

Excerpts from *Liturgical Everyday Sanctity*, 1938

Transfiguration

LitWH (1938), Introductory Talk (7.8.1938), 2-4

Fr Kentenich repeatedly talks about “transfiguration” and sharing in the transfiguration of Jesus Christ. What does he mean?

- a) That all that is created is “transparent”, so that we can see God through it;*
- b) sharing in Christ’s resurrection and transfiguration;*
- c) reaching the final goal, the meaningful goal of this world, which is to be found at the end of history;*
- d) the battle against and overcoming the Evil One.*

[2] We need to ask ourselves two questions at this point: One question concerns the present situation[in Germany]¹; the second question concerns the [theological] situation.

[The present situation]

Our Holy Father never tires of explaining that we can point to the most extensive possible domination of Christendom by the devil as the ‘political’ *mysterium iniquitatis* [mystery of evil] and as *mendacium incarnatum* [embodied lies].

The time has come when we feel the need to say that “there are Christians today who have Christ on their lips, the devil in their hearts, and the world in their hands.” That is to say, it is a time that is totally orientated to this world.

[The context of a theology of history]

So what is the present situation? How has the devil’s domination come about? How is it possible? According to our Catholic way of seeing things, three great powers influence world history – God, the devil, and human beings. Today the devil has the trump card. Human beings have overlooked their task to be a great power in governing the world. Human beings – that is, Christians, indeed our religious leaders - have failed through *peccata omissionis* [sins of omission] and *peccata commissionis* [sins of commission].

This is the reason for the judgement that has broken in on the world. Think of how many sins of omission we have committed! We have forgotten that in governing the world we have a part to play as a great power. We have considered our position too little and have been too little aware of it. We have seen Christianity too strongly as a

¹ Hitler was in power and the world was moving steadily towards another war.

cultural power and as a political power, [but too little as a religious power through faith].

[The devil in world events]

[3] If we think of the devil, two questions arise: the question about the ultimate, and question about the penultimate meaning of world events. Ultimately the meaning of events is God's dominion over the world and things; its penultimate meaning is Christ's dominion over the world. How totally the approach of new paganism contradicts this. The ultimate meaning [of history] according to [the secularised point of view] is the downfall, disintegration and total destruction of the world. The penultimate meaning [according to Nazi ideology] is the dominion of "blood and soil"², happiness on this earth.

[Our participation in the transfiguration of Jesus Christ]

However, the dominion of almighty God will come one day. St Paul proclaimed this dominion with the words: The world of things and human beings has to be aligned with the only begotten Son. Christ is the symbol of the transfiguration of the whole world, the transfiguration of human beings and the whole of creation. My body will one day become like the transfigured body of our Lord. The qualities of the transfigured body of the God-Man will be the qualities of my transfigured body. Our Lord's body is

1. immortal: "What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable" (1 Cor 15,42b). So we have to show an attitude of reverence to our bodies.
2. Our Lord's transfigured body possessed tremendous clarity. Think of the way everything shimmers through the body.
3. It is free and spiritual so that it can pass through doors. Paul put it this way: "It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body" (1 Cor 15, 44).
4. It enjoys profound and all-embracing agility, because it can move rapidly from one place to another.

[4] Our soul, too, shares in the transfiguration, it is immersed in the *visio beata*, which means sharing in God's way of knowing and loving.

Our senses will be fully satisfied in eternity. Just as we speak of the *poena sensus* [punishment of the senses] in hell, so in heaven there is the *praemia sensus* [reward

² "Blut und Boden", Nazi propaganda slogan idealizing and mythologizing the countryside. The earliest known usage is by Oswald Spengler in *The Decline of the West* (1918-22. ... It came to stand for all that was anti-modern and anti-urban in Nazi ideology, and found expression in literature and in the visual imagery of posters and film. ... Films frequently used the relationship between community and landscape to illustrate nationalistic or racist themes ... and to reinforce traditional views of the position of women (Cassel's Dictionary of Modern German History).

of the senses]. Our eyes, our ears will be completely satisfied. "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, ... God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Cor 2,9).

[Transfiguration:

Liberation from enslavement to this world, the gravity of this world, the need [suffering] of this world]

The whole of creation will also be drawn into the transfigured world. After it has first been buried in the world of original sin, it will share mysteriously in the transfiguration of the world. Then a new heaven and new earth will come down (cf Rev 21,2).

When I meditate on this great context, some of my enslavement to this world must fall away from me. "How this world nauseates me when I see heaven!" How can I hang onto things when I can't take them with me into eternity? Some of the need and anxiety of this world must also fall away. St Paul said, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us" (Ro 8,18).

However, we must also be set free from the gravity of this world. We who have grown older experience how often the body weighs upon the soul. *Ad maiora natus sum* – we have been born to greater things.

[5] The penultimate meaning of the world! Will God's reign be set up on ruins? Before God begins his reign, the God-Man will have had to set up his kingdom. Once the world, human beings and all things have become subject to him, he will hand over the sceptre to the Father. Then God will be all in all. The penultimate meaning of world history is to arrive at the hotly contested, yet victorious, reign of the God-Man. There is something terrible yet beautiful about this subject – over the Crib the "*Gloria in excelsis Deo!*" and in the temple Simeon's words, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel" (Lk 2,34). The Church is attacked with lies, murder and execution. Who is behind these enemy forces? A supernatural power – the devil. And Christ has been commissioned to render the devil's influence harmless. Christ must and will tie him down.

What is “Liturgical Everyday Sanctity”?

LitWH (1938) ed. Stein, 4th Conference, 81-93

This text is not a literal transcript of the talks. There are passages where you can feel a discontinuity in the thoughts. So it is not always easy to understand the text. At times it seems to give only the main points.

Part One sets the value of the liturgy against the background of those times. From our point of view it is interesting to see our father’s approach: The Eucharist is an important pastoral means. So it is always celebrated in its actual sociological, political and cultural context. To the extent that it does so, it answers the needs of the faithful.

The main thrust of the text is the inner connection, the necessary interaction between everyday sanctity and the liturgy.

The Value of the Liturgy

[When we glorify God we transfigure the world]

[81] There are primary and secondary values. The primary values have to be seen in the light of God, that is, the liturgy offers me the opportunity to give Almighty God the honour and glory worthy of him. Only those who have a strong urge towards God will be able to understand the meaning of the liturgy. At the same time we have the indirect possibility to divinise, transfigure and free all created beings from sin.

[...]

[Arrangement of the talk announced]

The liturgy serves the needs of people today for religious depth, for the integration and wholeness of the whole personality, for a unified education through creating a definite spiritual climate³, for community and for a distinctive leadership.

[Answer to the needs for religious depth]

The liturgy serves the needs of people today for religious depth. [...]

[Answer to the needs for a holistic way of life]

[83] The liturgy serves the needs of people today for integrated and unified wholeness.

The spiritual currents today move powerfully towards absolute wholeness. The whole of life has to be embraced. In its way the liturgy aims at embracing the whole person,

³ “Atmosphaerenpaedagogik” – the pedagogy of an atmosphere.

the whole of life. As a result it is the inveterate enemy of all opposing movements today.

[Answer to the needs for community]

The liturgy serves the needs of people today for community⁴. People today need the “education of a definite spiritual climate”. People today are increasingly driven apart. The liturgy takes up the Catholic spiritual climate. Where else will we find a Catholic climate in everyday life?

[Answer to the needs for leadership]

[84] The liturgy serves the needs of people today for leadership. They are leaderless. They are longing for individual guidance, for spiritual guidance. Through the liturgy we are offered a profound form of leadership. Why? And, where is the guidance of souls laid down in broad outline in the liturgy?

[1. Leadership through the Church Year]

An initial answer is given by the whole Church Year, because it is a single great reflection of God’s innertrinitarian life.

The life of the Eternal Father shines out during the *Christmas Season*. God the Father has sent his Son. The dialogue between Father and Son: “You are my son; today I have begotten you” [Ps 2,7]. The soul will feel that all its needs to be a child are satisfied, because all that is great, every awareness of being sheltered, resounds in those words: God the Father. So the soul’s urge to approach the Father as a child is satisfied. [85] God the Father wants to be embraced, God the Father wants us to centre on him.

The *Easter Season* focuses strongly on the only begotten Son of God in the strength of his childhood. There is no school in the world which does such justice to our childhood, or is so profound, as the liturgy. Christ’s childhood is pre-eminently revealed in the liturgy, in particular in the Easter event.

Meditate on the childlike self-surrender of our Lord as it resounds in the liturgy. His morning prayer: “Behold, I come to do your will” (Cf. Hebr. 10,7). He allowed his Mother to carry him to the Temple so that he could belong to the Father as a child (Presentation – Cf. Lk 2,22f.). Then his temptation in the desert (1st Sunday in Lent – Mt 4,1-11 parr): He wanted to be faithful to the Father. Then the transfiguration on Mount Tabor – the Father testified: “This is my beloved Son” [Mt 17, 1-9]. He was nailed to the cross in order to reveal his childlikeness – it is the greatest power of his

⁴ The Nazi regime had ordered the closure of all Church organizations and associations, and banned the Catholic press. From 1934 their motto was: “The streets belong to the National Socialists, the Party and its associations alone.” No Catholic association was allowed to appear openly any more. It is against this background that the need to experience a Catholic community has to be seen.

childlikeness. All peoples, the whole world, have to be drawn into his personal strength as a child.

Pentecost – the Holy Spirit: Reflection of God's life, the mission of the Holy Spirit within the divinity.

[2. The liturgy as spiritual guide]

A second answer: The liturgy makes use of a tremendous variety of themes. In it everyone can find a theme that appeals to them. St Augustine made use of the image of a lake when he talked about faith. Faith is so shallow, so simple, that a child can swim in it, yet so deep that the most learned academic is unable to reach the bottom of this lake, or exhaust it completely. What is said about faith also applies to the liturgy. In the liturgy we have the teaching and the original aim of all the saints. In it we have exceedingly profound elements.

[86] In addition, mention has to be made to *psychological elements of exertion and relaxation*. Human beings are unable to work flat out all the time like machines. They are unable to keep up peak performance constantly. [They have to relax too.]

Think of the Christmas cycle. In Advent the longing grows slowly from afar for the coming of the Saviour, then it becomes excited expectation: *cras* – tomorrow you will see him. Then comes the climax: *hodie* – today, today Christ is born. So the liturgy is a master in spiritual guidance.

[Answer to the need for a profound encounter with God]

A third answer. The liturgy gives us an answer to our fervent longing for a more profound encounter with God, and an understanding of the Church that touches heart and soul.

The longing for an encounter with God. People today have many “encounters with God”; they often see themselves as God. In the liturgy we encounter the God-Man. We are not merely reminded of the historical life of our Lord, it becomes a unique and concrete reality [today]. We don't need to follow the mysteries of John⁵. Our Lord's life is not repeated in detail, however the liturgy makes Christ present in a very real way. Christ is personally present amongst us. The liturgy is not just a memorial, it is also a renewal. The grace merited for us by our Lord through the particular mystery is renewed.

The liturgy makes us long for a more profound understanding of the Church as Christ living on in our midst. The Church is a profound extension of the incarnation. The soul of the Church is the liturgy in which Christ repeatedly becomes present.

⁵ Fr Kentenich is referring to some private revelation. It is not clear exactly what is meant. It is possible that one of the priests attending the course had told him about it, and it was well-known to the others attending the course.

What is the relationship between the liturgy and everyday sanctity?

This third question is the crux of the whole matter: When is awakened in the soul when we speak simultaneously of the liturgy and everyday sanctity? Is there an inner connection between the two? To anticipate the answer let me say, "Yes!" There are so many connections that we are justified in speaking not merely of everyday sanctity in the liturgy, but even of "Liturgical Everyday Sanctity".

Two lines of thought: an answer in principle, and a more practical answer.

