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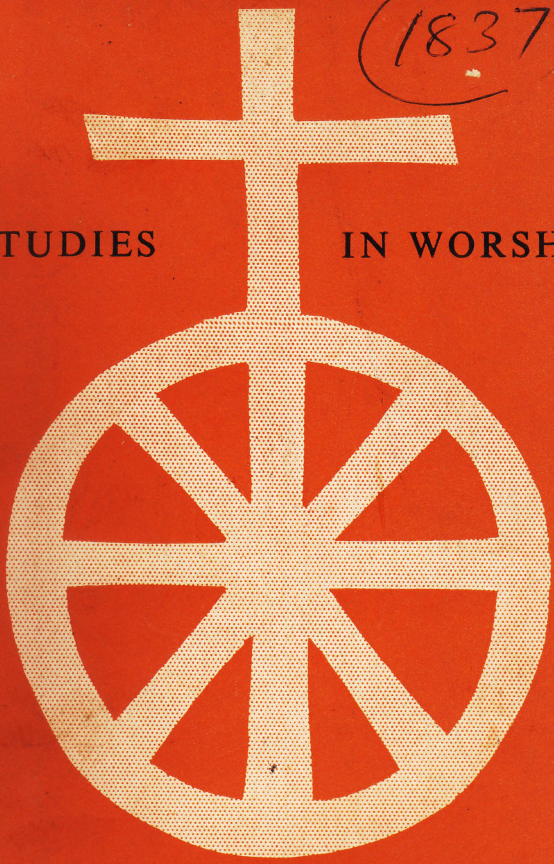

Paul Verghese

The Joy of Freedom:

Eastern Worship and Modern Man

EDITED BY J. G. DAVIES & A. RAYMOND GEORGE

The great liturgical tradition of Eastern Christian worship is still something of a mystery to most Christians outside the fold of the Orthodox Church. Indeed there is (as Fr. Verghese points out) in 'the Western Reformed and Lutheran traditions a definitely anti-liturgical bias' in which the 'preaching of the word' dominates public worship. Something more than 'preaching' is demanded by modern man in his worship, and that 'more' Fr. Verghese believes is found in Eastern Worship. This is the worship that speaks to daily life, a 'worldly holiness' that finds expression in concrete things, and yet transcends logic and argument, and lifts man and his community into the 'joy of freedom'.

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THE JOY OF FREEDOM

Eastern Worship and Modern Man

by

PAUL VERGHESE

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ECUMENICAL STUDIES IN WORSHIP

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CONTENTS

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FOREWORD

This book is neither by a scholar, nor for scholars. It is meant primarily for intelligent Western Christian readers, but others too may find themselves addressed here.

I am grateful to Professor J. G. Davies for suggesting that I should write such a book. My debt to my many Western Christian teachers can never be repaid.

Five monastic communities gave me their generous hospitality, warm fellowship, and a peaceful atmosphere for the writing of this book: the Jesuit Community in Mont de la Fourvière near Lyons, the Benedictine Abbeys of Bec-Helouin and Hautecombe in France, the Dominican Community in Fribourg, Switzerland, and the Reformed Community of Grandchamp near Neuchâtel, Switzerland. To have prayed and lived with these Western brothers and sisters has been a deeply enriching experience. I am grateful.

P. Verghese

Communauté de Grandchamp
Feast of the Presentation (*mayeltho*), 1966

PREFACE

The English word *Worship* seems to have no exact parallels in other modern or Biblical languages. It includes personal prayer as well as the corporate acts of worship of the Church.

Patterns of Christian worship originally emerged from one common form, but they soon developed into diverse liturgical and spiritual traditions in various cultures. All traditions of worship owe something to the pre-Christian cultural milieu in which they took shape. The Eastern tradition is no exception to this. It bears the marks of Egyptian, Jewish and Syrian, Iranian and Greek cultures, to mention only a few. It would be an error to assume however that there is only one Eastern tradition of worship. No such homogeneity of Eastern culture and tradition existed at any time—not even in the days of the "One undivided Church".

Cultural diversity, even in a small geographical area like the modern Middle East, gave rise from the beginning to a great number of spiritual and liturgical traditions. The Jerusalem tradition was never identical with the Antiochene or Alexandrian traditions. Asia Minor had its own cultural patterns and traces of this can be discovered even in the earliest traditions as reflected in the New Testament. Byzantium, which inherited all these traditions along with the Greek and Roman cultures, developed something peculiarly its own. To what extent then are we justified in speaking of an Eastern tradition in general? Despite the distinctive features of different African, Asian and European cultures, can one justify the effort to delineate a common pattern that underlies the worship of Antioch and Alexandria, Byzantium and Persia, Ethiopia and the Slavonic countries? If we limit ourselves to a study of the texts of the various liturgical anaphoras, the general lines of diversity and similarity between the several traditions can be delineated with comparative ease. That work has been ably attempted by liturgiologists in the past[1] and research continues to this day in this field.

[1] See for example A. Archdale King, *The Rites of Eastern Christendom*, 2 vols, 1950; Donald Attwater, *The Christian Churches of the East*, 2 vols, 1948, and *Eastern Catholic Worship*, 1945; F. E. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, Vol. I, 1896.

The purpose of this slender volume has to be something less ambitious. All that it can hope to achieve is to set Eastern worship in the context of the present world; it is a plea rather than an analysis. It seeks first to clear away certain popular misunderstandings. This effort should not be taken as polemic, or even as apologetic. It is a commendation before everything else, but in the best ecumenical interests. No tradition can fail to benefit from a pattern of worship which has succeeded in holding the Church together for centuries when all else seemed to have been taken away from her.

The first chapter of this study seeks to deal with the objection that, for the educated modern man, not just Eastern worship, but in fact any form of worship is irrelevant and useless. There are certain elements which modern men and women need in worship; but worship is first a duty and only secondarily something useful. Western readers may also too easily associate a vague kind of mysticism with the East, and therefore keep away from trying to come to terms with it. This book seeks to show that the fear is based on assumptions which may not be justified.

A study of Eastern worship is difficult for others either because they think that it ignores historical reality in order to escape into another world, or that it is too fixed in a given historical period. For others, study of Eastern worship is an attempt to find the "true" original form of worship. For the Eastern Church, history is a form of memory which is more than mental; it is the reliving of a past experience in joy. The content of that memory can be illuminated but not supplied by the historical method.

This book attempts simply to point to some general features of Eastern worship, and not to describe it in any detail. Its purpose is to create interest in the average reader rather than to instruct the scholar.

The notion of priesthood is inseparable from worship; but priesthood should first be understood, so the Orthodox believe, as belonging to the whole Church and therefore to every baptized Christian. The ordained bishop or priest fulfils a special function within this common priesthood. The worship of the Church requires both the common and the special priesthood. This Orthodox understanding of priesthood should be acceptable even to many who are anticlerically oriented.

The final chapter deals again with the question of prayer, which has become so difficult for modern man. My thesis is that prayer and wor-

ship are the real characteristics of a Christian. The free access with confidence into the presence of the Father, through Christ, in the Spirit, is the source of the joy of freedom.

I

DOES MODERN MAN NEED TO WORSHIP?

MODERN MAN claims to have "come of age". Dietrich Bonhoeffer who drew the special attention of Christians to it, has asked us not to mock at this claim.[1] We should, on the other hand, respect the maturity of "Modern Man" and deal with him as an adult. One supposes that the "we" here stands for the Church. Can one wonder to which age-group *she* belongs? The senile or the adolescent? Christianity has also matured in post-war Europe. It, at least a section of its Protestant wing, has no longer any need for "religion". Is there any place for worship in a "world come of age" and in a "religionless Christianity"?[2] True,

[1] *Letters and Papers from Prison*, 1958, pp. 147 ff.

[2] Neither the "world come of age" nor "religionless Christianity" are original ideas of Bonhoeffer. The first, as he himself admits, comes from Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Montaigne, Bodin, Machiavelli, Grotius, etc. *op. cit.* pp. 162 ff. The second has its source in Kierkegaard, Barth and in the writing of that great seminal mind of our century, Martin Buber, who said, in his *Zwiesprache:* "In my earlier years the 'religious' was for me the exception. There were hours that were taken out of the course of things. From somewhere or other the firm crust of everyday was pierced. Then the reliable permanence of appearances broke down; the attack which took place burst its law asunder. 'Religious experience' was the experience of an otherness which did not fit into the context of life . . . The 'religious' lifted you out. Over there now lay the accustomed existence with its affairs, but here illumination and ecstasy and rapture held, without time or sequence. Thus your own being encompassed a life here and a life beyond, and there was no bond but the actual moment of the transition . . .

"Since then I have given up the 'religious' which is nothing but the exception, extraction, exaltation, ecstasy; or it has given me up. I possess nothing but the everyday out of which I am never taken . . .

"As when you pray you do not thereby remove yourself from this life of yours but in your praying refer your thought to it, even though it may be in order to yield it; so too in the unprecedented and surprising, when you are called upon from above, required, chosen, empowered, sent, you with this your mortal bit of life are referred to, this moment is not extracted from it, it rests on what has been and beckons to the remainder which has still to be lived, you are not swallowed up in a fullness without obligation, you are willed for the life of communion" (E. T. in *Between Man and Man*, 1961, pp. 30 ff.).

Bonhoeffer did speak of a *disciplina arcani*, which we hide from the modern world so as not to offend it. Continental Bonhoefferian scholarship feels that this constitutes a legitimate subject for *future* research. We must in the meanwhile proceed with "dereligionizing" Christianity; it often happens that most of the liturgical elements of the Church's worship belong to the outmoded category of "religion".

Parallel to this is the interesting development of the liturgical theme in the second Vatican Council. Pope John, whose pastoral heart ever bore in it great compassion and respect for the modern world, made the *schema* on the Liturgy the test of the Council's first session. The overwhelming majority by which this schema was approved at the second session, and the speed with which Pope Paul has decreed the liturgical reform demanded by the Council witness to the urgent need of "modern man" for relevant forms of worship.

This desire for reformation of the Catholic liturgy goes back at least one generation to the saintly Pope Pius X, and possibly much earlier to the Benedictine monk Dom Guéranger (1805–1875) in the 19th century, who may well be called the "Father of the modern liturgical movement"[1]. But when the Catholic liturgical movement (with a parallel movement in the Anglican Church associated with the names of Pusey and Keble) was at its productive best in Austria, Germany and France, it drew forth a very negative response from the equally productive Protestant Neo-Orthodoxy. Emil Brunner's comparatively unknown book *Die Mystik und Das Wort*[2] reflects this lack of comprehension at its worst. The book concludes: "*Entweder die Mystik, oder das Wort*".

There is thus in the Western Reformed and Lutheran traditions a definitely anti-liturgical bias which now finds expression in the attitudes of the neo-Bonhoefferians and neo-Bultmannians and the decreasing tribe of Barthians and Brunnerites. The Reformation bears the marks of its reaction against corrupt medieval Roman liturgical practices; a less passionate self-evaluation is only beginning. The Germanic tradition of Lutheranism and the closely allied Swiss type of Reformation will take time to find their true orientation to worship.

[1] For a history of the liturgical movement in the Roman Catholic Church, see Dom O. Rousseau, *Histoire du Mouvement liturgique*, 1945, E. T. *The Progress of the Liturgy*, 1951. See also Massey H. Shepherd, Jr., *The Worship of the Church*, 1952.

[2] 2nd Edition, 1928, p. 399. By *Mystik* he seems to be referring to the *Kult-Mystik* of Dom Odo Casel.

And these two traditions still wield great influence in Free Church, Anglican and Lutheran Protestantism all over the world.

This conflict is mentioned here only as a warning against a too facile acceptance of the frequently heard dictum that modern man is averse to liturgical worship. That is a judgment by some theologians of the Reformation which a good many intelligent Christians in that tradition may deny. It remains true, however, that among theologians and the ordinary run of believers in the various Protestant traditions the aversion, less informed than emotional, to liturgical worship[1] continues to be a fact.

Having made that qualifying remark, one should also observe that modern man is, consciously or unconsciously, hungry for authentic worship. In a time when the Roman Mass, highly formalized and clericalized, did little for the spiritual and intellectual nurture of Christians, the insistence of the Reformers on the priority of the preached Word seemed self-evident. But modern man lives in the reaction from that reaction; he is tired of the preached word. He has a desperate need for levels in his mind deeper than the conscious to respond to the transcendent through beauty of form. Preaching, in measure and with quality, may still speak to him, but he certainly needs a great deal more.

But what is that "more"? Here we run into difficulties, for to define that "more" is to risk condemnation by the theologians. One speaks subject to correction in saying that "the more" for which modern man is hungry includes authentic worship and this has at least the following six elements:

(1) gathering up of the real life of man today
(2) awareness of the transcendent
(3) involvement of the non-conscious layers of mind
(4) expression through concrete things and actions
(5) expression of devotion through forms that transcend logic
(6) experience of the transcendent unity of the community.

The first and the fourth alone may not raise too many eyebrows. Even there the concept of spirituality which is derived from the false opposition of matter to spirit would create problems. The other phrases are increasingly open to question in the modern world, and one needs to discuss all these briefly, if only to clarify what is meant, and not necessarily to set the minds of logical analysts at rest.

[1] James Moffatt detects, even in Luther, an indifference to or detachment from "rites and forms". See *Christian Worship*, ed. Nathaniel Micklem, 1936, p. 121.

(1) *Gathering up the real life of man today*

Among theologians at least, it has become a commonplace to say that worship cannot be authentic unless related to daily life. The discovery of a "worldly holiness" is one of the most profound insights of our time. But this concept is not totally new to the Christian tradition. The earliest liturgies had at their very heart thanksgivings and prayers for the blessings of daily life, for rain in season, for the fruit of the earth, for the joys of living. Our trouble has been that we have been too closely bound to the formulae in which ancient generations expressed *their* thanks and prayers for *their* daily life. Our life today is more complex and more varied than theirs. We need fresh concepts and new formulae in which to give thanks and to pray for this urban-technological world. Here the East has shown real lack of vitality in its refusal to revise the liturgical texts. The shock of a contemporary Eastern Orthodox congregation at the addition of the words "and air" to the prayers for those who travel by "land and sea" is a case in point.

The intercessory prayers and prayers of thanksgiving in the eucharistic liturgy have varied from epoch to epoch. A spiritually alive Church should always be able to produce fresh prayers of intercession for liturgical use in every generation. The West has shown much more vitality at this point than the East. The reluctance to change liturgical formulae seems more evident in those Churches which have a rich liturgical heritage. The fear of change at this point, however, may be just as much due to lack of understanding as to reverence for tradition. The issues of politics and economics, science and technology, of rural and urban societies, of war and peace, of tension and strife, of injustice and oppression, of racial hatred and commercial exploitation, need to find some expression in our worship in order that they may truly be gathered up in our offering of ourselves to the Lord. Liturgical reform along these lines seems to have been attempted by none of the ancient Churches in recent times. The Liturgy can never be a place of escape out of history.[1] It must gather up history into itself and thereby sanctify it. Authentic worship must bring to the altar, along with the bread and the wine, the joys and sorrows of all men.

[1] Even when we close the doors of history behind us to enter into an eschatological encounter with the Lord; as St Maximus the Confessor says, we take that history with us into the eschaton.

(2) *The Transcendent*

Modern man lives in a time of history when the "eclipse of God"[1] is a fact of experience. Martin Buber has graphically portrayed the problem faced by the heightened self-awareness of modern man in his attempts to relate himself to the transcendent. In the very act of becoming conscious of the transcendent he becomes also self-consciously aware of being conscious of the "other" and this self-consciousness comes between him and the "other" to eclipse the latter. This dilemma has tempted modern man to take the easy path of denying the transcendent altogether, or of domesticating "it" as simply the "beyond in our midst"[2] or the "ground of our being"[3]. Yet the search for the transcendent has become a characteristic of our time as witnessed by the great attraction towards Eastern religions like Hinduism and Buddhism on the part of Western man.

In certain philosophical circles there is a refusal to accept the validity of a number of concepts—concepts of metaphysics or ontology or of anything which is beyond the experience of the senses. Protests against this rejection of ontology, even while coming from such a powerful genius of our century as Martin Heidegger, are received with but feeble enthusiasm by the academic world, Christian or non-Christian. Kant has scared us out of our wits, and today the transcendent appears legitimately accessible to us only through modern art or music where the already depraved human consciousness is the agent both of perception and of articulation.

There was some hope that Rudolf Otto's "Idea of the Holy" would redeem us from the dilemma by positing the "wholly other", which can be encountered in an experience of the transcendent mainly through feeling, to be articulated later by the rational mind. But he has now come under fire not only for his too clear distinction between the emotional and the rational, but also for his distinction of the religious experience as being *sui generis* and unrelated to the rest of experience.[4]

[1] Martin Buber, *Eclipse of God* in *The Writings of Martin Buber*, E. T. by Will Herberg, 1958, p. 110 ff.

[2] Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, 1958, p. 124.

[3] See the whole *Honest to God* debate, where these potentially rich terms of Bonhoeffer and Tillich are reduced to a comprehensibility that lacks profundity.

[4] The pendulum seems to have swung back to the basic position of William James, a pragmatic, anti-metaphysical, undogmatic view of faith as something which has concrete results in practical action. Martin Buber attacked Otto's view

How are we to "recover" the transcendent in our time? The attempt to describe the transcendent is like holding water in a sieve, and the conscious attempt to be conscious of the transcendent results in the "eclipse" of God. Only by long and habitual reconditioning can modern man be restored to the awareness of the transcendent, and such conditioning occurs only in a proper liturgical tradition. But an academic approach to liturgy or a pedantic attention to details in worship can obstruct the recovery of that awareness.

It needs to be made clear that the word "transcendent" here does not mean merely something that escapes our comprehension. As Bonhoeffer rightly says:

> The "beyond" of God is not the beyond of our perceptive faculties. The transcendence of theory based on perception has nothing to do with the transcendence of God.[1]

But Bonhoeffer goes too far when he asserts that God is the "beyond" in the midst of our life. The issue between God's transcendence and His immanence cannot be resolved by any facile slogan. Precisely because God is not occupying a point in time and space as other objects or persons do, He is not to be captured in our neat time-space categories. God does transcend comprehension. But His transcendence is not a matter of the limits of our mind. He transcends the time-space cosmos itself, and not merely the categories in which we think about it. He is neither part nor whole of that cosmos. He is beyond that cosmos—not in the sense that He occupies a "point" "out there" or "up there" beyond the cosmos. He cannot be classified or located. That is fundamentally His transcendence. Our Father in "heaven" is not an object of astronomic research or space-probing. That sort of a God is an affront to our thinking. He is not a God who docilely fills the "gaps" in our thinking. He simply puts our thinking in its place. He cannot be thought. He can only be worshipped in humble loving self-dedication. Modern man does not become fully human until he learns to worship this transcendent God.

(3) *The non-conscious layers of consciousness*

The apparent self-contradiction in the phrase may appal us. Even Freud is under fire today for positing a "sub-conscious" or "uncon-

indirectly when he spoke of his conversion "from the religious". See W. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, 1929, pp 430 ff.

[1] *op. cit.*, p. 93.

scious" level of mind. "Mind equals consciousness"—that is the new slogan since Husserl's[1] Phenomenology was popularized by his brilliant disciple Jean-Paul Sartre[2] and was taken over even into Pastoral Psychology[3].

Yet it is equally clear today that attitudes are not always consciously acquired or exercised, that full consciousness of consciousness is not yet universal, and that learning takes place by more than conscious instruction. We have in modern times consciously sought to be aware of consciousness; our current literature abounds with revelations of thoughts of whose presence in our own minds we were only half aware until we saw them articulated in print. We say that in order to be fully human we should choose in full awareness; yet how few are able to exercise this prerogative of "existential decision"! Our politics and our big business thrive on the knowledge of people's hidden motives and desires.

