

THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION IN THE WORK OF PIUS PARSCH
WITH AN OUTLOOK TOWARDS THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL'S
CONSTITUTION ON THE SACRED LITURGY

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ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Apostolicam Actuositatem
AAS	Acta Apostolicae Sedis
AG	Ad Gentes
AMATECA	Associazione di Manuali di Teologia Cattolica
ASS	Acta Sanctae Sedis
CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church
CIC	Codex Iuris Canonici (The Code of Canon Law)
CiW	Der Christ in der Welt. Eine Enzyklopädie
EA	Erbe und Auftrag
GIRM	General Instructions of the Roman Missal
GrEnt	Der große Entschluss
HID	Heiliger Dienst
LG	Lumen Gentium
LQF	Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen
LThK	Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche
NDB	Neue Deutsche Biographie
NCE	New Catholic Encyclopaedia
PPSt	Pius-Parsch-Studien
RCIA	Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults
SC	Sacrosanctum Concilium
SPPI	Schriften des Pius-Parsch-Instituts

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. Context of Pius Parsch

The twentieth century has been remarkable for an enormous increase of interest in the Church's liturgy. The interest has shown itself in two ways: both of them valuable and necessary. The first way was concerned above all with theory; it consists in the study of the liturgy as it is, in research concerning its original development, in establishment of its authentic texts, in discovery of the exact meaning of its prayers and rites, and in the exposition of the wealth of its symbolism. This is the scholarly approach. The second way is concerned above all with practice; it consists in using the liturgy as a means of the apostolate, in helping the people to understand it and to take part in it, in thus enabling them to live the very life of the Church as expressed in her prayers and sacred rites. This is the pastoral approach.¹ A person who can be undoubtedly called a pioneer in this approach was the Augustinian Canon, Pius Parsch of Klosterneuburg, Austria. He stressed the importance of grasping the spirit of the liturgy and leading the people to an active participation in it based on their common priesthood, rooted in the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. Parsch had the people in focus. He wished a liturgy and liturgical renewal movement oriented towards the people.² In order to make the liturgy more relevant and meaningful to the people he employed various creative methods that enabled them to be aware and be conscious of what they are really doing. His aim was to bring the liturgy close to the people and to make it a people's celebration, which leads them to a life in fullness.

2. Theme of the Dissertation

Christian life has its beginning in the encounter of the human person with the risen Christ, leading to conversion of heart and sacramental insertion into the Paschal Mystery of his death and resurrection. This happens through the participation in the

¹ Cf. C. Howell, Introduction, in: P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, trans., C. Howell, London 1957, vii-x, here vii. This book is the English translation of the 3rd edition of Parsch's "Messerkklärung im Geist der liturgischen Erneuerung", published in 1950.

² The liturgy propagated by Parsch is known as the "Volksliturgie", translated and used in this dissertation as "Popular Liturgy". The liturgical movement initiated by him is the "Volksliturgische Bewegung", translated and applied here as "Popular Liturgical Movement".

sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.³ Pius Parsch sees the sacraments as the sources of grace. Each of the seven sacraments, in virtue of its institution by Christ, stands at the service of the divine life of grace. They are the channels through which the life of grace flows from God through His Church to her members. Therefore, the sacraments are visible signs through which God communicates this free gift of grace to His people. Parsch stresses the necessity of nurturing the divine life of grace through the instrumentality of the sacraments.⁴ This research highlights the person of Pius Parsch and his theology of the sacraments in general and in particular his teaching and understanding of the sacraments of initiation with an outlook towards the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.

3. Structure of the Work

This dissertation consists of three main parts, which are divided into six chapters. The first part of the work comprises two chapters. The first chapter of the first part is a biography of Pius Parsch. It highlights specially Parsch's making of an Apostle of Popular Liturgical Movement and his ardent love for liturgy and Bible. It also throws a glance at the emergence and characteristics of the Popular Liturgical Movement and its minimal programme. The second chapter of the first part exposes Parsch's teaching and understanding of the sacraments in general, giving an overall view of all seven sacraments, their theology and effects. Since the theme of grace is a prominent feature of Parsch's writings and teachings, this chapter also gives a glimpse of his understanding of grace, accenting the influence of Matthias Joseph Scheeben on Parsch. Besides this chapter also portrays Parsch's perceptions of popular devotion.

The second part of the dissertation deals with the sacraments of initiation. This part is divided into three chapters. The first chapter discusses Parsch's understanding of the sacrament of Baptism and highlights its theology and effects. This chapter also places a special emphasis on the common priesthood of the faithful and the incorporation of Christian into the Mystical body of Christ, bringing in the forefront

³ Cf. P. Puthanangady, et al., *Baptism and Confirmation* (Indian Theological Series 3), Bangalore 2006, xiii.

⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt: Wortverkündigung im Geiste der liturgischen Erneuerung*, vol. 6: *Das Kirchenjahr im Lichte der Gnade*, Klosterneuburg 1952, 323; cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance: Vortrag, gehalten am 1. Deutschen liturgischen Kongress in Frankfurt am Main am 22. 6. 1950*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/1950), 329-340, here 334.

the influence of Pope Pius XII's encyclical *Mystici Corporis* on Pius Parsch. The second chapter of the second part deals with the sacrament of Confirmation, spotlighting its theology and effects. It also traces the synopsis of the reforms of the rites of this sacrament in the Second Vatican Council and in the Apostolic Constitution of Pope Paul VI's *Divinae Consortium Naturae*. The third chapter is a discourse on the sacrament of Eucharist, foregrounding its theology and consequences. This chapter deals in an elaborate way with the theme of active participation, a slogan, propagated by Pius Parsch and his Popular Liturgical Movement. It also briefs the application of practical measures for the promotion of active participation in the liturgy by Pius Parsch.

The third part is an outlook. It deals with the concerns of Pius Parsch, which were taken up in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. It gives a preview of the context of the Second Vatican Council and the factors leading to the composition of *Sacrosanctum concilium*. This chapter likewise contextualises Pius Parsch in the 20th century Liturgical Movement leading to the Second Vatican Council. It particularly discusses the parallelism found in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy and in the writings of Pius Parsch. This chapter ends with a personal evaluation by the author.

4. Scope, Methodology and Sources of the Study

In writing this thesis I have made an attempt to read Pius Parsch systematically and tried to expose the structural principles of his thought. In doing so, I have assayed to disclose his thoughts as impartially as possible. As for the sources of the work concerned I have relied mostly on the primary sources; original books and articles of Pius Parsch available in German. Since some of his main works are translated into English (see in Bibliography), I have also made use of them both for quotations and references (indicated in the respective footnotes). The secondary sources used in this dissertation are from the studies, works and articles on Pius Parsch by various authors. Besides, there are bibliographies of church documents and books and articles in general, pertaining to the theme of the dissertation. The Scripture quotations, references and abbreviations contained herein are from *The New Revised Standard Version*, published by Theological Publications of India, Bangalore 1997.

One could study Parsch in a much wider way. However, here I have limited myself and have made an attempt to understand his perceptions on the sacraments in his religious milieu and present him in the context of 20th century Liturgical Movement and especially as the forerunner of the Second Vatican Council.

PART ONE

**PIUS PARSCH: A PROFILE AND HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE
SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL**

CHAPTER ONE

PIUS PARSCH: AN APOSTLE OF POPULAR LITURGICAL MOVEMENT

The name of Pius Parsch belongs to the truly great figures of the twentieth-century Liturgical Movement, which finally resulted in the reforming decrees of the Second Vatican Council in 1962-1965. He is therefore, a significant figure for the world church. His contribution to the Liturgical Renewal Movement is remarkable and unforgettable. Through his lifework Parsch has become one of the symbolic figures of liturgical and biblical renewal. His name was like a ‘programme’ in the early part of the 20th century.¹ He was a priest, doctor of theology and professor, who has made the name of the monastery and city of Klosterneuburg known in the whole of catholic world.

This being the first chapter of my dissertation, I would like to highlight the person, life, and work of this great liturgical reformer from Klosterneuburg and the impulses and incentives that contributed and led him to become one of the leading pioneers of the Liturgical and Biblical Movement of the 20th century.

1.1. Pius Parsch’s Childhood and Way to Priesthood

Parsch was born on May 18th, 1884 at Neustift, Olmütz, Moravia. His parents were Franz Xaver Parsch and Maria Parsch. He received the baptismal name Johann (Johannes Bruno).² He spent his childhood and youth in a religious family. As a young boy he showed signs of religiosity by serving as an altar boy in the church. Parsch spent most of his holidays with his paternal uncle, Johann Sebastian Parsch, who was a priest. Parsch’s association with him must have created in him an inclination to clerical life and liturgy.³ Adding to that, during his high school years he had the opportunity to come into contact with priests and theologians. In his

¹ Cf. N. Höslinger und Th. Maas-Ewerd, Vorwort, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit: Pius Parsch und die biblisch-liturgische Erneuerung (SPPI 4)*, ed., N. Höslinger und Th. Maas-Ewerd, Klosterneuburg 1979, 7-9.

² Cf. J. Zabel, *Pius Parsch: Wegbereiter der liturgischen Erneuerung*, 3rd ed., Königstein 1970, 12; cf. R. Pacik, Parsch, Pius, in: *NDB*, vol. 20, Berlin 200, 74-75; cf. R. Pacik, Pius Parsch (1884-1954), in: *Gottesdienst als Feld theologischer Wissenschaft im 20. Jahrhundert: Deutschsprachige Liturgiewissenschaft in Einzelporträts (LQF 98)*, ed., B. Kranemann und K. Raschzok, vol. 2, Münster 2011, 886-900, here 886. This article will be hereafter mentioned as: R. Pacik, Pius Parsch (1884-1954), in: *LQF 98*, vol. 2.

³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie: Ihr Sinn und Umfang*, Klosterneuburg 1940, 11-12; cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Lebenslauf von Pius Johann Parsch*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 16-18; cf. J. Zabel, Pius Parsch, 13; cf. R. Pacik, Pius Parsch (1884-1954), in: *LQF 98*, vol.2, 886-900, here 886.

schooldays he was considered an “outsider” and people knew that Parsch would dedicate his life to priesthood. The call to priesthood was very evident in him since childhood. After his schooling and graduation, he joined the Augustinian Canons at Klosterneuburg, near Vienna, on August 28th, 1904.⁴

1.2. Parsch’s Early Inclination to Liturgy

Parsch received the religious name Pius after the newly elected Pope Pius X. He was inspired by this great pastor pope and was grateful to him for his incitements on “active participation”⁵ in the liturgy, the cogitations on the frequent Holy Communion⁶ and his suggestion of making the Bible available to the people.⁷ As a novice he was pious, sincere and hardworking. At the very beginning of his vocation to the monastery, the first signs of his later life’s work, the Bible and the Liturgy, became evident. His first encounter with the liturgy made a deep impression upon him. After the first few days of his entry into the monastery Parsch asked for a commentary on the psalms from the library, because it was intolerable for him to say the psalms without understanding them. Thus a particular fondness and interest in the breviary took hold of him at once. In the course of his theological studies this fondness increased so much that he resolved to write a commentary on the breviary.⁸ Parsch also began to read the Bible zealously and became very fond of it. In 1905 a commentary on Psalms in five volumes appeared named ‘*Psallite Sapienter*’ by Maurus Wolter⁹. Parsch read it with a strong craving.¹⁰ He says: “Ich entsinne mich,

⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 11-12; cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Lebenslauf von Pius Johann Parsch*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 16-18; cf. Th. Warnung and Th. Schnitzler, *In memoriam Pii Parsch: Daten aus seinem Leben*, in: *LJ* 4 (1954), 230-236, here 230.

⁵ The expression “active participation” first appears in Pius X’s *Motu Proprio Tra le Sollicitudini* promulgated on 22nd November, 1903. This is an instruction on the Sacred Music. In this *Motu Proprio* the pope uses for the first time the expression “active participation”. Cf. *ASS* 36 (1903/04), 329-339. Parsch was fascinated by this great reform pope and he included this expression in his liturgical work.

⁶ The decree *Sacra Tridentina Synodus*, promulgated on 20 December 1905, issued and approved by Pope Pius X stressed the importance of frequent and daily reception of the Holy Communion. Pius X encouraged and promoted the daily reception of the Holy Communion. Cf. *ASS* 38 (1905/06), 400-405. This was an inspiration for Pius Parsch and he valued the frequent and daily Communion as an integral part of the liturgy.

⁷ Cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Lebenslauf von Pius Johann Parsch*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 18.

⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 12; cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Lebenslauf von Pius Parsch*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 19-20.

⁹ Maurus Wolter (1825-1890), was born in 1825 at Bonn and was ordained priest in 1850. In 1857 he was professed as a Benedictine monk in Rome. He, then along with his brother Placidus returned to Germany and re-founded Beuron. As its first abbot Maurus promoted the liturgy, Gregorian chant, art, science and parochial work, modelling his efforts of those of Dom Guéranger. Between 1871 and 1890 Wolter published a five volume explanation of the psalm, *Psallite Sapienter* (Sing Psalm

dass ich das Buch mit einem wahren Heißhunger verschlungen habe.“¹¹ Alongside of the breviary, the ecclesiastical year fascinated him too. After his ordination to priesthood he bought the work of Prosper Guéranger¹² named ‘Das Kirchenjahr’¹³. Parsch read and studied this work time and again. This also served as a basis for his later liturgical works.¹⁴ From the very beginning of his life at Klosterneuburg he was a dashing protagonist of the frequent and daily Holy Communion.¹⁵ This clearly shows his aptitude for liturgy. The Decree on the Frequent and Daily Holy Communion created dissension among Parsch and his spiritual father and confreres, who could not understand the new practice of frequent and daily communion.¹⁶

Parsch completed his theological studies at Klosterneuburg. He was ordained in 1909. The back side of his ordination souvenir shows an extract from the Decree on

Wisely). Cf. V. Fiala, Wolter, Maurus, in: New Catholic Encyclopaedia (NCE), 2nd ed., vol. 14, 811-812; cf. J. R. K Fenwick and B. D. Spinks, *Worship in Transition: The Twentieth Century Liturgical Movement*, Norwich 1995, 20-21; S. Petzolt, Maurus Wolter: Ein Leben im Geist der Liturgie, in: EA 66 (1990), 349-359. Reading and studying this commentary enabled Parsch to deepen his understanding of the psalms.