[1. An answer in principle]

Please do not forget, we are enquiring into the relationship between everyday sanctity and the liturgy, or, to express it more precisely, between everyday spirituality and sanctity and liturgical spirituality and sanctity.

I would like to give three answers:

- Everyday sanctity and the liturgy require each other;
- they promote each other;
- they merge, so they are identical.

[1.1 The liturgy and everyday sanctity require each other]

Everyday sanctity requires the liturgy and vice versa. To what extent?

[The liturgy requires everyday sanctity]

[88] What is the aim of the liturgy? It has to embrace the whole person, the whole world, free them from sin and divinise them. If it only aimed to do this ontologically, and not on the level of attitude and life, it would be playing around. So what is the aim and purpose of everyday sanctity? It should help the transfiguration, the divinisation of human beings and the glorification of God to become effective, and what is ontological to become ethical. The liturgy acknowledges the great, objective reality – the divinisation of human beings and the glorification of God. This objective reality gives rise to reverberations in life [into the world]. As they return, they have to be taken up by those who preside at the liturgy, and have to reverberate back to the world, and in this way help to divinise it. The ontic, objective reality has to become a subjective reality and find expression in the ethical reality: *ordo essendi est ordo agendi*. The ontic has to become the ethical.

[Everyday sanctity requires the liturgy]

Everyday sanctity requires the liturgy as the great source from which it is constantly nourished. Whatever exists in the objective order – the natural as well as the supernatural order – has to be assimilated into everyday sanctity. If we can prove that a

unique, sacramental organism exists, we can take it for granted that everyday sanctity is nourished by it.

Is it even possible for everyday sanctity to be sound unless it makes use of the reality of the Eucharist, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the other sacraments? To ask the question is to answer it: The liturgy constantly gives rise to a large number of sources from which everyday sanctity is fed.

[1.2 The liturgy and everyday sanctity promote each other]

So we have to ask: What does the liturgy give everyday sanctity and vice versa?

What does the liturgy give everyday sanctity?

[89] Two things. Firstly, it gives it a large, well-developed and integrated, supernatural and sacramental organism. It develops the *ordo essendi* [the order of being]. It gives a developed and supernatural ontological world, and hence, secondly, the outward symbols that mediate grace, the outward, inspired forms.

What does everyday sanctity give the liturgy?

Everyday sanctity ensures that the *opus operatum*, that is, the effect of the objective, supernatural, ontological world and the inspired symbols, is complemented [by the *opus operantis*]. Everyday sanctity sees to it that the “*agere*” [action] does not get left behind. The *opus ex opere operantis* [the effect because of the personal action of the priest] may not get short changed. For example, when I bless a stable or byre, that the farmer has to see to it that the building remains clean and that the animals can live in a healthy way.

Think of baptism. There we make use of water and words. These forms convey the reality of the sacrament. They have an effect even if the person being baptized does not co-operate consciously. The objective reality has an effect. When I pour the baptismal water, the person being baptised does not become holy because I [the priest] am holy, but because the supernatural organism is holy. This does not exclude that if the administrator of the sacrament is holy, holiness is increased.

The high moral standing [of the dispenser of the sacrament] has to be brought into line with what the supernatural organism requires. [90] To administer the sacraments validly, the “*operatio ex opere operantis*” is the *conditio* [necessary condition]; for administering the sacraments it is [only] the *causa* [cause]. If the blessing is carried out correctly with the sacraments, the Church’s rivers of grace flow, but our own activity is also necessary.

[1.3 The liturgy and everyday sanctity merge]

“Liturgical Everyday Sanctity” – are they not identical? Doesn’t every form of holiness have to be everyday sanctity? The formulation “Liturgical Everyday Sanctity” is actu-

ally nonsensical, because liturgical spirituality would normally have to be everyday sanctity, and vice versa. That is how it *should be!* However, we are living in a time of confusion when it is not the case. We are living at a time in which the liturgy and everyday sanctity are seen as opposites. So it is a good idea to connect what seem to be opposed, and to ensure that defensive feelings are removed.

The two merge, that is to say, every form of everyday sanctity has to be liturgical sanctity, and every liturgical sanctity has to be everyday sanctity. Of course, this only applies if both are sound. They are not always sound. However, this is how it has to be in an ideal situation.

[The degree of intensity of holiness]

Years ago we spoke about “Marian people”. We wanted to express a quality that is anchored in people – the Marian element. We explained that there are three types of Marian people. Marian elements can be embodied in people in a very general sense. A person is “generally” Marian who also loves the Blessed Mother, and who practices the usual Marian spiritual exercises in a general way. Each Catholic would normally have to be Marian in this general sense.

However, being Marian can also mean distinctively Marian, that is, the Marian tendency is strongly expressed in these people.

And, finally, Marian can also mean that the Marian tendency is uniquely present.

[91] So the qualities of Marian devotion can be anchored in people in these three stages.

Let us now apply this to the liturgy. Everyday sanctity and liturgical sanctity also merge according to these three degrees.

[The usual degree of liturgical everyday sanctity]

Every normal Catholic sanctity has to have a liturgical colouring. The usual degree must *also* be liturgical. There is no sanctity that can exist without an understanding of the sacramental character of the Church *in re* or *in voto* [in reality or as a longing]. People must at least want to receive the sacraments. The ancient hermits did not have a distinctively liturgical attitude – they were alone. Nevertheless they also had to be liturgical – they were baptised, they received the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Eucharist.

[A distinctive liturgical everyday sanctity]

A higher degree: distinctive liturgical spirituality and everyday sanctity. Today every sound spirituality has to be distinctively liturgical. Why? Because the Holy Spirit has allowed the deeper wellsprings of the liturgy to flow very richly, so that a person who is at least somewhat sensible cannot bypass it.

Holy Mass is the heart and centre of liturgical spirituality. A good Catholic has to have understood the central point of spirituality. The little old mother mentioned previously could and did this when she offered up Christ's sacrifice to the Father for her son.

Our "Everyday Sanctity" preaches a distinctive liturgical everyday sanctity. Whatever you do, integrate the liturgy into your life! The focal point of life has to be Holy Mass; however, Holy Mass has to be constantly repeated during the day.

[Unique liturgical everyday sanctity]

[92] Finally, uniquely liturgical – we priests have to call a unique liturgical everyday sanctity our own because of our calling. However, we have to distinguish between two attitudes: I have a distinctive liturgical attitude, or, I have a fanatically liturgical attitude.

My whole priestly life is embedded in the organism of the liturgy. I encounter the liturgy everywhere – when administering the sacraments and the sacramentals, or when praying the Breviary. Everything centres on Holy Mass, but I have also to carry out in life whatever proceeds from Holy Mass. "*Sanctus est qui sancta vivit*" [They are holy who live a holy life]. So I have to use the administration of baptism, the Anointing of the Sick, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, meaningfully, and not see them just as pious gifts. All the values innate to the liturgical acts have to be made fruitful for my spiritual life, my daily life.

However, this does not mean that I do not have a free and personal spiritual life. Objective and subjective spirituality⁶ are inseparable. Everyday sanctity preserves us from completely excluding a subjective spirituality. The liturgical fanatic denies this; he only acknowledges an objective spirituality.

The liturgy has to transform me personally, so that I can transform the world. Unless the objective celebration of the liturgy influences me personally, and embraces me personally, of what use is the liturgy to me? If I stand before a beautiful horse and call out in admiration, "How lovely you are!" it does not mean that I will get a house for myself from it. I have to work for it! Or, how does it help me if I stand before a dung-hill and admire it? It has to be used as fertiliser.

[2. A more practical answer]

The liturgy teaches us everyday sanctity. It illustrates everyday sanctity and forms everyday sanctity.

⁶ The subjective spirituality includes praying the Breviary, the Rosary, the Stations of the Cross, devotions, etc.

2.1 The liturgy teaches everyday sanctity

[93] The liturgy requires everyday sanctity by word and symbol. To some extent “liturgical” and “everyday sanctity” must always be equally important to everyone; however, priests and elite Catholics are expected to live them more completely.

The liturgy promotes everyday sanctity. The two merge. ... The expressions have now been explained. The vital rhythm of objective sanctity resonates in the soul. However, the soul has also to resonate in harmony with it and send back an echo⁷. The ethical component may not be forgotten.

What is the danger of a one-sided, fanatically liturgical attitude? It is the same danger we find in dialectical theology⁸ in Protestant ranks: Nothing is taken really seriously any more. Everything is transfigured: Marriage - “To the pure all things are pure”, they say. An objective spirituality has to become subjective spirituality, otherwise we will be very disappointed by the coming generations.

People today are facing the bankruptcy of their world. So they flee into the objective world of the liturgy. People today are tired and morally helpless. An “objective” spirituality can become dangerous for them. But they may not flee from themselves. They have to learn to be hard on themselves, to work subjectively on themselves.

People today are adventurous, they have become nervous. We have to work far harder to live a moral life. Despite all our reverence for the objective values of the liturgy, we may not use it to avoid striving personally for moral values, nor may we use it as an excuse for moral minimalism. We have to emphasise living a moral life in every respect. It is not knowledge, but savouring and digesting divine things that nourishes the supernatural life in us.

“*Siate rigorosi!*” Pope Pius XI called out to the Capuchins.

⁷ The image here is that of a musical instrument. Once a string has been touched, the other strings resonate. That is to say, the objective and subjective elements have to harmonise.

⁸ Important representatives of Protestant dialectical theology are Karl Barth, Emil Brunner and Rudolf Bultmann.

LitWH (1938), ed. Stein, 5th Conference, 94-111

[The liturgy and everyday sanctity merge]

[94] It is not knowledge, but savouring and digesting divine truths that nourishes the soul. We want to allow this thought [on the liturgy] to come alive in us and influence us.

The liturgy and everyday sanctity merge. We want to meditate on the harmony, the relationship between everyday sanctity and the liturgy. There is a profound relationship between everyday sanctity and the liturgy, so much so that we can talk about *liturgical everyday sanctity*.

First of all a line of thought that is more in principle, then comes a more practical answer.

[A discussion in principle]

A line of thought that is more in principle. We defined everyday sanctity as “a God-pleasing harmony between loving bonding with God, work and human beings in every circumstance of life”⁹.

We defined the liturgy as the mysterious and holy action of the God-Man, Jesus Christ, as head of his Church, in order to glorify the Father and divinise the world (to free the world from sin and transfigure it)¹⁰.

We have to pick up the definition of the liturgy from that of everyday sanctity, and vice versa. We could also say that the liturgy and everyday sanctity require each other, promote each other and merge, that is to say, to a certain extent they are identical.

The liturgy gives rise to a new, supernatural and integrated organism, which can be grasped through outward symbols. The “God-pleasing harmony”, of which the definition of everyday sanctity speaks, includes this organism of the liturgy. The same is true vice versa – the definition of the liturgy also includes everyday sanctity because it influences our moral life and striving. Individual human beings have to co-ordinate and identify themselves with the new rhythm of life created by the liturgy. To start with, the liturgy creates this new organism with human co-operation, as we have already been told. That is true. However [95] human beings have to act with Christ, they have to suffer and die with him. Christ is the head of the Church. He acts through, with and in his Church. The Church must also act with Christ, it has to see to it that this rhythm of life proceeding from the Liturgy also reaches into the moral

⁹ M.A. Nailis, *Everyday Sanctity*, 2.

¹⁰ Cf. Marian Instrument's *Spirituality* (1944) 20: “The holy, mysterious action of Christ as head of his Church, and the holy, mysterious co-action of his Bride, the Church, in order to free the world from the devil and sin, to transfigure it, and to glorify the Father.

striving and personal lives of its members. The human rhythm has to be co-ordinated with the liturgical-sacramental rhythm.

We have already begun to discuss the more practical answer. When we do so we want to allow everyday sanctity and the liturgy to merge. I would like to present three trains of thought to you:

- The liturgy teaches,
- The liturgy illustrates, and
- The liturgy forms everyday sanctity.