If cleansing is to be applied to these sub-conscious layers which have such an influence on our being and our conscious conduct, psycho-analysis will not only have to be made cheaper and less time-consuming, but also more profound in its understanding of man. Worship cannot be a cheap substitute for psycho-analysis. In true worship, however, there is more than cleansing. Face to face with the Truth, in the Spirit, man subconsciously becomes transformed, or to use an Eastern Orthodox expression, transfigured. The process of which St. Paul says: "We, all, with unveiled face, reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transfigured into his image, from glory to glory; through the Lord the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3: 18), is not open to simple psychological analysis. But worship in which there is not this encounter at the deeper levels with the transcendent God and the resultant transfiguration into His dynamic and indefinable image can hardly meet the needs of modern man.

(4) *Concrete Expression*

If the Incarnation[4] as a historical event is the foundation of the Chris-

[1] Edmund Husserl, *Ideas, General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, 2nd impression, 1952.

[2] e. g. *The Psychology of Imagination*, 1963.

[3] Rollo May, *The Art of Counselling*, 1939.

[4] In Eastern theology the word "Incarnation" stands for the whole *oikonomia* of Christ's ministry in the flesh beginning with the Annunciation and culminating in Pentecost and the formation of the Church.

tian faith, then there is no need to elaborate the point that Christian worship has to draw in all the substantial elements of human life and culture. All human communication appears to need the sensual. Feeling, taste, sight and smell have more of an immediately conscious quality than hearing. Perhaps because we do not see the medium through which the sound-waves pass to reach our ear-drums, there might have been a temptation to consider "the hearing of the pure word" as in some sense more spiritual than the things in worship which one can feel, see, taste and smell. But man is, as Evelyn Underhill says, "a social, sensuous and emotional creature keenly aware of his visible environment, but only half aware of the unseen"[1], and he needs social, sensuous and emotional means for the expression of his worship as well. Man is called to worship in time and space. And the whole of man, not merely his ears and his brain, needs to be involved in worship.

The Reformers could be excused if they sometimes failed in the articulation of this fact—after all, they were themselves brought up in a rich though often corrupt cultic milieu. They could afford to put all their emphasis on the preached word so long as the cultic tradition still remained in full weight as a balancing factor. The successors of the Reformers have only recently come to take account of the cultic tradition within which alone the Word becomes fully alive. Prejudices remain, which need to be overcome, if the "more" for which modern man is hungry is to be provided.

(5) *Forms that transcend logic*

There is a truth often overlooked in the fully justified campaign for the use of the vernacular in the liturgy. Worship always has to have a non-rational residuum. The Hebrews developed phrases which, though originally translatable, soon came to have a richness of meaning beyond the literal sense. "Hosanna", "Hallelujah" and even "Jehoshuah" soon became cries of non-rational emotional exultation and joy in the presence of God.

Modern man needs this regular excursus into a non-rational expression of his deeper yearnings and feelings. It is not always necessary to have a completely rational explanation of every gesture and item of symbolism used in the liturgy. Music, colour and smell, as well as gestures and actions, can be used to express this non-rational element in worship. If all that is accomplished by symbolism were verbally or conceptually explicable, one could have dispensed with symbolism

[1] *Worship*, Fontana ed. 1962, p. 25.

altogether. The roots of symbolism go beyond a mere matter of shorthand. Symbols often express the ineffable and give vent to yearnings and longings not conceptually to be described. A completely rational liturgy, however well-chosen its words and however precisely and concisely it expresses noble thoughts, cannot be a complete liturgy. That which is beyond logic and exact concepts must find expression in its words and in the actions prescribed by the rubrics.

(6) *Transcendent Unity of the Community*

The word "community" is still somewhat of a stranger to our post-individualist modern world. At best community signifies for us a group of individuals bound together by common assumptions, interests and goals. However much we may try to assert that the community is in some sense prior to the individual, the sense in which this is so becomes never too clear to our minds. Worship has to be in community. He who has not felt in his bones his own solidarity with the rest of mankind has not yet known the heart of worship.

The origins of individualism cannot be sought in the Protestant principle of private interpretation. Its roots go back to the development of medieval Western (Roman Catholic) spirituality, particularly in the Low Countries. When the devotion of Dionysius (the pseudo-Areopagite) was transplanted into the soil of Holland and Belgium, it flowered and bore fruit in the spirituality of Gerhard Groote, Ruysbroeck and Thomas à Kempis. These were great men of God, yet the Beatific Vision towards which they oriented their life of prayer was a "meeting of the alone with the alone". And Western piety, both Protestant and Catholic, still bears the marks of this individualism.

True and full worship is always an act of the whole Body of Christ. The Roman Mass, coming from an earlier period when the Roman Church was still truly Catholic, preserves the traces of this conception in its prayers. The conception itself, however, was lost till recently through concentrating upon the acts of the priest and on the state of the elements, without taking into account the fact that the Body of Christ, as the whole Divine-human community, shared in the eucharistic offering of Christ. This community, however, is not limited to those physically present at worship. It spreads its arms to include all the faithful, and all mankind, while it bows down to worship the Creator. It goes back into the past and forward to the "last day" to include "all those who have pleased God" from Adam to the Parousia. This total community in space and time to which I belong has to

become a reality in worship. History and eschatology and all generations, as well as all races and peoples, have to be borne in consciousness in authentic worship.

This is not simply a "theological" point. Modern man is anxious to discover this transcendent community, wherein he finds his true orientation. Christian worship, in order to be true, must also provide modern man with the sense of being one member in a large community on heaven and earth in whose worship he shares.

From what has been said so far, the inference could be made that worship becomes true when it meets modern man's need. Such a utilitarian or functional definition of worship is more than false—it is dangerous.

No utilitarian or functional framework can clarify the meaning of worship. That clarification, never to be thoroughly accomplished, requires the grasping of its three fundamental aspects:

(1) it is an end in itself,

(2) it is essentially sacrificial and always related to the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ,

(3) it is an act of the Holy Spirit operating through man as a free being.

(1) *Worship—an end in itself*

Certainly, worship cannot be ancillary to mission. Nor is it part of mission. Some Eastern theologians have sought to explain it that way. One can understand this interpretation only in the context of the pressures of Western thought which at times assumes axiomatically that a church which is not "missionary" is not a church. Representatives of Eastern Churches, whose recent historical circumstances have prevented any direct missionary activity, have sought to justify their own claims to being a Church by the assertion that in the eucharist they are declaring (*kataggellein* 1 Cor. 11: 26) Christ's death and resurrection until He comes, and thus engaging in the missionary task. Of course the eucharist is a showing forth of Christ's incarnate ministry, but it was never intended to be a showing forth to the unbeliever or to the unbaptized. And mission, rightly understood, is of the baptized to the unbaptized. To consider the eucharist as an aspect of mission cannot therefore be right, even when we realize that today in many communist countries many "unbelievers" are brought to Christ through attending the eucharist. This, however, is not to be regarded as normal.

There is a school which thinks of worship as instrumental to mission and daily life. On Sunday morning the ordinary Christian becomes spiritually cleansed and endowed with power to live his life through the working week. A caricature of this position is to regard the Church and Sunday morning worship as constituting a spiritual "filling station". Is there not, however, some truth in the assertion that in worship one is to receive grace and power for one's life? Does not the dismissal benediction of some of the Eastern liturgies say precisely this?

> Priest: Our brethren and beloved, we commit you unto the grace and mercy of the Holy and glorious Trinity; depart ye in peace with the blessings and provisions for your earthly pilgrimage, which you have received from the healing altar of the Lord. (Syriac *St. James.*)

Certainly not. The intention of the eucharist is not that we may receive "blessings and provisions for our earthly pilgrimage" from it. That may well be one of its effects. Eucharistic worship, done in obedience to the command: "Do this until I come", constitutes the most characteristic act of man. To be truly man is to share in the once-for-all sacrifice of Him who alone is truly man. It is not even in order that we may be fed by the Body and Blood of Christ, that we participate in the eucharist, absolutely essential as this is for life. It is an act of freedom, love and joy. It seeks for nothing beyond the Holy Trinity to whom the offering is made, though much may accrue to it in the course of the act.

(2) *The Eucharist and Christ's sacrifice*

In the Latin tradition sacrifice seems to have had a dominant sense of propitiation—the appeasement of an angry God. But sacrifice need not always mean that. This is hardly the occasion for an extended discussion of sacrifice. It should be stated, however, that for the Christian at least, all sacrifices, whether of the people of Israel or of other peoples of the world, should receive their true interpretation from the sacrifice of Christ and not vice versa. All primitive sacrifices, including those of the Old Testament can only be seen as types and shadows. Christ's sacrifice was real. In faith, in love, in obedience, in hope, without reservation, without asking for anything in return, He said, "Father, into thy hands I commit my Spirit". That was the perfect sacrifice—not propitiatory, not appeasing an angry God, not gaining surplus merit for others, but a simple, faithful, loving act of self-immolation. This is sacrifice—the highest expression of love. One

gives oneself (and not a substitute) to Him who is all—in love, in joy, in faith. This should be the dominant mood of worship, not merely the contemplation of the worthiness of God, but the joyous act of losing oneself in loving self-surrender to that worthy God. The eucharist is the act in which the Church is caught up in freedom, love, joy and self-surrender, into the once-for-all and eternal sacrifice of Christ. It is neither repetition nor mere memorial.

When we focus our attention on other aspects of the eucharist, on the actions of the priest, on what happens to the elements, even on Christ's feeding us in the communion, if that means losing sight of the central act of Christ's sacrifice in which we are caught up, then we are in danger of misinterpreting the eucharist and worship in general.

Though self-forgetful, we are nevertheless not to forget the whole Body of Christ, set in the context of that mankind within which Christ was incarnate and the whole of which Christ offered to God by summing it up in his own Body.

(3) *The Holy Spirit and the Freedom of Man in Worship*

The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come".[1] The Bride of Christ, the Church, never stands without the Spirit. "We know not how to pray rightly, but the Spirit Himself intercedes in us through wordless sighs".[2] The Church, the Body of Christ, is where the Spirit dwells, though He can never be limited to it. "Do you not know that you (plural) are God's temple (singular) and that God's Spirit dwells in you (plural)?"[3]

This is not a question of any controversy about the words of institution or the *epiklesis* being the consecrating element or the "indispensable element" in the Eucharist. It is the Spirit who dwells in the Body that enables the members of that Body to be participants in the eternal sacrifice of Christ. Without the Holy Spirit there is neither worship nor prayer.

But the Spirit is always the Spirit of freedom.

> Now the Spirit is Lord. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, behold, freedom! And we all with unveiled face reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transfigured into his own image, which also is from the Lord Spirit.[4]

True freedom is the possibility of facing God with unveiled face. This is the gift of grace, the gift of the Holy Spirit. The veil of the Temple

[1] Rev. 22: 17. [2] Rom. 8: 26.
[3] 1 Cor. 3: 16. [4] 2 Cor. 3: 17, 18.

was torn in two at the death of Christ, and the fire of God descended upon the Church at Pentecost, purging it from sin and giving it "boldness of access into the presence" of God.

Eucharistic worship occurs when the Spirit transports us into the presence of the heavenly throne,[1] there to stand face to face with God without any protecting veil. The *Sursum corda* in the Syriac *St. James* has been elaborated to read:

> Up above where the Messiah is seated on the right hand of God the Father, let us lift up our minds and thoughts and hearts in this hour.

Here is a somewhat basic distinction between the Western and Eastern liturgies. In the Roman Mass, the eucharist takes place on earth and is later taken up by the angel into the presence of the Lord:

> Most humbly we beseech Thee, Almighty God, bid these offerings to be brought by the hands of Thy holy angel to Thine altar above; before the face of Thy divine majesty . . .[2]

In the Eastern liturgy, this sense of being in the presence of the Holy Trinity with the angelic hosts dominates the eucharistic service. When, for example, in the Byzantine Liturgy, before the creed and the *Sursum corda* the deacon exhorts: "The doors, the doors, in wisdom let us give heed", he is not simply asking to have the catechumens driven out and the doors shut. His symbolic action at that point is to withdraw the veil of the sanctuary. As St Maximus says, the deacon is asking us to close the doors of history behind us and to enter into the eschatological kingdom where God reigns.

The congregation's first act after the *Sursum corda* in most liturgies (Eastern and Western) is to join the company of the angels in heaven and to sing with them the triumphal song: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth, heaven and earth are full of thy glory".

This free access in faith and love into the presence of God has not yet, in spite of the great emphasis of the Reformation on the free grace of God, fully penetrated the Western tradition. In the West the gap

[1] The word for altar in Syriac and Greek is *thronos*=throne.

[2] Possibly this prayer is a later development in the Roman Mass. One finds a curious agreement at this point between the Roman Mass and the Coptic Liturgy which concludes: "O Angel of this oblation, who fliest up to the heights with this our praise, remember us before the Lord that he forgive us our sins" (Published by Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate, Cairo, 1963, p. 116). This could very well be a later addition in the Coptic Liturgy also; the Ethiopic St Basil omits it.

between God and man has been emphasized and the sinfulness of man constantly brought forward as the justification for that gap. In the East, there is an equally emphatic insistence on human sinfulness. The majesty of God, more in the beauty of holiness than in the glory of power, finds, however, just as graphic expression. There is no possibility of sinful man approaching the Holy God without being burned to ashes—this is so in the East as well as in the West. And this is the death-dealing bondage of man. To approach God is to die; but without God also one dies.

Grace means the possibility of approaching despite our sin, and living in the joy of His love. Grace is thus freedom both from sin, and from death, for in access to God and by life in His love, sin is itself wiped away and death is overcome.

Worship is thus the realization of grace and freedom. Joy is its constitutive mark. Salvation means freedom to worship. And worship is life, here as well as in the world to come. This authentic tone of freedom, grace and joy must find expression in our worship, for these are the qualities of true human existence. Other qualities which will meet the needs of man, modern or ancient, will also be created in the worshipping community, only when worship finds its true orientation. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom—freedom to enter boldly into the presence, freedom to offer ourselves in union with Christ's eternal offering, and therefore freedom to live a true human existence. Modern man's greatest need is to find that way of life.

II

MYSTICISM AND THE MYSTERIOUS EAST

HARNACK BEGAN a series of denunciations of the East, which have widely influenced Western ideas about the spiritual life and worship of the Eastern churches. It was not only against dogma in general that the great Professor reacted. Equally odious to him was the "mysticism" of the East. Harnack's great disciple and critic, Barth, who at least for a while successfully counteracted the anti-dogmatic bias in German theology, reinforced the anti-mystical bias in his reaction against Schleiermacher. The prejudices against "mysticism" remain deeply entrenched in contemporary Protestant thought on the European continent and in America.

In the nineteenth century when it was fashionable to suppose that Christianity was at first a pure Hebrew product which later became corrupted by a Hellenistic invasion, mysticism was often connected with that invasion. On the other hand, there is in our own time an anti-rational animus which might too easily assume that mysticism, as a universal religious phenomenon, could be made the nucleus of a new "religion for one world", a synthetic product created by man's ingenuity.

Fortunately for us, some genuinely scientific studies have in recent times been attempted on the history of the word *μυστικός*, notably in Kittel's *Theologisches Wörterbuch* and in *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* which is being published in separate Fascicles at Oxford under the editorship of Professor G. W. H. Lampe of Cambridge.[1] These works help us to see the meaning of the word in perspective. In pagan writers like Thucydides and Strabo *τὰ μυστικά* are the ceremonies of the mystery religions and *οἱ μυστικοί* are the initiates of these cults. The "mystery" then is not just any esoteric secret, but rather a cult, a form of worship, which is closed to uninitiated "outsiders".

The verb *μύω*, which is the root of the word *μυστήριον*, literally

[1] See also the Symposium *Mystery and Mysticism*, 1956, especially the last article by Père Louis Bouyer, "Mysticism—An Essay on the History of a Word".

means to "close", and its derivative μυέω to initiate[1]. In Socrates[2] and Sozomen[3] ὁ μυούμενος was used as a synonym for ὁ κατηχούμενος a candidate for baptism. From this meaning in connection with initiation, μυέω had also come to mean to teach or to instruct, even in the pre-Christian pagan writers.

However much one may resent the association with pagan mystery religions, the fact has to be kept in mind that Christian mysticism is deeply rooted in the μυστήριον, the mystery or sacrament of the eucharist. In the West, especially in the Spanish mystics, in the spirituality of the Low Countries, and in post-medieval developments in Catholic and Protestant spiritual life, there is a tendency away from the eucharist towards individual piety and the Beatific vision. The eucharist is normative for Eastern spiritual life though in the East also there have been notable aberrations and deviations. It is because of this inseparable relation between worship and Christian mysticism that we need to treat the latter at some length before we go on to the details of Eastern worship.

Apart from its alleged association with the Hellenistic incursion into the "purity" of Hebrew Christianity, there are five areas where Western critics are suspicious of mysticism, namely: (a) its anti-rational tendencies, (b) its reportedly unmediated access to God, (c) its tendency towards religious syncretism, (d) the peril of loss of individual identity by merger in the Divine, and (e) the philosophical problem of "ineffability". It is precisely at these five points, however, that Eastern Christian worship has something positive to contribute to the Western tradition and to modern man in general.

(a) *Anti-rationalism*

"The West is more rational—the East is more mystical"—so goes the generalized contrast—often with some apparent justification. Many who make the judgment mean no condemnation of either East or West; some may simply be tired of a dry logic in matters of religion. Often however a stricture is intended—e.g. the evaluation by a competent scholar like J. N. D. Kelly in *Early Christian Doctrines*[4] of the

[1] See the note on μυστήριον in J. Armitage Robinson's Commentary on *Ephesians*.

[2] Socrates 325A

[3] Sozomen 1436A.

[4] Second edition, 1960, p. 352. The author's charge of superficiality and inability to think through reflects his basic attitude towards the East. This otherwise

Eastern Fathers' views on soteriology: "But these were *superficial* answers; Augustine's starting-point was not theirs, and they could not be expected *to have thought the problem through*". But the tendency to minimize dogma in the East is not to be too easily attributed to intellectual laziness. The constant awareness, often lacking in the West, that dogmatic formulations can never be exhaustively descriptive of ultimate truth, led the Church from the beginning to place emphasis on the liturgy rather than on dogma as the more adequate medium by which the Incarnate Truth is to be kept before the mind of the Church. Verbal formulations were not the result of "thinking through". They arose rather from the need to check error.

Theology has today become the main preoccupation of many institutions for the training of leadership for the Church. To decry careful academic scholarship would be to show ingratitude for the patient work of dedicated men who have cut through a great deal of the sham and legendary in Christian thought, and brought light to bear on several aspects of the pure truth which were previously obscured by well-intentioned and pious nonsense. To assume, however, that words, however carefully chosen, can describe or communicate the whole truth is perhaps *impious* nonsense.

> Liturgy and dogma are closely united one to the other. The liturgy is the corporeal form of the dogma and the dogma is the soul of the liturgy. If one seeks here to separate that which is united (as in the Church one tends to separate more often than to reunite) one takes away from the true significance of both liturgy and dogma.

So speaks Prof. Regin Prenter of Aarhus in a perceptive article on *Liturgie et dogme*[1]. His conclusion is that Liturgy and Dogma are united as body and soul, and their separation affects the fullness of both. True, so far as it goes; but there is need to go further. Dogma can in the first place be equated either with formal dogmatic pronouncements of the Church or with the theology of the tomes. Dogma in the second place is the teaching of the Church, the expression of the mind of the Church, as the Body of Christ communicates life in the Holy Spirit to its members. The mind of the Church, ever growing through more intimate knowledge of her Lord and Spouse in the Liturgy and in her life in the world, can be set forth no more adequately in manuals of

valuable handbook shows a lack of sensitivity to the Eastern tradition which was the matrix of many of the dogmatic formulations which it so ably catalogues.

