

Understanding Our Liturgy Class for Monday January 17th, 2011

Introduction:

- The Eucharistic Sacrifice has been called the (in Latin) *collecta*; *domenicum*; *memoriale*; *communio*; *oblatio*; (and in Greek) *leitourgia*, *eucharistia*, *thusia*, *latreia*, *sunaxis*, *mustagoga*, *oikonomia*. Our English “Mass” comes from Latin “*missa*”=missio, i.e. dimissio (the concluding formula *Ite, missa est*—“Go, it is the dismissal”). The title “*missa*” has been in usage since at least the 4th century. It comes from *the first* dismissal of the catechumens.
- First mass probably said on Pentecost; certain traits that all liturgies have in common likely are of apostolic origin (e.g. the sign of the cross, the readings, the mixing of the wine with water, prayers for the living and the dead, words added to those of consecration, the Lord’s prayer, the sign of the cross, the kiss (or sign) of peace, the fraction, etc.)
- Two main divisions of liturgies are Eastern and Western: In the West, there are not many (Mozarabic, Gallic, Ambrosian, Roman). In the East, there are many. Both possess variety and complexity in their own ways.
- The three most ancient Sacramentaries we possess today are the *Sacramentarium Leonianum* (Pope Leo I, 440-461), *Gelasianum* (Gelasius I, 492-496), and *Gregorianum* (Gregory I, 590-604). Our Missal is closest in form to that of the *Sacramentarium Gregorianum*.
- All the way up until the Middle Ages, the book that contained the liturgical prayers proper to the priest was called the ‘Sacramentary’. From the 13th century, it included all the other parts of the mass, including the Scripture readings. It was from then on called the “Missal”.
- The basic form of the Roman Rite dates back to at least the fifth or even fourth century.
- Introductory Rites; Liturgy of the Word; Liturgy of the Eucharist; Communion Rite; Concluding Rites

Opening of Introductory Rites, “In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti” (cf. Mt 28:19):

- The apostolic mission is Trinitarian by nature; it is continued in the Church until the end of the world.
- The liturgy begins with the Trinity and ends with the Trinity (in the priestly benediction). The liturgy is Trinitarian in nature because it is the Son’s worship of the Father in the power of the Spirit.
- Is there any significance to the fact that the *ending* of the gospel is the *beginning* of the liturgy?
- sign of the cross (cf. Ez 9:4 and Rev 7:2-3)
 - Tertullian (c. AD 200): “At every step, in coming in and going out, when putting on our garments and shoes, when washing, when at table, when lighting a candle, on going to bed, when sitting down, at every work we perform, we Christians mark the forehead with the Sign of the Cross.”
 - Pope Innocent III (d. AD 1216): “From above to below, and from the right to the left, because Christ descended from the heavens to the earth, and from the Jews [right] He passed to the Gentiles [left]. Others, however, make the sign of the cross from the left to the right, because from misery we must cross over to glory, just as Christ crossed over from death to life, and from Hades to Paradise.”
 - It appears that moving from the right to the left was the ancient practice and that the faithful began mirroring the way the priests made the sign when facing the people to bless them (he would start from the left because it was the people’s right).

First Opening Greeting (cf. 2 Cor 13:13):

- The apostolic benediction is Trinitarian.
- Is there any significance to the fact that the *ending* of the epistle is the *beginning* of the liturgy?

The First Penitential Act and its Davidic subtext:

- **NTD**: “that I have greatly sinned” (1 Chr 21:8; cf. 2 Sam 24:10)
- 2 Sam, chapters 12 and 24 (1 Chr 21) and psalm 50 provide a backdrop for the Penitential Act.
- **NTD**: the superior rendering of “acknowledge” over “call to mind” has theological consequences in that we are owning our sins as opposed maybe to just contemplating them from a distance.
- Content of this confession? (Remembrance of past serious sin can actually lead to joy).
- “I confess to Almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters” (2 Sam 12:13; Ps 50:5-6; Sam 24:10; see also Lk 15:18; James 5:16)
- “in my thoughts” (in the census of Israel, David’s sin was an internal sin of vanity and pride; cf. Ws 1.3)