[1. The liturgy teaches everyday sanctity]

[The arrangement of the following thoughts]

We are now dealing with the point: the liturgy teaches everyday sanctity through words and symbols. What is taught in these two ways may be looked upon as a liturgically coloured definition of everyday sanctity. At times the liturgical definition of everyday sanctity stresses the ontic, at other times the ethical. When it is teaching in more ethical terms, an organic view of the whole also requires the ontic. In every instance the whole picture must be present.

From the material available we want to choose three words and three symbols. They will give us the direction for our striving, work and prayer. I hope that as a result our liturgical feeling for life will be awakened.

[1.1 The liturgy teaches everyday sanctity through words]

[1.1.1 First words: to thank always and everywhere]

[96] The first statement is perhaps the most classic one. The great Eucharistic prayer¹¹ begins with the words: "*Vere dignum et justum est, aequum et salutare, nos tibi semper et ubique gratias agere: Domine sancta, Pater omnipotens, aeterne Deus* – Father, all powerful and ever-living God, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks." Through this statement the liturgy itself professes everyday sanctity.

Let us meditate on two sub-thoughts – the meaning of the liturgy's testimony to itself and then one or the other element of filling it with ascetical value.

The liturgy's self-description

"*Vere dignum et iustum est ...*" [It is truly right and just...] The heart and centre of the liturgy is Holy Mass, and the heart and centre of Holy Mass is the Eucharistic Prayer. Here we have the right framework: "*Gratias agere* – to thank you" that is the Eucharist. Especially at its climax it is a great thanksgiving, "*gratiarum actio*". "*Semper et*

¹¹ The reference here is to the Roman Canon before the renewal called for by the Second Vatican Council. These words now introduce the Prefaces.

ubique – always and everywhere”. The attitude of the Eucharistic Prayer has to be transferred to all that is created, both ontologically and as an attitude, so that they are lifted out of the secular and profane world – and so that they can be freed from sin, transfigured and divinised, and together with the host lifted up to a single, great *hostia laudis* [sacrificial gift of praise].

This means in detail that the attitude of the Eucharistic Prayer has to be transferred on the ontological level to all that is created.

The great “magic wand of the liturgy” is the liturgical law of space and time, the great liturgical law of life and one’s state in life¹².

[97] The liturgy may be seen as a fisherman’s net, a golden net. This net has to catch everything – all our work, every word we speak, every time, every place, every state in life – everything has to be caught up by the liturgy. Why? They have to be lifted up and built into a higher world, either through the network of the sacraments, or through the network of the sacramentals¹³.

The great liturgical law of time¹⁴

Everything proceeds from the altar. The whole of time has to be sanctified and objectively caught up from the altar. Time has to be caught up objectively, not merely because people sanctify it.

Praying the Breviary¹⁵ has to be seen as a sacramental. That is how important it is! And yet, the Breviary is nothing else than a way to group everything around the climax of Holy Mass, the altar of sacrifice – it is an extension of the atmosphere of the Eucharistic Prayer, a preparation and thanksgiving for it. Prayer is objectively holy. Praying the Breviary in itself makes us holy. We have to see to it that it has a sanctifying effect by praying it in a holy, that is, devout way.

The liturgical law of space

[98] The altar is a holy place. Consecration, blessing, sanctification proceed from the altar to the cemetery, out into the fields, into the houses and homes of the people. The whole world has to be thoroughly divinised, drawn up into the objective organism of the sacramentals.

¹² Fr Kantenich is basing himself on Linus Bopp’s book: *Liturgische Erziehung. Gegebenes und Aufgegebenes*, Freiburg 1929, 20ff.

¹³ Cf. Vatican II, SC 61.

¹⁴ Cf. also John Paul II, *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, Nr 10.

¹⁵ The aim of praying the Breviary – since Vatican II known as the *Divine Office* – is to sanctify the day: Morning (Lauds), Evening (Vesper), Night (Compline). Besides this the different periods of the day have to be drawn into the praise of God through praying the Office Hours.

The liturgical law of life

The liturgical law of life is carried out by certain sacraments: at a person's birth, in puberty, in sickness to strengthen body and soul – a wonderful harmony.

Thomas compared our natural and supernatural lives, and noted that whenever our natural lives reach a major turning-point, the Church is there with a sacrament.

The liturgical law of our state in life

The two important states in life are consecrated and lifted onto a higher level by a sacrament – the priesthood and marriage. The other states are consecrated by a sacramental.

The whole of creation has to be taken out of the secular sphere ontologically¹⁶. Our Lord gave his Church the authority to consecrate and bless. The Church is not only able to consecrate and bless, it is also willing to do so.

[Extreme attitudes towards the “world”]

We have not co-ordinated ourselves to the age [and the mentality] of *rationalism*¹⁷. Let us take a look at the *Rituale* – think of all the things that can be consecrated and blessed! Why do we use the power of consecration so little? What don't we go out to the fields with our hands raised in blessing, etc? Why don't we educate our people to have their bread and houses blessed, and to bless them themselves? We are too little aware that there is a higher world. The liturgy has to draw the whole world, the animate and inanimate world, upwards, to lead them upwards to be formed into Christ, to become like Christ, to become “alter Christus”.

[99] Please note the great, diametrical difference between a Catholic and Protestant understanding on this point.

The Protestant teaching on the natural [= the way Protestants evaluate human nature after the Fall] expresses the conviction that human nature is completely bad. That is why Protestants do not accept that the natural can be transfigured. They naturally do not accept that human beings can be transfigured, so grace cannot dwell in human nature. Only an outward justification takes place. Human nature is corrupt.

¹⁶ Secularisation means transferring something into the purely worldly world. Religion and faith are consciously excluded from public life, that is, from politics, work, administration, town planning, etc. This is deliberately planned. The practice of one's faith is reduced to liturgical celebrations in the churches and one's private life. So the liturgy is meant to overcome the separation [not the distinction between] of reality into a profane and sacred sphere.

¹⁷ Rationalism designates the disposition which submits the objects of religious faith and the data of revelation to the tribunal of unaided human reason. Rationalism, therefore, excludes the supernatural or “mysterious” components of religious life. ... It follows, of course, that rationalism also subjects all claims based on authority or tradition to the critical scrutiny of reason. Gerald Hanratty, in *The New Dictionary of Theology*, 1992, Dublin, p.826.

On the other hand we have the opposite approach today – the natural is idolised¹⁸.

In contrast to these approaches we speak about the elevation of the natural. Our Catholic understanding accepts two things: We see the natural and lift it up. We make the sign of the cross over the natural in the sacraments and sacramentals. So we know that the natural is not completely noble, that the natural has also been thrown into the great river of the burden of original sin. The sign of the cross is therefore a protection against the [seductive] appeal of the natural, but at the same time we bless the natural with the sign of the cross. The natural has to be liberated from sin and transfigured, divinised. The whole of the natural sphere has to be drawn into the attitude of the Eucharistic Prayer. Ontologically everything has to be drawn into it.

What is ontological has also to be applied meaningfully to life. This follows from the nature of the liturgy. Let us remember the definition of the liturgy. It is Christ who works through the liturgy to sanctify everything. Christ wants to live not only *for* us, but *with* us. Christ wants to act, also with us. Christ wants to transfigure the world, either directly or indirectly. We have to be co-ordinated with this great, God-willed organism of transfiguration. We formulated it this way: We have to see to it that the new rhythm of life [the liturgy], which has now been created, resonates back into our souls. Also our lives have to be co-ordinated with the rhythm of the sacramentals. There is a constant interplay.

To explain this people like to use the concept “lifestyle” – a liturgical-sacramental lifestyle, an inner and outer lifestyle. This reaches into the natural. *Operatio sequitur esse* [What we are determines our actions, what we should do]. It is in the nature of the liturgy that what is ontic has to become ethical. It is so necessary for us to note this today, because people today are so easily inclined to avoid taking morality seriously. However, we may not forget in all this to take our own nature in hand.

[The liturgy describes itself in some of the opening prayers at Mass]

We can find another way in which the liturgy describes itself in the opening prayers of the Mass.

In the *Opening Prayer of the Second Sunday of Easter* we pray, “God all-powerful, we have just celebrated the paschal festivities; grant by Your grace that we may preserve the spirit of them in our way of life.”¹⁹ On the *Fifth Sunday after Easter* Holy

¹⁸ This was the tendency of the Nazi ideology, which declared the Arian race the master race that needed no redemption.

¹⁹ “*Praesta, quaesumus, omnipotens Deus; ut, qui paschalia festa peregrimus, haec, te largiente, moribus et vita teneamus.*” Translation from “The Hours of the Divine Office in English and Latin”, Vol 2, 1964, p. 1216.

Mother Church prays for two important gifts for us: that we may understand the glory of the Christian state, and that we may also live accordingly.²⁰

[101] Besides these and similar formulations in the prayers, the liturgy sees to it that whole periods of time highlight the ethical turning-point in our lives with tremendous force, because we need it. This is done in the Rogation Days²¹, Lent and Advent. They are meant to be serious times, times of penance and conversion. According to the liturgy we may use the things of this earth, but in such a way that they lead us upwards, as the *Prayers on the 3rd and 5th Sundays after Pentecost* express it.²² The ontological order of [objective] values and being have to become our order of life.

[1.1.2 A second word: Sanctifying the world]

[In the Roman martyrology]

We take a second teaching of the liturgy through words from the *Martyrology*: “*Mundum volens Deo consecrare.*”²³ *Consecratio mundi ad hostiam laudis.*

The Martyrology for the Vigil of Christmas emphasises that the Eternal Father sent his only-begotten Son, so that by his coming the only-begotten Son could sanctify the world: *mundum deo consecrare*. The world had to be consecrated to God; the World had to take on the form of Christ, it had to be formed into Christ.

Also I am part of the world. My human nature has to be divinised. The goal is that the whole of creation should be transfigured.

[References to Paul]

²⁰ “*Deus, quo bona cuncta procedunt, largire supplicibus tuis: ut cogitemus, te inspirante, quae recta sunt; et, te gubernante, faciamus,* - Lord, all that is good comes from You. Listen to our prayers: inspire rightful ideas in us and direct us to act in accordance with them. (ibid, p. 1318).

²¹ These fall on the Wednesday, Friday and Saturday of four weeks in the year at approximately the beginning of the four seasons, and which have been called the “*Quattuor tempora*” (= four times) since the 8th century in Rome. They were seen as feast-days. More recent research has discovered the roots in OT prescriptions for fasting, e.g., in Ezra(? I couldn't find this – looked in the [Einheitsuebersezung for the German equivalent and it gave Ezra, but it doesn't match](#)) 8,19 and Joel 2, 12-19.

²² On the 3rd Sunday after Pentecost we read: “... *ut, te rectore, te duce, sic transeamus per bona temporalia, ut non amittamus aeterna.* – That, drawn on by You, we may use the good things of this world only in passing, and not lose the treasures of heaven.” On the 5th Sunday after Pentecost: *Deus, qui diligentibus te bona invisibilia praeparasti: infunde cordibus nostris tui amoris affectum; ut, te in omnibus et super omnia diligente, promissiones tuas, quae omne desiderium superant, consequamur.* – For those who love You, Lord, You have prepared good things that no eye has seen. Fill our hearts with fervent love for You; then, seeing You in every creature and preferring You above every creature, we shall attain to those good things You have promised us, which surpass all desire. (ibid. p. 1536, 1573).

²³ In the new edition of the *Martyrologium Romanum* of 1922 we read: “*Jesus christus, aeternus Deus aeternique Patris Filius, mundum volens adventu suo piissimo consecrare ...* - Jeus Christ, Eternal God and Son of the Eternal Father, wanted to sanctify the world through his loving coming ...”