[1] In *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie religieuses*. No. 2–1958. pp 115–28.

theology than in concise dogmatic pronouncements. It is experienced only in living encounter and loving obedience, and is a mind which ever grows and will continue to do so throughout eternity. The Liturgy, infused through and through by the Scriptures, with the life of obedience that radiates from it to all time and space, is the living core of that mind. East and West alike are failing at this point. In the West, scholastic theology broke away from its liturgical moorings only to be nearly wrecked on the shoals of a mechanistic notion of causality. In reaction, the Reformation sought to guide it in the direction of a revelation of the Word, but it has still not learned to put the Bible in its liturgical context, where the revelation continues in the Church's encounter with the Lord.

The true function and limitations of language are still the object of continuing study[1]; there is general agreement that "in human language the exterior world becomes humanized, receives human form. The word enters into a structured system in which its intelligibility to man is actualized; man makes an interpretation of the world as he transforms it into language, in a new creative act which imitates God's".[2]

All truth reduced to language is limited; it bears the marks of its time and culture. The Church, especially in the East, developed a form of worship which makes full use of language, but goes beyond it to embody the truth of the Incarnation in an act, a dramatic act which uses all the props including setting, curtains, non-verbal sounds, smell, taste and touch, and, without abandoning the rational, hovers in the realm of that which goes beyond the rational. But there precisely the present-day East fails. The form keeps the truth alive so that worshippers can continue to share in it at both rational and trans-rational levels. The tendency however is to fail in keeping the rational and the trans-rational at equal power in such a way that neither is obscured. Perfunctoriness and theatricality without the numinous vitality of true

[1] See Hermann Noack, *Sprache und Offenbarung zur Grenzbestimmung von Sprachphilosophie und Sprachtheologie*, 1960. New interpretations of the character of the language, e.g. the critical-idealist (E. Cassirer), the anthropo-biological (A. Ghelen), existential-ontological (M. Heidegger), are collated and compared in this work. The work of Max Scheler, Wittgenstein, and the various schools of Logical Analysis throw additional light, especially in the problems they encounter, on the difficulty of relating truth, statement, communication and knowledge, which are all aspects of Revelation.

[2] Luis Alonso Schökel, S. J. of the Pontifical Biblical Institute, in *Hermeneutics in the light of Language and Literature, Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, XXV: 3, Anniversary issue, July 1963, pp. 371–86.

adoration and devout reflection can deprive Eastern worship of much of its power.

Both East and West alike need to keep this balance between the rational and the mystical without craving for one to the exclusion of the other. But neither can afford to separate the ineffable and that which can be verbally expressed. Eastern Worship seeks to keep this balance in form and principle, even where it fails in practice. Eastern mysticism is not anti-rational; it seeks to keep before us the limitations of the rational, by keeping that which is beyond the rational numinously present.

(b) *Unmediated Access*

This would be one of the major fears in the neo-Calvinist tradition—that Eastern mysticism by its teaching of the *Kultmystik* obscures the need for the mediation of Christ[1]. This fear of *die Mystik* is quite understandable in a generation which was led astray by the *mystique* of Schleiermacher's *Gefühl*. If this is the context of the neo-Calvinist suspicion of mysticism, then the need is to correct the misunderstanding about Eastern mystical worship rather than to suspect it. Emil Brunner's attack on mysticism is based mainly on the treatment of it by Evelyn Underhill and Rudolf Otto[2]. With singularly uncomprehending fury Brunner pronounces his judgment.

> And now, what is mysticism, seen from the Christian viewpoint? Great, solid mysticism is the great solidly religious rival of faith. The Christian faith has today no more respectable rivals amongst the religions, but Mysticism will continue to be her rival till the end of time.[3]

And he goes on to make a number of accusations against mysticism in general—that it overlooks the distinction between the Creator and the creation, between time and eternity, between I and Thou, between

[1] See e.g. the Chapter on "The Necessity for Reconciliation" in Emil Brunner's *The Mediator*, E. T., third impression, 1947, pp. 435 ff. He works out a highly questionable opposition between *Die Mystik und das Wort* in his work of that title (2nd edition, 1928).

[2] All the footnotes in chapter 15 of Brunner's *Die Mystik und das Wort* refer to Otto's *West-Oestliche Mystik* (1926) or to the German translation of Underhill's *Mysticism*.

[3] "Und nun: was ist Mystik, vom christlichen Glauben aus gesehen? Grosse, echte Mystik ist der *grosse, echt-religiöse Gegner des Glaubens*. Der christliche Glaube hat heute keinen anderen respektablen religiösen Gegner mehr; aber die Mystik wird sein Gegner bleiben bis ans Ende der Tage." *op. cit.* p. 394.

God and the soul. It ignores the problem of sin, and seeks direct contact with God—this is its grave defect and its insolent blasphemy. There is no solution to the problem of sin and the consequent breach between God and man—except for the Word of God to take the initiative in forgiving sin and reconciling us. For Brunner, mysticism is the last attempt of man to justify himself. And he comes in the last sentence of the book to his ringing climax, *Entweder die Mystik, oder das Wort.*[1] And there is the misunderstanding, in that false *entweder/oder.* The recovery of true worship in the Calvinist tradition still awaits the realization that the Word, Incarnate, written, or preached, belongs properly to the heart of the *Mysterion,* the eucharistic worship of the Church. No *Kult-mysterion* is possible without the mediation of Christ and the Holy Spirit. It is only the Body of Christ, in which Christ lives by the Holy Spirit, which can celebrate the *Mysterion.* The Incarnate Word is not opposed to the Mystery. He is the subject and the object of the eucharistic mystery. As the preparatory service of the Syriac Liturgy of *St. James* puts it: "O Lord, Thou art the offering, and unto Thee the offering is offered."

Eucharistic mysticism is completely free from any charge of seeking an unmediated access to God or of overlooking the gulf between God and His creation caused by human sin. Just as in the neo-Calvinistic concentration upon the word alone the gap is bridged by the free forgiveness of God, in the *Kultmysterion* of eucharistic theology, the consciousness of sin and the need for divine forgiveness are evident at every point. The following prayers taken at random from the Syriac, Coptic and Byzantine liturgies will make clear that there is no tendency here either to overlook human sin or to enter into the presence of God without the mediation of Christ the Incarnate Word:

> O God the Father, who for Thy great and unspeakable love towards mankind didst send Thy Son into the world to bring back the sheep that had gone astray, reject not Thou, my Lord, this bloodless sacrifice; for we trust not in our own righteousness but in Thy mercy". (Syriac *St. James.*)[2]

> Thou, O Lord, knowest that I am not worthy, neither prepared, nor meet for this holy ministry which is Thine; and I have no face to draw near, and open my mouth before Thy holy glory; but according to the multitude of

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 399.

[2] This prayer appears also in the Coptic Liturgy of St. Basil as the "Prayer of the Veil". E. T. in *The Order of Holy Qurbana,* Kottayam, (no date), p. 23

> Thy tender mercies, forgive me, a sinner and grant unto me that I find grace and mercy at this hour. (Preparatory Service, Coptic *St. Basil.*)[1]
>
> I make my supplication unto Thee who alone art gracious and ready to hear: look upon me Thy sinful and unprofitable servant and cleanse my heart and soul from conscience of evil, and by the power of Thy Holy Spirit enable me to draw nigh unto this Thy holy table and to minister unto Thy most pure and holy body and Thy precious blood: with bended neck I come and make my prayer before Thee, turn not away Thy face from me, neither reject me from among Thy children, but vouchsafe to accept these gifts even from me Thy sinful and unworthy servant: for Thou Thyself both offerest and art offered, Thou Thyself both dost receive and art distributed, O Christ our God, and we give glory unto Thee, together with Thine unbegotten Father, and Thy most holy and gracious and life-giving Spirit, now and for ever and world without end. Amen. (Slavonic *St. Chrysostom and St. Basil.*)[2]

Obviously the either/or of Brunner is a false one. Kultmystik and Word belong together. In true eucharistic mysticism neither is the One Mediator by-passed nor is sin overlooked.

(c) *Tendency towards religious syncretism*

Calvinism seems so jealous of the sovereignty of God, and so much on guard against the encroachment of idolatry into the pure Gospel, that it not only discourages art and sculpture, but would have nothing to do with anyone seeking any other way to God except through the Christian Church.

Emil Brunner called mysticism the arch-enemy of the Gospel. The mystics of the world religions find so much in common. The Muslim *Sufi* and the Hindu *Rishi* find their way to God through mystic contemplation. If we concede that the Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist can find God without believing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then certainly the foundations of the Gospel would appear rather shaky. Too many in the post-Christian West are already taking to Hindu Yoga and Zen Buddhism. To concede the validity of the mystic way is to open the doors to religious syncretism. This fear cannot be dismissed as utterly groundless. If we insist that only Christians are saved, then we must insist also that what the Hindu, Muslim or Buddhist mystic finds by his contemplation is not God.

This may very well be the case. But what about the first assumption that only Christians are to be saved? True, we can quote Scripture to prove it:

[1] E. T. in *The Coptic Liturgy*, 1963.
[2] E. T. in *The Orthodox Liturgy*, 1954, p. 57.

> He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. (Mark 16: 16.)
>
> He who believes in him is not condemned; he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the only son of God . . . He who believes in the Son has eternal life; he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God rests upon him. (John 3: 18, 36, RSV.)
>
> And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. (Acts 4: 12.)
>
> I am the way, and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me. (John 14: 6.)

There is no doubt for a Christian that access to the Father is through the only-begotten Son, in the Holy Spirit. The Hindu, the Muslim, the Buddhist and the pagan do not have other and special mediators through whom they can find God.

But it is an error to assume that God is unable to deal with men in Christ through the Holy Spirit except through the Church and the preaching of the Word. Believing the Gospel and being baptized are the normal way to salvation; but it is not for us in the Church to limit the work of God to the normal. God's ways are past finding out. In so far as He has revealed them to us, we ought to walk in them. But our failures cannot bind God. He continues to work for the salvation of all mankind. And as St. Paul says:

> God has consigned all to unbelief, in order that he may have mercy on all. How inscrutable are his judgments and how intractable his ways! Who has known him? Who has been his counsellor? Who has paid him something, that he can claim something in return? For from him and through him and for him is the whole universe. To him be glory for ever. Amen. (Rom. 11: 32–6.)

If God has mercy on us all, all of us being equally underserving, what right shall we have to complain?

Quite apart from that consideration, however, Christian eucharistic mysticism, need not, and does not in practice, lead to syncretism. Even conceptually certain clear distinctions can be made between Christian eucharistic mysticism and mysticism in other religions:

(1) the corporate element
(2) the incarnate element
(3) the historical-eschatological element.

The union with the Person of Christ which the Christian experiences in baptism and the eucharist is the union of the Body with its Head, not of the individual with the All. It is a corporate union which at the same time unites us to Christ and to one another. This does not lead to the loss of the personal in the infinite, but rather to the augmentation and rectification of the personal in the community.

Christian eucharistic mysticism is based on the Incarnation of Jesus Christ at a particular point in time and space. The scandal of particularity is the hallmark of Christian mysticism and will always serve as a safeguard against any facile syncretism. Matter and time are affirmed and sanctified, not denied or dissipated, in the eucharist or in the Incarnation.

Christian eucharistic mysticism looks backward to the events of the earthly life of Jesus Christ in which it participates; the Christian shares also, here on earth, in the final fulfilment of the completion of creation which has already begun in history. The eucharistic community enters into the eschaton and lives out that life in time. This perspective distinguishes it from all other mysticisms and guards against the encroachment of syncretism.

(d) *Peril of loss of individual identity*

From time immemorial, personal or individual existence which implies freedom and responsibility, as well as anxiety and guilt, has been a burden for man. He has sought, and still seeks, to escape from the burden by being conformed to the mass, or by a mystic union with the All (or with the "ground" of it), or by total identification with class, group, religious sect, or nation. The record of mysticism is replete with case-histories of escape. But to see mysticism only as escape is to misunderstand it basically. Even the Antonine monks of fourth century Egypt needed each other and were neither individualists nor escapists.

But this fear of the loss of individual identity is just as neurotic a feature of human existence as the bizarre attempts to escape individual existence by merger in the divine. If the individual cannot commit himself to God without fear of "losing his life" for God's sake, how can he have faith? When St Paul says "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me"[1], is he not reporting a genuine case of the loss of individual identity only in order to recover it in a healthier and truer way in the Body of Christ? This neurosis of modern man,

[1] Gal. 2: 20.

jealously anxious about personal security and personal survival, has been one of the most powerful creative forces in the economic life of the West. But it has also made it all but impossible for him to rest in God. And there is no faith without resting, without relaxing in the love of God.

As we have already noted earlier, Christian eucharistic mysticism does not lead to the merging of the individual in the All, but to union with Christ, which means to abide in Him and to bear fruit. If we remain individuals, we neither live nor bear fruit. We die and perish. Fear of the loss of individual existence leads to death. Willingness to surrender individual existence to the God of love is a necessary condition of the rediscovery of genuine personal freedom. There is neither love nor faith without self-surrender. Not even God loves without surrendering Himself to us. It is His gift of Himself that makes Christian surrender saving and not suicidal.

(e) *Ineffability as a Philosophical Problem*

Modern philosophy, especially the Anglo-Saxon movement of "Logical Analysis" thinks with Wittgenstein[1] that what can be said at all can be said clearly and what cannot be spoken one ought to be silent about. Mysticism constantly speaks of an ineffable residuum in its experience of transcendent reality. Logical clarity seems unable to do justice to this experience. Logic is often therefore tempted to deny its very existence.

Some of these philosophers have sought to find logical justification for such apparently self-contradictory statements of the mystical experience as "Brahman is both far and near".[2] But in general, mystery and mysticism are decried by many contemporary English and American philosophers as aspects of the "occult" which need to be "extruded" from discourse. In the relentless pursuit of clarity, these philosophers hope to reduce all mysteries to problems, or puzzles, originating either in lack of knowledge or unclear thinking.

There is certainly here a change of ethos. Ancient Western philosophy began in wonder[3], some modern philosophies seem to begin with

[1] *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, E. T., 1958, p. 27.

[2] See the works of Ninian Smart, *Reasons and Faiths*, 1958; *A Dialogue of Religions*, 1960, etc.

[3] At least Plato and Aristotle thought so. Plato, *Theaetetus* 155 d, Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I: 2.

curiosity and end with the elimination of it.[1] Mysticism insists on ineffability for a valid philosophical reason which ought to be acceptable even to Linguistic Analysts. If a mystic were asked to state the case for the ineffability of God, he would probably put it this way.

What can be known can be uttered. What cannot be known cannot be described. What is known to man is subject to him. That which he knows he always overcomes and brings under control. God can be known, but not known exhaustively. He can therefore be uttered, but not described. He is not to be overcome or brought under control by man, but to be known in love and surrender. Therefore, though knowledge of God leading to union with him in loving self-surrender is possible, controlling knowledge of God has not been given to man. All things are put in subjection to man and can therefore be known by him. But He who put all things under man's foot, remains Lord, and does not fall into the category of other things. He can be known, in love and surrender, in worship and prayer, but not in conceptual or descriptive formulae.

But the mystic's concept of ineffability does not arise from lack of knowledge. He knows God and therefore he cannot speak. He used to speak before he knew. St Thomas Aquinas wrote a great deal about God—but before his direct experience of God. Meister Eckhart, the great Western mystic spoke about a "taught ignorance", a speechlessness that comes from knowledge that is beyond words. He called it "transformed knowledge, not ignorance which comes from lack of knowing; it is by knowing that we get to this unknowing". Linguistic analysis, which insists on that which is known being spoken clearly, belongs to a level of knowledge where the object of knowledge comes within the realm of the methodology of science. There are higher and more complex levels of reality of which we have only a veiled knowledge. There are many simple things of everyday experience which we do not yet know clearly. The relation between thought and brain, or between reality and concept, has not yet been established scientifically, though there are philosophical theories galore which seek to explain what is not yet understood.

The obvious inadequacy of words to communicate the meaning of poetry, art and music, which have to be directly experienced, should make us more diffident about the claims we make for language. Language is one of our great tools which make us men. But language

[1] See the brilliant polemic directed against some forms of linguistic analysis by M. B. Foster, *Mystery and Philosophy*, 1957.

is not omni-competent. It has its limits. The limits of language need not however coincide with the limits of knowledge. God is certainly not within the limits of anything—language or knowledge. But He can be known—in the worship of loving self-surrender. In worship man transcends language, and experiences the transcendent reality of God. There words can only stand by and serve, not rule. Mysticism does not necessarily belong to the mysterious East. Eucharistic mysticism belongs to the heart of human existence.

In what sense does this book use the word "mysticism"? As William James says, "the words 'mysticism' and 'mystical' are often used as terms of mere reproach, to throw at any opinion which we regard as vague and vast and sentimental, and without a base in either facts or logic".[1]

James goes on to describe a "mystical state of consciousness" as having the properties of ineffability, noetic quality, transiency and passivity. R. C. Zaehner of Oxford would use the term "mysticism" as a general term for all praeter-natural experiences.[2] Another English writer, F. C. Happold, gives us a wide variety of definitions, but tells us that "the word 'mystical' did not become current until the later Middle Ages, and 'mysticism' is indeed quite a modern word".[3] Happold helps us to see that mysticism should be viewed in its three aspects "as a type of experience, as a way of knowledge, and as a state of consciousness."

But eucharistic mysticism is more than an experience, a way of knowledge or a state of consciousness. It is a way of life—life in the Body of Christ. Perhaps the word "mystical" is unfortunate, because so open to misunderstanding. The medieval use of "mystical" as an adjective qualifying "Body of Christ" has little justification. What we are advocating is not that all should become "mystics". Rather we are stating that union with Christ as an experience in the Body of Christ, through the Holy Spirit, is what constitutes the Christian life. At the heart of that life is the great mystery of the eucharist.

[1] *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, 1920, p. 379 ff.
[2] *Mysticism, Sacred and Profane*, 1957, pp. xi–xviii.
[3] *Mysticism, A Study and an Anthology*, 1963, pp. 37 ff.

III

WORSHIP AND HISTORY

THE WORD "WORSHIP" does not seem to have a Biblical equivalent. The New Testament *latreia* and *leitourgia* and their Old Testament equivalent *'abodah* are better translated "service" than "worship". The service of God, as a servant attends on his master, was the dominant note here.

If one takes also the other New Testament word *proskunesis* and its Hebrew equivalent *mishthacheweh* (2 Kings 19: 27), and combines it with the former, one gets the meaning of worship. The Hebrew root *shachah* = to bow down, to prostrate oneself, is akin to *shuch* = to sink down. The surrender of man's proud independence and self-piloting arrogance forms the heart of this act.

Prayer and worship with or without petition seems to have been a universal phenomenon except among pockets of atheists in all cultures and times. The self-surrender took various forms—some grotesque, some magnificent and some movingly noble—throughout the history of man, and it is only in the last century or so that some men have consciously rejected every conscious form of worship and prayer. There is a strange correlation between the development of the historical method and the rejection of the worship of God in western culture. Mircea Eliade's words are very pertinent at this point:

> It is historicism that definitely secularizes Time, by refusing to admit the distinction between a fabulous Time of the *beginnings*, and the time that has succeeded it. No magic any longer illuminates the *illud tempus* of the "beginnings"; there was no primordial "fall" or "break", but only an infinite series of events, *all* of which have made us what we are today. There is no qualitative difference between these events; all deserve to be rememorized and continually revalued by the historiographic *anamnesis*. There are neither events nor persons that are privileged. In studying the epoch of Alexander the Great or the Message of the Buddha, one is no nearer to God than in studying the history of a Montenegrin village or the biography of some forgotten pirate. Before God, all historical events are equal. Or, if one no longer believes in God, before History. . . .
>
> One cannot be unmoved by this grandiose asceticism that the European

mind has thus imposed upon itself by this frightful humiliation, self-inflicted, as if in atonement for its innumerable sins of pride.[1]

Some modern men at least seem to have lost all sense of consecrated time or place. All times have been brought under the levelling influence of the historical method, and the "sacred time" of the Incarnation fares no differently in their scrutiny. Similarly Western Christian thought, most characteristically expressed by some Protestant theologians, denies a specially holy place or area. By asserting the holiness of the whole, they deny all distinctions in holiness. "The Lordship of Christ over the Church and the World", a slogan which could have arisen only in a tradition which affirmed only the one at the expense of the other, is now interpreted to denote a "holy worldliness" or a "worldly holiness".