¹⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 12; cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Lebenslauf von Pius Parsch*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 19-20; cf. A. Schwab, *In Memoriam Pius Parsch: Ein Leben für die Liturgie*, in: *HID* 8 (1954), 37-38, here 37; cf. J. Zabel, *Pius Parsch*, 13-14; cf. A. Ruff, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform: Treasures and Transformations*, Chicago 2007, 229-230.

¹¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 12.

¹² Prosper Louis Pascal Guéranger (1805-1875), vies with Lambert Beauduin for the title ‘Father of the Liturgical Movement’. It was Guéranger himself who first used the expression “liturgical movement” to describe the revival of liturgical studies and the growing interest in understanding and improving liturgical practice. In his time, his monastery at Solesmes served as a kind of showcase for the proper celebration of the Mass and Divine Office and as a workshop for the pursuit of liturgical scholarship. Guéranger did not ignore the faith of the laypersons. He believed that they should be shaped and strengthened by the sacraments. According to him the spiritual heart of Christian life was the liturgical prayer of the Church, the Mass and the Divine Office. He advocated a return to the liturgy as the true source of spiritual life. He believed that people needed the liturgy and the liturgy needed the whole people of God to celebrate it. Cf. M. Kwatera, *Prosper Guéranger: Founder of the Modern Liturgical Movement*, in: *How Firm a Foundation: Leaders of the Liturgical Movement*, ed., R. L. Tuzik, Chicago 1990, 17-22, here 17-18; cf. M. Ducey, *Guéranger, Prosper*, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 6, 557.

¹³ Originally written in French, the first volume of Guéranger’s work, *L’Annee liturgique* (The Liturgical Year) was published in 1841. This series was later translated into English and other languages. The work, original in form and structure, is a 5,000 – page meditative commentary on the texts and prayers of the Mass and the Divine Office for each day of the year. Guéranger’s purpose in these volumes was to deepen comprehension of liturgical texts, especially the scriptures, which he saw as the chief requirement of renewed participation. Cf. M. Kwatera, *Prosper Guéranger*, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 17-22, here 20. For Pius Parsch this work was an inspiration and it served as basis for his later liturgical works.

¹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 12-13.

¹⁵ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 13; cf. R. Pacik, „Aktive Teilnahme“ – zentraler Begriff in Pius Parschs Werk, in: *Pius Parsch in der liturgiewissenschaftlichen Rezeption: Klosterneuburger Symposion 2004* (PPSt 3), ed., W. Bachler, R. Pacik and A. Redtenbacher, Würzburg 2005, 31-52, here 31.

¹⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 13; cf. F. Kolbe, *Die liturgische Bewegung* (CiW 9,4), Aschaffenburg 1964, 51; cf. A. Ruff, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform*, 230.

Frequent and Daily Reception of Holy Communion.¹⁷ Once again it was a clear sign of his inclination to liturgy. Since there were enough priests in Klosterneuburg, he was immediately sent to a parish in the capital city, and for four years he remained there as an assistant pastor at Maria Treu, Vienna. At that time he organized and founded a student union. Meanwhile he received his doctorate in theology. Parsch's liturgical preferences were put entirely in the background. In those first few years of his priesthood he did not learn how to direct a single activity which could awaken an interest in the liturgy.¹⁸ He says about this period, "Ich war ganz und gar Seelsorger."¹⁹ During that time he spent a lot of time at the confessional every day and dedicated himself to various associations. Parsch took special interest in propagating the idea of frequent Holy Communion and spent time on spiritual direction. He had a special love for children and he worked with great enthusiasm and love for the people. He also maintained correspondence with his spiritual children. About his pastoral life during this period, he was content like a fish in the water.²⁰

Four years later, Parsch was called back to his monastery in 1913. He had to choose between the chair of pastoral theology and that of the New Testament at the monastery's theological school. Since he liked parish work, Parsch chose pastoral theology, which he even regretted later on in his life.²¹ Along with that, he was expected to help in the training of the novices. Here again his old love for liturgy awoke. In the classes for the novices Parsch occupied himself with the explanation of the psalms and the breviary. This activity did not last long since the World War I (1914-1918) broke out. The war did not keep him at home however; he volunteered for chaplain duty at the front. His wish was granted in May, 1915. Parsch went to a front line regiment and remained with it as its chaplain until the end of the war.²²

¹⁷ Cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Lebenslauf von Pius Johann Parsch*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 20.

¹⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 13; cf. Th. Warnung and Th. Schnitzler, *In memoriam Pii Parsch*, in: *LJ* 4 (1954), 230-236, here 230-231.

¹⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 13.

²⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

²¹ Cf. P. Parsch *Volksliturgie* 1940, 13; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51) 73-76, here 73; cf. *Die Methode der Bibelstunde*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 257-261, 289-293, 324-330, 353-358, here 258; cf. R. Pacik, *Pius Parsch (1884-1954)*, in: *LQF* 98, vol. 2., 886-900, here 886-887.

²² Cf. P. Parsch *Volksliturgie* 1940, 13-14; cf. R. Pacik, *Pius Parsch (1884-1954)*, in: *LQF* 98, vol. 2, 886-900, here 886-887; cf. Th. Warnung and Th. Schnitzler, *In memoriam Pii Parsch*, in: *LJ* 4 (1954), 230-236, here 231.

1.3. Parsch as Army Chaplain: A Turning Point in His Life

This period was very decisive in Parsch's life and work as a liturgist. In his association with officers, soldiers and other men he acquired knowledge of man. Parsch learned to know the mind of the ordinary individual and his need for religion.²³ Pre-war parish life had been weak and soft. He had little understanding about the people and situation. His own ideas matured in caring for souls during the war. He realized that the men need stronger fare than that which the often sugary piety of pre-war days could offer them. Thus, the way was paved for new ideas which were joined to the two sources, the Bible and Liturgy.²⁴ Parsch said about that remarkable time, "during the first World War I spent four years at the front as the chaplain. It was in the course of this work that I began to realize the importance of Bible for both priests and lay folk. I realized too how important it was that the people should learn to understand the liturgy and take an intelligent part in it."²⁵ He added, "Diese Zeit war für mich überaus lehrreich."²⁶

In the battlefield, Parsch came into direct contact with the Bible and the liturgy. After the first year, when there were so many troop-movements, his regiment took up a position in the Carpathians, where they encamped for the winter. Thus he had plenty of free time. One day, the thought that he knew nothing at all of the life of the Lord and Saviour was weighing heavily on his mind. At once, he had a commentary on the Gospels sent from home, and then he avidly began to investigate the life of Jesus. A harmony of the Gospels hung before him, and so through study he came closer to the Gospels.²⁷ He said to himself, "Da ist ein Mangel für Priester und Volk, dass sie von der Hl. Schrift so wenig wissen und verstehen."²⁸ Again Parsch's love for the

²³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 13-14; cf. F. Röhrig, *Pius Parsch und die biblisch-liturgische Erneuerung im historischen Kontext*, in: *Pius Parsch in der liturgiewissenschaftlichen Rezeption*, 19-26, here 21.

²⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 14.

²⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, trans., H. E. Winstone, New York 1963, 7. This book is the English translation of "Die liturgische Predigt", vol. 6, by Pius Parsch, published in 1952.

²⁶ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 14.

²⁷ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 14; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 73-76, here 74; cf. *Die Methode der Bibelstunde*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 257-261, 289-293, 324-330, 353-358, here 293; cf. *Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 321-324, here 321; cf. J. Zabel, *Pius Parsch*, 19.

²⁸ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 14; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 73-76, here 74; cf. *Die Methode der Bibelstunde*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 257-261, 289-293, 324-330, 353-358, here 293; cf. *Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 321-324, here 321; cf. P. Parsch, *Wie halte ich Bibelstunde*, *Klosterneuburg* 1951, 45-46.

breviary and the psalms appeared. Just at that time the new Psalter of Pope Pius X had been introduced. He now began a commentary on it, a liturgical explanation of the psalms of each of the Hours.²⁹

And then a third interest arose. Parsch often said Mass for the soldiers, at times for the whole division, as well as for a small group, and for the sick and wounded. He found it distressing that the soldiers understood nothing of the Mass.³⁰ On the other hand, when Russia collapsed in 1917 he and his unit were stationed successively in Galicia and Bukowina and finally in Kiev; in all these places Parsch was surprised by the churches of oriental rite; there the people took an active and intelligent part in their liturgy and their whole spiritual life seemed to be founded upon it.³¹ This was what made him realize the importance of Pius X's phrase about "active participation in the liturgy" as being the "primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit". Thereupon, another idea struck him which of course, matured only after several years: the active participation of the laity in divine worship. Thus he became an apostle of "active participation".³²

In the battle field, Parsch initiated various creative methods to make the liturgy more active and meaningful to the soldiers. At some occasions he let one another priest to celebrate the Mass and at the same time, he himself taking the role of a commentator or a prayer leader explained the Mass in the form of prayers to the soldiers. And what was later known as the *Gemeinschaftsmesse*³³, had already been celebrated by him with the soldiers during that period.³⁴ Another important factor that influenced and inspired him at that time was his meeting and association with the great Ethnologist, Wilhelm Schmidt³⁵ SVD. Schmidt shared with Parsch the fine idea of printing out

²⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 14-15.

³⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 15.

³¹ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 15; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, viii.

³² Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, viii.

³³ Hereafter mentioned as Congregational Mass.

³⁴ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 15; cf. R. Pacik, *Volksgesang im Gottesdienst: Der Gesang bei der Messe in der Liturgischen Bewegung von Klosterneuburg* (SPPI 2), Klosterneuburg 1977, 12; cf. R. Pacik, Pius Parsch (1884-1954), in: *LQF* 98, vol. 2, 886-900, here 889.

³⁵ Wilhelm Schmidt (1868-1954) resolved to become a foreign missionary, and he joined the Society of the Divine Word, studying at the Gymnasium in Steyl, Holland and at St. Gabriel Mission Seminary, Mödling near Vienna. After his ordination in 1892, he studied linguistics in Berlin and then taught languages and ethnology at St. Gabriel. There, in 1906, he founded the *Anthropos Institut* and the journal *Anthropos*, which continues to give preference to manuscripts submitted by missionaries. In 1918 he was appointed professor of ethnology and science of religion at the University of Vienna. Cf. M. Gusinde, Schmidt, Wilhelm, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 12, 744. In the First World War Schmidt too served as military chaplain. It was during this time Parsch came into association with him. Winfried

and distributing the mass texts of Sundays and feast days among the people.³⁶ This was to enhance the active and meaningful participation of the people in the liturgy. Because the majority of the people hardly knew what was really taking place in the Holy Mass. And this idea came into a realisation and a reality in the post-war period when the mass leaflets were brought out for the first time at Easter in 1919.³⁷

1.4. The Post-War Period and the Glorious Time of Popular Liturgical Movement

Although the war had come to an inglorious end, Parsch came back with a rich booty; there are two goals of his life's work which were of far reaching importance to the entire Catholic Church: 'to make the Bible a book of the people, and to guide Catholics to an active participation in the liturgy.'³⁸ In mid-November 1918 he returned to his monastery. There he was not given much time to adjust himself. Again he took over the task of teaching pastoral theology and instructing the novices. He also soon found a matching of minds. With the novices he at once conducted a Bible class on the life of Jesus, and then a class on the explanation of the breviary, especially the Psalter. Thus he was enabled to make the clear observation that the simple Bible class by far gave the young men the greatest pleasure. Then he started a Bible class for the laity too, dwelling particularly on the life of Jesus, and soon afterwards began an explanation of the Mass.³⁹

In 1921 Parsch got a big recognition for his work when he was appointed as the commissioner of examinations in the department of New Testament at the Theological Faculty of the University of Vienna by the then Archbishop of Vienna, Friedrich Gustav Piffl and when he was invited once a month to conduct classes on

Glade gives an account of the association of Parsch with Wilhelm Schmidt in his article "Pius Parsch and Wilhelm Schmidt SVD". Cf. W. Glade, Pius Parsch and Wilhelm Schmidt SVD, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 273-278.

³⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 15-16; cf. A. Schwab, *In Memoriam Pius Parsch*, in: *HID* 8 (1954), 37-38, here 37.

³⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 4 (1929/30) 501-509, here 501; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 14-16; cf. F. Kolbe, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 51.

³⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 16; cf. R. Pacik, *Pius Parsch (1884-1954)*, in: *LQF* 98, vol. 2, 886-900, here 887. Original: "Ich hatte eine reiche Beute aus dem Kriege nach Hause gebracht. Zwei Erkenntnisse, die mich noch heute beglücken: Die Bibel muss wieder Volks- und Priesterbuch werden und das Volk muss seinen Kult verstehen und aktiv vollziehen. Das war für uns Christen die Siegesbeute aus dem verlorenen Kriege." P. Parsch, *Wo stehen wir?*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 1-4, here 1.

³⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 16.

breviary for the priests in Vienna.⁴⁰ Here too, he had the opportunity to shape, mould and develop his two slogans “Bible and Liturgy”.⁴¹ It was about that time when he heard of a *missa recitata*,⁴² which was held in student circles. He decided to hold the first Mass with the active participation of the whole congregation with his lay group. His wish was materialised at the feast of the in 1922, when he celebrated the Congregational Mass (which they named “liturgical Mass”) with the people in the liturgical community of St. Gertrude.⁴³ Since that time, such “liturgical” Masses were often celebrated and were by degrees perfected. This set up for him years of liturgical missionary work. In some twenty churches of Vienna he held liturgical weeks, in which he explained the Mass and then eventually conducted the congregational Mass.⁴⁴

This was when the so-called Popular Liturgical Movement began, of which Parsch can be called one of its important originators. It was not only the reorganization of the celebration of the Holy Mass, but also the renewal of the entire religious life.⁴⁵ Parsch celebrated the Holy Week and the Easter as the most important season of the liturgical year. In order to make it meaningful and understandable to the people he got the texts of the liturgy printed adding his own personal explanations and reflections. He was encouraged to do so because the people hardly understood anything although they had the opportunity to take part in the prayers with the Canons in Klosterneuburg, which was recited in Latin. So he made the text available to the people to enhance an active and meaningful participation in the prayers that they recited.⁴⁶ Adding to that came the publication from Parsch in a line known as the ‘Liturgische Perlen für das Volk’ in 1923. They are: The Divine Service of the Holy Night, the Trilogy of the Holy Week, the Liturgy of the Feast of Easter, the Liturgy of the Corpus Christi and the Church’s Morning and Night prayers.⁴⁷

⁴⁰ Cf. N. Höslinger, Der Lebenslauf von Pius Parsch, in: Mit sanfter Zähigkeit, 13-78, here 39.

⁴¹ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴² *Missa recitata* or Dialogue Mass is a Low Mass, in which the people recited some parts of the Latin Text of the Tridentine Mass. Cf. F. Kolbe, Die liturgische Bewegung, 52.

⁴³ Cf. P. Parsch, Volksliturgie 1940, 18; cf. F. Kolbe, Die liturgische Bewegung, 51; A. Ruff, Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform, 231. We shall discuss more about it in the chapter “The Sacrament of Eucharist”.

⁴⁴ Cf. N. Höslinger, Der Lebenslauf von Pius Parsch, in: Mit sanfter Zähigkeit, 13-78, here 40.

⁴⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 39-40.

⁴⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, 39-42.

⁴⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

Another important initiative came from his journey to Germany in 1929. This trip was very significant in his life as a liturgist. He took up this journey because he wanted to get informed in which way the liturgy was conducted beyond Klosterneuburg. Besides, he wanted to come into contact with various personalities who engaged themselves in various liturgical works and activities. He also desired to visit various abbeys in which liturgy was celebrated in greater perfection.⁴⁸ With this intention in mind Parsch undertook his liturgical journey and visited various places and met important personalities of that time who in one way or other were associated with the liturgical renewal: e.g., he met Odo Casel⁴⁹, the founder of the Theology of mystery⁵⁰, in Herstelle; Abbot Ildefons Herwegen⁵¹ in Maria Laach⁵²; Romano

⁴⁸ Cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Lebenslauf von Pius Parsch*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 50-51.

⁴⁹ Dom Odo Casel (1886-1948) was born on September 27, 1886, in Koblenz-Lützel in western Germany. After preparatory schools, he attended the University of Bonn. There he came to know Ildefons Herwegen, monk at Maria Laach, through whose influence Casel was to embrace the monastic life. After his philosophical and theological studies, he was ordained a priest in 1911. Cf. P. Malloy, *Odo Casel: Theologian of the Mystery*, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 50-57, here 51. Casel earned doctoral degrees in both theology and philology. He was spiritual director for the Benedictine sisters at Herstelle from 1922 until his death in 1948. He attained prominence as a liturgical scholar through his editorship of the *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft*. His special achievement, however, was to bring out the meaning of liturgy as a celebration of the mysteries of Christ and His Church; the ritual and sacramental deed of the Church makes present Christ's act of salvation. He obtained his first insights from the liturgy and the Fathers of the Church; but he took formal elements also from the history of religions, which, especially the Hellenistic mystery cults were a sort of preparation for Christ. Cf. B. Neunheuser, *Casel, Odo*, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 3, 202; cf. P. Volk, *Casel, Odo*, in: *NDB*, vol. 3, 164; cf. A. A. Häußling, *Odo Casel OSB (1886-1948)*, in: *LQF* 98, vol. 1, 236-241.

⁵⁰ Casel called his system *Mysterientheologie*, mystery-theology. It attempted to explain how the divine is present in Christian worship: in Casel's terms, the "mystery-in-the-present", the *Mysteriengegenwart*. Drawing from the witness of both the early Church and Hellenistic religious traditions, Casel proposed that in the liturgy, the mystery of Christ (which is Christ himself) actually is made present again. This mystery is not simply grace, nor a memory of Christ in the minds of believers, nor in the case of the Eucharist only the presence of Christ in the bread and wine. Rather, Christ's historical life as well as his glorified life is made present for the liturgical assembly, which can experience its impact anew. He was satisfied with asserting, on the basis of his understanding of Scripture, tradition and liturgical writings, that Christ is present in his historical and glorified reality in the liturgy. By celebration the Church's rites, including the Liturgy of the Hours and sacramentals, contemporary Christians transcend time and are brought into transformative contact with Christ. Because Jesus' life reached its culmination in the paschal mystery: his passion, death, resurrection; it is in these events that the Church especially knows him in its common prayer. Cf. P. Malloy, *Odo Casel: Theologian of the Mystery*, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 50-57, here 52. For him, the *mysterium* is a holy, cultic action in which the redemptive act is rendered present in the rite; since the cultic community accomplishes the rite, it participates in the saving act and through it attains redemption. Cf. O. Casel, *Das Christliche Kultmysterium*, ed., B. Neunheuser, Regensburg 1960, 10.

⁵¹ Ildefons Herwegen (1874-1946) was an ardent supporter of liturgical movement. With his election in 1913, as 44th abbot of Maria Laach, he was able to enlist the full force of his monastic community and thus became the revered head of the movement toward liturgical renewal. Cf. H. A. Reinhold, *Herwegen, Ildefons*, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 6, 809. During his years a number of scholarly publications were begun at Maria Laach which gradually contributed to changing the understanding among clergy and educated laity. In 1928 Herwegen himself published two pamphlets on the basic tenets of the Liturgical Movement: *Kirche und Seele* and *Christliche Kunst und Mysterium*. In these works he argued that Christianity is not essentially a doctrine, but a life, the life of Christ in the baptized Christian. When the Church celebrates the Divine Mysteries, it participates in the saving work of

Guardini⁵³ and Johannes Pinsk⁵⁴ in Berlin. This liturgical journey has enabled him to learn how the liturgy was being celebrated in various parts of Germany and which steps they had taken towards the liturgical renewal. This was also an eye opener for Parsch. From this trip he gathered lot of incentives and many at time he was impressed by the progress made in the liturgical renewal, in making the liturgy meaningful and relevant to the people.⁵⁵ After the completion of his journey he was able to remark happily, “Unser Streben und unser Weg ist der richtige. Wir können manches lernen: die Form beachten. [...] Dem Choral sollen wir innerhalb der Grenzen, die wir uns gesteckt haben, größere Aufmerksamkeit widmen. Wir bleiben bei unseren deutschen Gesängen.”⁵⁶ Many remarkable achievements in the practical order stand to the credit of Parsch. He is likely to be remembered best for his

Christ. He was critical of the subjective individualistic piety, which he traced to the Middle Ages, challenging the prevailing idea that the Middle Ages was an ideal age. Cf. J. R. K. Fenwick and B. D. Spinks, *Worship in Transition*, 26-27.

⁵² The abbey Maria Laach is a Benedictine Foundation in the Rhineland, near Andernach, West Germany. It was founded in 1093 by Count Palatine Henry II and his wife. Under abbot Herwegen, this abbey became a centre of the liturgical reform. Besides liturgical studies, have appeared studies in Benedictine history, hymnology and art. Since 1948 scholarship has been concentrated in the Abbot Herwegen Institute for Liturgical and Monastic Research. Cf. E. von Severus, *Maria Laach, Abbey of*, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 9, 152-153. Pius Parsch was greatly influenced by the developments at Maria Laach, so much that he acknowledged himself to be “a pupil of Maria Laach”. Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 4 (1929/30) 501-509, here 507; cf. R. Pacik, *Volksgesang im Gottesdienst*, 12.

⁵³ Romano Guardini (1885-1986) was a philosopher of the Christian world view and prolific writer on theological topic. Guardini’s eminence among leaders and inspirers of Catholic renewal in the years between the two World Wars started in 1918 with the publication of *The Spirit of the Liturgy*. *The Church and the Catholic* soon followed, (1923), introduced by words for which he has become famous: “A religious process for incalculable importance has begun – the Church is coming to life in the souls of men”. In German speaking lands there is no one who deserves more to be called a precursor of Vatican Council II. His influence was enormous, not only through his university position in Berlin, but above all by reason of inspiration he gave to the vigorous German Catholic Youth Movement as a chaplain of the *Quickborn*. His writings include works on meditation, education, literary figures such as Dante and Rilke, art, philosophy and theology. Cf. P. Minser, *Guardini, Romano*, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 6, 550.

⁵⁴ Johannes Pinsk (1891-1957), through his contact with Benedictine Abbey Maria Laach during the time of abbot Herwegen, became one of the leading protagonists of the Liturgical Movement in Germany. He was also greatly influenced by the Mystery-theology of Odo Casel. “Pinsk bemühte sich um eine an der Alten Kirche orientierte, vertiefte und auf das für ihn Wesentliche konzentrierte Sichtweise der Liturgie: um eine aktive Partizipation der Gläubigen am Leben des pneumatisch gegenwärtigen, erhöhten Christus“. Cf. K. Unterburger, *Pinsk, Johannes*, in: *NDB*, vol. 20, 458.

⁵⁵ Cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Lebenslauf von Pius Parsch*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 50-51.

⁵⁶ P. Parsch (Nachlass), *Meine Deutschlandsreise* [maschinschriftliches Manuskript nach einer stenographischen Mitschrift von Paula Höfer], Klosterneuburg 1929, 8; cf. R. Pacik, *Volksgesang im Gottesdienst*, 211.

development of a certain form of communal public Mass called the Betsingmesse (pray-sing-mass).⁵⁷

1.5. The Time of National Socialism

With the reign of National Socialism (1938-1945) the spiritual activities were limited to Mass alone. In 1941 the monastery of Klosterneuburg was seized by the despots of the Third Reich and expropriated. The choir-monks had to go into exile. The publishing work had to be given up, and the modern printing presses were destroyed. Parsch went into a workers' parish in Vienna (Floridsdorf), where he remained for five years and worked for the parish. Still, from Floridsdorf he went to Klosterneuburg on Sundays in order to celebrate the liturgy there. When the bombs fell on Vienna, the industrial district of Floridsdorf was badly hit. His own house was demolished. For a year and a half Parsch lived in the tower of the church. In September 1946 he returned to his monastery, which had been restored to the monks. Now, once again he could resume his literary and liturgical work. At the college he taught New Testament and no more pastoral theology. After World War II he dedicated his time mostly to Bible.⁵⁸

1.6. The Last Days of Parsch

In 1950 Parsch's speech on 'Christliche Renaissance'⁵⁹ at the Liturgical Congress in Frankfurt on the Main he once again revealed the two aims to which he had dedicated his vitality and vigour. His first aim was to bring the cult of the Church closer to the ordinary people and thereby make possible their active participation in the liturgy. And the second aim was to place the Bible into the hands of the faithful.⁶⁰ Unfortunately, Parsch could not experience the liturgy constitution of the Second Vatican Council. The Eucharistic Congress in Barcelona (1952)⁶¹ lead his way to his

⁵⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, Wo steht unsere Bewegung Ende 1937?, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 12 (1937/38), 168-172, here 170; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, ix; cf. F. Kolbe, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 52. About the Betsingmesse we shall discuss in detail in the chapter on "The Sacrament of Eucharist".

⁵⁸ Cf. B. J. Krawczyk, *Der Laie in Liturgie und Theologie bei Pius Parsch (PPSt 6)*, Würzburg 2007, 22-23. Markus Bitter gives a detailed description about Parsch's life in the parish of Floridsdorf. Cf. M. Bittner, *Parsch in einer Großstadtpfarre (1941-1946)*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 194-198.

⁵⁹ This talk was published in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340.

⁶⁰ Cf. F. Kolbe, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 53.

Parsch was invited to the Eucharistic Congress at Barcelona, which took place from May 27th to June 1st in 1952. The theme of the Congress was "Die Eucharistie und der Friede". Cf. P. Parsch, *Meine Eindrücke vom Eucharistischen Kongress in Barcelona*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 306-310,

death. Due to his years long overburdened work he was suffering from high blood pressure. The long difficult journey to Barcelona and the scorching heat of the south caused a stroke. Thereafter, he did not recover from his ailment. He died on March 11th, 1954 in Klosterneuburg. He was buried at the cemetery of Klosterneuburg. Later his corpse was taken to St. Gertrude and buried there.⁶² Though Parsch died ten years before the Second Vatican Council, no doubt many of his ideas found realisation in this great Council.