Please compare with this what St Paul wrote in his letter to the Colossians²⁴: He, the firstborn of all creation; he [102] is the *causa exemplaris* – the exemplary cause of all creation. So everything has been created in his image. Everything, whether visible or invisible, has been created in him. Everything through him and for him. He is the head of all, everything exists in him, is held together by him – people and every created thing. He is the head of his body, the firstborn from the dead. So he has to have precedence in everything. In him is the fullness of God, in him God wanted to reconcile everything.

Or, take another passage from the Letter to the Romans.²⁵ The whole of creation groans and sighs for transfiguration. Through the sacraments and sacramentals human beings should even now attain the *visio beata* in heaven. A new heaven and a new earth.

[Reference to Pius X's motto]

Or, think of *Pius X's* motto: *Omnia instaurare in Christo*.²⁶ This comes out better in Greek: in Christ everything should be “recapitulated”, everything should be incorporated into him [cf. Eph 1,10].

[Reference to Christ's description of himself in the Gospels]

Or, take the *Gospels*. Through them everyday sanctity shines out to us in a completely new light. Vice versa, through everyday sanctity we see things in a completely new light when we open the Gospels. Our Lord identified himself with the things of this world: I am the light [Jn 8,12], the bread of life [Jn 6,35; 48; 51], the way, the truth and the life [Jn 14,6], the good shepherd [Jn 10,12] etc. All these things in our world are analogies, they point to Christ.

But they are even more; things not only point to Christ, to a certain extent they have all to share in his transfigured body. [103] He is the Lamb of God [Jn 1,29], he is the bridegroom [cf. Mt 9,15; Jn 3,28], the doctor of the peoples [cf. Lk 4,23; 5,31]. These are not just comparisons; they have to be interpreted [in the sense of the transfiguration of the world]. The whole world has to become Christ's garment and one day become a part of his transfigured body. This happens germinally through the liturgy in the sacraments and sacramentals, [their fullness will] one day be revealed at the end of the world.

We have here more than just an *analogia entis* [the analogy of being]²⁷. The revealed order unveils an *analogia trinitatis* [an analogy of the Trinity] to us: From all

²⁴ Cf. Col 1, 15-20.

²⁵ Cf. Ro 8,19

²⁶ To renew all things in Christ. Cf. his enthronement encyclical of 4.10.1903 in which he described the guiding thought and aim of his papacy: To renew all things in Christ, so that Christ may be all in all.

²⁷ Article on Analogy in *The New Dictionary of Theology*, 1992, Dublin.

eternity the Father thought of me in the only-begotten Son, he loved the world in the Holy Spirit – the whole world.

Early Christianity knew and loved the liturgy's understanding of the different comparisons at a very early date. Pope Damasus²⁸ collected all the images and expressed them poetically in order to describe our Lord: Hope, way, life, light hero, king, prophet, priest, messiah, master, bridegroom, mediator, rock, vineyard, olive, wellspring, reconciler, net, stone, house, etc.

From this we can deduce how many inspirations the everyday saint can draw from the liturgy. We can see them from the point of view of prophetic bonding to things²⁹. When St Francis³⁰ saw a lamb, it was not just a symbol to him; he warmed to Christ, the Lamb of God³¹. For the saints all these things pointed to Christ and inspired them to love Jesus Christ. Let us also get used to these thoughts and this world of values.

[Reference to the teaching of Franzelin]

[104] "*Mundum deo consecrare*" – to consecrate the world to God – is, first of all, an ontic elevation. Cardinal Franzelin³² said that through his Church Jesus Christ "*voluit mundum supernaturaliter transformare*"³³. This task is carried out by the liturgy. The ethical turning-point follows organically on its own. Let us absorb this way of thinking drop by drop.

[1.1.3 A third word: Go, I am sending you into the world]

A third word: "*Ite missa est* [Go, you are sent out]" That is to say: "*Ite missio est*, - he mission begins." The mission consists in applying the whole of Holy Mass to the day. The day's Mass has to become our life's Mass³⁴. Please compare this with "Everyday Sanctity"³⁵. Our mission consists in seeing to it that the whole atmosphere of

²⁸ Damasus I, Pope from 366-384. We owe to this Pope the discovery and adornment of the graves of the martyrs in the Catacombs. He composed many inscriptions, which were then written artistically by calligraphers and chiselled into marble tablets. This is what Fr Kentenich is referring to. PL 13,347/424.

²⁹ Cf. M.A. Nailis: Everyday Sanctity.

³⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

³¹ Cf. Bernhard Christen, *Leben des hl. Franziskus von Assisi*, 351f., attributing his reference to Celan, *Vita I*, 1.I, c. 9 n. 78 and Bonaventure c.8, n. 110-112.

³² Johann Baptist Franzelin, SJ (1816-1886), important theologian and cardinal: taught 1850-1876 in the Gregorian College in Rome; worked in many Roman congregations and for the First Vatican Council.

³³ The quotation is taken from his work *De ecclesia* (On the Church) published in 1887: ... wanted to transform the world supernaturally.

³⁴ In the retreat course on the Holy Spirit and the Realm of Peace (1932), p. 132, Fr Kentenich said, "For about half a year our Sisters have got into the habit of talking about our 'life's Mass'. That is the correct expression: life's Mass, not just the morning's Mass. What we do in the morning at Holy Mass is only the Introit, the entrance, the beginning. The individual things we experience at Holy Mass have to be continued throughout the day."

³⁵ Cf. M.A. Nailis, *Everyday Sanctity*: "The everyday saint knows no rest until everyday life continues and completes what happened at Holy Mass in the morning through constantly repeating the offertory, consecration and communion." Cf. also: "Above all the everyday saint renders the graces received at

Holy Mass is applied o the day. The attitude, the colouring, the basic attitude of Holy Mass has to fill the whole day, forming our day's work with constant repetitions of the offertory, consecration and communion. That was the understanding of the Early Church where they used to say: "From the altar to the arena"³⁶; inwardly I want to be devoured by wild animals³⁷. [105] A continuous offertory, consecration and communion have to take place.

These three ways in which the liturgy describes itself should be sufficient.

[1.2 The liturgy teaches everyday sanctity through symbols]

We want to take a closer look at three symbols.

[1. Symbol: Bread and wine]

First of all, the holy forms of bread and wine. They symbolise our Lord. Think of St Ignatius of Antioch. He interpreted bread and wine symbolically: He had to go into the arena. He lived from Holy Mass. He was attracted by the symbols of bread and wine. So his favourite thought was: I must be ground by the millstones like bread – I have to be ground by the teeth of wild animals. That is how strongly he was orientated to the liturgy. Bread and wine can only become the Flesh and Blood of Christ if the wheat has first been ground by the millstones, and the grapes have gone through the winepress. If we want to become like God, we have to be milled and trodden like Christ. Christ was beaten and kicked in order to become bread and wine for us. How strongly the ethical effect of the liturgy shines through here! It is nothing else than a symbolic description of everyday sanctity.

We people endowed with senses repeatedly need a reminder, a sign to jog our memories. The second symbol we want to contemplate is such a reminder.

[2. Symbol: Kissing the altar]

[106] We kiss the altar very often³⁸. The altar is Jesus Christ. It also contains the relics of the saints and martyrs³⁹. The altar and martyrdom. This is how closely the

that day's Mass effective in order to impress the stamp of perfection on everything, even the lowliest work." Cf. also Fr Kentenich, *Aus dem Glauben leben*, Bd. 15, 83.

³⁶ Cf. sermon of 29.11.1964 in *Aus dem Glauben leben*, Bd. 15, 80-81: "From this we can understand a slogan of early Christianity: From the altar into the arena! Dying during the day, constant dying. If it has been practiced, if it has become a reality, we will also be able to go into the arena and allow ourselves to be torn to pieces by the lions, to be murdered. From the altar into the arena! When we apply those words to our lives, we can say: From the altar into the arena of my everyday life! If I am a housewife, what is the arena? If I am studying, what is my arena? If I am an employee, what is my arena like? From the altar into the arena! If I separate my arena from the altar, it will soon no longer be God's arena. It could become the arena of the world, the arena of the devil."

³⁷ Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop and Martyr (+ after 107) wrote: "I am God's wheat; the teeth of wild animals have to grind me so that I may become the pure bread of Christ." (Letter to the Romans, Ch. 4,1-2, PG5, 689).

³⁸ The number of times a "liturgical kiss of the altar" takes place at Holy Mass has been greatly reduced by Vatican II. The altar as a symbol of Christ is only kissed at the beginning and end of Mass

early Church connected martyrdom with the holy sacrifice. The sacrifice has to give me the strength for martyrdom. This is a symbolic depiction of everyday sanctity.

[3. Symbol: Mingling wine and water]

I would like to mention the wonderful ceremony of mingling wine and water at the Offertory as the third symbol. The mixing of water with the wine in the chalice – think of the accompanying words: wonderfully created, wonderfully renewed – sharing in Christ's nature⁴⁰; the great, triple union.⁴¹ I am that tiny drop of water; I have to be transformed into wine.

The wine symbolises the divinity of Jesus Christ. The prayer draws our attention to this triple union: The dignity of human nature, the connection between flesh and spirit, the union of the divinity with the human nature of the God-Man – the union of fallen nature with Jesus Christ through grace. It means our divinisation. The ceremony draws our attention to the fact that both, above all the profound union with God through grace, have been merited for us by the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ symbolised in the water and blood that flowed from Jesus' side. We are reminded of all this.

[107] In addition, I actually am what is afterwards changed – bread and wine. Bread and wine are composed of countless tiny drops and grains. They symbolise me. They symbolise not only our mysterious union with Jesus Christ, but also with one another. St Augustine drew the conclusion, "Be what you see!" What do we see? A totality. So what does the mystery do? It admonished us to be united and leads us to that state.

Hence the challenge: Be united! (Cf. Jn 17). Here we also find the strong, ethical challenge: Unless you try to bring about unity, the liturgy will lead to your downfall.

So our attention is again drawn to the heart and centre of everyday sanctity: To make use of everything to become holy.

(kiss of greeting and farewell). What has remained is the kiss honouring the Book of the Gospels after the reading.

³⁹ Since the early Middle Ages (8th century) it has even been prescribed that every altar has to have an altar stone with the relics of saints.

⁴⁰ "God, you have wonderfully created human beings in their dignity and still more wonderfully renewed them: grant that through the mystery of this water and wine we may share in the divinity of him who condescended to share in our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord." The priest prayed these words when the water was mixed with the wine, and they are still prayed silently and in an abbreviated form,

⁴¹ "In the celebration of the Eucharist, the mingling of water with the wine took on a symbolic meaning early on. Cyprian of Carthage, for example, saw the water as symbolising the people, and the wine indicating the Blood of Christ (epist 63,13). Ambrose interpreted the mingling of water and wine as an indication of the blood and water which, according to Jn 19,34, flowed from Jesus' side (sacr. 5,4)." J. Schmitz in his introduction to Ambrose: On the Sacraments ... Fontes 3,54.

[2. The liturgy illustrates everyday sanctity]

The second sub-thought: The liturgy illustrates the theory of everyday sanctity. It illustrates it from the Bible and through living examples.

Let us look into the Bible. Almost the whole of the Bible is used in Mass and the liturgy. Everyday sanctity is illustrated there in the living example of our Lord and the saints.

2.1 The living example of our Lord

[Liturgical feasts as days of remembrance]

[108] We are reminded of the whole of the historical life of our Lord, which is placed before us by the Bible and has to be brought to life. All the feasts of the Church Year have to be seen as days that remind us of our Lord's life. However, we are not dealing here with merely historical remembrance. Our Lord is really and truly present in the sacrament of the Eucharist⁴². Is the particular mystery made present? The theologians have first to prove this precisely⁴³. Jesus' presence, however, is a visible fact.

[Liturgical feasts as days of renewal]

The feasts of the Church Year are not just days of remembrance, they are also days of renewal, because when we are reminded of the respective event, the grace is renewed, which our Lord merited through the respective mystery.