- “and in my words” (James 3:8-10)
- “in what I have failed to do” (cf. 2 Sam 11:1; see also Mt 25:42; James 4:17).
- **NTD**: “through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault” retains rhythm and psychological effect of repetition (cf. 2 Sam 24:17)
- triple striking of the breast/heart (the “tunsio pectoris”)
 - a closed or open fist (cf. Lk 18:13)
 - The Douay Catechism of 1649 teaches that that triple striking of the breast “signifies that all sin is from the heart (Mk 7:21), and ought to be discharged from the heart, with hearty sorrow (cf. 2 Sam 24:10).”
 - cf. Ps 50:19 (offering to God your heart, broken in sorrow for your sins)
 - The three strikes is also probably a vestige of the older form of the Confiteor that enumerated three kinds of transgression and not four like the current form of the Confiteor. Also, the number three corresponds to contrition, confession, and satisfaction.
- The Davidic paradigm includes contrition, confession, satisfaction (temporal consequences of sin remaining even after guilt is taken away).
- “therefore I ask blessed Mary...all the Angels and Saints...” (Rev 5:8; 8:3-4; 1 Sam 12:19; Jer 42:2; 2 Macc 15:12-14; James 5.16; Heb 12:1)
- “and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God” (Bar 1:13)

The Second Penitential Act:

- **NTD**: “...For we have sinned against you” (Bar 3:2)
- **NTD**: “Show us, O Lord, your mercy, and grant us your salvation.” (Ps 84:8)

The Third Penitential Act:

- **NTD**: “You were sent to heal the contrite of heart.” (Ps 146:3)
- **NTD**: “...seated...” (more clearly brings out the scriptural language of the typical edition)

The Kyrie:

- κύριε ἐλέησον (Mk 10:47: ἤρξατο κράζειν καὶ λέγειν· υἱὲ Δαυίδ Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησον με)
- pre-Latin vestige of Roman liturgy or Eastern import that remained unchanged? (Hebrew, Greek, Latin are in the liturgy as the languages that once proclaimed Christ to the world and will continue to do so until the end.)
- cf. “Jesus Prayer” (Lk 18:13 and the striking of the breast in the Confiteor; cf. CCC 2665 and 2669)
- “iotacism” is the process by which a number of vowels and diphthongs in Ancient Greek converged in pronunciation so that they all sound like iota in Modern Greek (“η, υ, ει, οι, ηι, υι” all pronounced “ι”).

The Gloria (The “Greater Doxology”):

- an example of a genre of privately composed hymns that was popular in the second and third centuries (cf. ‘Oh Gladsome Light’ and the *Te Deum*).
- at least as old at the third century but it could be from the second or even first century (cf. the tradition in the *Liber Pontificalis* and Polycarp’s recorded prayer, “I praise Thee, I bless Thee, I glorify Thee...”)
- translated from Greek into Latin in the fourth century, most likely by St. Hilary of Poitiers (d. AD 366), its Latin is older than the Latin of Jerome’s Vulgate (cf. *excelsis* vs. *altissimus*).
- The original Greek composition is used to this day in the Eastern Liturgy, but not in the Eucharistic Liturgy. Rather it is found as a morning hymn in the Office.
- Until the 11th century, the Gloria was reserved for the Bishop on Sunday and only for the priest on Easter. But since then, the priest sung it on Sundays. Today, we all are encouraged to sing it.
- Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις θεῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας
- Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis
- **NTD**: “and on earth peace to *people of good will*.” (Lk 2:14) ...doesn’t decide the ambiguity for us and thus leaves the meaning polyvalent [‘men of good disposition’ vs. ‘men whom he favors’, ‘...whom he has chosen’, ‘...who are his own’...hence our current translation of “*his people*”]. One might argue it favors the ‘men of good disposition’ reading just by virtue of how a normal English speaker would read the text, not being aware the subtler meaning.