The Eastern Church, while conceiving of the whole creation in space and time as sanctified by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, yet sees gradations and concentrations of holiness at certain points in time and space.[2] The time of Christ and the Apostles stands in a class by itself as "holy time", time in which the Eternal Son of God was bodily present. No historical method can unearth the mystery of this sacred time. It is a time in history, and in so far as it is that, it is open to historical investigation; but it is more than historical time. It is the time of the *oikonomia* when the Eternal was manifest in time, sanctifying it and revealing Himself through it. Eucharistic time is similarly holy time for the East, for the Eternal impinges on that time, transforming it, and through it the whole of time. The wedding-supper of the Lamb, that eschatological and therefore eternal event, becomes prefigured and manifested in the Paschal Feast of the eucharist. It is time caught up into eternity, and eternity shining through time. Eucharistic space is holy space. Heaven, that realm beyond space, becomes physically present in the place where the eucharist is being celebrated. It is "Holy Land", even as the land which the Lord blessed with His footprints is Holy Land. "Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory"; that happens in eucharistic space where heaven and earth meet.

These concepts perhaps carry no conviction to a modern reader. They are, to him, perhaps, either romantic, or mystical—both equally bad words, the second perhaps worse than the first. If one understands by "romantic" a mental projection of the ideal on to the ordinary, there is more justification for applying this word to the contemporary

[1] Mircea Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries*, 1960, pp. 55 f.

[2] See Paul Evdokimov, *L'Orthodoxie*, 1959, *quatrième partie*, pp. 201–13.

idea that all space and time are holy. The charge of mysticism is more serious, if only because more misunderstood. "Mystical" is perhaps the right word for statements that transcend the methods and canons of contemporary historical and natural sciences. The Incarnation and the eucharist belong to a realm which cannot be comprehended by the historical or scientific methodology of our time. If "mystical" is to be opposed to rational, then it may come to have the meaning of irrational or anti-rational. This the East would deny; but it would still claim that its vision and articulation of eternal verities has to go beyond the rational, to be expressed in the language of wonder and awe. When the language of the East is analysed rationally, it often becomes ridculous and meaningless; precisely because of the attempt to comprehend rationally that which can only be contemplated in wonder.

The methods of modern science and history are the signposts by which modern man has painstakingly learned to chart reality. To be asked to lay aside these methods even for a while is for many to be conducted blindfold into a dark room. But without this experience of being led blindfold, the comprehension of Eastern worship and the Eastern vision of reality can hardly become accessible. There is no book which can guide the modern scholar to understand Eastern worship. Assemani and Baumstark, Brightman and Salaville, Dix and Jungmann and many others can clear up for us the shape of the Eastern liturgy, but neither they nor this slight volume can introduce the reader to Eastern worship. There is no substitute for regular, informed, and devout participation in the life of a worshipping community. Alas, the truly worshipping Eastern communities are so rare, not only in the West, but even in the East.

Having made the point about the inadequacy of the historical method to investigate Eastern worship, one still needs to make a few simply historical points about it—not so much in explanation as to provide background.

Prayer seems to have been comparatively unknown to the early Jews. The accounts of Abraham beseeching God on behalf of the people of Jerusalem, and Moses interceding for his people, seem to be exceptions with individuals close to God, but such experiences were not within the reach of the ordinary Israelite.[1]

[1] Even the earlier Psalms became the common property of Israel very late in the history of the Jerusalem temple.

It is only in the exile that prayer as a common practice develops. Daniel was known to the Babylonians as a man of prayer (Dan 6: 10 ff.) and even his wisdom in interpreting visions was attributed to his life of prayer. It was in the exile, deprived of David's throne, Solomon's Temple and the Land of Promise, that the Jews developed a deeper piety. Many of the psalms were composed in a milieu of deprivation. Genuine prayer seems to require a background of suffering and deprivation. Small wonder then that the Christians of East Germany today find the theology of the affluent West thoroughly inadequate!

It was again in the Diaspora that the Jews, a despised and often persecuted minority, developed the forms of Synagogue worship which have so profoundly influenced worship in East and West alike.

In our time there is too much of a tendency to ignore the history of the Church's worship, and to create new liturgies which speak directly to the needs of modern man and in his language. No one can deny that much in the traditional liturgies of the Church has become archaic and out-moded. This is true in the cases of many collects and litanies of intercession. It is fully justifiable and necessary that each generation should seek to formulate its own collects and prayers of intercession. But this does not mean that each generation should ignore those who have gone before them, and create a new liturgy after its own tastes. In Eastern worship one is never allowed to forget the presence of the faithful departed at every service of worship. This in part explains the reluctance of Eastern Churches to attempt radical reforms of the liturgy. The liturgy does not belong exclusively to the present generation. The Church in the whole of time and space worships together in the eucharistic liturgy.

The purpose of historical research into liturgies is not to restore a so-called primitive liturgy in its pristine purity and correct form, but rather to find a form of worship in which the past generations feel just as much at home as the present. Deliverance from the tyranny of the historical method clears the path for the recovery of true worship. The historical method with its unilinear and uniform view of time is still comparatively new. It increases our certainty about the past, but at a highly superficial and reduced level. If we think that what can be established by scientific historiography alone can belong to our racial memory, we shall be so much the poorer in our memory. Things have happened to our forefathers which can no longer be established, but which continue to have their impact on who we are. The event of Jesus Christ is the greatest of these happenings. No historiography will

ever reduce that happening to a describable event, clear in all its details. The Church's memory of that event can be illuminated by the application of the historical method but not replaced by the latter.

True worship demands liberation from this tyranny. History has to be relived and recalled in a form that is not always clear and conceptualizable. In the eucharist the community relives the decisive event of history in a creative, self-transforming, liberating way. That too is an aspect of the joy of freedom which constitutes true worship.

IV

THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY, "COME"

Some General Features of Eastern Liturgical Worship

The distinction between Eastern and Western patterns of worship, though significant, is by no means clear-cut. A few of the most significant differences are discussed below:

1. *Use of the Vernacular*

All Orthodox Churches generally encourage the use of the vernacular. Fr. S. Salaville[1] regards this as one of the major differences between East and West. In the West, with the exception of certain parishes in Sicily which celebrated the Roman rite in Greek and the important group of Glagolitic churches in Dalmatia, Latin has until the Second Vatican Council, for long been the liturgical language of the Catholic Church. In the East it was a matter of principle that the Bible and the Divine Office should be translated early into the language of the people.

Liturgical languages

The Byzantine liturgies of St. John Chrysostom, St. Basil and the Presanctified are today celebrated in at least the following languages:

(1) *Greek.* Greece, Constantinople (Turkey), Syria-Lebanon, Europe and America, as well as generally in the Greek diaspora.
(2) *Old Slavonic.* Russia, Albania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and the Slavonic diaspora.
(3) *Rumanian.* Rumania and the Rumanian diaspora.
(4) *Georgian.* The Georgian Soviet Republic and Georgian diaspora.
(5) *Arabic.* Middle East and Levantine diaspora.
(6) *Hungarian, Japanese, Korean, Luganda, Chinese* (still?), *Estonian, Finnish*
(7) *French, English, German,* and *Spanish* (in Latin America)

[1] *Liturgies orientales, notions générales, éléments principaux,* 1932, p. 47.

At the beginning of the century the Byzantine rite used to be celebrated in Lettish, Tartar, Eskimo and the Indian dialects of N.E. Asia, but current information regarding these churches is difficult to obtain.

The non-Byzantine rites use mainly the following languages:

(1) *Syriac.* In Syria, India and the Syrian diaspora.
(2) *Arabic.* In the Middle East and Middle Eastern diaspora.
(3) *Coptic.* Egypt.
(4) *Ge'ez, Amharic.* Ethiopia[1].
(5) *Malayalam.* India (Malabar).
(6) *Armenian.* Armenia and the Armenian diaspora.
(7) *English.* Indian and Ethiopian diaspora.

Though the principle of using the language of the people is generally accepted, in practice the emotions of clergy and laity alike often pull in the direction of keeping the ancient liturgical languages. Vernacularization can be said to be in general proportionate to the spread of modern education. The most literate of the Orthodox Churches, the Syrian Orthodox Church of Malabar, now uses almost entirely the modern vernacular, Malayalam.

Orthodox Churches in Europe and America have constant pressure on them to celebrate the liturgy in the modern languages of the West, and in general the tendency is to yield to this pressure, though traditionalism puts up a considerable resistance. University centres like Oxford appear to provide the kind of congregation that would readily accept a vernacular liturgy.

The early Jerusalem Church could very probably have used Aramaic (demotic Hebrew) or Syro-Chaldean as their liturgical language, this being the mother-tongue of our Lord and the Apostles. In this sense, the Syriac language could be said to have been the first liturgical language. But already by the middle of the first century, we find the liturgy celebrated in Greek in Antioch. This was not of course hellenistic Greek, but that form of the Greek language which shaped itself in the process of spreading through the Empire as its *lingua franca.* On the one hand it lost its classical form and literary sources, on the other it acquired a certain flexibility and many semitic idioms, as well as something of the precision of Latin. This was the medium which God

[1] Ge'ez is the ancient language of Ethiopia, called also Ethiopic. One of the modern vernaculars of Ethiopia, Amharic, (the official language of Ethiopia) is being used in a few churches, usually under the instructions of Emperor Haile Sellassie.

had chosen for the spreading of both the Gospel and the Liturgy of the Church to the ends of the *oikoumene*.

Syriac continued to be important, especially in Palestine which put up the greatest resistance to hellenization, and in places outside the Graeco-Roman Empire, like Persia. The result was that already in the second century Syriac-speaking Christianity had spread over a wide area from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf. But the main liturgical language, at least in the Empire, and especially in the cities (Antioch, Alexandria, Athens or Rome) was from the beginning Greek. And the earliest liturgical fragments we have are Greek rather than Syriac. The early Syriac liturgies, though drawing their inspiration from the worship of the Jerusalem Church, yet do not appear to have been derived directly from the Aramaic of the Lord and the Apostles. They appear rather to be translations from the Greek, as is the case with the Peshitto Syriac New Testament.

The first missionaries to Armenia came from Syria, and they did introduce Syriac as the language of public prayer; but soon it was replaced by Armenian, through the work of St. Gregory the Illuminator in the second half of the third century. At the beginning of the fifth century, St. Mesrob gave the Armenian language an alphabet, and the use of the vernacular was solidly established for all time.

In Georgia the liturgical language was first Greek, brought by the missionaries from Constantinople around the fourth century. But soon it was replaced by the Georgian language which benefited from the Armenian alphabet of St. Mesrob. The Apostles of the Slavs, Cyril and Methodius, created not only a new alphabet but also a new vernacular for the Slavic countries. Even in recent times, the Russian Orthodox Church in her missionary endeavours during the last century, had the liturgy translated into Japanese (2nd ed. 1895), Chinese (1894) and even Finnish.

The Greek Church showed in the last century a desire to introduce the Greek language into Bulgaria and Rumania, but generally failed in achieving this end. The Middle East is gradually moving towards Arabic, and the American Greek churches towards English. It should be said to the credit of the Greek Church that the liturgy is already being celebrated in Luganda by the African Greek Orthodox Church of Uganda. Wherever the missionary spirit is evident in the Orthodox Churches, the use of the vernacular is encouraged. Even the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, perhaps the most uncritically loyal to tradition among the Orthodox Churches, has already introduced

the use of the English language in the liturgy in its missionary parishes in New York, Jamaica and the West Indies.

2. *Congregational participation*

The full participation of the faithful in the offering of the liturgy was a characteristic of the early Church in all areas. Eastern worship had it perhaps in a larger degree from the beginning, and has retained it at least in the non-Byzantine tradition. Our earliest evidence comes from the fourth century, from the Catechesis of Cyril of Jerusalem (348 A.D.), and the Pilgrimage of Egeria (*c.* 395). Their accounts reveal not only some limited popular responses in the liturgy; but also the possibility of non-liturgical (?) extemporaneous prayer for the layman. After exhorting the candidates for baptism to enter the Church with decorum, men with men and women with women, St. Cyril continues: "Even though there be good ground for your sitting near each other, yet let passions be away. Then, let the men when sitting have a useful book; and let one read, and another listen: and if there be no book, let the one pray and another speak something useful."[1]

The congregational responses specifically mentioned by St. Cyril are: "We lift them unto the Lord" (response to the *Sursum corda*); "It is meet and right" (response to the "Let us give thanks to the Lord"); the Lord's Prayer with the Amen; "One is Holy, One is the Lord, Jesus Christ" (in response to "Holy things to holy men"). The Preface and the *Sanctus* are also mentioned, but it is not clear who the "we" in this passage stands for—the celebrant, or the people or both together. Quite conceivably the whole congregation joined in the whole prayer which makes

> mention of heaven, and earth, and sea; of the sun and the moon; of the stars and all the creation, rational and irrational, visible and invisible; of Angels, Archangels, Virtues, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, Thrones; of the Cherubim with many faces: in effect repeating that call of David's, Magnify the Lord with me. We make mention also of the Seraphim, whom Esaias by the Holy Ghost beheld encircling the throne of God, and with two of their wings veiling their countenances, and with two their feet, and with two flying, who cried, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. For, for this cause rehearse we this confession of God, delivered down to us from the Seraphim, that we may join in hymns with the hosts of the world above."[2]

[1] *St. Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the Christian Sacraments*, F. L. Cross, ed. 1951, p. 49.

[2] Cross, *op. cit.* pp. 73–4, *Mystag.* V: 6. The Greek *St. James* has this prayer today in a somewhat similar form, where the priest begins the prayer and the people

It is to be regretted that in the Byzantine tradition, the choir constantly usurps the place of the congregation. Brightman's text of the Byzantine Liturgy of the 9th century (St. Basil and St. Chrysostom) shows no lines indicated for the choir at all. The whole creed is to be said by the people.[1] When we come, however, to Brightman's text of "*The Liturgy of St. Chrysostom According to the Present Use of the Greek Orthodox Church*"[2] the words ὁ λαός seem to have been entirely replaced by ὁ χορός. Even the Amens are said by the choir or the deacon. The creed and the Lord's Prayer alone are left to the people. According to this text the only Amens the people say in the whole anaphora are at the end of these two prayers.[3] The same is the case with the contemporary text of the Slavonic liturgy published by the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius. It would appear that something has gone wrong here for the theological explanations one has heard in justification of this practice all sound rather lame. The only plausible explanation appears to be that the development of choral music which reached its climax in the West around the 18th century affected the Greek and the Slavonic churches as well. It is to be said however that the Orthodox congregations even in their silent participation experience a measure of real inner devotional involvement, though this is no reason why the full and active participation of the people should not soon be restored in this tradition.

To take an example from the Oriental liturgies, the Syriac *St. James*, as more closely following the Jerusalem tradition than probably any other liturgy, provides ample scope for congregational participation. The text for the public celebration in English[4] comes to 35 pages with an average of 32 lines each. A count of the lines to be said by the people comes to 297, which is more than 26 per cent of the total. This does not

complete it by joining in the last part: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord Sabaoth, Heaven and Earth are full of thy glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest". See Brightman *op. cit.* pp. 50–51. The translation of the Syriac *St. James* in Brightman is defective. The people's response in Syriac *St. James* reads exactly as in the Greek, except for the translation of ὁ ἐρχόμενος by "He that hath come and is coming" a theologically more satisfying interpretation.

[1] Brightman, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

[2] Taken from two printed missals of 1869 and 1890.

[3] It is of course to be kept in mind that the choir, representing the angelic choir in the heavenly liturgy, have their proper liturgical place; but they are not intended to take the place of the human congregation.

[4] *The Order of the Holy Qurbana*, Kottayam, n.d.

include the creed which is recited by the deacon or the hymns sung by the people before and after the public service. In this particular text there is only one page on which there is no line to be said by the people, and this happens to be the page on which the Nicene Creed is printed.[1] All the other Oriental liturgies, the Ethiopian, Coptic, Armenian or "Nestorian", have more or less the same proportion of the eucharistic service said by the people.

But contemporary Eastern worship as a whole is defective at another, and perhaps more important point of congregational participation—namely that of communion itself. The reverence for the consecrated elements and the sense of the numinous throughout the whole service are a great deal higher in the East in general than in the West. But this leads to a greater tendency towards non-communicating attendance than in the West. This is most acutely seen in the Ethiopian Church where very few lay people actually communicate between puberty and old age. The clergy do not attempt to correct the notion, prevalent among many lay people, that one has to be sinless in order to communicate.[2] In most other Orthodox Churches, the vast majority of the faithful communicate at least once a year—during Holy Week. Attempts are being made in many Orthodox Churches to encourage more frequent communion, but the degree of success so far is not as encouraging as one would wish.

3. *The place of the deacon in the liturgy*

The deacon occupies a special place in Oriental liturgies, somewhat different from that of the server in the Roman Mass. The deacon serves at the altar; but he is more of an intermediary between the celebrant and the congregation. He exhorts the people to prayer and especially in the intercessory prayers actually leads them in the words of the prayers. In the Syriac liturgy he also explains the service to them at certain points: e.g.

[1] Brightman's Text of *The Liturgy of the Syrian Jacobites* is defective, both in accuracy of translation, and in the fact that the translation is made from the priest's manual which does not give the deacon's lines or the people's responses in full. Many of the hymns sung by the people are also omitted in this text.

[2] It needs to be stated, however, that the text of the liturgy itself is most explicit in its injunction; that no one should come to church who did not intend to communicate. Sixteenth century records clearly show that the Ethiopians communicated frequently, sometimes as often as three times a week.

> Beloved, how awesome and fearful is this moment when the living Holy Spirit comes down with power from the highest heavens, hovers over this holy offering which has been set, and sanctifies it! Stand ye in quietness and awe, and be in prayer. Syriac *St. James.*

In the Coptic liturgy, the deacon's instructions are more abrupt and to the point like: "Stand up for prayer", "Pray for so and so", "Bow your heads before the Lord", "Kiss one another with a holy kiss", etc. In the Byzantine liturgy we find the deacon exhorting the people: "Let us love one another, that so with one mind we may acknowledge . . ." . . . "Let us stand aright, let us stand with fear, let us give heed to present the holy offering in peace" . . . "Bow down your heads to the Lord", etc.

The deacon used to be also the person who administered the communion, but this responsibility is now generally carried out by the celebrant himself.

4. *The absence of solitary masses*

It is not normally permitted to an Orthodox priest to celebrate the eucharistic liturgy by himself. In exceptional circumstances he can seek special permission to do so, but generally he should have at least the deacon, and one person to represent the congregation. The eucharist is not an act of the priest but of the whole Church and three is thus the minimum for an Orthodox eucharistic service. In the Ethiopian Orthodox Church two priests and three deacons are the minimum for a eucharist, but this seems to be a late practice. In any case, the Orthodox priest is not required to celebrate the eucharist every day. He should do so as often as possible, when there is a congregation to celebrate with him.

5. *The epiklesis and the Holy Spirit*

The invocation of the Holy Spirit has often been a matter of controversy in the West.[1] The present Roman Mass has it amongst the offertory prayers, in the form: "Come, O Sanctifier, Almighty and Eternal God, and bless this sacrifice prepared for the glory of Thy holy name." This occurs before the words of institution. In Oriental liturgies the invocation of the Holy Spirit (*epiklesis*) occurs after the words of institution, in various forms:

[1] For a full discussion (from one point of view) of the controversy see article by Père S. Salaville on *Epiclèse eucharistique* in *Dictionnaire de la Théologie catholique*, v.i., 1924, pp. 194–300.