1.7. The Characteristics of the Liturgical Movement that Came Forth from Klosterneuburg

The liturgy, the public worship of the Church, which in early times set the rhythm of Christian devotion, was put further and further in the background in favour of private and lay devotion in the Middle Ages. Hence, subjectivism and individualism in the religious life of Catholics came strongly to the forefront. All too much leeway was given to human action in opposition to the operation of divine grace. So the liturgical worship languished more and more and finally became a function of the priest and the people gave themselves to private devotion during the liturgy and in place of it.⁶³

Pius X, the great Pope of the liturgical reform, was the first to take cognizance of this anomalous situation. He is the father of the liturgical revival which set in after the war. The movement first caught fire in Belgium⁶⁴. In Germany it was in the abbeys of Maria Laach and Beuron, that the idea was ardently taken up. It appealed primarily to the academicians and intellectuals, for whom a whole new world was unfolded and made accessible.⁶⁵ Up to that time, however, the movement had one

here 307. At this Congress Parsch gave a talk under the title "Schenke allen, denen du den Glauben gabst, auch den Frieden". This talk is given in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 310-317.

⁶² Cf. J. Zabel, Pius Parsch, 74-75; cf. Th. Warnung and Th. Schnitzler, In memoriam Pii Parsch, in: *LJ* 4 (1954), 230-236, here 232.

⁶³ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 25; cf. J. Zabel, Pius Parsch, 32.

⁶⁴ The Belgian movement, spearheaded by Lambert Beauduin (1873-1960), is known principally for its pastoral focus. Beauduin had been a labour chaplain with the *Aumôniers du Travail* as a diocesan priest in Liège, and was deeply influenced by the workers whom he served and their social problems. Even prior to his association with the *Aumôniers*, he was known for his strong social consciousness and his compassion for the downtrodden. In 1906 he left labour chaplaincy and diocese, and entered the monastery of Mont César, where he came into contact with the Irish Benedictine *Colomba Marmion*. Both monks saw liturgical prayer as foundational to their monastic life and shared a deep love for the liturgy of the hours. The official beginning of the Liturgical Movement in Belgium is usually traced to September of 1909, during the National Congress of Catholic Works at Malines. Cf. K. F. Pecklers, *Liturgical Movement*, I: Catholic, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 8, 670-676, here 672.

⁶⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 25.

weakness: it was still very intellectual, that is it confined itself to explaining the liturgy. Cultured Catholics were indoctrinated in the spirit of the liturgy; they learned to understand the text and were qualified to assist at the solemn rites of the abbeys, however without themselves being permitted to participate.⁶⁶

From Klosterneuburg came forth the second impulse. The people – the ordinary people – ought likewise to be included in the movement. And then there was a most important axiom which the abbeys had left completely out of account, inscribed upon the banner: the active participation of the laity in the liturgy. The faithful should be present at worship not like “silent spectators”⁶⁷, but should actively enter into the liturgy and play the role in it that was meant for them.⁶⁸ At Klosterneuburg the liturgy was seen from the point view of the laity and it studied the role that they could play as to make the participation in the liturgy active and meaningful. So, there was a great emphasis of using the vernacular in the liturgy and not only Latin alone. This was the particular aspect of the liturgical revival as it went forth from Klosterneuburg.⁶⁹

The Popular Liturgical Movement concerned itself, first of all, with the Mass, and it looked for all possible ways of bringing the laity into its celebration. The laity was to realize that much in the Mass had become set and fossilized. The movement recognized the fact that the instruction part of the Fore-Mass had almost completely lost its purpose of bringing the Word of God to the hearer. It realized that the laity was almost entirely left out of consideration and was represented by the choir and the mass servers. The movement even had to wage a campaign in order to distribute the Holy Communion to the faithful in the Mass.⁷⁰ The Popular Liturgical Movement then came to three types of Congregational Masses: the Mass recited in unison (gesprochene Chormesse), the Mass sung in unison (Betsingmesse), and the High

⁶⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 25.

⁶⁷ It is an extract from the apostolic constitution *‘Divini Cultus Sanctitatem’* issued by Pope Pius XI on the 20th December, 1928. Through this apostolic constitution on the liturgy, Pope Pius XI appeals for the promotion of the Gregorian chant and the church music for an active participation in the liturgy. The pope observes that it is most important that when the faithful assist at the sacred ceremonies, or when pious sodalities take part with the clergy in a procession, they should not be merely detached and silent spectators, but, filled with a deep sense of the beauty of the liturgy, they should sing alternately with the clergy or the choir, as it is prescribed. Cf. AAS 21 (1969), 33-41.

⁶⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 4 (1929/30) 501-509, here 505; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 25-26.

⁶⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 26.

⁷⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 27-28.

Mass sung by the congregation (deutsches Hochamt⁷¹). The Mass sung in unison is the popular type, which should be the parish Mass of the people; the solemn Congregational Mass doubtlessly comes close to the classic liturgy.⁷²

The Popular Liturgical Movement included not only the Holy Mass alone in its programme, but also the ecclesiastical year with its seasons and feasts, with procession and custom; the parish, the church with its altar, organ, baptismal font, the sacraments, the canonical hours with their psalms and readings: all these have been brought in the scope of the movement, enhancing and aiming at the active participation of the people.⁷³ A new type of piety developed: whose traces originated in the early Church. The Middle Ages and modern times preferred impetuous devotion and the fear of sin, while the early Church lived its devotion, proceeding from grace.⁷⁴

1.8. The Minimal Programme of the Popular Liturgical Movement

As the pioneer of the Popular Liturgical Movement, Parsch had a definite programme for his movement. He set certain goals and aims. He prioritized them and aimed at achieving them in the course of time. This he termed as the ‘minimal programme’. About the minimal programme of the Popular Liturgical Movement Parsch said:

Das Programm enthält also nicht das, was wir uns als Ideal ersehnen, nicht die volle Lösung unserer Fragen und Bestrebungen, sondern den Anfang, Teillösungen, die Abstellung der ärgsten Verstöße gegen das liturgische Empfinden, die ersten Wartesteine, auf denen dann weitergebaut werden kann.⁷⁵

The minimal programme of the Popular Liturgical Movement could be summarized in the following eight points:

1. The Mass as a communal sacrifice and sacrificial meal: the celebration of the community masses with people’s active participation in it; the distribution of

⁷¹ This form of mass was celebrated with Latin or German Ordinarium and German Proprium (the priest and his assistant meanwhile prayed their respective parts in Latin). It is a kind of re-built form of *Missa recitata*; whose hymnal part will be sung and not only recited by the choir. Besides this, there was also a modest – entire or greater part recited form. Cf. R. Pacik, *Aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *HID* 58 (2004) 122-132, here 127.

⁷² Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 27-28.

⁷³ Cf. *ibid.*, 28.

⁷⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 28.

⁷⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 57.

Holy Communion within the Mass; fewer Requiems; and the elimination of non-liturgical devotions and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament during the Mass.

2. Revival of sacraments and sacramental life: the administration of the sacrament of Baptism in the church with the parish community; the decentralisation of the administration of the sacrament of Confirmation in the parish churches, instead of those days existing practice of administering it in the Cathedrals; the diligent administration of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and the celebration of the sacrament of Marriage at the nuptial mass with the nuptial blessing.
3. Preaching at the service and in the spirit of the liturgy: preaching and instructions aiming at the liturgical upbringing; accurate and diligent instructions on the Mass; proclamation of the gospel in vernacular on Sundays and feast days; homily as the integral part of the mass; religious instructions and liturgical lessons outside the church building; introduction to the liturgy by the minister on the eve of Sundays and feast days; religious lessons and catechism for the upbringing of the youth.
4. Restructuring of the afternoon devotions: popular devotions instead of benedictions; the praying of the divine offices, especially vesper and compline with the faithful; the enlivening of the afternoon devotions with the readings from the Bible and from the life of the saints.
5. Parish as a lively family: building up of a lively parish community under the fatherhood of the priest rather than forming many associations and mechanizing organisations.
6. Dignity of the place of worship: treating the church as the home of the parish community and place of sacrifice and not as a museum of pictures and statues; all the religious articles including the vestments and ministers conforming to this dignity.
7. Fostering of liturgical singings: singing as primarily the work of the entire community and not only of the choir; a schola for leading and organizing the singings and choral training for the choir leader.

8. The promotion of the objective and theocentric piety among Christians instead of subjective and individual pieties and devotions.⁷⁶

1.9. Institutions of the Popular Liturgical Work

In order to promote the popular liturgical work, two institutions were established in Klosterneuburg, which at the same time complemented each other: the Popular Liturgical Apostolate and the Liturgical Community of St. Gertrude. The former was an institute that included a publishing house and an advisory board for the popular liturgical work. The latter institution was a catholic fellowship which endeavoured to carry out the popular liturgical revival in a practical way. Theory and practice thus went together. The Popular Liturgical Apostolate studied the method, and provided texts and auxiliary material; the Liturgical Community of St. Gertrude was the training school, as it were it was expected to put into practice what the Liturgical Apostolate taught.⁷⁷ Let us discuss them in detail.

1.9.1. The Popular Liturgical Apostolate

The more Parsch preached and lectured the more he studied. Soon he began to write. He was convinced that, if the people were to understand and take part in liturgical services they had to be provided with practicable and intelligible texts. Hence many booklets with the words, music and sometimes commentaries, appeared from his pen. He wrote articles explaining the principles underlying his methods to other priests. The articles gained widespread popularity throughout Austria and also spread into Germany. Parsch was fortunate in that his superiors appreciated the importance of his work and actively encouraged him by putting the needed resources at his disposal.⁷⁸ Thus he was able to start an organizing and publishing centre known as the Volksliturgisches Apostolat⁷⁹ in 1928.⁸⁰ This name, “Popular Liturgical Apostolate”, clearly announced Parsch’s main purpose: It was not for research, neither for

⁷⁶ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 58-65; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Mindestprogramm der volksliturgischen Bewegung* (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 13), Klosterneuburg [n.d.], 2-5; cf. J. Zabel, *Pius Parsch*, 50; cf. A. Ruff, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform*, 233. It is to be noted that the minimal programme of Pius Parsch represented his own liturgical convictions. Throughout his life he tried to achieve these goals.

⁷⁷ Cf. J. Zabel, *Pius Parsch*, 39.

⁷⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, viii.

⁷⁹ Since 1969 this institution has been known as ‘Pius-Parsch-Institute’. Cf. R. Pacik, *Parsch, Pius*, in: *NDB*, vol. 20, 74-75 here 75.

⁸⁰ P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, viii.

monastic nor academic liturgical forms, much less for liturgical reform.⁸¹ His energy was spent in an apostolate for the Christian people to bring them to both interior and exterior participation in the liturgy. First and foremost, people had to be provided with suitable liturgical texts. In order to reach this goal, Parsch produced a host of booklets containing the words and music and sometimes commentaries for the services.⁸² He published numerous explanations of the liturgy, articles, brochures and even full-scale books dealing with the biblical and liturgical movements which, to his mind, were simply different facets of the same apostolate. All of this made his monastery a liturgical centre of Austria and all German-speaking countries.⁸³ In the beginning, Parsch was the sole authority of the publication; he was the author, publisher, forwarder and packer. But in the course of time he had employees and co-workers at his disposal.⁸⁴

The Popular Liturgical Apostolate has grown from an insignificant beginning to become a noteworthy institute. Here are two proofs from this publishing house, two columns upon which it rests: the Mass Leaflets and the Klosterneuburg Liturgical Calendar. The Mass leaflets were sixteen page booklets, which contain the Mass of the day with both the proper and the common parts. Millions of these leaflets were distributed and have helped countless Catholics to understand the Mass and the ecclesiastical year.⁸⁵

The Liturgical Calendar, which is originally called “Jahr des Heiles”, was a sign-post through the ecclesiastical year. In 1923 it appeared as a small directory; since then it has gone out year after year in ever larger editions and in ever greater size. Finally, it became a perpetual Calendar, which ran through all the phases of the Church's year and drew from every liturgical source. More than 200,000 copies of this work have been distributed.⁸⁶ This book has served as a daily companion for unnumbered priests and lay people. Bishops state that it lies upon their prie-dieu for daily meditation. Convents use it for table reading. To the missionaries in pagan lands it is a book of consolation. It has been translated into many languages. It was the only

⁸¹ Cf. M. Kwatera, Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 30.

⁸² Cf. *ibid.*

⁸³ P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, viii; cf. M. Kwatera, Pius Parsch, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 30.

⁸⁴ Cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Lebenslauf von Pius Parsch*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 48.

⁸⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 30; cf. J. Zabel, Pius Parsch, 39-40.

⁸⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 30.

book of its kind in the world. Besides, the publication made an effort to make available all liturgical text of the Mass, breviary and other rituals to the people to enhance their vibrant participation in the liturgy.⁸⁷

Parsch founded a periodical entitled “Bibel und Liturgie” in 1926, a practical pastoral journal intended chiefly for priests. “Bibel und Liturgie” is a professional liturgical journal. From the start this liturgical journal has also been a biblical journal. In 1928 he published a weekly paper called “Lebe mit der Kirche”, another popular liturgical journal intended chiefly for the laity.⁸⁸ This small booklet helped the propagation of liturgical prayers and life among the people. Adding to that there were other publications named “Kirchliche Wandzeitung”, an illustrated wallpaper meant for the passers-by and “Liturgische Jugend”, a liturgical periodical for the children.⁸⁹

The Popular Liturgical Apostolate was not merely a publishing house, but an institute for liturgical life, celebration, liturgical art, and a place of study and discussion. It also served the purpose of conducting courses, conferences, liturgical weeks. Other works of Parsch that have helped to propagate the Popular Liturgical Movement were: “Die Liturgische Predigt”, proclamation of the word in spirit of the liturgical renewal, in 10 volumes; “Meßerklärung”, explanation of the liturgy; “Lernet die Messe verstehen”, a popular explanation on mass; “Breviererklärung”, explanation of the breviary; “Volksliturgie”, the programme book of the renewal movement in two editions; “Das Leben Jesu”, an excellent helper for the Bible classes; “Laien-Rituale” and “Meßsingbuch”. All these and more publications of Parsch have still great relevance and significance to priests and laity.⁹⁰ “Bibel and Liturgie”, a journal which has appeared since 1926 still belongs to the leading Liturgical Journals of the German speaking area.⁹¹

1.9.2. The Liturgical Community of St. Gertrude

The cradle of the Popular Liturgical Movement, led by Pius Parsch, was the small chapel of St. Gertrude, where the Liturgical Community has held its services since 1922. Here, all that the Popular Liturgical Apostolate has striven for has been tried

⁸⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 30.