Let us take *Christmas* as an example. Through the birth of our Lord I am given grace he merited for me through his birth. This includes the grace of childlikeness.

Or, the *Baptism of Jesus*: Also those graces are renewed. Our Lord is the everyday saint *per excellentiam*. He lived everyday sanctity *per eminentiam*: I have completed the work you gave me to do [cf. Jn 17,4], that is to say, I am the true everyday saint.

So, day after day our Lord walks across the "stage" of the altar. We are well advised to make full use of the Gospel in order to have the figure of our Lord placed before our eyes for that day. Christ wants to incorporate us into himself from this aspect. For example, the Good Shepherd – today, in these 24 hours, the Good Shepherd

⁴² In his encyclical "*Mediator Dei*" Pius XII wrote (§163): "In the sacred liturgy, the whole Christ is proposed to us in all the circumstances of His life, as the Word of the eternal Father, as born of the Virgin Mother of God, as He who teaches us truth, heals the sick, consoles the afflicted, who endures suffering and who dies; finally, as He who rose triumphantly from the dead and who, reigning in the glory of heaven, sends us the Holy Paraclete and who abides in His Church forever; 'Jesus Christ, yesterday and today, and the same forever' [Hebr 13,8]."

⁴³ Fr Kantenich is here referring to the controversy that was raging at that time on the teaching on mystery. A good survey is offered in Chapter 1 of: Filthaut, Theodor: *Die Kontroverse ueber die Mysterienlehre*. The main protagonist was P. Odo Casel OSB, of Maria Laach Abbey.

wants to incorporate me into himself. We have to look into this great world in this really living way, and not just understand it theoretically.

[2.2 The example of the saints]

Something similar applies to the example of the saints. Hirscher⁴⁴ said at that time: We may in truth speak about a Marian Church Year⁴⁵. We can actually take this for granted if we have understood the heart and centre of the liturgy as the holy action of the God-Man.

Theology tells us how deeply and lovingly the Blessed Mother was united to the God-Man. So we are not surprised that the liturgy the Blessed Mother stands out very extensively. The Blessed Mother's profound and loving relationship to our Lord's actions and redemptive work has to be expressed by the liturgy. *Lex credendi est lex orandi*⁴⁶. What we pray in the liturgy is prayed theology.

[110] Let us go into details: In the liturgy the image of the Blessed Mother is drawn in her supernatural greatness as the Mother of God, the great advocate, the Mediatrix of grace, our great example, by the individual feasts.

However, the Blessed Mother is also drawn as the everyday saint. She is a living visual aid. Something similar applies *mutatis mutandis* by the other saints. All the saints in their own way are distinctive everyday saints.

Incentive for our practical lives

When we celebrate the feast of a saint it means that our Lord takes on the concrete form of the saint in a unique and mysterious way. Or, the original qualities of the saint of the day are mysteriously embodied in our Lord. Naturally always to a lesser extent than they exist in our Lord. Our Lord wants to be brought closer to us in the concrete form of the saints⁴⁷. Let us take the leading ideas of the Communion or Introit, or the Offertory. The leading idea is given most classically in the Communion

⁴⁴ Johann Baptist von Hirscher, (1788-1865), Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology in Tuebingen (from 1817), co-founder of the so-called "Tuebingen School", from 1837 in Freiburg.

⁴⁵ Johann Baptist von Hirscher: *Das Leben der seligsten Jungfrau und Gottesmutter Maria* – the Life of Mary, the Blessed Virgin and Mother of God – p.343f. He wrote: "... The main elements of the life of the Blessed virgin have been taken up by the Church into its cult and forms a permanent object of its devotion. The Church has created special days of remembrance of the conception of the Blessed Virgin, her birth, the message of the angel given to her, her visit to Elizabeth, the birth of Christ, her divine Son, his presentation in the Temple, the adoration of the wise men, the flight into Egypt, the Easter journey to Jerusalem and the finding of the lost Child, then the main scenes in the life and suffering of Christ, and what his holy Mother felt and suffered as a result, finally her own death and assumption into heaven. So no one can live through the Catholic Church Year as a Catholic Christian without at the same time having the joyful and sorrowful life of the Blessed Virgin and Mother placed before his soul."

⁴⁶ "The rule of praying determines the rule of faith." This statement comes from Prosper of Aquitaine (+ ca. 455), a student of St Augustine. In "*Marialis cultus*" Paul VI, §23 described the liturgy as the "golden norm of piety". See also "*Mediator Dei*" (Pius XII), §§45-48.

⁴⁷ Cf. on this subject the sermon for the feast of St Joseph, 19.3.1966, in: PLE, Bd.4, 67-68.

prayer; the theoretical [111] discussion of the thoughts in the Communion prayer is given in the Epistle; it is classically illustrated in the Gospel; we find the prayer of the heart that should follow, the vital illumination of the leading idea in keeping with the inner attitude, in the Gradual or the Tract⁴⁸.

So we can celebrate Holy Mass meaningfully and understand it better. We have introduced a certain system into it.

[3. The liturgy forms everyday sanctity]

The liturgy forms everyday sanctity through the words, example, atmosphere, and through the addition of grace, the mediation of grace. The treasures of the liturgy are given to us. The liturgy works not merely *ex opere operantis*⁴⁹, but also *ex opera operati Christi et ecclesiae* {through power of grace of Christ and the Church}.

⁴⁸ Short acclamation before the Gospel during Lent when the Alleluja is omitted.

⁴⁹ The personal contribution of the faithful and the priest in celebrating the sacramental event.

Dimensions of the Liturgy: Theocentric, christomystical, ecclesial

LitWH (July 1938) 133-140 [7th Conference]

As “Everyday Sanctity” tells us, the source of our bonding with God is the Triune God’s bonding with us human beings⁵⁰. Let us look at our image of God⁵¹. No source is as essential and effective as this. The living God has created us, “in him we live and move and have our being” [cf Acts 17,28].

[134] So that is the essential basic relationship: our relationship to God. This basic relationship has a tremendous effect, as is proved by many practical experiences. If we think God out of the picture, if we think the Father’s kind hand out of the picture, we would not exist.

[Our image of God is conditional on our image of human beings, and vice versa]

As a person is, so is his or her God! If I reduce the living God to my human understanding, I will soon be a person driven by my passions for whom the word “sin” does not exist. However, if my concept of God is a towering one, I will always be generous, I will always look beyond myself, even when I fail; I will always be a person of longing and humility – and all this because our image of God is the most effective norm for our image of humanity.

“As a person is, so is his or her God!” So if my concept of the living God towers upwards, I will always be a person of longing. So, “tell me who you go around with, and I will tell you who you are.”

There is an ancient Celtic saying: “You can recognize a person by his God, by his devil and by what he thinks of the world.” If you want to know a person, you have to know his or her concept of God.

[The polarity in our image of God: Majesty and Love]

Our concept of God only has an effect to the extent that our idea of God, with its polarity [between divine majesty and love], has become our dominant idea and value. We know a great deal about God, but this knowledge forms our personal lives too little. If we were profoundly gripped by an experience of God, how different we would be. Either we know God too little, or we experience God too little.

⁵⁰ Cf. M.A. Nailis, *Everyday Sanctity*, Vol I.

⁵¹ When Fr Kentenich speaks about our “image of God”, two things are usually combined: our concept of God and our experience of God. Similarly, when he talks about our “concept of God”, he often does not mean an intellectual knowledge, but our experiences with God that have formed this concept.

We have to experience the polarity in God: supreme majesty and supreme love. So we have to tremble and glow before almighty God⁵². We have forgotten this, so our concept of God has so little effect on our lives. If we have forgotten to glow with love, we will have a Jansenist⁵³ concept of God; if we have forgotten to tremble before him, it will be pietistic.

[135] Each sound form of spirituality has to begin with working out a profound concept of God and a profound experience of God. Also the liturgy has to do this. The source of our bonding with God is the Blessed Trinity's bonding with us human beings.

[What is the image of God in the liturgy?]

In order to answer this question, allow me to start with a thesis: The liturgy reveals God and brings him to life permanently and effectively as the loving and absolute monarch. The liturgy speaks the language of an absolute and loving monarch, and teaches us the language of absolute, childlike self-surrender.

We are starting out from the image of God in Holy Mass, but, since the whole of the liturgy is nothing else than a preparation for and extension of Holy Mass, we will find this image of God throughout the liturgy. The liturgy constantly draws the image of God, because it unites us constantly with God.

[136] The liturgy *permanently* and effectively reveals God and brings him to life as the loving and absolute monarch. Human beings are constantly in danger of dethroning God and enthroning their own egos. The liturgy is a masterly educator, because the Holy Spirit directs this education. That is why there are constant references to the image of God, and why his image is constantly being painted.

The liturgy permanently and *effectively* reveals God as the loving and absolute monarch. The image of God is painted⁵⁴ not just in words; we are also encouraged to live

⁵² These are the two 'movements' of love as described by Fr Kentenich: Attraction and awe (German: hinlaufende und ruecklaufende Linie).

⁵³ In his Encyclical *Miserentissimus Redemptor* of 8 May 1928, on the reparation we all owe to Sacred Heart of Jesus (AAS XX [1928] 165-178), Pope Pius XI called the Jansenist heresy "the worst possible enemy of love for God and genuine piety. It preaches that instead of loving God as a father, we should rather fear him as an irreconcilable judge." (quoted from *Heilslehre Nr. 22*).

⁵⁴ See Milwaukee Sermon of 16.6.1963 in: *Aus dem Glauben leben*, Vol 8, 44: "We have all seen pictures painted by the famous medieval artist, Raphael (1483-1520). When he was still a small child, his parents left the house in his care. While his father was away, a stranger called to see him, and young Raphael simply told him his father wasn't there. He did not ask for the visitor's name, nor did he note his personality. When his father returned and was told there had been a visitor, but that the boy did not know his name, he started to become very angry. Oh, said Raphael, I will quickly sketch the visitor for you. At the time no one knew what a talent he had for drawing. He ran off quickly fetched a piece of paper and a pencil, and quickly reproduced the general outlines of the man in such a way that his father knew exactly who had called. Actually the boy had revealed his talent. Later he became one of the greatest artists of the Middle Ages.

The liturgy is also such an artist. We must also become such artists – recording the great outlines of Christianity untiringly, not losing ourselves time and again in little things and then thinking we are on the right track. If we want to become artists of love, we will have to try to practice drawing

the liturgy in practice. We have to adore God, talk to him with our lips and hearts, and with the ceremonies.

The liturgy permanently and effectively reveals God and brings him to life as *the loving, absolute monarch*. So how can we describe our image of God? He is the absolute, loving monarch, the “*summa majestas*” and the “*summa bonitas*”.

The liturgy expresses this in words and symbols. Actually this is the language of the liturgy. It always speaks through words, *but also* through symbols.

[The liturgy reveals God’s image through words]

The liturgy speaks through words. We have to differentiate between words of *teaching* and words of *prayer*. When the liturgy is teaching us, it points to our absolute, loving monarch. When it is praying, it pulsates with absolute, childlike self-surrender. [...]

[137] The great entrance to the liturgy is the *Invitatorium* [before Lauds or at the beginning of the Office of Readings in the Breviary]. The Breviary is nothing else than a preparation for and follow-up – the framework, as it were – to Holy Mass. The general mood set by the *Invitatorium* re-echoes through the whole of the liturgy. What does the *Invitatorium* sing into the soul? A constant, profound enthronement of almighty God, and a constant dethronement of our own egos⁵⁵.

The Invitatorium is Psalm 94[95]. Let us read it:

1 Come, ring out our joy to the Lord; hail the God who saves us. Let us come before him giving thanks, with songs let us hail the Lord.*

2 A mighty God is the Lord, a great king above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his.**

3 To him belongs the sea, for he made it, and the dry land shaped by his hands. Come in; let us bow and bend low; let us kneel before the God who made us, for he is our God and we the people who belong to his pasture, the flock that is led by his hand.*

[138]

4 O that today you would listen to his voice! Harden not your hearts as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the desert when your fathers put me to the test; when they tried me, thought they saw my work.**

5 For forty years I was wearied of these people and I said: “Their hearts are astray, these people do not know my ways.” Then I took an oath in my anger: “Never shall they enter my rest.”