Priest (secretly): We thus do offer Thee this spiritual and unbloody worship, and pray and beseech and implore Thee, send down Thy Holy Spirit upon us and upon the gifts here set forth,

(aloud) And make this bread the precious body of Thy Christ and that which is in this chalice the precious blood of Thy Christ, having changed them by Thy Holy Spirit. (Byzantine Liturgy.)

In the Coptic liturgy today, we find:

Priest (inaudibly): And we pray Thee, O Lord our God, . . . by the pleasure of Thy goodness that Thy Holy Spirit may descend upon us and upon these offerings placed here, to sanctify them, to transform them and manifest them holy unto Thy holy ones . . .

In the Syrian Anaphora we find various forms of the epiklesis:

(a) Priest (inaudibly): Have mercy upon us, O God the Father, and send upon this offering Thy Holy Spirit, Who is equal with Thee my Lord and with Thy Son in authority, in kingship and in eternal substance, Who spake in Thy old and new covenants, and Who descended as a dove upon our Lord Jesus Christ in the River Jordan and as tongues of fire upon the Apostles in the Upper Room

(aloud) and Who similarly descending may make this bread into the life-giving body, the saving body, the body of our Saviour and our God, and Who may perfect this cup into the blood of the new covenant, the saving blood, the blood of our Saviour and our God. (*St. James.*)

(b) Priest (inaudibly): Have mercy upon me, my Lord, and send upon me and upon these offerings which have been set, Thy Holy Spirit, Who perfects all mysteries of the Church by the power of His indwelling,

(audibly) and perfect this bread into the body of our Saviour and our God, and transform this admixture in this cup into the blood of our Saviour and our God. (Syriac—*Dionysius Bar Salibhi.*)

(c) Priest (inaudibly): Send forth Thy Holy Spirit from Thy Holy abode and may He hover over and indwell this bread and this mixture (of water and wine) which have been set, sanctify them and make me blameless and spotless,

(audibly) and make this bread the body of our Saviour and our God and perfect the mixture in this cup into the blood of our Saviour and our God. (Syriac *St. John Chrysostom.*)

(d) Priest (inaudibly): O Merciful Lord, of great mercy, have mercy upon me. And send upon me and upon these offerings the living and life-giving Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier of all and the Giver of sanctity, Who spoke by the holy prophets and crowned the Apostles and martyrs. May He rest upon these mysteries and sanctify them,

(audibly) that by resting he may make this bread etc . . . (as above). (Syriac *Anaphora of St. John the Evangelist.*)

Each Syriac Anaphora has a different form of the *epiklesis*.

The controversy is an instance in which the Orthodox have sometimes been trapped within the wrong terms of a western debate. Nicholas Cabasilas[1] already in the fourteenth century refers to Latin criticism of the *epiklesis*. The point is that the elements have already been consecrated (and transubstantiated) by the uttering of the words of institution by the priest. The Latins considered the Eastern practice of praying for the Holy Spirit after the consecration "not only impious but futile and unnecessary". They quoted St. John Chrysostom as authority for the words of institution being the consecrating element. Cabasilas advances long and involved arguments to prove that the epiclesis is the consecrating act, and that the Latins have also prayers of consecration after the words of institution. One could have quoted Chrysostom who said: "The priest stands bringing down, not fire, but the Holy Spirit" in "our present rites."[2]

The debate, however, about the exact moment of consecration, should not be pressed too far. Each tradition has developed its own peculiarities. The Roman mass also has a form of invocation of the Sanctifying God.[3] In the East it is much more emphasized, especially since St. Cyril of Jerusalem wrote his catechetical lectures in the middle of the fourth century.

> Then having sanctified ourselves by these spiritual hymns, we call upon the merciful God to send forth His Holy Spirit upon the gifts lying before Him; that He may make the Bread the Body of Christ, and the Wine the Blood of Christ; for whatsoever the Holy Ghost has touched, is sanctified and changed.(*μεταβεβλήται*).[4]

Eastern theologians today seem generally reluctant to speak of the epiclesis as the moment of consecration. It is against fundamental Eastern Orthodox attitudes to isolate any prayer from the total liturgical act and to ascribe to it special powers. Nor is it right for the Orthodox to say that the words or prayer of the priest can accomplish

[1] *A commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, E. T., 1960, p. 71.

[2] *On the Priesthood*, iii: 4, E. T. *St. John Chrysostom Six Books on the Priesthood*, 1964, p. 71.

[3] There is no unanimity among Western scholars as to whether the Roman mass ever had an epiclesis properly so-called in the canon.

[4] *Mystag* V: 7, E. T. *St. Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the Christian Sacraments*, 1951, p. 74. For a brief discussion of the special significance of the epiclesis see Evdokimov, *l'Orthodoxie*, pp. 249–251.

the *metathesis* or transposition of the elements, apart from the total liturgical act, in which the prayers of the priest constitute an indispensable element.

6. *The Use of Icons and an Iconostasis*

Iconology is a peculiarly Byzantine and Slavonic development. Though icons originated in Syria, the theology of icons was developed in the Byzantine Empire and Church especially after the defeat of the iconoclastic party in the notorious debate of the seventh and eight centuries. Syria, Egypt and Ethiopia also developed their iconography, but they were not involved in the controversy and so did not find the need for developing an articulate apologia for icons.

In the West also there was very little real involvement in this theological discussion. So western evaluations of iconography tend to be cautious and unenthusiastic. Trent and the sixteenth century Roman theologians show little understanding of the concept of icons. The religious art of the West, as it developed in the Renaissance, had already lost touch with the source-springs of iconography in the East. Hence perceptive Easterners generally find Western religious art (with some notable exceptions) unconducive to worship. An Orthodox can admire the technical brilliance of the art of the Sistine Chapel but he finds it often non-Christian despite its religious subject.

The Reformation was even more negative to icons. For Luther, they were permissible as illustrations. Calvin could accept nothing more than historic scenes with more than one person depicted, so that it would not make the faithful stumble into idolatry.

Icons came to occupy a prominent part in Orthodox worship only with the 12th and 13th centuries. The painters were usually monks, and there was a whole discipline of fasting and prayer required for painting an icon. The artist was not expected to show any original creative genius, but to follow the conventions with deep inner spiritual discipline. Icons have to be of scenes of actual events and persons who have actually manifested themselves. For example an icon of the Trinity can be made only in two forms: either that of the three angels that appeared to Abraham, or the scene of the Baptism of our Lord in the Jordan, when the Holy Spirit descended on Him as a dove and the voice of the Father was heard from heaven. In other words icons are theophanies, manifestations of the sacred and the transcendent, in space and time. The icon, like the Word, is a revelation. It is a presence, not a decoration or an illustration.

For a full treatment of the "theology of the icon" the reader's attention is drawn to the masterly work of Leonid Ouspensky, *Essai sur la théologie de l'icone dans l'église orthodoxe*, 1960.[1] It needs only to be said here that icons have come to play an integral part in the worship of the Orthodox Churches. As one enters the church, one is made conscious of the presence of God the Holy Trinity and of the saints. But the icons are not portraits. Portraits and photographs, as well as statues in our day, are mementoes of someone who is absent. An icon is an indication of a presence. The Church is where God and the saints are present, and the icons are there as indications of this presence.

The special reverence paid to the Blessed Virgin and the saints in no way detracts from the glory due to the Lord. In fact the Theotokos and the saints are revered primarily as those in whom Christ dwells and whom He has joined to Himself (Christified) in a special sense.

Since eucharistic worship is an act of the whole Body of Christ, the iconic presence of the saints is regarded as specially apt and essential. The icons are not visual aids to worship. They are manifestations of the presence of Christ and the saints in the worshipping community.

The use of icons is certainly subject to abuse: the record of the iconoclastic controversy is full of evidence to that point. A letter addressed by Byzantine Emperor Michael in 824 A.D. to Louis le Débonnaire says among other things:

> They choose the images of the saints to serve as godparents to their children. . . . Some priests have taken to the practice of scraping the paint on the icons, mixing this powder with the eucharistic bread and wine and distributing the mixture to the faithful after the eucharist. Others place the body of the Lord in the hands of the icons from where the communicants receive them.[2]

But the misuse of any religious practice cannot be an argument against the practice itself. The use of icons is an integral part of Eastern liturgical worship, especially in the Byzantine tradition. In fact an understanding of the theology of icons can often serve as the best introduction for a Western reader to the spirit of Eastern worship.[3]

[1] A briefer account in English is available in L. Ouspensky and V. Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons*, 1952.

[2] Mansi, XIV, p. 240, quoted in *Contacts, Revue Française de l'Orthodoxie*, XII, no. 32, 4th quarter, 1960. This whole issue of *Contacts* on *L'Icône* is an excellent introduction to the problems of iconography for those who read French.

[3] A very helpful discussion of icons and their place in worship is provided by a Western writer in Ernst Benz, *The Eastern Orthodox Church*, 1963.

In the writer's own Church, the ancient movable screen has not yet been replaced by the iconostasis. But the theology of the iconostasis, namely that in eucharistic worship the saints and the faithful departed are with us, is essential to her faith and practice as well.

V

THEOLOGY IN LITURGY

Some General Features of Eastern Liturgical Worship (contd.)

7. *The Theological Richness of Worship*

In the East, especially in the Syrian tradition, worship was from the beginning acknowledged to be the true milieu for the formation of the mind of the believer. While lections and homilies played a large part in the instruction of the Christian, the liturgical texts became so enriched with theological substance that the Church did not always have to depend upon the availability of competent orators in all the parishes to look after the teaching of the faithful.

In the Syrian Liturgy there developed three main elements that helped the theological instruction of the faithful through the liturgical medium: the prayers of the Liturgical Year, the Book of Life, and that special eucharistic prayer called the *Sedra*[1] which has developed such infinite variety in the Syriac tradition.

The development of the prayers of the Holy Week was the key to the whole liturgical year's instruction. Here were meditations and prayers which went on for hours and hours, tirelessly turning out new ways of understanding the meaning of the Crucifixion and Resurrection, with a wealth of biblical material often accompanied by somewhat fanciful but devotionally moving exegetical comments. Then each festival as it was adopted in the Church came to have its own proper meditation, which, independent of the homiletical competence of the individual priest, gave the congregation a full-dress exposition of the Scripture passages for the day. Even the various doctrinal controversies did not fail to leave their mark on the liturgical prayers of the Church. The Prayer of Fraction of Dionysius Bar Salibhi provides

[1] The *Sedra* is a long meditative prayer, always preceded by another prayer of introduction called the *prumion*, occuring in the eucharist as well as in other offices said with a priest present.

an insight into the so-called "Monophysite" view of the Person and Nature of Christ.

> Thus verily did the Logos of God suffer in the flesh, was sacrificed, and was broken on the Cross. While His Godhead was in no wise separated either from His soul or from His body, His soul was indeed separated from His body. They pierced His side with a spear and there flowed from it blood and water for the remission of the sins of the whole world, and His body was smeared with it. And for the sins of the whole world died the Son on the Cross. His soul returned and was reunited with His body, and He converted us from the ways of the left to the right; by the blood of His body, He reconciled and united and knit together the heavenly with the earthly, the people with the peoples and the soul with the body. On the third day He rose from the grave. And One is Emmanuel, not divided after the indivisible union of the two natures.[1] Thus we believe and thus we confess; and the same we affirm as the truth, that this body is of this blood, and this blood is of this body.[2]

Or again this on the Holy Trinity and the Procession of the Holy Spirit:

> Holy is the Father, Begetter and not Begotten; Holy is the Son, Begotten and not Begetter; Holy is the Holy Spirit that proceeds from the Father and takes from the Son. One is the true God Who redeemed us by the power of His mercy and grace.[3]

The theologically rich long prayers appear to be more homiletical meditations than prayers. *Lex credendi lex orandi* is too simple a way of putting it. The point is that prayer is the proper context for true dogma, not that the dogma is to be regulated by the prayer of the Church. There is always danger in taking dogma out of the context of prayer and making it a subject for discursive thought. Academic theological development in our day appears to be heading for a dead end of dry barrenness; perhaps reincorporating the faith in the devout prayers and offices of the Church may provide a healthier approach to theology everywhere.

[1] Literally "and let him not be separated after the union which cannot be separated into two natures."

[2] Translated from the Syriac by the author. Syriac Text in *Kethabo de thakso d'Anaphoros*, 1957, pp. 100–101, Dionysius Bar Salibhi, Syrian Bishop of 'Amid in the 9th century.

[3] A prayer of the Priest in the Anaphora of Dionysius Bar Salibhi, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

8. *The awareness of the total Body of Christ*

In the Roman Mass the commemoration of the saints occurs in the canon:

> In the unity of holy fellowship we observe the memory, first of all, of the glorious and ever Virgin Mary, Mother of our Lord and God Jesus Christ; then that of Thy blessed Apostles and Martyrs, Peter and Paul, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Thaddeus; of Linus, Cletus, Clement, Sixtus, Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus, John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian and of all Thy saints, by whose merits and prayers grant that we may be always fortified by the help of Thy protection, through the same Christ our Lord, Amen.

There are also the prayers after the consecration in the Roman Mass, which commemorates all the departed and also specific ones:

> Remember also, O Lord, Thy servants and handmaids, N(ame) and N(ame), who have gone before us with the sign of faith, and rest in the sleep of peace (here remember the dead). To these, O Lord, and to all who rest in Christ, we beseech Thee to grant of Thy goodness, a place of comfort, light and peace, through the same Christ our Lord, Amen.
>
> To us sinners also, Thy servants, trusting in the greatness of Thy mercy, deign to grant some part and fellowship with Thy holy Apostles and Martyrs: with John, Stephen, Matthias, Barnabas, Ignatius, Alexander, Marcellinus, Peter, Felicitas, Perpetua, Agatha, Lucy, Agnes, Cecilia, Anastasia, and all Thy saints, into whose company we implore Thee to admit us, not weighing our merits, but freely granting us pardon, through Christ our Lord.

All this is in the true western tradition—brief and to the point. In the Eastern liturgies, however, there is an insistence on this theme which is well-nigh annoying. Fr. Salaville, the great Byzantinologist, lists repetitiveness as one of the great weaknesses of the Oriental liturgies.[1] In the Western rite, the commemoration of the saints and the departed, who form after all the major portion of the Body of Christ and in whose company alone we can offer the eucharistic offering, is well-nigh subdued in the silent prayers of the priest. In the Oriental liturgies we are never allowed to overlook their presence in the Body with us. In the Russian liturgy, for example, the very first prayer of the preparatory service remembers the departed: At the prayers of our holy fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us, Amen.[2]

[1] "répétitions fréquentes des mêmes idées en termes presque identiques", *Liturgies orientales*, 1932, p. 91.

[2] *The Orthodox Liturgy* (Fellowship of St. Alban and Sergius), p. 1.

The Blessed Virgin Mother, always the personification of the whole Body of Christ, appears at frequent intervals in the preparatory prayers. At the "ordering of the Holy and Divine Liturgy" the priest remembers in succession the Blessed Virgin, John the Baptist, Moses and Aaron, Elijah, Elisha, David and Jesse, the three holy children, Daniel the prophet and "all holy prophets"; Peter and Paul, "with all the rest of the holy apostles"; "our fathers among the saints: Basil the Great, Gregory the Divine and John Chrysostom: Athanasius and Cyril, Nicolas of Myra, Peter, Alexis, Jonas and Philip of Moscow", Niceta, Leontius; the martyrs Stephen, Demeter, George, Theodore Tyro and Theodore, and all holy martyrs; the martyresses Thecla, Barbara, Cyriaca, Euphemia, Prascovia, Katharine and all holy martyresses; the monks Antony, Euthymius, Saba, Onephorus, Athanasius of Athos, and many others; the nuns Pelagia, Theodosia, Anastasia, (and so on); the miracle-workers Cosmas and Damian, etc., etc., the "ancestors of God" Joachim and Anna, the saint in whose name the Church is consecrated, the saint whose day it is, the "equals of the Apostles" Cyril and Methodius, the Grand Duke Vladimir, and "all the saints"; then again the saint whose the Liturgy is (St Basil or St Chrysostom even if they have already been commemorated).

After these eight sets of commemorative prayers of the Body of Christ in past time, one turns to the rest of the Body in space: every Orthodox bishop and patriarch, one's own patriarch, archbishop, bishop, the whole priesthood, the whole diaconate, the whole brotherhood (the laity), the sovereign, the royal family and then all those who have asked for special commemoration at the eucharist. And from then on the priest, the deacon and the people are never allowed to forget this vast cloud of witnesses who join them in the offering of the eucharist. The litanies close always with a commemorative dedication of ourselves to God, with the whole Body of Christ.

The same is true of the other Oriental liturgies. Rather tiring lists could be produced from any one of them. And the limits of the Body of Christ are drawn with a liberality that is comprehensive enough, as for example in the Syrian Liturgy's ordering of the elements:

> We remember first our father Adam and our mother Eve, the Holy Mother of God Mary, the prophets and apostles, the evangelists, the martyrs, the confessors, the just ones and the priests, the holy fathers and the true shepherds, the teachers of the True Glory (Orthodoxy), the solitaries and the cenobites, all those (invisible) who stand with us in prayer, *all those from the beginning of the world who have pleased Thee, all those from Adam and Eve unto the day of days.*

> We remember also our parents and brethren and children, those who have taught us the word of truth, our own departed, and all the faithful departed, especially those related to us by blood, those who have shared or are sharing in the establishment of this church, and all who have anything to do with us in word and deed, in matters small or great, and especially him or her at whose request this offering is offered.[1]

And so on, several times through the liturgy by priest and deacon and people.

The use of the censer is also here to be noted as closely related to the Body of Christ. Traditionally the censer symbolizes the Church, the whole Body of Christ, on heaven and on earth. In the author's Church, the teachers give something like the following interpretation:

The bowl of the censer symbolizes the earth, its lid the heavens; the coal stands for sinful humanity, and the fire in it represents God the Son who became incarnate in human flesh making it alive. The four chains represent ecumenicity in time and space, each link in the chain representing a generation, while the four chains stand for the four corners of the earth. The twelve tinkling bells on the four chains remind us of the apostolic voice ringing in the Church, and the incense is the life and prayer of the believers, rising up as a sweet fragrance in the presence of God. Censing is a reminder to the Church that the whole Body of Christ in time and space is praying with us in the eucharist, and we remember them. This is suggested in the four couplets which are chanted at the censing of the elements in the Syriac Liturgy:

On the East	With this sweet incense be commemorated the Virgin Mary, Mother of God.
On the West	With this sweet incense be commemorated prophets, apostles and holy martyrs.
On the North	With this sweet incense be commemorated teachers, priests, the just and the righteous.
On the South	With this sweet incense be commemorated the holy Church and all her children.

It is to be remembered that in the Orthodox Church we not only seek the prayers of the saints, but also pray for them. The Diptych for the living and the departed contains not merely a request to the saints in heaven to intercede for us, but also a prayer to God to comfort them. This is evident in the Syriac liturgy. The three prayers for the departed (first for the Blessed Virgin, the apostles, prophets and martyrs, and all

[1] Tr. from Syriac.

the saints, second for all the doctors of the Church who have maintained the faith and handed it to us, and the last for all the faithful departed) are intercessions for them as well as requests to intercede for us. The two former end thus:

> May their prayers be a stronghold for us; let us beseech the Lord,
> while in the last the prayer is:
> Let us pray and beseech Christ our God, who hath received their souls and spirits unto Himself, to vouchsafe them in His great mercy pardon of offences and remission of sins, and to gather us and them into His heavenly Kingdom.[1]
> And in the post-communion prayers the priest intercedes:
> In this offering which we have offered this day may the Lord God and His chosen angels and holy ones be pleased; and by it be granted rest and good remembrance to His mother and His saints and to all the faithful departed . . ..[2]

This mutuality amongst the whole Body of Christ expressed in the mutual remembrance and intercession for each other, though present in the Western Rite, is more adequately and amply expressed in the Eastern Rites. The role of icons is also to be understood in this connection.