⁸⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 4 (1929/30) 501-509, here 505; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 3.

⁸⁹ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 31.

⁹⁰ Cf. J. Zabel, *Pius Parsch*, 42.

⁹¹ Cf. *ibid.*

out. Each Sundays and holidays, divine worship has been celebrated with the active participation of the laity. The canonical hours have been prayed with the people.⁹² The Holy Week, the Easter services and other feasts have been carried out liturgically here. Priests came from all the parts of the globe and the lay people came here to study the possibility of the liturgy for the laity. And there were no division on the basis of social status and occupation. All were treated equal; there was no distinction between academics and workers, employers and employees.⁹³ It was the concern of this Liturgical Community to make a sincere effort to celebrate the liturgical year with all its solemnities and feast days, actively and meaningfully. Christmas and Easter vigils were observed. And also extraordinary celebrations like baptism, confirmation, marriage, altar dedication etc. were celebrated with people's active participation.⁹⁴ At the peak time, this community had around 350 members, who participated in the Bible classes, liturgical circle, the choir practices etc. They were like one heart and one soul. Not only the grown-ups who were interested in the liturgy but there was also great number of young people, who, above all, engaged themselves as mass servers and singers. At various occasions the people gathered together: in prayer, in work, in games and various other initiatives and activities. It seemed like a model and exemplary community. Thus in this community there was a spirit of oneness and belongingness among the members.⁹⁵ This beautiful development was broken up in 1938 by National Socialism.

1.10. Pius Parsch and the Bible Movement

Like other great pioneers of the liturgical movement, Parsch, too, insisted on the essential and intimate connection between liturgy and scripture. He believed that people could be brought to an understanding of the liturgy only by the knowledge of the scripture and thereby he identified the parish as the centre of liturgical renewal.⁹⁶ As discussed, Parsch's priority and first goal was making the liturgy meaningful and

⁹² Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 35; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 5), Klosterneuburg [n.d.], 9.

⁹³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 4 (1929/30) 501-509, here 508; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 35.

⁹⁴ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 39; cf. N. Höslinger, *Die Liturgische Gemeinde St. Gertrud in Klosterneuburg*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 177-185.

⁹⁵ P. Parsch, *Die Liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 4 (1929/30) 501-509, here 509; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 39; cf. N. Höslinger, *Die Liturgische Gemeinde St. Gertrud in Klosterneuburg*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 177-185, here 178-180; cf. B. J. Krawczyk, *Der Laie in Liturgie und Theologie bei Pius Parsch*, 48-49.

⁹⁶ M. Kwatara, *Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy*, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 32.

understandable to the people and leading the believers to an active participation in it. The second priority was to make the Bible the book of life for the people. To this end he started holding regular Bible classes at the Liturgical Community of St. Gertrude in Klosterneuburg from 1919.⁹⁷ Therefore, a profile on Pius Parsch remains incomplete when we do not speak about the Bible Movement. Let us see, in short, the factors that influenced and inspired Parsch to occupy himself with the Bible Movement.

1.10.1. Parsch's Way to the Bible

Parsch came in touch with the Bible when he entered the novitiate. There he had to buy the Holy Scripture for himself. In the novitiate the novices were recommended to read the Bible. So as a novice, Parsch intended to read both the Testaments of the Scripture. This had a great influence in his later life. Later on, during his theological studies, Exegesis, Hebrew and Hermeneutics, Parsch felt that, most of the time, the classes were sheer dry exegesis.⁹⁸ After the completion of his theological studies he started with his dissertation. He wrote his dissertation on the significance of Christ's death on the cross according to St. Paul.⁹⁹ The study of theology gave him the initial interest in the Bible. After the ordination during his pastoral ministry at Maria Treu in Vienna, Parsch had no touch with the Bible.¹⁰⁰

In 1917 during the World War I, at Carpathian field, where Parsch's troop encamped for the winter, a sudden thought came to his mind, "Du kennst nicht einmal die Evangelien, du kennst das Leben Jesu nicht"¹⁰¹ Parsch considered this as his vocation and immediate striving factor, which led him to the Bible Movement. Therefore, he took the New Testament and began to deepen his knowledge of it. He also asked for

⁹⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Wie halte ich Bibelstunde*, 6-7; cf. P. Parsch, *Die Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 73-76, here 73.

⁹⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Wie halte ich Bibelstunde*, 6-7; cf. P. Parsch, *Die Methode der Bibelstunde*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 257-261, 289-293, 324-330, 353-358, here 258.

⁹⁹ For a higher exegesis on the Bible, Parsch went to Prof. Pölzl in the University of Vienna. The lectures of Prof. Pölzl somehow impressed him, so much so that by the end of his theological studies he started his dissertation under his guidance. The original title of his dissertation is: "Die Bedeutung des Kreuzestodes Jesu Christi nach S. Paulus". Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Methode der Bibelstunde*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 257-261, 289-293, 324-330, 353-358, here 258; cf. N. Höslinger, *Pius Parsch und Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel heute* (Mai 1966), 17-18, here 17.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Wie halte ich Bibelstunde*, 6-7; cf. P. Parsch, *Die Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 73-76, here 73.

¹⁰¹ P. Parsch, *Wie halte ich Bibelstunde*, 8; cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here 333-334; cf. *Die Methode der Bibelstunde*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 257-261, here 258. Cf. R. Pacik, *Pius Parsch (1884-1954)*, in: *LQF* 98, vol. 2, 886-900, here 893.

a commentary on the Bible from his home. He began studying the exegesis as well as the historical reality, the life and teaching of Christ. Since Parsch had a great aptitude for pastoral ministry he immediately thought about the laity, who hardly knew anything about the Bible and the life of Jesus. So he made a resolution, which he wanted to accomplish on his return from the World War I, to conduct Bible classes for the people. On his return to the monastery in November 1918 he began to carry out his idea by conducting the Bible classes for the novices first. Soon after, beginning with May 1919, he regularly began to conduct Bible classes for the Christians of Klosterneuburg, even during World War II.¹⁰² Though many criticised and scorned him by saying that it was an enterprise of the Protestants, he continued on his way. For many people it was a sensation.¹⁰³

In order to produce a good result in the Bible classes it was important to make the Bible available in a cheaper rate. Thus, comprising both Old and New Testaments Parsch brought out a cheap comprehensive Bible for the people in 1934. It was the first of its nature in the German speaking area.¹⁰⁴ During his life time Parsch held thousands of Bible classes, out of which hundred were about the life of Jesus. Apart from the Popular Liturgical Apostolate he founded the Bible Apostolate of Klosterneuburg¹⁰⁵ in 1950. This Institute has two concrete tasks. First above all spreading and propagating Bible and secondly, take the Word of God to the people through Bible preaching, Bible classes etc. Two of his writings that served as device to the pastors and the lay people were “Wie halte ich Bibelstunde” (1951) and “Wie lerne ich Bibel lesen” (1951).¹⁰⁶

1.10.2. Relation between Bible and Liturgy

From the beginning both Liturgy and Bible went side by side in Klosterneuburg. Both complemented and permeated each other. The extension and expansion of the

¹⁰² Cf. P. Parsch, *Wie halte ich Bibelstunde*, 8-9; cf. P. Parsch, *Die Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 73; cf. R. Pacik, *Pius Parsch (1884-1954)*, in: *LQF* 98, vol. 2, 886-900, here 894.

¹⁰³ Cf. N. Höslinger, *Pius Parsch und Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel heute* (Mai 1966), 17-18, here 17.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. J. Zabel, *Pius Parsch*, 66.

¹⁰⁵ In 1966 the Bible Apostolate of Klosterneuburg was raised to Austrian Catholic Bible Work through the Bishops' Conference of Austria. Since then it has been known as the *Österreiches katholisches Bibelwerk*. Cf. R. Pacik, *Parsch, Pius*, in: *NDB*, vol. 20, 74-75 here 75.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. N. Höslinger, *Pius Parsch und Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel heute* (Mai 1966), 17-18, here 18; cf. J. Zabel, *Pius Parsch*, 72-73.

Liturgical Movement succeeded through the Bible Movement. According to Parsch the Bible Movement is the sister and the child of the liturgical movement.¹⁰⁷ From the beginning he had placed the Bible beside the Liturgy. He says “the Bible interprets what happens in the Liturgy”. The Liturgy is “memoria”, is the realization of the great deeds of God through word and action (cf. 1 Cor. 11: 26; Acts 2: 42). It is the realisation of the salvific deeds of Christ in His transformation. The Holy Eucharist is the sacrament of transformation. The aim of the Liturgy is also our transformation.¹⁰⁸ In Parsch’s opinion transfiguration takes place whenever the liturgy is celebrated. For him this is what took place at Mount Tabor at the time of Transfiguration.¹⁰⁹

To Parsch the Bible is the supplement of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the food of the soul whereas the Bible is the light of the soul. The celebration of the Word of God leads to the celebration of the Eucharist.¹¹⁰ Taking only the Bible will lead us to sectarianism, but the Bible and Liturgy together will lead us to God. To put this into his own words, “Die Bibel allein kann leicht zur Sektiererei führen, aber Bibel und Liturgie führt dich den geraden und zuverlässigen Weg zu Gott.”¹¹¹ In the Bible we hear the Word of Christ and in the Eucharist the Lord himself comes to us.¹¹² According to Parsch Bible and Liturgy disclose the real face of Christianity; therefore people should take them as two sources of their religious lives.¹¹³ Thus Bible and Liturgy became his lifelong task.

Bible and Liturgy are two God given gifts, which brought renewal to the religious life of the Christians in the 20th century. The word of God and the Bread of God, light and nourishment are the two great means of renewal of a Christian.¹¹⁴ The two sentences cited above express the firm conviction of Pius Parsch about his Bible ministry. He wanted to initiate a “Popular Bible Movement” as the great pastor pope,

¹⁰⁷ P. Parsch, Wo steht unsere Bewegung am Ende 1937?, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 12 (1937/38), 168-172, here 169.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. A. Stöger, Pius Parsch und die Bibelbewegung, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 120-154, here 134-135.

¹⁰⁹ R. Stafin, Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch: Ein neues Verhältnis zwischen Gott und dem Menschen (PPSt 2), Würzburg 2004, 48.

¹¹⁰ P. Parsch, Wie halte ich Bibelstunde, 68.

¹¹¹ P. Parsch, Die Methode der Bibelstunde, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 13-16, 33-37, 68-70, 102-104, here 70.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ R. Stafin, Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch, 48.

¹¹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, Die Methode der Bibelstunde, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 13-16, 33-37, 68-70, 102-104, here 15.

Pius X, had planned and begun.¹¹⁵ He named himself “Volksbibliker und Volksliturgiker”.¹¹⁶ He was firmly and fully convinced that his aptitude and sense of liturgy was a charisma, which he had received from God. So he was able to state, “Ich hatte vorher von Liturgie nie etwas gehört, bin auch von niemand beeinflusst worden – es war einfach da.”¹¹⁷ Through this charisma he came to the Bible and he was convinced that his interest in the Bible was a heavenly vocation.¹¹⁸ According to him the Bible is at the service of Liturgy. Liturgy should be celebrated with consciousness and with understanding. Therefore the first condition is understanding the text.¹¹⁹

1.10.3. The Bible and the Laity

According to Parsch the Bible Movement should also be a Popular Movement. To achieve this he proposes three goals. First of all, the people should own a copy of the Bible, furthermore he highly recommended a comprehensive text comprising both Old and New Testaments. And on their part the people should give due honour and respect to the holy Bible and it should find a prominent place in their houses. Secondly, the people should make an effort to read the Bible every day without negligence. Thirdly, they should be encouraged to read the Bible in their families.¹²⁰

The main concern and focus of the Bible apostolate was to make the faithful autonomous and daily readers of the word of God.¹²¹ And the ultimate aim of this apostolate was the individual independent reading of the Bible. Parsch says, “Das Endziel ist das selbstständige Lesen der Hl. Schrift.”¹²² Through this he aimed at the

¹¹⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Wie halte ich Bibelstunde*, 6; cf. A. Stöger, *Pius Parsch und die Bibelbewegung*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 120-154, here 120.

¹¹⁶ P. Parsch, „Schenke allen, denen du den Glauben gabst, auch den Frieden“, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 310-317, here 310; cf. A. Stöger, *Pius Parsch und die Bibelbewegung*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 120-154, here 120.

¹¹⁷ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 11.

¹¹⁸ P. Parsch, *Das Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 73-76, here 75.

¹¹⁹ A. Stöger, *Pius Parsch und die Bibelbewegung*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 120-154, here 121.

¹²⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 446; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Leben Jesu*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 10 (1935/36), 18-19; cf. *Stand und Aussichten der Bibelbewegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 10 (1935/36), 49-52, here 51-52.

¹²¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Wie halte ich Bibelstunde*, 18.