Two great thoughts are presented: Almighty God is the origin of the natural and the supernatural orders. Secondly, this almighty God is at the same time the God who is Love and fearful strictness. – The consequence: If love does not attract us, we have

the great features of love of God and others throughout our lives.”

⁵⁵ On this whole subject see Linus Bopp, *Liturgie und Lebensstil*, 39ff.

to at least be moved by fear. Hence the serious admonition: “*Nolite obdurare corda vestra*” [Harden not your hearts].

[Adoration]

After every verse we pray, “*Venite adoremus*” [Come, let us adore him!]. When we adore God, we de-throne our own, little ego. The tiny human being needs to be de-throned every day. The first part of the antiphon changes [in the course of the Church Year], but the “*Venite adoremus*” remains in the *Invitatorium* – that is, the dethronement of human beings. Study the *Invitatorium* throughout the Church Year!

“You will be like God!” [cf. Gen 3,5]. This is what the serpent promised the first human beings in Paradise. This ambition is, according to our modern psychologists⁵⁶, far more strongly expressed than the urge to love and give ourselves. That is why the liturgy has to enthrone God time and again while dethroning human beings.

[The Essential Dimensions of the Liturgy]

[139] In the *Invitatorium* we are presented with a distinctively theocentric attitude, a distinctively Christocentric, Christomystical attitude, and an ecclesiomystical, Church centred attitude⁵⁷.

[1. Theocentric orientation of the liturgy]

A distinctively *theocentric* attitude: People and the world are primarily seen from God’s point of view. This is a tremendous blessing. Seen from God’s point of view, human beings are an original idea of God [and an original] wish of God.

An Indian philosopher once asked a Greek philosopher: “What is the object of philosophy?” The Greek philosopher replied, “Human beings.” The Indian rejoined, “You will never attain your goal. If you want to know human beings, you have first to know God.”

Our image of human beings and our image of God are interconnected. It is impossible for me to have a clear image of human beings unless I have a clear image of God. So I may tell myself: God thought of me from all eternity in conjunction with the *verbum divinum* [the Divine Word, the Son of the Father], [he] loved me in the Holy Spirit in conjunction with the *verbum divinum* – I am an “*imago trinitatis*” [an image of the Blessed Trinity]. I am personally an original idea of God, [an original] love of God, [an original] wish of God.

The liturgy teaches us to see world history from God’s perspective. World history is not blind fate. A great God, our Father, holds all the threads in his hands. This belief and conviction gets rid of human anxiety and fear. Catholic faith in Divine Providence

⁵⁶ For example, Alfred Adler and his individual psychology.

⁵⁷ The Second Vatican Council worked out the perspectives mentioned and the fundamental aspects of a Christian liturgy in its Liturgical Constitution.

shows us almighty God not just with an intellect, but also with a kind heart. God is the absolute monarch who governs the world. Bishop Sailer said, "The blind fate of paganism has been given an intellect by Judaism and a heart by Christianity"⁵⁸.

[2. The liturgy is Christomystical]

[140] The fundamental attitude of the liturgy is *Christomystical*. I shy away from calling it "Christocentric". From a certain point of view it naturally is also Christocentric, but in relation to the Father it is Christomystical. Our Lord is totally turned towards God, the Eternal Father. Why is the liturgy theocentric in attitude? Because it is Christomystical. We are incorporated into Christ. And Christ is totally orientated to God, the Eternal Father.

Since we call a Christomystical attitude our own, we are not afraid of what will happen at work⁵⁹. "I can do all things in him who strengthens me" [Phil 4,13]. I am not alone.

[3. The ecclesial dimension of the liturgy]

The liturgy is *ecclesiomystical* or *ecclesiocentric*. If I am liturgically-minded I am always surrounded by a supernatural community. The Church militant, suffering and triumphant is always at my service. In the "*Communicantes*" of the Canon⁶⁰ it is made clear that we are always surrounded by a large community. So do away with all fear of the world! Even if my world wants to have nothing to do with me, I have another world where I am at home: the world of the angels, the world of the saints, the whole supernatural world is my world.

⁵⁸ Compare this with the statement in the Christmas Congress 1966, 72: "Only since the Bible has told us about a personal God, which gave Judaism an eye and Christianity a heart, only since that time has faith in Divine Providence become possible; only since then has a philosophy and theology of history become possible."

⁵⁹ Cf. Linus Bopp, *Geborgenheit* 9: "So do away with all fear of what will happen at work, and aversion to work: Christ, the One who sacrifices himself, is in us and helps us."

⁶⁰ The first (Roman) Eucharistic Prayer, which remembers the saints before the act of Consecration, begins with the word "*Communicante*" (in holy community).

The Liturgy as a Symbol

LitWH (July 1938) [8th Conference], 143-150

To what extent is our post-modern society able to use and understand symbols? To what extent is it able to celebrate and understand the liturgy? There is no doubt that our post-modern society lives with a great many symbols and rituals. The question is whether these symbols point to a transcendental world, the world of the faith, or whether they remain within this world as a sign of longing for a home, for identity, for being sheltered, for justice, solidarity and affection.

Symbols are windows that invite us to cast a glance into the next world, a transcendental world. Their aim is to bring us into a vital and personal relationship with God.

The ability to celebrate and understand the liturgy is the ability to allow profound faith to mould our lives, to see reality as God's mirror and language, and to draw strength from trusting in this sacramental structure of reality.

Symbols include human physicality in our relationship with God. What are symbols? Rites, processions, the way we arrange a room, statues of saints, incense, songs, prayers, our postures when we pray (standing, kneeling, sitting, prostration on the floor) are concrete symbols. They involve the whole person. They appeal, first of all, to our feelings, to our sensory experiences (seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting), and only then to our mind. Symbols help the believer to feel emotionally at home and become deeply rooted in the transcendental world and God.

From a theological point of view, symbols have a revelatory and mediating function: they convey a message and a grace. The whole of reality is a sign; it achieves an unparalleled concentration in the sacramental signs of Baptism and the Eucharist.

[What are symbols?]

[143] The nature of symbols – Very simply we could say that they are acts, tangible acts, which we see performed in the Sacraments – in particular at Holy Mass – and in the sacramentals. However, even outside the sacraments, God's wonderful deeds are always connected with outward signs. Hence the formulation: The liturgy speaks to us through *symbols*.

A symbol is a sign, an outward image we can perceive with our senses, a sign of a higher reality behind them. God's great deeds, which he has performed in the past, he still performs today when the outward signs are used.

A symbol can be seen in two ways – it can be a sign that mediates grace and mediates ideas.

[Symbols as the vehicle for ideas]

Look at the section on “prophetic attachment to things” in “Everyday Sanctity”. There they are discussed as signs that mediate ideas.⁶¹

[Symbols as the vehicle for grace]

[144] Symbols “mediate grace”. This can be seen in two ways: they contain *Christ*, that is, they contain Jesus Christ, the Bringer of Grace, himself, or quite simply they contain grace. [Only the Eucharist gives us both: the Bringer of Grace and grace itself.] Bread and wine [after they have been changed into the Body and Blood of Christ at the consecration] mediate grace, because they contain the Grace-bringer. All the other sacraments contain Christ’s strength. The Eucharist is the climax of the entire liturgy⁶², because we have Christ himself here. The sacramentals⁶³ also mediate grace (e.g., holy water, blessed objects).

In this context we think also of the human nature of the God-Man. It was also an outward sign, a symbol. It is called “*instrumentum conjunctum*”, that is, an instrument constantly united with and rooted in the Godhead.

[The Church as the “great sacrament”]

The Church as such is an extension of the God-Man; so it is called “the great sacrament”, or also the “great symbol”. So are the individual sacraments in and through the Church. They in their turn, like the Church, represent the nature of the God-Man. That is to say, the sacraments are signs that are separate from the divinity [=from the divinity of God], that is, “*instrumenta separata*”, that are nevertheless used by God in order to bring about works of grace.

[The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ:
the incarnate structure of the Church]

[145] Let us look at the great context! [of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ] [...] The Church is a *mystical* body. We have to distinguish here between the Mystical Body of Christ and the physical body of Christ. For this reason I will first explain and then clarify.

⁶¹ M.A. Nailis, *Everyday Sanctity*

⁶² *Sacrosanctum concilium* speaks in §10 of the liturgy as “the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the fount from which all her power flows.” §11 of *Lumen Gentium* calls the liturgy “the source and summit of the Christian life.”

⁶³ Cf. SC 60: “Holy Mother Church has, moreover, instituted sacramentals. These are sacred signs which bear a resemblance to the sacraments. They signify effects, particularly of a spiritual nature, which are obtained through the Church’s intercession. By them people are disposed to receive the chief effect of the sacraments, and various occasions in life are rendered holy.”

[The physical body as matter]

The explanation: I am looking at the physical body of our Lord. What am I looking at? Allow me to put it this way – I am looking at a lump of flesh. That is to say, Christ's body is just as much matter as any other matter. In how many forms can matter be seen? In the form of stones, plants, animals and people. Now comes the fifth form: the God-Man as a Person. The matter in all these forms is the same.

The liturgy makes us aware of this when it speaks of human flesh [while giving the Ash Cross on Ash Wednesday]: "*Memento homo, quia pulvis es et in pulverem reverteris* – Remember that you are dust and will return to dust." So my flesh is matter. Our flesh will disintegrate into dust and ashes.

[Matter and the spiritual soul]

Matter is the same everywhere. Nevertheless there is an essential difference between all the forms of matter to the extent that matter in its individual forms – as a reality we can perceive with our senses - is a symbol of a higher reality. Let us take the difference between plants and stones. Behind the plants there is another reality, the vegetative soul. This vegetative soul of plants is a higher reality than that of stones. Or, look at the difference between plants and animals. The sentient soul of animals is a higher reality than the vegetative soul of plants. The higher the reality behind something, the better we can understand it as a symbol.

[The body as the mirror of the soul and the divine]

Or, let us take another example. When we shake hands it does not mean that one lump of flesh touches another lump of flesh. Joining hands is an image of something higher that we can perceive with our senses, that is, it is a symbol of sincere love. The body is the companion, instrument and, above all, the reflection of the soul.

[146] The body is the reflection of the soul. This is where we have to start. If the God-Man shakes me by the hand, what do I have in my hand? Who is shaking my hand at this moment? The hand of the God-Man is a sign of a higher reality: *God* has shaken my hand. If the human nature of the God-Man does something, there is a higher reality behind it. The God-Man acts, but this means that *God* is at work. Since the human soul can only act through the body, so also the God-Man can only work through his human nature.

The human nature of the God-Man is a great Sacrament (*instrumentum conjunctum*). In the normal course of events the God Man can only work through his human nature. That is why his human nature was involved everywhere, for example, when he worked miracles. He also usually gave inner graces in connection with an outward sign.

[The Mystical Body of Christ – Christ works through his Church]

We talk about the Mystical Body of Christ. This is not just his physical body. What the human nature of the God-Man brought about during his lifetime, God now brings about, the Holy Spirit brings about, through the representative body of Jesus Christ, the Church. [This takes Christ's activity as Mediator through his Church into account in a unique way.] There is no grace without Christ. However, I can only come to Christ through the Church. So there is also no grace without the Church. The Church as such is the great sacrament, the great symbol⁶⁴.

[147] How is the symbolism expressed? The Church can and must contain and mediate grace mainly through the sacraments.

This brings us to the second dimension – the Church is a *sacramental organism*. The Church is an organism that is formed, moulded and perfected by the sacraments.