9. *The Spirit of Devout Piety expressed in Fulsome Poetry*

To the rational and matter of fact Western mind, some of it sounds a bit too fulsome. As Salaville remarks, the metaphors are sometimes a bit forced, and the poetry is redundant and exuberant.[3] But to the Eastern mind, this alone speaks to the depths. The cerebral profundity and the precise clarity of the Western collect often leaves him unmoved. He has to have the aid of rich and devout language like:

> Thou, my Creator, Who for meat hast freely given me Thy flesh, Who art a fire consuming the unworthy, O consume me not; but rather enter Thou into my members, into my every joint, into my very heart and reins. Burn up like thorns all my transgressions; purge Thou my soul, and hallow my imagination; knit firm my bones and joints withal; shine into all the five senses of my body; fasten me wholly in the fear of Thee. Guard, shield and shelter me evermore from every deed and word which stains the soul. Cleanse, wash, adorn me: set me right, give me understanding and enlighten me. Prove me the habitation of Thy Spirit only, and in no wise the dwelling-place of sin: forth from this house of Thine, at the coming in of that I have

[1] *The order of the Holy Qurbana*, pp. 37–9.
[2] Tr. from Syriac. Pampakuda Manual, p. 120.
[3] *op. cit.* p. 91.

received, let every passion and every evil work take flight as from fire . . . .[1] (From the Slavonic Liturgy. A post-communion Prayer of St. Simeon.)

The priests' prayers before the celebration of the eucharist are always in the Orthodox tradition examples of devout humility:

O Lord, who knowest the hearts of all, O Holy One who restest in Thy holy ones, Who alone art without sin and able to forgive sin, Thou knowest, O Lord, that I am not worthy, neither ready nor meet for this holy ministry which belongs to Thee; in the presence of Thy holy glory, I have neither face to draw near nor mouth to open, but in the multitude of Thy tender mercies, forgive me, a sinful man, and grant unto me that I may find grace and mercy at this hour, and strengthen me from on high . . . (From the Prayer of Preparation in the Coptic *St. Basil.*)

Or the following hymn of vesting of the priest in the Armenian Liturgy:

O mystery, deep, unsearchable, eternal, which hast decked with splendid glory the heavenly dominions, the legions of fiery spirits in the chamber of Light unapproachable,
With wondrous power didst Thou create Adam in a Lordly image,
And didst clothe him with gracious glory in the garden of Eden, the abode of delights, . . .
O Chalice of fiery rain that was poured on the apostles in the Holy Upper Room,
O Holy Ghost, pour thy wisdom on us also along with the vestment,
Holiness becometh Thine house, who art clothed with Majesty. Like as Thou art girt about with the glory of holiness so also gird us about with Truth . . .[2].

Or this:

I tremble, taking fire. O let me not be burnt, like wax, like grass. O dreadful mysteries!
O divine compassion! How should my frailty take of the body and the blood of God, and be made incorruptible? (From the eighth Canticle of the Preparatory Office of the Slavonic Liturgy.)[3]

Examples could be multiplied of this spirit of humble devotion and the sense of the numinous glory of God reflected in the words of the prayers. But that spirit and that sense cannot always be caught in words

[1] *op. cit.* p. 99. Note how this prayer refuses to spiritualize the faith, but is concerned as much with the body as with the spirit.
[2] Brightman, *op. cit.* pp. 412–3.
[3] *Orthodox Liturgy*, p. 5.

or forms, and wherever the Eastern tradition loses these things the words lose life and worship becomes perfunctory.

The hymnody of the Eastern Church also bears the same quality. The hymns are either descriptive of the saving events, or commemorative of the saints. Rarely do they speak of individual emotions as does much nineteenth century Protestant hymnody.

10. *The Scriptural Quality of the Eastern Liturgies*

One often encounters the notion that in the East the liturgy has replaced the Scriptures at the centre of the life of the Church. This is true only in so far as the two are inseparable in the understanding of the Eastern tradition. Modern Old Testament and New Testament scholarship is coming to the conclusion that much of the Scripture, both the Old and the New, was originally formed in a liturgical context. It is also true that the devout Jew's worship was saturated with the Old Testament, and for the Jewish convert to pray or preach the Gospel was to use the language of Scripture.

The early Eastern fathers who composed the prayers of the liturgy were also equally soaked in the Scriptures of the Old and New Covenants. And as the congregations listened to these meditations year after year through the liturgical cycle, the Scriptures became engrafted in the consciousness of the ordinary believer in a manner which is beyond the reach of conscious didactic instruction. The combination of poetic imagery with devoutly profound theology, a spirit of genuine concern for all of mankind in prayer, a joy in thanksgiving combined with penitent humility—these are the elements which give the liturgical texts their special quality. But this would have been quite inadequate for worship if the liturgical texts were not moulded by men saturated with the words of the Scriptures and who therefore could communicate the content of the Scriptures to the worshipping community, including the literate and the illiterate, in a manner which reaches the latter without losing the former's interest. The present writer, whose family had possessed the Scriptures in the vernacular ever since printing was introduced into his country, yet learned the bible more in the liturgy than by his own reading.

It is possible that such biblical instruction as comes to the worshipper through participation in the liturgy may not be as precise and as conscious as the knowledge acquired through disciplined and critical bible study. The measure of biblical illiteracy, however, that prevails

among even those who go to bible classes regularly gives one reason to doubt the claim that the conscious method is in general more effective. Perhaps the conscious method when combined with liturgical conditioning of the mind may place the Scriptural truth at a deeper level of consciousness than the conscious method by itself. The text of one of the *Sedras* (meditative prayer) for Pentecost in the Syriac Liturgy is an example taken at random:

> Christ our God, the light that enlighteneth our minds and who with the Father and the Holy Ghost is ever blessed and sanctified by the hosts of heaven, was pleased, by His own will, to come down to us and to become one amongst us. From a holy virgin He was pleased to be born in the flesh, that He might fulfil for us all that is necessary for our salvation—birth, baptism, crucifixion, death and resurrection.
>
> When He was pleased again to ascend unto the Father, He gathered together His apostles on the Mount of Olives, laid His holy hands on them, blessed them and gave unto them the charisma of priesthood in abundant measure. And He breathed upon them the Holy Spirit, and said to them, Tarry ye in Jerusalem until I send you the Holy Spirit from the presence of the Father. He will enlighten you and give you wisdom by His abundant charisma. If I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you.
>
> And when He had thus established his apostles, He ascended into heaven in triumph and sat down with glory on the throne at the right hand of His Father. On this day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended upon them suddenly imbuing them with the divine charismata, bestowing on them divine wisdom, enlightening them with divine teaching, and endowing them with the tongues of all nations. Today spiteful Jews stood aghast at the sight of the illiterate speaking wisdom and fulfilling the holy and divine mysteries. Today the holy apostles drank of the new wine of God through the gifts of the holy and life-giving Spirit; while the Jews were filled with envy and mocked them for being drunk with new wine. Today Simon Peter rejoiced at the fulfilment of the Lord's promise; Andrew, the sons of Zebedee and the other holy apostles stood with great joy and exultation. Today by the descent of the Holy Spirit the upper room became a second Babel, not, as in the first, by the punishment of confusion of tongues, but by the power of the Holy Spirit the apostles were enlightened by the light of grace, and were endowed with wisdom for the proclamation of the truth.
>
> Today Judas Iscariot stood ashamed[1] when he saw his companions the holy apostles transformed and enlightened in their mind and spirit by the divine light of the heavenly mysteries.

[1] Here the composer of the prayer has conceivably let his imagination roam beyond the bounds of the scriptural text. Does he imagine Judas standing with shame on earth or in the place of perdition?

> And now, O Lord, we beseech Thy love of mankind which is beyond words, on this day of Pentecost, pour down upon us the grace of Thy holy and life-giving Spirit, so that thereby we may be pruned of all the thorns of sin and offer unto Thee the fruits of the Spirit—abundance of faith, hope and genuine love. And bestow on Thy holy Church Thy grace and peace. And look down in mercy on the sick and the afflicted and on those who have asked us that we intercede for them in our weak and sinful prayers. In Thy love of mankind give rest and good remembrance to our fathers and brethren, our leaders and all our faithful departed, so that they and we may with one voice ascribe unto Thee with Thy Father and the Holy Spirit glory and honour, now and for evermore. Amen.[1]

In this or any other similar passage one can see the free compositions of a mind saturated with the Scriptures, but not composing prayers with academic faithfulness to the text. This freedom has existed in the very composition of the Scripture text and continues in its growth and elaboration in the liturgical texts. The Church did not at this time feel bound by the texts of the Scriptures, though it was always nurtured and guided by them. In the liturgical texts composed during certain spiritual golden ages of the Church, she has advanced beyond the scriptural text, though always in faithfulness to its guidance, to articulate that deep and growing wonder at the mystery of God's love of mankind.

II. *Use of Concrete Forms and Actions*

The liturgy is not a text, but an action. The besetting temptation of liturgiologists to concentrate on the written text of the liturgy should not obscure the fact that the text is only a guide to the action; the name *leitourgia* or "service" belongs properly to the action and not to the text. The Eastern liturgies cannot be understood simply by a penetrating study of the texts. Though dramatic in form, they are not plays to be read. They are not even dramas to be seen. Only by full and repeated participation along with a congregation nurtured in the liturgical tradition can one come to know their spiritual riches.

Often the Orthodox themselves do not consciously understand everything they do or say in the liturgy. The use of the censer has already been mentioned. The fragrance of the incense is meant to do more than merely appeal to the sense of smell. It denotes the offering of a sweet-smelling sacrifice to God. But very few Orthodox realize

[1] Second Sedra for Pentecost, translated by the author from the Syriac *Thakso*, Ed. Fr. Abraham Konat, 1960.

that the censer is also an image of the whole Body of Christ in space and time, and that its censing is meant to draw our attention to the saints in heaven praying with and for us.

The gestures of the priest and the laity, in the kiss of peace, in the bowing of heads, in the reverence paid to the icons or the eucharistic elements, in the signing of the cross, all these are part of the liturgical act. The offertory and communion ought to be full acts of the total congregation. The liturgical colours, the sounds (bells, etc.), the movements of the priest and the deacon, all these are integral parts of the liturgical action. It is an act of the congregation, not simply a prayer. Rather it is an act of Christ, through His Body. Not only among preliterate peoples, but even among over-literate modern peoples, the need for a solid, concrete, *act* of worship is acute. Words are only one of the elements in liturgical worship. No true liturgy can be performed with words alone, however much congregational response that liturgy may provide for.

12. *Variety of Forms*

A Western Christian who has witnessed only the liturgy of the Eastern Orthodox Church (Byzantine tradition) may have the impression that Eastern liturgies are all alike, except for the difference of the particular language used (Slavonic, Greek, etc.). Among the Oriental Orthodox Churches (non-Chalcedonian tradition), however, there exists a very rich variety of forms. The Syrian Orthodox Church, for example, has preserved at least 65 different anaphoras, though many are no longer in use. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has recently published 14 different anaphoras, and there are reportedly more in manuscripts.

From a perusal of these forms, it becomes obvious that new liturgical forms were developed until as late as the twelfth century. In Syriac we find anaphoras named not only after St. John the Evangelist, St. Peter, the Twelve Holy Apostles, St. James, St. John Chrysostom, Eustathius of Antioch, Xystus of Rome, Julius of Rome, but also later Mar Dionysius Bar Salibhi, (12th century), St. Matthew the Seer, St. Isaac (4th century?), and Mar Abraham Nahshirthono. In Ethiopia the liturgies named after the 318 Fathers of Nicaea and after the Blessed Virgin must be quite late. Perhaps a thorough historical study of this phenomenon will give the Oriental Orthodox Churches courage and incentive to create new anaphoras, with intercessory prayers that are

more relevant to our times. The fear of innovation in liturgical practices seems comparatively late in the history of the Orthodox Churches and does probably reflect a time of spiritual decline, when form and content are hard to distinguish and the Church clings therefore to both with equal tenacity.

VI

KINGS AND PRIESTS

The Royal Priesthood of the Whole Church

The doctrine of the priesthood constitutes one of the key theological problems of our time. The "royal priesthood" of all the baptized is a biblical notion which we find even in pre-Reformation Roman Catholic theology. But the distinction, if any, between the general priesthood of all the baptized and the special priesthood of those ordained is far from precise even today, perhaps especially today, when the levelling forces are wiping out the distinctions between clergy and laity.

Thomas Aquinas tried to deal with this in Question 82: 1 of the *Summa*, which is concerned with the priest's place in the eucharist. The Question is "Does the consecration of this sacrament belong to a priest alone?" The *Summa* answers yes, and quotes Isidore as authority, who said: "It belongs to a priest to perfect this sacrament of the Lord's body and blood upon God's altar". Of the four objections which the Angelic Doctor seeks to answer, the second quotes St. John Chrysostom, who says: "Every holy man is a priest". And the reply is:

> A devout layman has a spiritual, but not a sacramental priesthood. Being united to Christ by faith, hope and charity he can fruitfully offer to God spiritual victims and sacrifices. For "a sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit"; and again "Present your bodies a living sacrifice" (Rom 12: 1). Hence St. Peter says: "A holy priesthood is to offer spiritual sacrifices". But this is quite a different thing from the sacrificial power of the official priesthood.[1]

The general tendency of medieval scholasticism was to obscure even the "spiritual" priesthood of believers, and it should be said to the credit of the Angelic Doctor that he reinstated it in scholastic thought. In his discussion on sacramental character (*Summa Theol.* III q. 63), he says:

[1] E. T. in (F. O'Neill,) *St. Thomas Aquinas, the Blessed Sacrament and the Mass*, 1955.

> Now the whole rite of the Christian religion is derived from the priesthood of Christ. It is clear then that the sacramental character is specially the character of Christ, to whose priesthood the faithful are likened or configured by reason of the sacramental characters, which are nothing else but certain participations of the priesthood of Christ, which are derived from Christ Himself.[1]

But St. Thomas runs into the same difficulty as contemporary theologians in distinguishing the *differentia*[2] between the royal priesthood of the whole church, and the priesthood of the specially ordained. Most theologians would today agree that "spiritual" and "sacramental" are not real *differentiae*, for if a sacrament is not spiritual, then what use is it?

In the Eastern tradition, the priest cannot ordinarily consecrate alone. The liturgy provides for, and canon law requires, the participation of the deacon as well as the people. It cannot be said therefore that the people have no sacramental ministry. They are co-consecrators of the sacrament with the priest.

The patristic tradition bears witness to the fact that priests or bishops were chosen in early centuries on the basis of personal holiness and spiritual wisdom.[3] In spite of all our sentimental objections to any kind of a double standard separating priests and non-priests, it appears that a particular closeness to God is the special prerogative of the priest. This runs counter to the doctrine of the holiness of the whole people of God only if we refuse to accept degrees of holiness, and insist that the indifferent Christian is as holy as the greatest saint by virtue of their common baptism and chrismation. This certainly is not the patristic view, though it may well be a democratic view. It was the priests' prerogative to approach more closely to the holy altar of God than the layman was allowed to. And therefore there is a certain validity in the Reformation insistence that priests ought to be holy people, though the authentic tradition refutes the notion that the effectiveness of their ministry is dependent on their holiness. To quote at length from the second theological oration of St. Gregory Nazianzen, in which he

[1] E. T. in *Sacraments and Worship*, Ed. P. F. Palmer, 1957, p. 140. For St. Thomas, *character* means mark or imprint, usually indelible.

[2] The distinction between clergy and laity is quite ancient and can be traced back at least to St. Clement of Rome who says (*Ep. ad. Cor.*, xl) that the "layman is bound by the ordinances of the laity".

[3] See e.g. St Gregory Nazianzen's sermon "In defence of His Flight to Pontus" paras 8–21, E. T. in *LNPF* Ser. 2, VII, pp. 206 ff.

speaks of the congregation at worship in terms parallel to the people of Israel at Mt. Sinai:

> Now when I[1] go up eagerly into the Mount—or, to use a truer expression, when I both eagerly long, and at the same time am afraid (the one through my hope and the other through my weakness) to enter within the Cloud, and hold converse with God, for so God commands; if any be an Aaron[2] let him go up with me, and let him stand near, being ready, if it must be so, to remain outside the Cloud. But if any be a Nadad or an Abihu, or of the Order of the Elders,[3] let him go up indeed, but let him stand afar off, according to the value of his purification. But if any be of the multitude,[4] who are unworthy of this height of contemplation, if he be altogether impure let him not approach at all, for it would be dangerous to him; but if he be at least temporarily purified, let him remain below and listen to the Voice alone, and the trumpet, the bare words of piety, and let him see the Mountain smoking and lightening, a terror at once and a marvel to those who cannot get up.[5]

This closeness of access, differing according to the degree of sanctification, was not dependent on personal holiness, but one could assume a failure where a degree of personal holiness was not developed which at least corresponded if not exceeded the degree of access to the presence of God. The royal priesthood of the whole Body of Christ shares in the same predicament. It is not because we are holier than the rest of the world that we have been called to be "a corps of priests", but that call, which is primary, becomes impeded if it does not lead to personal holiness in the Christian community.

The Church is the priest of the world. The world does not know God; is unable to approach God. But the Church does know, not because it is wiser or holier, but because God has called it to know Him intimately. The Church ought, however, to develop the holiness and wisdom commensurate with her calling. The Church should stand on the Holy Mountain, on behalf of the world, conscious of their needs, interceding for them, in full identification with them; but occasionally at least the world that stands at the foot of the mountain should "see

[1] As Bishop

[2] Possibly referring to priests.

[3] Referring to the baptized. This seems a reasonable interpretation since the next sentence refers to catechumens and hearers. The baptized may be called 'elders' in so far as they now belong, through baptism and chrismation, to the Royal Priesthood.

[4] Referring to catechumens and hearers not yet baptized.

[5] E. T. *LNPF*, er. 2, VII, p. 289.

the Mountain smoking and lightening", otherwise they may give up the Church for lost and go home, as many have already done.

This combination of access into the Holy Presence and the holiness that develops in relation to that access should characterize the life of the whole Body of Christ. This is their royal priesthood—to stand on behalf of the Kingdoms of the earth before the King of kings, in High Priestly intercession and in holiness of life. These two elements are the foundation for mission. Without worship and holy life there is no true mission. Where there is genuine worship which never forgets the people at the foot of the mountain, and where there is holiness of life that authenticates itself, mission will be a natural outcome and will not be an artificially high-pressured or drummed up activism. The heart of this priestly ministry is the eucharist. And every baptized Christian participates in the eucharistic priesthood. This is one reason why baptism and chrismation are not two separate sacraments in the Eastern Church.[1]

To be baptized is to be a member of the Body of Christ whose life or soul is the Holy Spirit. And to be baptized is to be initiated into the priestly ministry of the eucharistic offering. The hymn sung at the anointing with the holy chrism in the Syrian Orthodox baptism reads:

By the holy chrism, said the Lord, let Aaron be anointed,
that he may become holy.
By this holy chrism is anointed this little lamb
that comes to be baptized.

[1] This statement may be contested by some Eastern theologians, particularly since the Orthodox officially or unofficially seem to have accepted the decision of the Second Council of Lyons (1274 A.D.), defining the number of sacraments to be seven. The Orthodox confessions of Peter Mogila and Dositheus mention the number seven, which means a separation between baptism and chrismation; this does not appear to be borne out by the Orthodox Sacramentaries which give only one order for the sacrament of baptism and chrismation together. Within this order of service itself, the two sacraments are inseparably intertwined, and cannot be separated into two parts as can be done for example in the case of the eucharistic liturgy (Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Sacrament). The author has not examined the sacramentaries of all the Eastern Churches but would be glad to have information to the contrary, with the data relating to the time when these began to be considered as two separate sacraments.

A separate sacrament of "chrismation" is administered by certain Orthodox Churches to members of other confessions joining the Orthodox Church or to one who after being baptized and chrismated in the Orthodox Church, had joined a non-Orthodox Communion, and is now returning to the Orthodox Church. These seem to be late practices and problems posed by the unrepeatability of baptism which we confess in the Niceno-Constantinopolitan creed.