¹²² P. Parsch, *Das Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 73-76, here 75; cf. P. Parsch, *Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 257-259, here 257; cf. P. Parsch, *Wie halte ich Bibelstunde*, 17 and 52.

maturity of the people on account of their royal priesthood.¹²³ The people should not be tied to the priest like spoon fed babies to their mums' apron strings but they should learn to be independent and responsible for the pastoral activity and should work for the building up of God's Kingdom in the parish and in the family.¹²⁴ Here Parsch already foresees a situation where there will be a lack of sufficient priests in the parish communities, in which the people may have to take the responsibility and an active part in spreading the message of Christ.¹²⁵

In Parsch's opinion the Bible has been and will be the book of life for every Christian. The aim of the Bible ministry is "to make the Bible the book of Life for the people". According to him the Bible is the living word of the Supreme God. When we read the Bible, God stands in before us and speaks to us. The Bible is the letter of the Heavenly Father to the children abroad. It is a way of incarnation of the Son of God, who is essentially the Word of God (Logos).¹²⁶ Thus, Parsch affirmed that the Bible should be the book of life for all. He would add that the Bible must be the favourite book of the pastors. It should be their book of reading, meditation, homily and prayer. The Holy Scripture must be the great book of education, teaching and life.¹²⁷

In the Bible God speaks to men, God speaks to every individual and His words and voice are manifested in the body of the written letters in the Scripture.¹²⁸ Towards the end, Parsch himself affirms that his conducting of the Bible classes, Bible weeks etc. have enabled him to deepen his understanding of the Bible. "Früher habe ich die Hl. Schrift historisch gesehen, heute sehe ich sie wirklich gegenwärtig. Es ist nicht Paulus, der zu den Korinthern spricht, sondern es ist Gott, der zu mir spricht. Und

¹²³ Cf. P. Parsch, Die Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 73-76, here 75.

¹²⁴ Original: "Der Laie soll nicht mehr als Gängelband des Priesters gehen, er soll mitverantwortlich sein für die Seelsorge, für den Aufbau des Gottesreiches in Pfarre und Familie." P. Parsch, Die Methode der Bibelstunde, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 257-261, 289-293, 324-330, 353-358, here 293; cf. P. Parsch, Wie halte ich Bibelstunde, 21-22.

¹²⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, Die Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 73-76, here 75; cf. Die Methode der Bibelstunde, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 257-261, 289-293, 324-330, 353-358, here 293; cf. P. Parsch, Wie halte ich Bibelstunde, 21-22.

¹²⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, Die Methode der Bibelstunde, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 13-16, 33-37, 68-70, 102-104, here 15; cf. P. Parsch, Wie halte ich Bibelstunde, 51.

¹²⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, Wo steht unsere Bewegung Ende 1937, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 12 (1937/38), 168-172, here 169; cf. P. Parsch, Die Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 73-76, here 74; cf. P. Parsch, Bibelapostolat: Mit dem Klerus steht und fällt die Volksbibel, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 321-324, here 321.

¹²⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, Die Methode der Bibelstunde, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 257-261, 289-293, 324-330, 353-358, here 293.

weil Gott auf den Flügeln des Bibelwortes zu mir kommt, so muss ich Ehrfurcht haben vor dieser Heimsuchung Gottes.”¹²⁹

1.11. With Gentle Tenaciousness

Parsch knew that many years of hard mission work would be required in order to spread and execute his ideas and wishes to the popular liturgical and biblical movement.¹³⁰ Thirty years of his experience taught him that the biblical and liturgical work was not an easy task and it would proceed only very slowly. But he never gave up his venture but went ahead with confidence and patience. In order to spread the liturgical and biblical movement Parsch organized and conducted various programmes like bible classes, liturgical weeks, training programmes for the clergy, lectures, sermons, seminars etc.¹³¹ At the beginning his programmes were confined to Vienna and Austria. But later, his works made him known to the outside world so that he was often invited to preach and to hold lectures. The mass texts, scripts and books had also become famous in Germany. Between 1930 and 1938 he conducted a number of liturgical weeks, courses, conferences and lectures in various parts of Germany e.g. Breslau, Dresden, Berlin, Frankfurt on the Main, and Munich.¹³² Despite all his initiatives, ventures, hardships, oppositions and difficulties Parsch remained faithful to his slogan “Mit sanfter Zähigkeit”.¹³³

¹²⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, Die Methode der Bibelstunde, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 257-261, 289-293, 324-330, 353-358, here 293.

¹³⁰ Cf. J. Zabel, Pius Parsch, 53.

¹³¹ Cf. A. Stöger, Pius Parsch und die Bibelbewegung, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 120-154, here 128.

¹³² Cf. J. Zabel, Pius Parsch, 53-54.

¹³³ P. Parsch, Wo stehen wir? in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 1-4, here 4; cf. A. Stöger, Pius Parsch und die Bibelbewegung, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 120-154, here 128.

CHAPTER TWO

PIUS PARSCH AND THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL

That all the sacraments of the New Law were instituted by Christ is a dogma of the Church.¹ The seven sacraments touch all the stages and all the important moments of Christian life: they give birth and increase, healing and mission to the Christian's life of faith. There is a certain resemblance between the stages of natural life and the stages of the spiritual life.² Throughout history the Christians have given the seven sacraments pride of place in the Catholic Church. In the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council a double emphasis was placed on the sacraments. While the sacraments continue to be seen as bringing sanctifying grace to the individual, they are recognized as dynamic actions of the Church, which bring about and nourish the salvific relationship of Christians to God, and the world through the Church.³

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church sacraments are “powers that come forth” from the Body of Christ, who is ever-living and life-giving. In the Church, which is Christ's Body, the sacraments are actions of the Holy Spirit. They are “the masterworks of God” in the new and everlasting covenant.⁴ Sacraments originate in the person of Jesus Christ, who is considered the basic sacrament. Through the ministry of the Church they are celebrated and make it possible for Christian believers to encounter the Risen Christ. In the Christ-event God chose to communicate himself to men and women and bring them to Himself. Sacramental celebrations symbolize the Christian cult, which is meant to transform human life and achieve a union with God and other human beings. In sacramental celebration, Christians recognize what God has done for humankind in salvation history and

¹ Council of Trent: Decree on the Sacraments, in: H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* (Latin-English), P. Hünermann, ed., 43rd ed., San Francisco 2012, no. 1601. Hereafter mentioned as “Denzinger” with its respective number.

² Catechism of the Catholic Church: With Modifications from the Editio Typica, New York 1994, 1210. Hereafter cited by the abbreviated form CCC and the respective number. The Church's magisterium has never given a definition of “sacrament”. In its teaching at the Councils of Trent and Vatican II there is insistence on certain essential characteristics of “sacraments” but no authentic binding definition. Succinctly put sacraments are visible signs chosen by Christ and celebrated ritually in the community of the Church to draw the Church into an experience of Christ's paschal mystery by means of liturgical actions enacted through the power of the Holy Spirit under the agency of the Church's ordained ministers. The word “sacrament” is the English equivalent of the Latin *sacramentum*, which is one of the renderings of the Greek word μυστήριον. Cf. K. W. Irwin, *Sacramental Theology*, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 2, 465-479, here 465. In the contemporary sacramental theology the seven sacraments are appreciated as encounters with Christ, who is the basic sacrament, (Schillebeeckx) in the context of the Church as the foundational sacrament (Rahner). Cf. *ibid.*, 472.

³ Cf. E. D'Lima and T. P. Urumpackal, *Sacraments in General*, Bangalore 2005, 6.

⁴ Cf. CCC 1116.

encounter Jesus Christ, who embodies and represents the inaugurated Reign of God in the world. In the celebration of the sacraments Christians commune with the divine and are united with other people.⁵ In this chapter we shall discuss Parsch's view of the sacraments in general.

2.1. THEOLOGY OF THE SACRAMENTS IN THE WRITINGS OF PIUS PARSCH

2.1.1. Sacraments as Source and Means of Grace

In his writings Pius Parsch does not directly give a clear-cut definition of the sacrament. But he defines sacrament in relation to grace. According to him grace is not an outward sign of God's favour. It is something that affects the soul deeply. It makes the soul holy and united with God; it raises it to a higher life. It makes us share the divine nature. By grace we enter into the closest possible union with God; we become His children: His sons and daughters. Through grace we become brothers and sisters of Jesus, co-heirs with Christ; we become temples of the Holy Spirit, who truly dwells in us. And so, by grace a person becomes the dwelling place of the triune God.⁶ In Parsch's opinion God could have given each of us this great gift directly had He so willed. But He willed to give it to us by means of visible signs because of man's twofold nature consisting body and soul.⁷ These visible signs are called the sacraments. Parsch explains in detail:

Wir werden dies noch besser verstehen, wenn wir die Heilsökonomie der Gnade ins Auge fassen. Gott der Vater hat mich von Ewigkeit zum Kinde Gottes auserwählt und berufen. Jesus Christus ist für mich Mensch geworden und hat durch seinen Tod am Kreuz den Erlösungspreis für meine Begnadigung gezahlt. Der Hl. Geist ist der Spender und Urheber der Gnade. Nun hat Christus weiter eine Gnadenanstalt, eine Gnadengemeinschaft und ein Gnadenkraftwerk gestiftet, die Kirche, die auch mir den Strom der Gnade zubringen soll. Nun fehlen nur noch die Drähte, die mir von diesem Kraftwerk die Gnade zuleiten. Das sind die sieben Sakramente.⁸

⁵ Cf. E. D'Lima and T. P. Urumpackal, *Sacraments in General*, 6.

⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt: Wortverkündigung im Geiste der liturgischen Erneuerung*, vol. 6: *Das Kirchenjahr im Lichte der Gnade*, Klosterneuburg 1952, 14 and 144.

⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 323; cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/1950), 329-340, here 334; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 270. The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines the sacraments as "efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us. The visible rites by which the sacraments are celebrated signify and make present the graces proper to each sacrament. They bear fruit in those who receive them with the required dispositions." CCC 1131.

⁸ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 323.

Parsch gives yet another account in order to show how the sacraments become means of grace. He does it by using the example of the rite of baptism. In the celebration of the baptism the priest pours water on the person to be baptised by saying “I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Through these two things (matter and form⁹) great things happen, “der Mensch wird aus einem Unerlösten ein Erlöster, ein Gotteskind, gotterfülltes Leben durchflutet seine Seele; es eröffnet sich für ihn der Himmel, der Heilige Geist nimmt Wohnung in seinem Herzen.”¹⁰ By this illustration Parsch defines a sacrament as a source, a medium, an instrument of grace. He sees the seven sacraments as the great sources of grace.¹¹ A sacrament is a grace-bringing revelation of God to the people.¹² This concept has two important elements: a divine and a human one. Firstly, it is “ein Gegenwärtigwerden, ein Begegnen, ein Nahen Gottes; Gott kommt im Sakrament zu uns.” Secondly, it is “eine Entsühnung, Begnadigung, Heilung des Menschen. Der Mensch wird heilig, gotterfüllt.”¹³

2.1.2. Christ as the First Sacrament

In relation to the definition of sacrament as the grace-bringing revelation of God to the human beings Parsch speaks of Christ as the first and greatest sacrament.¹⁴ Christ is the greatest revelation of God that we can ever think of. In Christ God Himself comes to the people. Through his coming Christ brought the people the saving grace.¹⁵ When Jesus Christ said, “He who ever has seen me has seen the Father” (Jn.

⁹ The matter of the sacrament of baptism is true natural water; it does not matter whether it is cold or warm. The form is: “I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Council of Florence: Bull *Exsultate Deo*: Decree for the Armenians, in: Denzinger, 1314.

¹⁰ P. Parsch, *Das Kirchenjahr in der Pfarre*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 11 (1936/37)*, 497-506, here 498; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 201.

¹¹ P. Parsch, *Das Kirchenjahr in der Pfarre*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 11 (1936/37)*, 497-506, here 497. Parsch also speaks of the sacramentals that bring grace. “Der Katechismus spricht auch von den Sakramentalien, das sind kleinere Sakramente, die nicht so unmittelbar wirken wie die sieben großen.” P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 201.

¹² P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 11 (1936/37)*, 161-165, 185-190, here 163. In speaking of the pre-eminence of the Holy Eucharist, the council of Trent cites sacrament as “a symbol of a sacred thing and a visible form of invisible grace.” Cf. Council of Trent: Decree on the Sacrament of the Eucharist, in: Denzinger, 1639.

¹³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 11 (1936/37)*, 161-165, 185-190, here 163; cf. *Das Kirchenjahr in der Pfarre*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 11 (1936/37)*, 497-506, here 498; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 201.

¹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 11 (1936/37)*, 161-165, 185-190, here 163; cf. *Das Kirchenjahr in der Pfarre*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 11 (1936/37)*, 497-506, here 498.

¹⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 11 (1936/37)*, 161-165, 185-190, here 163; cf. *Das Kirchenjahr in der Pfarre*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 11 (1936/37)*, 497-506, here 498-499; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 202.

14: 9), he implied that his humanity, the visible presence in the word was the sign and instrument of God's presence in the world. Therefore he fulfilled the sacrament concept in an absolute and unique manner.¹⁶

Among the modern theologians Edward Schillebeeckx expresses the concept of Christ as the primordial sacrament very clearly.¹⁷ As the human deeds of Jesus are divine deeds, personal acts of the Son of God, divine acts in visible human form, they by nature possess a divine saving power and consequently they bring salvation; they are the "cause of grace". Although this is true of every specifically human act of Christ, it is nevertheless especially true of those actions which are exclusive acts of God even though enacted in human form: the miracles and the redemption. Considered against the background of the whole earthly life of Jesus this truth is realized in a most particular way in the great mysteries of his life: his passion, death, resurrection, and exaltation to the side of the Father.¹⁸

Being the personal visible realization of the divine grace of redemption the man Jesus is the primordial sacrament because the Father intended His Son to be the only way to the actuality of redemption in his humanity. "For there is one God and one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1Tim. 2: 5). To his contemporaries, being personally approached by the man Jesus was an invitation to a personal encounter with the life-giving God because personally that man was the Son of God. Human encounter with Jesus is therefore the sacrament of the encounter with God.¹⁹

2.1.3. The Church as Sacrament

Parsch portrays the Church, which is the Mystical Body of Christ, as the second greatest sacrament.²⁰ God is near to us in the Church. Where the Church meets with the world, God the Father and Christ present.²¹ The Church is also the distributor of grace; her blessed and consecrated hands distribute grace of salvation. Christ lives on

¹⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 202.