[Sharing in our Lord's life:
in keeping with the vital rhythm in the order of nature and grace]

What does that mean in detail? The task of all the sacraments is to build up and extend the Church in their own way. In addition, the task of the individual sacraments is to allow us to share in our Lord's life in their own way.

This is in keeping with the rhythm of natural life – of coming into existence, maturing, growing and dying. Life rises and falls. This order in nature is transferred into the supernatural world by the sacraments. We share in the developing nature of the God-Man through baptism, in the maturing nature of the God-Man through confirmation, in his growing nature through the Eucharist. This is what we call the "principle of liturgical life". That is to say, our natural life in all its important stages is lifted up into a higher, supernatural organism by means of a new, unique incorporation into our Lord's life through a new and original relationship to the nature of the God-Man.

Besides the rise of nature, there is also a decline: people become ill, they die. This is where the sacrament of the dying⁶⁵, the anointing, fits in. The sacrament of penance should be understood in the same way. [148-150 omitted]

[150] So let us look at the individual sacraments. We used the rise and fall of life to describe them, basing ourselves each time on our Lord's life and our natural lives.

⁶⁴ Cf. LG 1;48, where the Church is called the "universal sacrament of salvation." Cf. also *Gaudium et Spes* 42. Even in SC 2 the Church is no longer described according to its juridical structure, but by its sacramental nature as the original Sacrament.

⁶⁵ The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is not meant only for those who are in danger of dying (cf. SC 73). However, the Sacrament should continue to be given to the seriously ill who are in danger of dying. "The Anointing of the Sick completes our conformity to the death and Resurrection of Christ, just as Baptism began it... This last anointing fortifies the end of our earthly life like a solid rampart for the final struggles before entering the Father's house" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, §1523).

Love for Mary and the Celebration of the Liturgy

LitWH (July 1938) 229-240 [Final Conference]

The retreat course for priests on "Liturgical Everyday Sanctity" closed with a Marian conference. Fr Kentenich wanted to show that Marian devotion and a liturgical spirituality are not contradictory⁶⁶, but are interconnected and complement each other. Both have the same goal: concern for the "mystical Christ", that is, that Christ will be formed in the ecclesial community and in the life of priests.

[The subject of the talk: looking at Mary, our MTA]

[229] In conclusion we now have to turn our gaze to the one we have neglected until now. We have to look at the one to whom we have consecrated ourselves for time and eternity – our Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt.

[Looking back – the retreat has been a time of grace in our lives]

Have these days [of retreat] been a time of grace for our lives, for our pastoral work? Yes. We have to admit humbly and with a childlike attitude that the earthquake of grace that has taken hold of us proceeds from the shrine, from the heart of the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt. We don't need to prove it, we know how much our personal lives and destinies have been united with her.

[Gratitude for the insights of the mind, warmth for the heart and readiness for the will]

[I have said that this retreat] has been an earthquake of grace. I think it has been a fairly strong one. It has penetrated our minds, it is entered into our wills and our hearts. It is probably the reason why we now see our high goal of everyday sanctity, and the movement of everyday sanctity, far more clearly. We also owe our clear and inner firmness and effective readiness to reach out to this great goal to it. Our hearts have become warm again for our Family, for our ideal, for the Church and for God. With body and soul, with mind, will and heart, we have found a home in a supernatural, sacramental world.

So at the end of the retreat we say a sincere thank you.

⁶⁶ Cf. G.M. Boll, Zeichen der Zeit. Maria in der Liturgie, in: Regnum 25, May 91/2, p. 49f; cf. LG 66 Marienmessen – Cf. also the Encyclical of Pope Paul VI, "Marialis Cultus" of 2.2.1974 (AAS 66 (74) 114-168. The whole first chapter deals with Mary's position in the renewed Roman liturgy, and the new liturgical books. A cycle of sermons by Fr Kentenich in Milwaukee deals with the relationship between a liturgical and Marian spirituality under the title "Cum Maria ad altare". "In profound and fervent union with the Blessed Mother, and after her example, we want to centre constantly on the altar." (Cf. Sermon of 17.1.1965 in: Aus dem Glauben leben, Vol. 16, 89ff.).

[A look into the future: Will grace go on working?]

[230] At the same time the question arises: When will the earthquake of grace stop? And if it stops, are we back in our old state again? Will we again disappoint ourselves and the world? "*In vanum laboraverunt!*" [They have worked in vain]. No, this earthquake of grace may never stop, nor will it stop. We hope that it will never stop again until the end of our lives. Of course, there is one condition.

[Our co-responsibility – faithful fulfilment of our duties]

The Family stands before us like the English Admiral Nelson⁶⁷ stood before his soldiers at the start of a great naval battle, when he called out those words, "England expects that every man will do his duty to the utmost." In the same way almighty God and the blessed Virgin stand before us and call out to us, "We expect you to carry out your duties faithfully and to the utmost". What will our answer be?

[We trust that the Blessed Mother will accompany us on our way]

Aren't we in a similar position to the Israelites at that time? They had to fight against a far superior power. They didn't have the courage to do so. They went to the Prophetess Deborah [Ju 4, 1-16] for advice. She told them to take courage and go into battle. The Israelites told her, "If you go with us, we are ready, we will have the courage to dare to enter into battle, because we will fight and win; otherwise we do not have the courage to take up the battle."

At the close of the retreat don't we want to tell the Blessed Mother very simply, "The earthquake of grace going out from your shrine will go on seething and breaking if you are constantly with us." She will reply, "I will gladly go with you, but I require only one thing: that you take hold of my hand, that you look up to me and listen to me."

[Arrangement of the conference]

[231] She will then start to reveal herself, to make us aware that she not only wants to be with us from her little shrine, but that in the daily liturgy she also accompanies us constantly, she wants to be with us as our Leader and Queen.

"If you go with us ..." "I will go with you, you must only look at me ..." Have we not become sufficiently perceptive and alert in these days?

1. Mary accompanies us – in the liturgy and in life

In the liturgy I see the Blessed Mother as the one who accompanies me constantly on my liturgical way through life. There is a popular saying: "Tell me who you go around with, and I will tell you who you are." If I see the Blessed Mother constantly on my path through life, won't I become more like her? Will she not see to it that the

⁶⁷ Viscount Horatio Nelson, English Admiral, 1758-1805, conquered the French fleet in 1798 at Abukir and in 1805 at the Battle of Trafalgar.

earthquake of grace [of this retreat] will last until the end of my life? I know that meeting Mary always means meeting God and being blessed by God. When I look into my liturgical path through life, I will see how often the Blessed Mother has met me as my companion. Think only of the wreath of Marian feast-days.

[The liturgy embraces the whole historical life of our Lord and Mary]

If we have interpreted the nature of the liturgy correctly, we will take it for granted that the liturgy places the whole historical life of Jesus before our eyes. Nor may I forget his great co-worker in the work of salvation, the Blessed Mother, may she be praised for all eternity! No, she cannot be forgotten by the liturgy, nor is she forgotten.

[There is also a “Marian Church Year”]

Hirshcer⁶⁸ speaks of a Marian Church Year”. Just as Mary accompanied our Lord in his historical life, so she continues to accompany him in his mystical and sacramental life. All the mysteries of the God-Man interpenetrate with the life of Mary in the historical and sacramental life of our Lord. Is there a Marian mystery that is not celebrated by the liturgy? At times we see the Blessed Mother as the Immaculata [conceived immaculate], [232] at other times as the Ancilla [handmaid of the Lord], or as the Dolorosa [suffering Mother], the Gloriosa [glorious Mother], or Co-redemptrix. Then we see her as the tremendous sign in the heavens [Rev. 12,1]. The great sign appears again and again on the horizon of our liturgical lives. The historical life of our Lord is unthinkable without the historical life of Mary.

In the same way, the mystical life of our Lord is unthinkable without Mary’s life sharing in it. “Lord, that I may see!” [Lk 18,41]. Lord, that I may hear!

[Mary, the saints and I myself - an embodiment of Mary’s life]

So I will not find it difficult to encounter the Blessed Mother more than before. If I am liturgically minded, it will already have become a habit to see the saint whose feast-day is being celebrated as the embodiment of our Lord’s life, and as an example for my personal life. This is the way that people who are inspired by the liturgy see and hear the saints. So, on her feast-days, the Blessed Mother is a germinal manifesta-

⁶⁸ Johann Baptist von Hirscher (1788-1865), Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology in Tuebingen (from 1817), co-founder of the so-called Tuebingen School, from 1837 in Freiburg. In his work “Das Leben der seligsten Jungfrau und Gottesmutter Maria” (the life of the blessed Virgin and Mother of God, Mary) he states: “... The main events in the life of the blessed virgin are taken up in the cult of the Catholic Church and form a permanent object of her devotion. The conception of the blessed Virgin, her birth, her who was conceived in her at the message of an angel, her visit to Elizabeth, the birth of Christ, her divine Son, his presentation in the temple, the adoration of the wise men, the flight into Egypt, the journey to Jerusalem and the finding of the lost Child, then all the main events in the life and suffering of Christ, and what his holy Mother felt and suffered, finally her own death and assumption into heaven are given special days of commemoration by the Church. So no Catholic Christian can live through the Catholic Church Year without at the same time presenting the joyful and painful life of the blessed Virgin and Mother to his or her soul.” a.a.O 343f.

tion of our Lord, just as the saints are at every other feast of saints. The liturgy is in fact a manifestation (parousia) of the Blessed Mother and our Lord, although ultimately it is also a manifestation (parousia) [ideal depiction] of myself. That is to say, if I have grown deeply into the liturgy, it is natural for me to experience that I am an '*altera Maria*' (another Mary) on Marian feast-days, and as an *altera Maria* I will allow the *alter Christus* (another Christ) to come alive in me.

[Warmth and joy in the liturgy because of Mary]

If my mind-set is Marian, how my heart will warm when Mary is presented to me. If we love the Blessed Mother, it only needs a certain word to be spoken and love for Mary will echo in our souls. For example, if we hear a Marian hymn, we immediately respond with joy. How my heart warms when the Blessed Mother is shown to me in some form or other.

[233] There are not just feast-days of the Blessed Mother - there is a whole wreath of such feast-days – she is often mentioned in every Holy Mass. The more strongly we take our bearings from the liturgy, the more we will allow ourselves to be led to respond to the mention of her name with a simple emotion, because this is a Church custom – as often as Mary's name is mentioned, we bow our heads slightly. When I bow my head, my heart, my whole being, bows down before her.

The Blessed Mother goes with me. I will look up to her more often in the future. It is so easy for me to do so. How fruitful this will be; it will also be fruitful for our devotion to Mary. Every time I meet her, every talk about her, is ultimately a Marian Pentecost. How can we make devotion to Mary bear fruit in the liturgy? If we allow it to draw our attention to Mary repeatedly, especially in closest connection with the salvation event, our hearts have to warm.

[Love for Mary makes us profoundly receptive for all that is divine]

So our love for Mary must have a fruitful effect on the liturgy. I will become profoundly receptive for all that is connected with the Blessed Mother. We will also have a heart for everything our Lord loves and holds dear.

The Blessed Mother loves the work of redemption and its repetition in the liturgy. If I often meet her in the Eucharist, I will not need to fear that the earthquake of grace will cease.

2. Mary is our leader

The Blessed Mother tells us, "I want to accompany you; I want to be your leader and queen through the great realm of the liturgy". If I were to ask her where, and to what extent, she holds out her hand to me in the liturgy, she will answer, "Not so much by my words, but far more by all that I am and do. I will and may lead you day by day to a deeper understanding of your own dignity, your personal tasks as a priest, because your priestly dignity and tasks are essentially co-ordinated with my dignity and task."

“*Simile simili gaudet* – birds of a feather flock together.” The similarity of our dignity and task enkindles my love for Mary.