The same are the Chrism, that anoints visibly this
little lamb that comes to be baptized,
And the Holy Spirit, that invisibly and divinely
descends to brood and sanctify it.

And immediately after the anointing, the baptized is taken to the eucharistic altar, to walk round it three times and then to be "crowned" when the following prayer is said:

Crown, O Lord God, this Thy servant with glory and honour, and may his life become pleasing to Thy Lordship and fitting the glory of Thy Holy Name, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, for ever and ever, Amen.

Here we find the same combination of the Aaronic priesthood and Messianic Kingship, which becomes manifested in the access to the altar and the sanctity of life. The "glory and honour" with which the baptized is crowned appears to be the kingship of a self-sacrificing, God-pleasing life of suffering love.

The Differentia of Ordination

Luther was rather vehement in his attack on ordination as a sacrament. According to him, "it is the point at which Christian fellowship perishes, where pastors become wolves, servants become tyrants, and men of the Church become worse than men of the world"[1]. It is rather interesting that the fourth century father[2] who wrote the great panegyric on the priesthood also catalogued all the corruptions of the priesthood both in the Old Testament and in his own times. Priestcraft appears perennially open to corruption. The fourth century, when the doctrine of the priesthood came to full flower, would seem, at least from St. Gregory's descriptions of it, to have been open to corruptions quite similar to or at least of the same degree as the sixteenth century of which Luther writes. The corruption of a sacrament is hardly an argument against it. On the other hand the claim that this sacrament was directly ordained by the Lord has yet to be substantiated in a convincing way.[3]

We know from the biblical evidence that Christ gave power to the

[1] *Pagan Servitude of the Church*, E.T. in *Martin Luther*, ed. J. Dillinberger, Doubleday Anchor, 1961, p. 345.

[2] St. Gregory Nazianzen.

[3] The usual Roman Catholic argument that in celebrating the Last Supper and ordering the apostles: "Do this in remembrance of me", our Lord ordained the priesthood can be accepted only if it relates to the priesthood of the whole Church; for it is the whole Church that "does this" and not merely the priest.

apostles to forgive sins and that the apostles were themselves ordained by this act of the Lord. He blew the Spirit on them; laid hands on them. That the apostles ordained *episkopoi*, *presbyteroi* and *diakonoi* can also be substantiated from the New Testament evidence. The word "priest" however does not occur in that context. The Syriac (Aramaic) word *Qashisha* used to this day for the priest literally means elder or old man. So do the Arabic, Ethiopic and several other Semitic words for priest. The Greek now uses *hiereus* which literally means priest. The Syriac also uses the term *kohno* which is related to Hebrew *Kohen*.

Theologically, the order of priests could be construed only as a delegated order, while the bishop and the deacon have their own specific functions. The priestly order is derived from the episcopal order, and the system of orders that developed from early times is of two rather than three orders[1].

The bishop was primarily the high priest and chief shepherd as can be seen from an examination of the early ordination liturgies:

> Father, who discernest the hearts, bestow upon this Thy servant whom Thou hast chosen for the episcopate, to feed Thy holy flock and serve as Thine high priest, that he may minister blamelessly by night and day, that he may unceasingly propitiate Thy countenance and offer to Thee the gifts of Thy holy Church;
> And that by the high priestly spirit he may have power to forgive sins according to Thy command, to assign lots according to Thy bidding, to loose every bond according to the authority Thou gavest to the apostles, and that he may please Thee in meekness and a pure heart, offering to Thee a sweet-smelling savour,
> Through Thy child Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom to Thee be glory, might and praise, to the Father and to the Son with the Holy Spirit, now and world without end. Amen.[2]

However the high priestly and shepherdly functions of the *episkopos* are not to be seen purely in juridical terms. Even the notion of special "powers" given to the *episkopos* at his consecration is open to mis-

[1] Even Clement of Rome thought in terms of two rather than three orders: "And thus preaching through countries and cities, they appointed their first-fruits, having proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons of those who should afterward believe. Nor was this a new thing; for indeed, many ages before it was written concerning bishops and deacons. For thus saith the Scripture in a certain place 'I will appoint their bishops in righteousness, and their deacons in faith.' " *Ep. ad. Cor.* xlii (see Is. 60: 17 LXX).

[2] From the *Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus* (*c.* 215), ed. Gregory Dix, 1937, p. 5.

understanding. The one and only High Priest does not delegate His powers to the bishops by a line of apostolic succession. If the great High Priest, Jesus Christ, were not living for ever to make intercession for all, the episcopate would be ineffective. Yet it is God's will and expressed purpose that Christ's high priesthood should be sacramentally present in each eucharistic community. This is the meaning of the Great Apostolic Commission. There is a tendency in some theological circles to see both the priesthood and the mission in a chain or pyramid of relationships—the Holy Trinity—the Incarnate Son—the apostles—the bishops—the priests and so on. This is hardly true to the biblical understanding of the relationship between heaven and earth or eternity and time.

The *Episcopos* is neither a substitute for, nor a delegate of, Christ the High Priest. In him Christ Himself is sacramentally present in the midst of the sacred community—as High Priest in its eucharistic assembly, and as the Good Shepherd in the daily life of the holy people. It is not merely the consecration of the bishop that constitutes a sacrament —his very person is sacramental. This is why, and not because of a notion of the "indelibility" of "sacramental character", the Eastern Church does not conceive of any "retirement" for an aged bishop.

It is necessary in this connection to refer to a prevailing misinterpretation of the concept "hierarchy" in both East and West. The word has often been used to denote the collegium of the bishops or the clergy as a class. The tendency is to think of the *authority* of the *priestly* group within the whole Church, as if *hierarchy* were derived from *hiereus* = priest, and *archè* = rule. The word itself came into ecclesiastical coinage through St. Dionysius (the pseudo-Areopagite) who uses *hierarcheo* and its derivatives some 200 times in his works. For St. Dionysius the word *hierarchy* denotes an ordering (*archia* or *taxis*) of holiness (*hieros* = holy)[1]. The *hiera archia* (holy ordering) refers primarily to the heavenly hosts, ranked around the throne of the Holy Trinity, the various heavenly beings ordered in ranks according to the degree of their own holiness: the cherubim and the seraphim, the archangels, the principalities and powers and the more ordinary angels and so on, the whole *ensemble*, reflecting the light of God, transfiguring

[1] "The hierarchy, according to me, is a holy ordering (*taxis hiera*) and a way of knowing (*episteme*), and an energy operating for deiformity according to capacity, and, to those informed by the illumination that proceeds from God, elevating each one, according to his ability towards the resemblance of God". (Trans. from the Greek *The Celestial Hierarchy*, III: 1, *PG.* CLXIV, 36D).

each member towards the nature of God Himself. Dionysius spoke of this heavenly hierarchy or order of holiness being sacramentally present in the eucharistic community, in the form of the various orders of the priesthood and the laity gathered together around the Lord on His day. The eucharistic community, ordered around the celebrant priest, is a reflection or earthly image of the heavenly reality of the holy ordering of archangels and angels around Christ. This notion of the celestial and earthly "hierarchies" has little to do with the notion of the ruling function of a class of priests. The laity are fully included in Dionysius' conception of the earthly hierarchy.

The differentia of ordination cannot be delineated except in terms of special *charismata* given by the Holy Spirit to different members of the Body. The episcopate is a special charisma given to the Church by the Holy Spirit. It is perhaps the highest individual gift to the Body, apart from the gift of *agape* given to all. It is the concrete, personal and sacramental presence of Christ the High Priest and Good Shepherd, not to be separated from Christ's presence in the whole Body. Its central elements are the High Priestly ministry at the eucharist and in regular prayer, and the royal or shepherdly ministry of teaching, feeding, building up, forgiving, healing, and ruling in the daily life of the people. The priest is a delegate of the bishop without authority to delegate his functions further. With that limitation he functions as the bishop in each local congregation. The deacon assists the bishop both in his priestly and in his pastoral functions. None of these orders can be conceived apart from the Body of Christ or without the laity.

The Kingship or Lordship of Christ is also a shared Kingship. The whole body participates in it, not vicariously, but through incorporation. We have been anointed as kings and priests. It should be kept in mind that the Kingship of Christ is radically different from the conception of Kingship in the mind of Pilate[1] and in many of our minds as well. It is not a kingdom that builds itself by vast armies. It is a kingdom of truth, and therefore unshakeable by the vicissitudes of war and politics. It is this kind of kingship, the kingship of truth, of suffering, of the acceptance of failure in the interests of justice and righteousness, of laying down one's life for others, that characterizes the Lordship of Christ in which we share. The great error of the triumphalist Church, whether Catholic, Protestant or Orthodox, has always been a misunderstanding of the nature of Christ's kingship. Even today, in the non-triumphalist theology of the Lordship of

[1] See Pilate's question in John 18: 33 and Our Lord's reply in 18: 36.

Christ, there persists this fundamental misunderstanding of Christ's kingship as arbitrary and sovereign in a "Calvinist" sense. It is important in this connection to remember that the word "shepherd" and "judge", rather than "king", are the true Old Testament words for those who exercise authority. Care, feeding, protection from oppressor, social and personal righteousness, these were the concerns of the rulers. The kingly or pastoral ministry of Christ in the modern world is of the same kind. "I am the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep." That is the true messianic character.

The royal priesthood of the Church is thus a sharing in Christ's intercessory and pastoral ministry. It is shared by the whole Church in a holy ordering of gifts or charismata by the Holy Spirit. He who is most gifted in the community by the Holy Spirit, with an abundance of holiness and wisdom, love and spiritual strength, is chosen and consecrated by the Church to be the central sacramental presence of Christ in their midst. The priests or pastors exercise the same ministry, as delegates of the bishop, but without further power of delegation. The deacons assist the bishop or priest in both their priestly and shepherdly ministries. The people share fully in the total priestly and pastoral ministry of the Church in and for the world, and within itself. The charismata given to the Church bear fruit in the lives of the whole community in love, joy, reconciliation, largeness of spirit, mercy, goodness, faithfulness, humility and inner discipline. (Gal. 5: 22). When men are drawn towards God by these fruits to worship and to adore Him, the ministry of the Church in the world begins to fulfil its function.

All this has serious implications for the training of the clergy. This is not the place to discuss these. What has so far shaped the pattern of theological training since the beginning of the institution of "seminaries" is the notion that the priest or pastor is primarily a preacher of the word or a teacher. To recognize that he is to live as a sacramental presence of Christ the Good Shepherd and High Priest in the midst of the community has significant implications for the renewal of the worship of the Church. Only by training the clergy in a pattern that combines the development of spiritual maturity or personal holiness, which includes what we call strength of character and deep capacity for love of people, with a full awareness of the life of the world and its problems, can we recover true worship. Perhaps the Church made a mistake when it abandoned the ancient practice of choosing the most mature and spiritually developed layman in the community and ordaining

him to the priesthood. The new pattern by which boys and young men who have not lived "in the world" for a sufficiently long time and who "volunteer" themselves to be trained for the ministry in a "seminary" seems to fail to produce the right kind of ministers or priests.

The recovery of true worship is closely related to both aspects of the priesthood—the general and the special. Until our congregations develop an awareness that they are themselves a priestly and pastoral community we cannot radically improve the tone of our worship. Until we have men matured in the rough-and-tumble of normal daily life in the world, chosen by the congregation and called to the priesthood, we cannot have a truly authentic special priesthood. Such a priesthood is an important key for regaining the joy of freedom. The whole Church has to be priest on behalf of both itself and the world, and a pastor to itself and to the world. Only thus can the Church truly show forth the meaning of the chrism which made us kings and priests in union with Christ. It is in the exercise of this kingly (pastoral) and priestly ministry that the joy of freedom comes alive.

VII

PERSONAL PRAYER AND PUBLIC WORSHIP

WE ARE CONCERNED in this chapter with "private prayer" as distinguished from eucharistic worship. In fact prayer can never be private. All prayer is public, being an act of the Body of Christ through one or more of its members. It is always prayer in Christ, to the Father, through the Holy Spirit.

Bishop Robinson seems to miss this point (despite his book on *The Body*, 1952, the conclusions of which do not seem to have penetrated *Honest to God*) when he speaks of traditional prayer as disengagement. We cannot disengage ourselves from the Body of Christ into which we have been baptized. Both private and public prayer, as well as acts of charity to one's neighbour, are all done in the Church, the Body of Christ. The Christian does not alternate in his existence between two distinct and mutually exclusive spheres called the Church and the world. They are concentric circles or interpenetrating spheres and to be in the Church means to be in the world, though the converse may not necessarily hold true. Bishop Robinson readily identifies himself with a vast multitude of modern Christians who "are evidently not 'the praying type' "[1]. There is nothing more patently refreshing than this frank confession of a bishop. And on that basis the bishop suggests a new form of prayer for the modern man.

> I wonder whether Christian prayer, prayer in the light of the Incarnation, is not to be *defined* in terms of penetration through the world to God rather than of withdrawal from the world to God.[2]

It is doubtless true that in Christian spirituality as it developed in East and West there frequently appears this tendency to separate too neatly the realms of action and prayer. Bishop Robinson himself errs on the opposite side of that separation, when he says that true prayer is *in* the meeting with our fellow-men, and not in withdrawal. He fails to take into account the fact that our Lord Himself, when the crowds

[1] *Honest to God*, 1963, p. 93.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 97.

pressed Him, physically withdrew into the wilderness to pray by Himself for long hours. (Matt. 14: 23; Mark 6: 46; 1: 35; Luke 5: 16; 6: 12; 9: 18, etc.). At other times, as on the Mount of Transfiguration and in Gethsemane, He took two or three of His disciples to pray with Him (Luke 9: 28, 29; 18: 41 ff.), but withdrew even from His disciples to pray alone.

To think of physical withdrawal and solitude as disengagement is certainly a misunderstanding. Our consciousness, rather than our geographical location, is where we bear our fellowmen in prayer. The bishop seems to miss this point in his discussion on prayer. His second error is in not noticing that "penetration through the world to God", which he proposes as a definition of prayer, is not so far from the traditional (Tradition with a capital T, perhaps?) understanding of prayer. In all the great Christian mystics we find this total identification with and compassion for fellow-man (which is what "penetration" should mean) in their approach in prayer to God. St. Isaac the Syrian (sixth century) saw it this way:

> What is a charitable heart? It is the heart of him who burns with pity for all creation—for every human being, every bird, every animal, every demon. He looks at the creatures or remembers them, and his eyes are filled with tears . . .
>
> Therefore he offers his prayer constantly for the dumb creatures and for the enemies of truth and for those who do him harm, that they may be preserved and pardoned.[1]

It is obvious that we cannot become human without the world. Without other men, and things (food, drink, etc.) no child can grow. The world is thus the raw material out of which we are made. When the Fathers speak of "renouncing the world", they do not mean physically abandoning this raw material. St. John defined love of the world as consisting in desire directed to three things that belong to the pattern of this world; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the conceit of life.[2] This is the love that is opposed to the love of God: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in it. If any one loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him".[3] That love of the world is still opposed to the love of God, despite the "coming of age" of the world. The world can be loved in two ways, obviously. One way we see in John 3: 16, where we are told that "God so loved the

[1] E. T. by Maria Kullmann, quoted in Victor Gollancz, *A Year of Grace*, 1955.
[2] 1 John 2: 16. [3] 1 John 2: 15.

world that he gave his only-begotten Son". That love of the world is still valid, and is an integral part of the love of God. No one can renounce that love of the world and be a saint of God. None of the saints of the Church ever counselled the renunciation of that deep love in God of the world.

But the other kind of love of the world was definitely discouraged by the apostles and by Christ Himself. It is a love of the world which expresses itself in the three fundamental desires, the craving for physical satisfactions which always in the end deceive, the craving for wealth, and the craving for power and glory which lead to conceit and pride, and therefore to a distortion of the meaning of life. The "world come of age" knows how deceptive these things are. Even the neo-Nietzschians and the devotees of D. H. Lawrence are ready to admit that naked power and naked lust do not ultimately satisfy, though they may hold that there is little more that man can achieve.

The traditional teaching on prayer does not advise the Christian to renounce the first kind of love of the world, but only the second. And no modern man can learn either to penetrate through the world to God or to seek God in the midst of the world, without renouncing this. As a matter of fact the problem of modern man's inability to pray is not a totally new phenomenon. St. James put it quite bluntly when he said: "You ask, and do not get, for you ask perversely, in order to spend it for your own pleasures".[1] From ancient times men have thought of prayer as asking for favours from God for oneself. And when He does not give, we deny the usefulness of prayer, and even the very existence of God. Prayer itself belongs to the redeemed man, to his kingly priesthood, as we shall attempt to show soon. Neither modern man nor ancient man ever learnt to pray right until the renunciation of the world in the second sense mentioned above began to grow as a reality in his life.

The whole thesis of this book can be summed up thus: the possibility and the ability to pray is what truly distinguishes the Christian from others; without prayer no man can be maturely Christian; nor fully human. Prayer is the joy of freedom, which characterizes the children of God.

Are these words the empty rhetoric of a pious preacher? Perhaps and yet, let not these words pass without an interpretation.

[1] James 4:3.

"What do you mean by 'joy of freedom'?" one may ask.

What is freedom? There is no word which has caused so much confusion in Christian thought as this word freedom. Thanks to that genius of Western Christian thought, St. Augustine, to whom almost all the great deviations of Western theology can be directly or indirectly traced, authentic freedom has become undervalued in the religious thought of the West. St. Augustine spoke about two kinds of freedom, *libertas major* and *libertas minor:* the one, freedom to choose between good and evil, and the other, freedom from the power of sin in the bosom of God. He chose the latter and abhorred the former. His own personal life had manifested the need for the second. The first was what got him into trouble to start with, and therefore he had no use for it. But the essence of freedom lies neither in the power to choose, nor in emancipation from internal or external constraint, though all these may well form important aspects of freedom. The essence of freedom lies in spiritual creativity, in being an originator of a causal chain—an uncaused cause. To choose is not the same as to realize that which one chooses. Am I free to choose between being a pauper and a millionnaire? I may choose the latter in freedom, but if I do not have the power to realize that which I choose, what use is the power of choice?

Modern man is freer than man in earlier societies, in the sense not only that he has many more *possibilities* to choose from, but also that he has greater powers of realizing his choices. He should, however, also gain access to the love and the wisdom without which freedom can destroy man instead of helping him to grow. Freedom is the power to do or to realize that which is chosen. Freedom is to be not at the mercy of forces over which one has no control. The free human society is a society not passively formed by causal forces engineered from outside or compulsively thrown up from inside, but a society which chooses its own destiny and has the wherewithal to pursue and to transform that destiny.

God alone is truly and absolutely free. He alone is totally free from extraneous conditioning or even non-voluntary inner compulsion. He alone can say: "let be" and it is done. He alone is not caused, but is truly the uncaused cause. Man, as creation, would appear to be totally caused by the Creator, and therefore not free. But that is precisely the ambiguity of man. He is created. Yet he is also a creator, because he is made in the image of the Creator. The image is what is constitutive of man as man, distinguishing him from other animals. What is at the depth of "human nature" is not his sin, but his freedom. Because at

depth he is free, therefore at the depths he discovers also the source of his freedom, namely the Creator God. That does not mean, however, that God is simply the ultimate depth or ground of our own being. That He may well be, but it is more correct to put it this way: He is freedom; we are made in His image, therefore we find freedom in our depths; when this freedom discovers the love and the wisdom that also lie at the depths, we experience that freedom as direct access to God. That is joy. That is adoption to sonhood. There prayer is learned.

But the way to the depths can never be found in isolation. That road passes through the depths of other people. Even the *omphaloscopia* (navel-gazing) of the Athos hesychasts[1] was not an attempt to find God in the depths by self-isolation. Freedom, love and wisdom are all maintained and transmitted in community. It is as the community reconciled by the Spirit encounters God in His grace, and renders to Him its self-oblation in loving self-surrender and in identification with the oblation of Christ on the cross that man in community experiences the joy of freedom. This eucharistic encounter with God is what makes man authentically human. Here he experiences liberation from that awful dilemma of man—that if he approaches the Holy God he dies, and if he does not, he dies also.