¹⁷ See in: E. Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God*, Lanham 1963. Osborne, too, discusses the theme "Jesus as Primordial Sacrament" in his book "Sacramental Theology". Cf. K. B. Osborne, *Sacramental Theology: A General Introduction*, Mahwah 1988.

¹⁸ Cf. E. Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God*, 14.

¹⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, 15.

²⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 161-165, 185-190, here 163; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 202.

²¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 161-165, 185-190, here 163; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 202.

in the Church.²² “Die Kirche ist die Fülle (das Pleroma) Christi, ist der erweiterte Christus.”²³ The sacraments are administered in the Church. So the Church as the community of people becomes a visible sign by bringing grace to the faithful.

One of the most distinctive contributions of the Second Vatican Council to the development of the ecclesiology is its assertion of the sacramental character of the Church. As *Lumen gentium* puts it “the Church, in Christ, is a kind of sacrament – as sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among all human beings.”²⁴ The idea of the Church as sacrament had a major impact on catholic ecclesiology in the 20th century. Even before the Second Vatican Council such ideas were gaining momentum within the Church. In part, this reflects the rise of a “theology of retrieval”, which sought to re-appropriate a series of seminal themes from earlier period of Christian history most notably the patristic period, which adopted understandings of the nature of the Church, which contrasted sharply with the more institutional conceptions which had gained the ascendancy since the 16th century.²⁵ The view can be seen clearly in the writing of Henri de Lubac (1896-1991), a pre-Second Vatican Council theologian noted for his magisterial grasp of the patristic heritage. In his important work “Catholicism” he wrote:

Wenn Christus das „Sakrament Gottes“ genannt werden konnte, so ist für uns die Kirche das Sakrament Christi, sie repräsentiert ihn in der ganzen ursprünglichen Kraft des Wortes: sie schenkt uns seine wahrhaftige Gegenwart. Sie setzt nicht nur sein Werk, sondern darüber hinaus ihn selber fort, in einem unvergleichlich wirklicheren Sinne als je eine menschliche Einrichtung ihren Gründer fortzusetzen vermochte.²⁶

²² Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 202.

²³ P. Parsch, *Der Seelsorger als Liturge*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 6 (1931/32), 185-196, here 187; cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 161-165, 185-190, here 164.

²⁴ LG 1. The expression Church as mystery or sacrament, as it was often expressed in the patristic time, went to the background during the Middle Ages and Reformation Period. It again got momentum in the discussions prior to Vatican II. Thereafter it was unfolded theologically. Cf. P. Hünermann, *Theologischer Kommentar zur dogmatischen Konstitution über die Kirche*, in: *Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil*, vol. 2, Freiburg 2004, 264-582, here 335-356. The Council did not suggest that the Church is a sacrament: the tradition of sevenfold understanding of the sacrament is retained: Rather the Church is like a sacrament. In making this statement, the Council seems to have been attempting to bring together the idea of the Church as constituted by the Word of God, on the one hand, and as being a visible entity on the other. This idea is certainly present in Augustine’s concept of sacrament as “visible words”. Cf. A. E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 5th ed., Oxford, 2011, 385.

²⁵ A. E. McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 385-386.

²⁶ H. De Lubac, *Katholismus als Gemeinschaft*, Einsiedeln 1943, 68.

Although retaining an institutional understanding of the Church de Lubac gave a new sense of identity and purpose to catholic conceptions of the Church: the Church is there to make Christ present to the world.²⁷

The idea caught on. In 1953, the German Jesuit theologian Otto Semmelroth (1912-79) published a highly influential study entitled “Die Kirche als Ursakrament”, in which he argued for the Church as the ‘Primordial Sacrament’ (Ursakrament) demonstrating God’s ability to use the material order to bear witness to the spiritual.²⁸ The Dominican theologian Edward Schillebeeckx (1914-2009) developed related ideas in his “Christ, the Sacrament of Encounter with God”.²⁹ The overall effect of this approach is to integrate the fields of Christology, ecclesiology and sacramentology into a coherent whole. Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-88) adopts a strongly incarnation approach of his understanding of the Church, arguing that the Church be the prolongation of Christ in time and space.³⁰ The Jesuit writer Karl Rahner (1904-84) continues this sacramental understanding of the Church declaring that the Church is there to make Christ present in the world in a historical, visible and embodied form.³¹

2.1.4. The Liturgy as Sacrament

Pius Parsch speaks of liturgy as a great sacrament. The liturgy is a great sacrament, a richly flowing stream of grace, in which Christ comes closely to the Church, in which Christ offers his salvific grace.³² In the liturgy Christ continues his life and realises his word “I am with you always, to the end of the age” (cf. Mt. 28:20). In the liturgy Christ continues to be our teacher and preacher. He becomes our saviour again. He is our saviour in the liturgy because he dies for us. The liturgy is the great sacrament which realises the incorporation and building up of the Mystical Body of

²⁷ A. E. McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 386.

²⁸ See in: O. Semmelroth, *Die Kirche als Ursakrament*, 3rd ed., Frankfurt am Main 1963.

²⁹ See in: E. Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God*, Lanham 1963.

³⁰ A. E. McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 386.

³¹ Rahner’s approach has attracted considerable interest. For Rahner, the Church is the continuance, the contemporary presence of that real, eschatologically triumphant and irrevocably establishing presence in Christ in the word of God’s saving will. Cf. K. Rahner, *Kirche und Sakramente*, Freiburg 1960, 17. Schillebeeckx differs from Rahner at some points of importance, most notably in his rejection of Rahner’s argument that the Church is the “primal sacrament” (an idea which can be traced back to Otto Semmelroth as we noted above). For Schillebeeckx, Christ must be regarded as that primal sacrament: whatever sacramental character the Church possesses must be understood to arise through its relation with Christ. Cf. A. E. McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 386.

³² Cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 161-165, 185-190, here 164, 186 and 188.

Christ.³³ According to Parsch in the liturgy Christ continues his salvific work and fulfils his promise “when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to myself” (cf. Jn. 12: 32).³⁴ He would affirm that liturgy as a sacrament brings inward grace through the external symbols:

Liturgie hat zwei große Aufgaben: 1. Zuerst ist es der Dienst, den die in der Kirche geeinten Begnadigten Gott darbringen, also der rechte Gottesdienst; 2. Liturgie ist das von Christus gewollte Organ der Gnadenspendung; Liturgie ist das große Sakrament, d. h. eine Summe von äußeren Zeichen, hinter denen eine heilige Gnadenwirklichkeit erstet und die die Gnade den Menschen geben. So ist die Liturgie das admirabile commercium, das Tauschgeschäft zwischen Gott und den Menschen: Gott gibt Gnade und der Mensch bringt die gebührende Ehre Gott dar.³⁵

Parsch stressed the sacramental nature of the liturgy by saying, “Liturgie ist auch das Organ, durch das sich Gott der Menschheit mitteilt.”³⁶ In order to emphasise the concept of liturgy as a sacrament Parsch asks: in which way do we receive the life of grace? He answers it by saying that it is through the sacrament of baptism; and that is liturgy. Parsch goes on asking: in which way do we preserve and unfold the life of grace? It is through the sacrament of the Eucharist and this is liturgy. Baptism and Eucharist are the two focal points around which the whole of liturgy revolves.³⁷ In other parts of the liturgy there is the sacramental character, too, for example the ecclesiastical year, the breviary, the blessings and other practices of the Church. In all these Christ comes close to us with his blessing and redemptive hand.³⁸

2.1.5. The Holy Scripture as Sacrament

Parsch enunciates that regarding the Holy Scripture as the early Christians did it is also a sacrament. It is a becoming of flesh, the incarnation of God. It is parallel to the incarnation of Christ.³⁹ In Parsch’s words:

³³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 161-165, 185-190, here 164 and 186; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 207.

³⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 161-165, 185-190, here 186; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 180 and 207.

³⁵ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 18-19.

³⁶ P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 161-165, 185-190, here 186.

³⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 207; cf. P. Parsch, *The Church’s Year of Grace: Advent to Candlemas*, trans., W.G. Heidt, vol. 1, Collegeville 1957, 6. This book is the English translation of Pius Parsch’s original work “Das Jahr des Heiles”. The English translation is done in 5 volumes.

³⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 207.

³⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 161-165, 185-190, here 164; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 203.

Auch die Hl. Schrift dürfen wir nicht so rational und natürlich ansehen, auch sie ist im altchristlichen Sinn sakramental. Sie ist ein Fleischwerden, eine Inkarnation Gottes. Es ist eine Parallele mit der Menschwerdung Christi. Dort hat der Logos menschliche Natur angenommen, in der Schrift hat Gottes Gedanke, Gottes Wille in der armseligen Hülle des menschlichen Wortes Gestalt angenommen. Doch auch diese Menschwerdung Gottes kommt nicht leer zu uns. Das Gotteswort hat Gnadenkraft, es ist, wie Paulus sagt, „schärfer als jedes zweischneidige Schwert“ (Hebr 4, 12). Von da aus verstehen wir die Worte Christi: „Nicht vom Brot allein lebt der Mensch, sondern von jedem Wort, das aus dem Munde Gottes kommt“. Von dieser Seite werden wir ein ganz neues Verhältnis zur Hl. Schrift erhalten. Glauben wir doch wieder an das Sakrament des Gotteswortes.⁴⁰

In modern times, theologians like Louis-Marie Chauvet speak of the sacramentality of the scripture. In his treatise “Symbol and Sacrament” Chauvet deals with the scripture as essentially sacramental.⁴¹ When Pius Parsch speaks of sacraments and when he terms something as a sacrament, it is to fulfil two criterions, which are: the presence of God and the grace of God.

2.2. PIUS PARSCH’S UNDERSTANDING OF GRACE

2.2.1. The Concept of Grace in the Writings of Parsch

In order to understand the notion of Parsch on the sacraments we must first and foremost grasp what he means and understands by the concept of grace because the concept of grace occupies a central part in his life and entire writings. However, his teaching on grace is neither very scientific nor dogmatic but rather of practical value for life and ministry.⁴² So it is necessary to define grace and find out what Parsch’s notion was. The word “grace”⁴³ comes from ordinary civil life and means some

⁴⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 161-165, 185-190, here 164.

⁴¹ L.-M. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament: A sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*, trans., P. Madigan and M. Beaumont, Collegeville 1995, 213-227.

⁴² Parsch expresses it in his own words, “Ich will nun einiges über die Gnade sagen, aber nicht so, wie die wissenschaftliche Dogmatik uns gelehrt hat, sondern praktisch, fürs Leben und für die Seelsorge und auch für die Predigt.” P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 12.

⁴³ The theological usage of the term “grace” directly corresponds with that of its Latin equivalent, *gratia*, from which it is derived. It is notable that the English word has also absorbed the peculiarly Christian character given by St. Paul to the Greek word *χάρις*. Thus grace is “the free and unmerited favour of God as manifested in the salvation of sinners.” Cf. E. M. Burke et al., *Theology of Grace*, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 6, 383-401. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines grace: “Grace is favour, the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life.” CCC 1996. “Grace is a participation in the life of God. It introduces us into the intimacy of Trinitarian life: by Baptism the Christian participates in the grace of Christ, the Head of the Body. As an adopted son” he can henceforth call God “Father”, in union with the only Son. He receives the life of the Spirit who breathes charity into him and who forms the Church.” CCC 1997.

undeserved favour conferred by a superior on a person subject to him. Thus it is not the same thing as a reward: for a reward is something that has been deserved. Grace is not deserved: it is a free gift from God bestowed on some of His creatures. It is a special sign of His love.⁴⁴ Parsch feels that this does not sufficiently explain what grace is. For, if a superior confers a special favour on a subject, he does not thereby make his soul any better for it. But when God gives grace to a man, He makes his soul beautiful – even similar to God Himself, holy.

Pius Parsch observes that in place of the word ‘grace’ the Holy Scripture also makes use of a number of similes and images such as: light, water, life (divine, everlasting life), new birth, new creation, admission to the Kingdom of God etc. According to him grace is God’s limitless love and kindness.⁴⁵ “It is a sharing in the life of the incarnated God. It is divine life. God is infinitely good. He is generous in forgiving, generous in giving grace. Grace is no mere outward sign of God’s favour. It is a ray of divine light, a heavenly beauty filling the soul and stamping it with Christ’s image through the seal of the Holy Spirit.”⁴⁶ Grace gives us divine privileges: eternity, happiness, perfection and holiness. It binds us to God in a way we could never have imagined possible but for His revelation.⁴⁷

Parsch makes it clear that grace is something that comes from God alone. No man can give it to himself or claim it for himself. God respects man’s freedom. He does not come like a thief to steal man’s heart. He does not come like a police officer to force obedience on us in the name of the law. He comes as a bridegroom to win His bride. He stands unassumingly at the door and knocks. He waits a long time for a man to open it to Him. Man must do something from his part. He must co-operate with God’s grace. He must give his assent. He must desire, he must open his heart and prepare it.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 144; cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ’s Body*, trans., C. Howell, Indiana 1962, 6-7. “We are Christ’s Body” is an English translation of Pius Parsch’s sermons on “Gnadenleib Christi” found in the appendix to the “*Die liturgische Predigt*”, vol. 6, 452-518, published in 1952.