[She leads me to perceive my own human dignity]

Similar dignity: Observe her historical and post-historical life. We know that a person’s dignity depends on his or her closeness to God. The closer they come to God, the greater their dignity; the further they are from God, the less dignity they possess. The blessed among women – how close she is to God! We could pause here time and again with our thoughts.

[She leads me to perceive my own priestly dignity and task]

[Mary is] the Mother of God, the one who bore God. She shares a sort of authority with the heavenly Father over their Son. This again resounds in my soul – I, too, have a similar authority as a priest over the real and mystical Christ. As a priest I become a representative of Christ, the Head – *signum configurationis Christi*, an *alter Christus* [a sign configured to Christ, a second Christ]. Birds of a feather flock together. The Blessed Mother makes me aware that as the one who bore God she gave birth to the only begotten Son of God, she cared for him and was allowed to share in his task. *Simile simili gaudet!*

My care [as priest] for the sacramental and mystical Lord is an offshoot of her concern for the historical Lord. I can only mention this briefly in our context. Please compare the two.

Further, I discover the relationship between the Blessed Mother and the Holy Spirit. She is a living instrument of the Holy Spirit. He first needed her to say ‘Yes’, because he could not and would not work without it. Normally the Holy Spirit cannot and will not set to work – in particular he does not want to allow grace to flow through the channel of the Sacraments – without my co-operation as a priest.

[235] Oh, if only I really wanted to see my dignity more strongly in the image of the Blessed Mother!

[Mary serves the historical and mystical Christ]

Similie simili gaudet – there is a similarity in dignity, and hence a similarity in tasks. The Blessed Mother has two tasks: First of all, to give life to our Lord and to serve him, and, secondly, in our Lord [to give life and to serve] the members of his Body. So, her task is to serve the historical and mystical Lord.

Did she serve the historical Lord? Without doubt she did. However, at the same time she served the mystical Lord. Through saying ‘Yes’ [at the moment of the Annunciation and under the Cross] she became the Mother of Christ’s members, the mystical Lord. Her “Yes’ required her to say yes by her life; she accompanied our Lord in his

bloody sacrifice on the Cross. The sacrifice of her life was to shed her blood spiritually. She paid a great price for saying 'Yes'. Slowly but surely she won her mysterious, spiritual motherhood [at the Annunciation] by accompanying the historical Lord [on his way of the Cross]. When she stood under the Cross it was the climax, the focal point of her co-suffering, the climax of the price she had to pay for her spiritual motherhood. So we are justified in seeing that she is constantly active from heaven. Her task is to care for the mystical Christ⁶⁹. Think of such formulations as: [she is the] Mediatrix of all Graces, Mary is the official bearer of Christ, [her and our task is] to form the world into Christ from Schoenstatt.

[A priest's concern for the mystical Christ]

Birds of a feather flock together. In my life as a priest, what is my concern for the mystical Christ? Do I do something similar to what the Blessed Mother did when I have to care in practice for the sacramental Christ?

[A priest's service as an instrument]

[236] Truly, when we reflect on these down-to-earth thoughts, we will not be able to avoid the impression that the Blessed Mother can be found everywhere along our liturgical path through life. She wants to continue carrying out the tasks she had during our Lord's lifetime and for the whole world through me as a priest. The more I love her, the more joyfully I will offer myself to her to be her instrument, so that she can re-live her historical life through me, and that through me she can continue and complete her care for the sacramental and mystical Christ.

[A liturgical atmosphere is always Marian]

When we meet Mary, we meet God and are blessed by God. A Marian climate is always a graced climate. A liturgical atmosphere is always a Marian atmosphere. They are not contradictory. If our mindset is liturgical, it is also Marian. If we are totally orientated to Mary, we will also be orientated to the liturgy. So it is a genuinely Catholic attitude.

3. Mary is our Queen

"I want to accompany you as your Queen", the Blessed Mother tells us. I look up to her in her historical and liturgical life and involuntarily ask: What is the justification for her royal title, what is the justification for her royal tasks?

⁶⁹ In this context Fr Kentenich often referred to Grignon de Montfort. Cf. Jbr (1952) in: *Lebensgeheimnis Schoenstatts*, Vol. 2, 114,f. "The saint [Grignon de Montfort] distinguishes between two births of our Lord – a physical and a mystical birth. [*Abhandlung 1. Buch Kap. 1, Nrs. 14ff. and II Nr. 22ff.*]. The first is the Lord in the womb of the Blessed Mother: its fruit is the *Christus historicus* – historical Christ. The second is the Lord's re-birth in souls: its fruit is the *Christus mysticus* – the mystical Christ. It too has to take place in Mary's womb – although not physically, but mystically."

[Why Mary is Queen: three justifications]

Her entitlement to a royal title: If I see things correctly, we may dare to acknowledge three reasons for the Blessed Mothers Queenship. She resembles our Lord. She is queen by virtue of inheritance, conquest and election⁷⁰.

She is Queen **by virtue of inheritance**. Her royal title is therefore inherited. She is the Queen Mother. Since she is the Mother of the King, she is also a Queen, in just the same way as we say that because she is the Mother of Jesus, she is the Mother of God.

[237] She is Queen **by virtue of conquest**. She conquered her royal power, her royal sphere of influence, by her co-suffering on earth, and by her constant prayer of petition on our behalf up in heaven.

She is Queen **by virtue of election**. We, too, have chosen her to be the Queen of our Schoenstatt Family. Countless numbers of people have done this.

So I constantly see her surrounded by her royal mantle, by royal purple.

[Her threefold task as Queen]

What are her royal tasks? We can deduce them from the lives of earthly, Christian Queens. They had three tasks with regard to their people:

First of all, to protect the faith, to spread the faith, and to deepen and assimilate the faith. Did the Blessed Mother carry out this task during our Lord's historical life and in the course of the centuries? Involuntarily we are reminded of those words: "*Omnes haereses tu sola interemisti [in universo mundo]* – you have overcome all heresies in the whole world."⁷¹

The Queen had a second task: She had to concern herself with widows and orphans. How has the Blessed Mother carried out this task in the course of the centuries? How much has she cared for us personally?

In addition, a Queen had to make herself available to all who came with petitions. How often she has heard our prayers, she has always done so! Think of the saying of St Bernard: It has never been heard [that anyone who had recourse to you was not heard].⁷²

⁷⁰ Fr Kantenich bases himself on Pius XII. See sermon of 2.9.1962 in: *Aus dem Glauben Leben*, Vol 3,78.

⁷¹ Antiphony of Compiègne, 9/10 century: PL 78, 746 – Response on the feast of Mary's Purification. Cf *Marienlexikon* 3, S67-69.

⁷² The "Memorae" as we know it today is not based on Bernard of Clairvaux, although some sentences can be found in his writings (PL 183,428). The prayer: 'Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known, that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help or sought your intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence I turn to you, O Virgin of Virgins, my

[238] I recall that this Queen comes to meet me in the daily liturgy. Her task remains forever; it is eternal. She remains our Queen even in eternity. She, the great intercessor, wants to help us to become what we would so much like to be.

[The prophetic and royal task of a priest]

Birds of a feather flock together. Do also we, as priests, possess royal dignity? Are we not in a certain sense “Kings”?

We are kings by right of inheritance. Through our ordination to the priesthood we are allowed to share in the God-Man’s character as High Priest, King and Prophet. So our own nature, our own being, is royal.

However, we have also become kings by virtue of conquest. Through our prayers, our co-sacrifice, we have earned this title.

We are also kings by right of election. How many people honour the priest in us!

So, those who encounter the Blessed Mother with such a clear and alert gaze will gradually be gripped by a profound Marian spirit. He will be blessed by her, and given an abundance of blessings by the Triune God.

So at the end of this retreat we again want to take hold of our Lady’s hand. Truly, if you go with me through the realm of the liturgy, and if I accompany you, if I understand you and follow you, I need fear nothing. The earthquake of grace will never cease again.

[Faithfulness to the covenant of love]

However, if she again and again reaches out her hand to us, but if we don’t see it or notice it, we will really have broken our oath, that is, those of us who have given ourselves to her. Hence the solemn promise to belong to her always, in all circumstances.

[239] When she reveals herself to us in the liturgy, isn’t that contained in our consecration to her – that we will meet her time and again in the liturgy?

Let us close these objective, dogmatic thoughts by giving ourselves and our whole being to her once again with childlike simplicity and faithfulness. When we belong to her, she will care for us all as her “property and possession”. She will ensure that we will meet our Lord, and discover ourselves in him and the Holy Spirit with the Father.

Mother; to you I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer them. Amen’

[Trust in her victorious power over the devil]

Nothing without her, but also nothing without us. The more we become Marian people, the more we may hope that we will become liturgical people. In future our whole task has to consist in constantly looking towards her with an alert gaze, and seeing her as she appears on our liturgical way through life. Then we can walk out into our present times with great calmness. She shines out on the horizon of history as the strong woman who crushes the head of the devil [Gen 3,15]. She will also crush the devil's head in my life. It is possible that the devil will spit his poison at us by inflaming the whole mob of hell to hunt us down, but we trust in those words: "Who finds me, finds life and salvation from the Lord" [Prov 8,15]. Just as she conquered the devil, so shall we, even if it costs us our lives. Perhaps, however, only at the cost of a small scratch, a small wound. To the extent that we are true to the Blessed Mother, the Woman of the Apocalypse will also win the victory in our lives.

[240] [The Croatian Duke Nicholas] Zrinyi⁷³ had protected the city against a vastly superior enemy army. He battled long and hard with the courage of despair. Their munitions were running out, so was their food, and he was facing a vastly superior army. Then he got the idea: Shouldn't we surrender the fortress under these circumstances? Each time he answered the temptation with the word: Never! Finally he came to the decision: I will don my full uniform as army General and throw myself into the battle. I would rather die the death of a hero out there than to hand over the fortress in dishonour. His soldiers were fired by the example of their beloved leader and called out: "Follow him!" And they won the victory.

What about us? We will never hand over the fortress of our Family to the devil. No matter the circumstances, our Family will remain Marian. "Follow her", the Mother of God! Just as she battled and gave her life for the life of our Lord, so we want to do the same. So let us close with the simple promise Max Brunner⁷⁴ called out: "*Ave imperatrix, morituri te salutant!*"⁷⁵ We are prepared to die rather than surrender the "fortress of the Family".

We greet her, the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt, with mouth and heart and with our lives – with our saintly, Marian and saintly, liturgical lives.

⁷³ Fr Kentenich is referring here to an episode in the Turkish wars of the 16th century, when the Croatian Duke Nicholas Zrinyi defended the Castle of Szigetvar against Sultan Soliman II. He was captured during the final sortie and was beheaded. A play by Theodor Koerner made this event very famous. In Act 5, Scene 8, he has Zrinyi say: "... Follow me! Follow me! There we will meet again! Die, courageous people! For God and our Fatherland! All reply: We follow you! We follow you! For God and our Fatherland!" (Theodor Koerner's complete works, Vol 335).

⁷⁴ Co-founder of Schoenstatt, a member of the so-called Founder Generation. Born 12.12.1897 in Arth near Altdorf, Germany, fell in World War I on 23.4.1917 near Arras. His remains were buried behind the shrine in Schoenstatt on 17.8.1934.

⁷⁵ "Hail, O Queen, those who are about to die greet you!" With these words, turning to Mary's statue, he closed a short address to the new members of the Sodality before he left for the war. Cf. Josef Klein, Max Brunner – Albert Langner, 10f. Fr Kentenich liked to quote these words again and again even in the last years of his life.

Questions for Reflection

1. In how far does Mary and devotion to Mary lead us to the liturgy?
2. How does Fr Kentenich see the connections between Mary's Queenship and the royal and prophetic service of a priest?
3. In his encyclical letter "Mediator Dei", what reasons does Pius XII give for Christ's Kingship?
4. Fr Kentenich describes the similarity between Mary and priests: they have the same task to bear Christ. When we speak to married couples, what would our theological reasoning have to be?