This material offering of the community united in Christ by the Holy Spirit is the Church's experience of sonship. The offering is neither to appease an angry God nor to gain merit for ourselves. It is the response of love, from the creation to the Creator. That response is not ancillary to anything. It is the characteristic act of man, made possible by the once-for-all act of Him who alone was truly man.

It is because of the never-ceasing ministry of Christ the High Priest on behalf of the whole creation before God the Father, and because of the presence of the Spirit in the Church, that we can share in this High Priestly ministry of prayer. It is as we share in it that we become more and more conformed to the image of God. And the closer we conform, so much more the "joy of freedom" becomes a reality. What does modern man secretly yearn for, more than this joy of freedom? All his pursuits in life are oriented towards joy and freedom, but he pursues pleasure instead of joy, and emancipation instead of true freedom. Pleasure crumbles in the hand into the ash of boredom. Emancipation achieved becomes a new burden of loneliness and guilt.

[1] The hesychasts were a group of 14th cent. Eastern Orthodox monks who propagated a system of meditation for attaining tranquillity of body and mind and arriving at a vision of the Uncreated Light of the Godhead.

The joy of freedom consists thus in two elements, both integrally related to worship and prayer:

(a) God's grace in Jesus Christ has given us *free access* into the presence of the Father through the Spirit without being hampered by our sin. This boldness of access is the first aspect of freedom. It is like the "freedom of the city of London", for example. The freedom of the sons of God is first the possibility of intimate communion with God, directly, face to face, in Christ, in eucharistic worship and in personal prayer. It is a joyous experience of deliverance from guilt and anxiety about possible condemnation.

(b) Secondly, the joy of freedom consists in the possibility of *sharing in God's continuous creation* of the universe. In prayer we share with God our understanding of which way the course of history, both personal and social, should go. Our desires when guided by the creative Spirit are often accepted by God as an expression of the freedom which he has granted to the creation. Often they may be corrected and sometimes over-ruled; for the understanding and the desires of man have to grow in dialogue with the wise and loving desires of God, through the continuing activity of the Holy Spirit in the Church. That which makes art and science, literature and technology, politics and economics, teaching and healing truly creative is this dialogue with the love and wisdom of God. It happens even in non-Christians and atheists in unconscious communion with the depths of reality, through the creator Spirit who works in creation from its beginning. The Christian, however, should be able to be in *conscious* communion with God. Genuine creativity even in non-Christians is a foretaste of the joy of freedom available to the sons of God. Too many Christians, however, prefer the yoke of bondage and the dullness of passivity, and learn neither to pray nor to create.

It is the presence of the Holy Spirit, through whom we are incorporated into Christ and live in Him, that banishes anxiety and guilt, grants us confident and joyous access into the loving presence of God, and forms in us the creativity of freedom, by which we shape the world in the direction of God's glory.

But how do we learn to pray? And what do we pray for? The disciples of our Lord soon discovered that part of the Master's power lay in His life of prayer. They secretly yearned to share in this power and went to Him saying "Master, teach us to pray." And the prayer He taught them answers more our latter question than the former. The Lord's prayer tells us more about content than about "technique",

more about "what" than about "how". Modern man, with all his newly acquired techniques, seems to be losing that truly human "technique" of prayer. No book can teach that technique. There are no comprehensive "Teach Yourself" books on prayer. Only a master of prayer, in a community of prayer, can transmit that technique to others. We shall not be able to say much about that technique in this book either. But the technique of prayer is inseparable from the content of prayer. And the Lord's Prayer gives some clear indications on both technique and content.

(a) *Intimacy of relation*

The address "Our Father in heaven" (*ābūn debeshmayo* in Aramaic) seems a liturgical elaboration of what our Lord actually taught, which was probably just "Father" (*abba*) as it appears in the Lukan text.[1] This intimacy of address is characteristic of Christian prayer. The combination of awe and freedom of access comes from the awareness of holiness and grace co-existing in God. The joy of freedom lies precisely in this awareness of the awesome grace that invites us to call Him Father, and to approach him with boldness (*parrhesia* in the New Testament).

Parrhesia[2] in the New Testament generally denotes the lack of shyness or obstruction or deceit or fear in the relation between man and man or between God and man. In Ephesians 3: 10–12, we are told that God's will is that the many-sided wisdom of God be made known to the "principalities and powers in the heavenlies" *through the Church.* This wisdom is the *sôdh*[3] of God, the eternal plan of God. We are now invited to share in this mystery, by boldly coming into God's presence as children and sharing in His administration of the Universe. It is an act of faith, made possible by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ: "according

[1] Most of the significant early manuscripts, i.e. Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Vulgate and the Sinai Syriac manuscript. See also Mark 14: 36, Rom. 8: 15 and Gal. 4: 6.

[2] The word is primarily of Johannine and Pauline provenance: John 7: 4, 13; 10: 24; 11: 14; 16: 25; 18: 20; 1 John 2: 28; 3: 21; 4: 17; 5: 14; 2 Cor 3: 12; 7: 4; Eph 3: 12; 6: 19; Phil. 1: 20; Col. 2: 15; I Tim. 3: 13; Philem. 8.

It occurs also several times in Acts and Hebrews as well as in Mark: Acts 2: 29; 4: 13, 29; 28: 31; Heb. 3: 6; 4: 16; 10: 19, 35; Mark 8: 32.

[3] *Sôdh* is an Aramaic word, meaning council, and derivatively the plans developed in council, known only to those initiated into the Council. This Aramaic usage lies behind St. Paul's usage of the Greek word *mysterion*, according to Fr. Raymond E. Brown, The Pre-Christian Semitic Concept of Mystery, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, xx, 1958, Number 4, pp. 417–43.

to His (God's) eternal purpose which He has fulfilled in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have *parrhesia* and access with confidence because of his faith". (Eph. 3: 11-12.)

Prayer and worship are the most characteristic expression of *parrhesia*, which itself is a privilege of sonship. *Parrhesia* is the immediate consequence of the coming of the Spirit, and a true mark of the joy of freedom.

(b) *Conformity with the will and purpose of God for the world*

The first three petitions of the Lord's prayer are for the fulfilment of God's purposes on earth in history. The clause, "as in heaven, so on earth", applies to all the three petitions: "Thy name be holy", "Thy Kingdom come", and "Thy will be done". The realm of time-space, placed now under the domain of man, is a realm where God can be denied and His purposes thwarted. God's name can be desecrated and blasphemed here, both in the actions of those who bear that name and in the words and thoughts of those who hear that name. The Kingdom does not come into that realm by arbitrary force, but through the prayer and action of man in freedom. And the primary orientation of Christian prayer is towards that coming of the Kingdom, that growing conformity of God's visible name on earth to the Holiness of His person, to His will becoming the will also of the created order in its freedom.

Prayer goes astray when it is ultimately focused on gaining immediate ends for ourselves—however noble and "spiritual" those ends may be. In the history of Christian spirituality, both East and West, there have often been serious deviations in this basic orientation of prayer. Prayer directed either to the Beatific Vision or to the realization of union with God has often been the hallmark of monastic spirituality.

The present writer can in no wise presume to pass judgment on the piety of our forefathers. He finds himself unable even to condemn off-hand the "pietism" of earlier generations of Western Christians. Yet he cannot help feeling that the times in which we are placed are calling for a new spirituality the like of which past ages have not fully known. It is the spirituality of the personal life of Jesus Christ Himself. It blends prayer and action into a holy love that is both burning and creative. It burns out sham and hypocrisy, falsehood and pretension, confusion and evil. It challenges and tantalizes, it draws and leads on, but never arrives at the goal where one can rest. It taunts the reason and yet deepens the vision of the mind. It does not give the final

answers, but still shows the way. It builds up. It causes man to grow. It creates community. It constantly challenges our notions of God, and our highest estimates of our own possibilities.

But it is not a spirituality where the transcendent is denied or the world ignored. It is a spirituality which, in St. Paul's words, views reality no longer "after the flesh", i.e. in its purely external manifestations. The eye of man is opened to the hidden and surprising richness of that which is not seen (2 Cor. 4: 18). He learns to view the world in the light of its "unseen" or unobvious meaning. He gradually grows in intimacy with a Personal God who cannot be located in time and space, and is at the same time in control of every point of that time and space. He understands more and more deeply the purposes of God for His creation, and yearns that that purpose be fulfilled: Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done. But the will and purpose of God for His creation are not entirely pre-determined. At every point of time and space, man is called upon to shape that will and purpose of God. History is a continuous shaping of the world by man, though he is never in control of the whole process. Prayer is a form of cooperating in that historical decision-making and acting. We are to aspire and pray for that which is best according to our knowledge of God's will, for that time and place. And prayer changes the course of history, just as much as the decisions of a Napoleon or the shape of Cleopatra's nose (which latter was probably not the consequence of a human decision).

Communities that know God intimately, as well as individuals within it, are to pray earnestly, in terms both of the general and perennial needs of humanity and of what the morning's newspaper or our neighbour's plight brings to mind. These prayers are expressions of the freedom of man, and do affect the shape of things just as much as technology or urbanization. The new spirituality demands from the Christian the maturity of intimacy with God combined with a deep and prayerful awareness of the perennial as well as particular needs of the world in which he lives.

(c) *The double focus of prayer*

Prayer first desires that God's purposes may be fulfilled. The first three petitions of the Lord's prayer are all for God's name, God's Kingdom and God's will. The second part, however, speaks of *our* (not *my*) needs as the Church, proleptically standing for the whole

human race. The prayers are for daily bread, for forgiveness of sins, and for deliverance from temptations and the power of the evil one.

We can do no less in our time. We must express with all yearning and full earnestness our desire that God's name would be hallowed by all (it is blasphemed by many today), that His reign may come, and that His will may be done, in the whole universe. That is the primary focus. If we begin our prayers with our own petitions or intercessions we are slightly distorting their character. For no intercession has Christian validity unless it is closely bound to the desire that the will of God be done.

But the secondary focus is just as important. We need to give content to the three aspects of our petitions outlined in the second half of the Lord's prayer. To pray for "daily food" seems unreal to those living in an affluent society. But if they would only extend their consciousness to the whole human race, the prayer then takes on a grim reality. If we can hold up in prayer the millions who have to starve in our modern world where we have such highly developed techniques of production and distribution, then prayer is no longer empty and unreal. To pray for forgiveness also takes on a new sense, when we take the "we" seriously. "Our" trespasses, as nations, as Churches, as groups, as families are too grim to recapitulate in our minds without a considerable measure of self-loathing. And have we, as nations, churches, groups or families, forgiven others? That by itself can bring a dimension of reality to prayer. What we are praying for is a world community where forgiveness is a reality—starting with ourselves. To pray God not to lead us into temptation, seems unreal. On the one hand God does not lead men into temptation as St. James says.[1] Besides, does not *peirasmos* actually mean testing? Is it not good for man to be tested and tried, so that he may come forth as pure gold? Does not the Psalmist ask us to praise God for having tested us?[2]

Some New Testament scholars have sought to resolve this problem by suggesting that the *peirasmos* refers to the eschatological temptation (such as is described in the Apocalypse)[3]. Here our more sophisticated modern understanding of eschatology can perhaps help. The "end time" is a time of testing, of coming to grips with evil, not in fear

[1] James 1: 13.

[2] Psalm 66: 7–9.

[3] Revelation 3: 10 speaks explicitly about Christ's promise to "keep" the Church of Philadelphia from "the hour of *peirasmos*" which is to come on the whole world.

and anxiety, but in the courage of faith and martyrdom. Since we are already living in the end time, we need not be afraid of coming to grips with the powers of evil. But no personal security was guaranteed either to Christ or to His disciples when they faced the enemy. They knew very well that the immediate issue would be the cross and death. But out of that cross and that death came the triumph of the resurrection. In our time we can do no less.

We do not, as some say in these days, walk into the trenches of evil knowing that Christ is Victor, and that the principalities and powers will crumble like the walls of Jericho at our approach. That kind of triumphalist optimism has no basis in the Scriptures. Light-headed ridiculing of the defeated powers cannot bring about their downfall. The fight against evil in our time is still mortal combat. If one goes into it with too much self-confidence, one will have either like Peter to learn the painful lesson that one cannot trust in one's own faith, or else succumb and be lost like Judas.

But if testing is our vocation in the end time, then why pray God not to lead us into it? Is this a counsel of quietism, which Christ Himself did not follow? Is this not, in a sense, a prayer for a life of "disengagement" and non-involvement? Should we pray for "a quiet life and a happy end" or a cross-bearing life of struggle against the powers of evil which may end rather "unhappily" in apparent failure and defeat? The answer again is in Christ's own example. He did not pray for a life of ease and comfort. But in the last moment, when the "hour" of testing had actually come, He prayed exactly as He taught us to pray: "Father, all things are possible unto thee; remove this cup from me; howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt"[1]. The synoptists at least represent Christ as really praying that He may not be "led into the testing". We can never know whether we shall be able to come out victorious on the basis of our own capacities. There are at least three ways in which one can come out of such severe tests in life—as Christ, as Peter, or as Judas. Christ prayed not only for Himself being delivered from testing. He prayed certainly for Peter[2] and presumably for Judas as well. But the results were different in all three cases.

The Lord's prayer warns us against any easy-going optimism on the part of Christians. The prayer not to be led into temptation is a necessary part of Christian prayer today. We cannot stand on our own strength. Testing comes to all, and the issue is not assured. The freedom

[1] Mark 14: 36. [2] Luke 22: 32.

of man precludes that kind of *non posse peccare*[1] even in Christian man. And we should live and pray, not only with the assured "joy of freedom" but also with the awe and fear of the testing and the judgment which come to us every day. This last petition therefore is central to the content of prayer. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." Life is not an ordinary game. It is a game where to lose is to lose oneself. And so along with the joy of freedom goes this acute tension and wholesome fear, which do not allow us to underestimate the power of the evil one, and of the principalities and powers through which he operates. This last petition is thus a call to eschatological vigilance, such as Christ Himself had to exercise during His last days on earth.

The Christian tradition of prayer is replete with an intense awareness not merely of the last judgment, but of the severe testing to which we are now subject in our pilgrimage. The life of prayer is thus a life of tension, of vigilance, of alertness. It is neither complacent nor easy-going. Prayer is hard work, like keeping your eyes open when you are drowsy. It can never become totally spontaneous or mechanically automatic. It is a discipline to be learned, a technique to be mastered.

It is in this struggle against "the sin which does so easily beset us" that the joy of freedom grows. Prayer is both a gift and a task. It is only by developing the strength of our wills that we can learn to pray. At Gethsemane, Peter and John could not keep their eyes open. It took no effort for them to fall asleep. But Christ prayed with such agony that His sweat was like drops of blood. And when He came back to Peter and John they were "sleeping for sorrow".[2] Sleep can be an escape. Prayer is wrestling. It takes courage, discipline and skill. This is the kind of vigilant prayer that the fourth century monks developed, and which saved a triumphalist Byzantine Church from death and decay. Today we need a new kind of monastic community where a new form of intense spiritual discipline of prayer can be developed. Only thus can the blunt edges of the Church's eucharistic worship be sharpened, and fresh blood pumped into its anaemic arteries. Only by an authentic spiritual discipline that takes this world seriously can the "world come of age" begin again to heed the Gospel, and see in it once again the transcendent power of God.

The joy of freedom in this world is thus in suffering and struggle, and not in comfort and ease. Freedom means the inner man's refusal to

[1] not able to sin. [2] Luke 22: 45.

be swept along by the stream of biological evolution, and to be able to stand and swim against the current when necessary. If this were to be made easy, painless and spontaneous, then what grows would not be freedom. The grace of God is not incompatible with this freedom. For freedom is not primarily from a static bondage to sin, but rather from being swept along by the stream of biological evolution, which is what St Paul calls "living according to the flesh". Man is called to be responsible for shaping his own being, which he cannot do without his knowing himself and his environment and being willing to change both, and having the power to do so. If he does not exercise this responsibility he descends to the level of animals which are formed and moulded by the forces operating in the stream of biological evolution.

To be free, therefore, means to have the possibility of not being at the mercy of these forces, biological, instinctive, psychological and social. This is what St. Paul means by "not being conformed to this age" in Romans 12: 2. In order to be free from being swept along by the turbulent stream, one needs a place to stand, which has to be within that stream, but yet is not swept along by it. This is Jesus Christ and His body. The grace of God appeared in sending Jesus Christ and in making provision for us to be incorporated into Him by the Spirit.

This standing place and our being called to stand there belong to the grace of God. But standing is not enough. God desires that, living in the confident awareness of His steadfast love and continuing grace, we should exercise our vocation to transform ourselves and our environment. "Be ye transformed by the renewal of your mind," says St. Paul. This renewal of the mind is a matter of prayer, worship, study, reflection, and disciplined obedience, all within the community. It is a continuous process which demands a strong and disciplined effort from us.

It is this exercise of the gift of freedom that really makes it come alive and produce joy. We have been granted access to the Father in the Son through the Holy Spirit. But we have to enter and live in that presence by the same Spirit. The joy does not come spontaneously from the gift. The Spirit respects our freedom and does not force us to pray unless we want to. Only when the privilege of entry into the presence is utilized, both individually and as a community, does the joy of freedom well up in our lives and become a contagion of "joy to the world" spread by transfigured lives.

Worship and prayer are part of the exercise of our freedom. We

can be delivered from evil, and be kept from falling in temptation, only if we pray and worship. But prayer and worship do not go with the easy-going mood, or the love of comfort so characteristic of our time. Modern man must also be willing to exercise his freedom to live in the "strenuous mood" and accept the "tough discipline" of prayer and worship. There is no use complaining about the meaninglessness of prayer, if we expect prayer to come spontaneously and automatically. But it is not only a question of our will and our discipline. The Holy Spirit, by whom we have been anointed to be kings and priests, waits in eager longing to help us in our infirmities, in order that we may grow into the fullness of that kingship and that priesthood. The gifts of the Spirit are there in the Church for all, but not the same gifts. Prayer too is such a gift. It is given to all; but some are given a special ministry of prayer and intercession, a closer intimacy with God. But no one has it without disciplined cultivation.

The joy of freedom is open to all men. It is God's great gift. Yet to accept it is to accept also a great responsibility. If we do not accept the gift and the accompanying responsibility of living as God's children, we perish. If we accept it, joy becomes real, anguish and suffering become transformed; boredom is banished, being gets a basis; life receives both a goal and a source of power; history itself is transfigured. But, still more important, God's name is hallowed; His Kingdom comes, and His will is done.

So be it, Lord.

CONCLUSION

WE HAVE SEEN that modern man has really not been emancipated from the need to worship. He becomes stunted in his growth and distorted in his person if he refuses or neglects to worship. Worship, however, has a dimension that is not contained by time and space, and goes beyond our conceptual and rational faculties. It needs to involve man's whole person. It implies a measure of union with God and fellowmen. And all union demands a willingness to sacrifice, at least in part, one's own self-identity and autonomy. Worship transcends the time-world, and brings us into relation with the transcendent. The meaning of human existence is impoverished without the experience of this transcendence.

Eastern worship, as an act of the total Body of Christ through the Holy Spirit, has many of the elements of worship which man needs at all times and everywhere. It has lagged behind in some ways, but can become, even in its present stagnant state, an inspiration for the renewal of worship.

Worship and prayer are the most characteristic acts of the redeemed humanity. Neither education through other means nor service to fellow-men can be a substitute for worship and prayer. But worship is integrally related to the pastoral ministry of care for one's neighbours. In exercising both we become kings and priests with Christ. This is the mark of true sonship, and therefore true humanity. True freedom is freedom to enter God's presence and to share in His rule over the creation. This freedom brings joy—that joy for which modern man is hungry.

INDEX

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