “Celebrant.” Although “presider” is the more ancient term, I prefer “celebrant” for the reasons explained in Simon Dodd, \textit{Hearing, saying, celebrating, presiding}, 2 MPA 180. It is even arguable that the priest \textit{presides} over the liturgy of the word and \textit{celebrates} the liturgy of the eucharist, and I have suggested a similar “split the difference” approach in connection to the direction of the celebrant, \textit{see Renovatio Ritus Romani}, supra note 18, 2 MPA, at 130, 153 n.121.

\textsuperscript{158} Scott Hahn writes: “If we’re on the witness stand, then who’s on trial? The penitential rite makes it clear: We are.” HAHN, supra note 17, at 45. I would suggest an emendation: The penitential rite \textit{should} make that clear, and for that reason, it should include the congregational recitation of the \textit{Confiteor}, which excludes the modern interpolations that the missal labels as options B and C. “The \textit{Confiteor} is an open avowal of compunction of heart, a contrite and penitential prayer which should cleanse the soul from even the slightest stains of guilt and from all sinful defects.” G\textit{H}R, supra note 17, at 358. Think what a difference in tone it makes to open the Mass with such a personal confession and participating in a common call for clemency, on the one hand, versus hearing an elaborate and general call for clemency on the other.

\textsuperscript{159} See supra note 23.
alternatives; as to the latter, the priest—not just a Catholic priest, but all priests, in the nature of the concept—stands as a mediator between God and Man, it would stand to reason that the celebrant should assume that a physical posture that reflects this interior and metaphorical posture even if it were not the universal tradition of the Church.\footnote{See Renovatio ritus romani, 2 MPA, at 125 ff.}

Yet another example involves the proper chants. Eyebrows might have gone up in part B when I said that the \textit{usus modernus} opens with a proper chant, the \textit{Introit}; when do we hear an \textit{Introit} chant in the \textit{usus modernus}? An offertory chant? A communion chant? We do not hear them because in many (perhaps most) parishes, substitutions are made. This practice is permissible within current liturgical law, it is an approved option, but, I suggest, we should stop exercising it.

Examples could be multiplied,\footnote{The interested reader will find a more programmatic proposal for liturgical reform in Renovatio ritus romani.} but you get the idea.

**Concluding remarks**

Shortly before his death, John Paul II wrote, with visible emotion:

For over a half century, every day, beginning on 2 November 1946, when I celebrated my first Mass in the Crypt of Saint Leonard in Wawel Cathedral in Krakow, my eyes have gazed in recollection upon the host and the chalice, where time and space in some way “merge” and the drama of Golgotha is represented in a living way, thus revealing its mysterious “contemporaneity”. Each day my faith has been able to recognize in the consecrated bread and wine the divine Wayfarer who joined the two disciples on the road to Emmaus and opened their eyes to the light and their hearts to new hope.\footnote{Ecclesia de Eucharistia, supra note 64, no. 59.}
The Mass, the crown jewel of the sacraments, is the most acute example of the function of the Church, which is, “in large part, to extend Christ’s sacramental presence on Earth. Christ ‘intended His work not just for His small number of contacts … in the brief time of His ministry. He wanted everyone to experience his presence and his healing touch. He established the Church on earth so that he could extend his incarnation through time and space.’”163 And when “the Church celebrates the [Mass], she confesses the faith received from the apostles—whence the ancient saying: lex orandi, lex credendi…[t]he law of prayer is the law of faith: the Church believes as she prays.”164

Well: If that is so, crisis in liturgy must presage crisis in belief. The Roman Rite is today in the grips of a crisis that followed, and that was arguably unleashed by, but which was certainly not warranted by, the Second Vatican Council. Unsurprisingly, then, polls of the laity show declining engagement with the Church and widespread ignorance of (and even dissent from) her teaching.165 With the corrected translation,

163 Simon Dodd, The Tactility of the Church, 2 MPA 19 (2012) (quoting SCOTT HAHN, SWEAR TO GOD 15 (2004)).

164 CCC ¶ 1124.

165 For example, when CARA explored Pew Forum polling data in early May, they reported the headline that 75% of children aged 14-17 in Catholic households describe themselves as Catholics, which seems positive. See Mark Gray, The Catholic Teenager: A few mysteries solved, 1964, May 2, 2013, http://nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com/2013/05/the-catholic-teenager-few-mysteries.html (last visited May 30, 2013). But drill down into those figures and you quickly hit dry rot. 75%—not 75% of the 75%, but 75%, the same percentage—don’t think that living consistently with the Church’s teaching is an important factor in what it means to be Catholic. 59% confess that they routinely skip Mass on Sundays (still a mortal sin without good reason, and incomprehensible in light of what we have said above if we assume that they know and understand the content of the Mass). 82% deny that confession matters. 87% admit that they haven’t opened a Bible in the last twelve months. Jesus told us to “make disciples,” not “make people who sometimes attend Mass and self-identify as Catholics to pollsters.” Cf. Dwight Longenecker, Help! My Children Aren’t Catholic Anymore!, STANDING ON MY HEAD, May 19, 2013, http://www.patheos.com/blogs/standingonmyhead/2013/05/help-my-children-arent-catholic-anymore.html (last visited May 30, 2013). The figure of dry rot, by the way, was chosen precisely: “An outbreak of dry rot within a building can be perceived to be an extremely serious infestation that is hard to eradicate, requiring drastic remedies to correct. Eventually the decay can cause
we have taken a firm step in the right direction by fixing the words of the Mass.\textsuperscript{166} We are nevertheless at great risk, I think, when the prevalent \textit{ars celebrandi} belie what we profess to be the reality of the Mass. Happily, though, this is fixable! The ordinary form of the Roman Rite can be celebrated in full continuity with both the \textit{ars celebrandi} of the Rite’s liturgical tradition \textit{and} the authentic reforms of the Council—and it should be.

At very least, I think we would benefit from having a terminology that articulates the differences in approach to \textit{ars celebrandi} and from clean and clear lines of demarcation between those approaches.\textsuperscript{167} I also think that we are more likely to have a productive discussion of them if we reflect on the scope character of the Mass itself, and put that invisible reality at the heart of the discussion, and I hope that what I’ve said is helpful in both regards.

I have now discussed elements of the Church’s action in all three of its offices: Teaching, Governing, and Sanctifying. In the fall, I hope to return and discuss the canon of scripture.

\textsuperscript{166} See supra, note 23.  
\textsuperscript{167} Cf. supra, p.10.}
Appendix 1:
The Churches *sui iuris* and their Rites

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<tr>
<th>Particular Church</th>
<th>Rite</th>
<th>Approximate numbers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albanian Byzantine Catholic Church</td>
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<td>3,845</td>
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Appendix 2:
The Byzantine Rite in the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches

Source: http://orthodoxwiki.org/List_of_autocephalous_and_autonomous_churches_and_linked_pages#theme-linked
Appendix 3:

What the Mass *really* looks like