⁴⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 144; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 146.

⁴⁶ P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 146.

⁴⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 15; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 124. Thus we see that Parsch is quite in line with the traditional and official teaching of the Church in his explanation and definition of the concept of grace.

⁴⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 109.

Parsch adds, “Through grace the Christian receives the strength to overcome his sinful nature.”⁴⁹ According to him the greatest and most noble thing that has ever been said of grace was said by St. Peter. He said that by grace we are raised so high that “we become participants of the divine nature” (2. Pet. 1: 4). Grace raises men above their natural condition giving them a supernatural greatness, which is indeed “like God”. It raises man to share His divine knowledge. It would be impossible for us to know God otherwise. None other than the only-begotten Son of God, who dwells in the bosom of the Father, sees Him face to face. Yet the man in grace receives “the enlightened eyes of the heart” in order to see God. Christ said, “No one knows the Son except the Father and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him” (Mt. 11: 27). Thus, by sharing the divine nature through grace we become capable of knowing the Father that is of knowing Him as He is.⁵⁰ “Through grace we are incorporated, grafted, into Christ, like the branch in the vine stem; built on to Christ, like a house on its foundation.”⁵¹

2.2.2. The Nature of Grace

Parsch realised that the example of a king is not an exact comparison to define grace. For he observes that the king can show great favours to his chosen subjects – greater than they can earn – but he cannot make them inwardly better people, who become more worthy of his love. One may quite easily be a rogue and repay the king’s favour with disloyalty and treachery.⁵² With Christian grace it is quite different. With His grace and favour God gives His chosen ones a supernatural loveliness and holiness of soul. He makes them like Himself and it is this supernatural quality of soul that – from man’s angle – is called grace, the “state of grace”. This is what we call “sanctifying grace” or pure and simple grace. On God’s side grace is a free, unmerited, supernatural, and divine favour. On man’s side it is a transformation of the soul from a natural to a supernatural creation.⁵³ Grace is not something negative. It is not merely a state of freedom from sin, of sinlessness. Nor is it something natural, like natural goodness and virtue. It is not the same as morality. It is not

⁴⁹ P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 81.

⁵⁰ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 15.

⁵¹ P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 84.

⁵² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 143; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 96.

⁵³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 143-144; cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ’s Body*, 7.

something psychological, something which resides in the intellect and the will. It is a higher plane, a reality of an order different from human nature.⁵⁴

Parsch exemplifies the nature of grace further with the example of iron. Iron is crude, black and hard. Put it in a furnace, however, it becomes glowing, incandescent and fluid. It assumes the nature and the quality of the fire, without however losing its own nature as iron.⁵⁵ According to Parsch, this is what exactly God does through grace too. Our human nature is transformed by the divine nature as iron is by fire. The man in grace is so influenced by the glow, the warmth and the light of God that he becomes like God without thereby losing his human nature. Therefore we can say that through grace our soul receives a supernatural resemblance to God as fire does to iron.⁵⁶

Every creature bears a resemblance to its creator yet this is scarcely more than a faint impress of His majesty as it were His footprint. The human soul already possesses a far greater resemblance to God. It is made in His image and likeness like a portrait which has been painted on canvas by an artist. But through grace our soul becomes so like to God that it is as though God Himself looked in it as in a mirror. Through grace our soul possesses a quality that is akin to the Godhead.⁵⁷ “Durch die Gnade werden wir vergöttlicht, gehören zum Geschlechte Gottes.”⁵⁸

2.2.3. The Holy Spirit as the Giver of Grace

Grace gives us the strength to fulfil God’s will, to conform ourselves to Him, and to love Him ardently. “The Holy Spirit is the giver of grace.”⁵⁹ The Holy Spirit is not only the giver of grace, He is the gift itself.⁶⁰ He does not merely bring us grace. In bringing grace he comes himself and remains with us for as long as we possess it. The Holy Spirit and grace are so closely united that in the language of the Holy Scripture two expressions, that is grace and Spirit, are interchangeable. Grace is often called Spirit (*Pneuma*). Spirit can mean both the Holy Spirit and grace.⁶¹ Grace is

⁵⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 96.

⁵⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 144; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 97.

⁵⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 144.

⁵⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ P. Parsch, *The Church’s Year of Grace: Easter to Pentecost*, vol. 3, 44.

⁶⁰ P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/1950), 329-340, here 334.

⁶¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 156; cf. P. Parsch, *The Church’s Year of Grace: Easter to Pentecost*, vol. 3, 45.

life: Christ's life within us. It makes us members of Christ's Body. The Holy Spirit breathes out this life. He radiates it. Just as a fire radiates light and warmth the Holy Spirit radiates the life of grace. He himself is and remains and dwells within us. Grace is so to say the 'atmosphere' of the Holy Spirit. The man in grace is a bearer of God. The Christian in grace is Christopher – a bearer of Christ.⁶²

2.2.4. The Influence of Matthias Scheeben in the Writings of Pius Parsch on Grace

Parsch developed his theology of grace influenced by the writings of Mathias Joseph Scheeben.⁶³ Many of Scheeben's ideas on grace find their expression in Parsch's writings. Parsch spoke of Scheeben's influences on his own writing, "Eine große Hilfe bot mir das kostbare Werk Scheebens, 'Die Herrlichkeiten der göttlichen Gnade'⁶⁴; dieses Buch möchte ich jedem Priester wärmstens empfehlen."⁶⁵ This book is an impassioned appeal to us all to understand the nature of sanctifying grace, to preserve this incredible gift from God, and to grow in it every day for the rest of our lives. Written in a popular, direct style, this book explains what is grace,⁶⁶ how grace works,⁶⁷ what its effects are⁶⁸, how to grow in grace,⁶⁹ and the union with God⁷⁰ that it allows us to achieve. At the same time, the book also enkindles a profound realization in readers about the importance and greatness of sanctifying grace and what it really means or should mean to us all. For sanctifying, grace is nothing other

⁶² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 248-249; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 246.

⁶³ Cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 215. Mathias Joseph Scheeben (born at Meckenheim near Bonn, 1 March 1835; died at Cologne, 21 July 1888) was a German Catholic theological writer and mystic. He did his studies in Rome. He was ordained priest in 1858. From 1859 he was rector and teacher of religious education in Münstereifel. Since 1860 he taught dogmatic and moral theology at the diocesan seminary of Cologne. Scheeben turns first to the question of the relationship between nature and grace, which he sees in spite of the separation of natural and supernatural, the former was regulated by the latter. His mind revelled in speculating on Divine grace, the hypostatic union, the beatific vision, the all-pervading presence of God; he was a firm believer in visions granted to himself and others, and his piety was all-absorbing. His main works were: 1) *Natur und Gnade: Versuch einer systematischen, wissenschaftlichen Darstellung der natürlichen und übernatürlichen Lebensordnung im Menschen*, Mainz, 1861. 2) *Die Herrlichkeiten der göttlichen Gnade*, Freiburg, 1863. 3) *Die Mysterien des Christentums*, Freiburg, 1865. Cf. P. Walter, Scheeben, Matthias Joseph, in: *LThK*, 3rd ed., vol. 9, 116-117.

⁶⁴ The English translation of this work, "The Glories of Divine Grace: A Fervent Exhortation to all to Preserve and Grow in Sanctifying Grace", appeared during Scheeben's life time and has gone through several reprinting. The translation here used is by Patrick Shaughnessy in 2000.

⁶⁵ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 10; cf. P. Parsch, *Liturgie und Arbeiter*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/1950), 2-12, here 4.

⁶⁶ Cf. M. Scheeben, *The Glories of Divine Grace*, 3-68.

⁶⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, 167-263.

⁶⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, 267-311.

⁶⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, 315-420.

⁷⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 71-164.

than “the life of God Himself”, which He shares with us and by which, in a certain sense, He raises us to His level.⁷¹

We find a lot of similarities in the writings of Parsch. The similes⁷² used by Scheeben in his writings to explain grace are also used by Parsch in his writings. Grace as the free gift from God,⁷³ grace as sharing in the divine nature of God,⁷⁴ as supernatural,⁷⁵ its relation to the Holy Spirit and Holy Spirit as its giver,⁷⁶ our adoption as children of God⁷⁷ are highlighted by both authors. The state of being the child of God (Gotteskindschaft) is the heart of Scheeben’s doctrine and the leading idea and fruitful principle that characterises his theology. In his book “Natur und Gnade”, Scheeben describes the supernatural as a participation in God's nature: the supernatural implies a state of being, life and knowledge, resembling that of God.⁷⁸

2.2.5. Pius Parsch and Popular Devotion

2.2.5.1. Subjective and Objective Devotion

In order to understand Pius Parsch in a better way and follow his line of thoughts and spirituality aright particularly his teachings on grace it is of great significance to discuss his concepts and critique on the popular devotion. The very title of the periodical “Bibel und Liturgie” was a programme for Parsch because he aimed at a renewal in the entire religious life of the Church based on the liturgy and the Bible.⁷⁹ In the preface to the first publication of “Bibel und Liturgie”, Parsch speaks of this renewal, which also includes the popular devotion. He specifically uses the term

⁷¹ Cf. M. Scheeben, *The Glories of Divine Grace*, 43, 44, 46, 55, 91. Scheeben was greatly influenced by Greek Fathers, who considered grace in its supernatural and divine excellence, as a perfection that surpassed even what was true in the created world of nature. They saw grace in its relations with the mysteries of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Eucharist. Cf. M. Scheeben, *Nature and Grace*, C. Vollert, tran., New York 1954, xix. This book is the translation of Scheeben’s original work “Natur und Gnade”.

⁷² In his treatise “The Glories on Divine Grace”, Scheeben uses many of the scriptural terms from the Bible to denote the term grace and its effects: for example, “living water”, “born again”, “new creation”, “children of God”, “divine adoption”, “life”, “justice”, “just”, “charity”, etc. See: M. Scheeben, *The Glories on Divine Grace*; cf. M. Scheeben, *Nature and Grace*, xii. We see a number of these similes in the writings of Parsch. Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 14.

⁷³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 143-145.

⁷⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 15.

⁷⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 143.

⁷⁶ P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/1950), 329-340, here 334.

⁷⁷ M. Scheeben, *The Glories on Divine Grace*, 83; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 14 and 144.

⁷⁸ This volume, which is highly original in concept and method, ranked Scheeben among the leaders of speculative theology.

⁷⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Zum Geleit*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926-27), 1-2, here 1; cf. R. Pacik, *Pius Parsch* (1884-1954), in: *LQF* 98, vol. 2, 886-900, here 896.

‘renewal’ because does not discover anything new but it is rather a return to what already existed: namely the devotion practised in the early Church.⁸⁰ Speaking about the Liturgical Renewal Movement and its aim Parsch also affirmed that it goes beyond the mere formulas and forms of the liturgy.⁸¹ And thereby he made it clear that the Liturgical Movement has both a body and a soul. The body is the artistic synthesis of the liturgy and the soul is the spirit, which is behind all the formulas of the liturgy. And the mission of the Popular Liturgical Movement is to return this real spirit to the world.⁸²

Parsch poses questions about the soul, the spirit of the Early Christianity, and how this spirit had deviated in the modern era. Addressing these questions he makes a difference between two types of devotion: the objective and the subjective devotion. According to Parsch the former has its basis in Early Christianity, Bible and liturgy, and the latter originates in the Middle Ages and even more in the modern era.⁸³ In the first edition of his periodical “Bibel und Liturgie”, Parsch wrote an article concerning the devotion of the people.⁸⁴ There he made an ingenious significant characterisation of the existing popular devotion. He made a thorough observation of the existing form of devotion with a critical mind and found that it was: i) subjective and individualistic, ii) shallow and iii) scanty.⁸⁵ Parsch also noticed that the people of his time were very lethargic towards devotion and there was not much enthusiasm in them. He ascertained the whole situation as very dry and desperate. So he called for a renewal in popular devotion.⁸⁶

In 1927 Parsch wrote about the subjectivism and his intention to renew the existing devotion in the spirit of the early Church and the Bible:

⁸⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Zum Geleit*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926-27), 1-2, here 1; cf. R. Pacik, *Pius Parsch (1884-1954)*, in: *LQF* 98, vol. 2, 886-900, here 896.

⁸¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932-33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 233; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 139.

⁸² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 233; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 139. The spirit Parsch intends here is the spirit of the Early Church, the real and authentic spirit of Christianity.

⁸³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932-33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 233.

⁸⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Ist das Laienbrevier berechtigt?* in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926-27), 52-54.

⁸⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Ist das Laienbrevier berechtigt?* in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926-27), 52-54; cf. N. Höslinger, *Pius Parsch und die Erneuerung der christlichen Frömmigkeit*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 155-174, here 1576; cf. R. Pacik, *Pius Parsch (1884-1954)*, in: *LQF* 98, vol. 2, 886-900, here 89; cf. B. J. Krawczyk, *Der Laie in Liturgie und Theologie bei Pius Parsch*, 149.

⁸⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Ist das Laienbrevier berechtigt?*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926-27), 52-54. His main intention was to promote objective devotion in the place of the existing subjective devotion.

Die lit. [sic!] Erneuerung will nicht bloß alte Gebetsformen wiederbeleben und manches Vergessene, dabei so Wichtigste in den Vordergrund stellen. Die Liturgie verkörpert eine andere, von der gegenwärtigen verschiedene Frömmigkeit, einen neuen Geist. Es ist dies der Geist der alten Kirche, der Geist der Bibel. Ich meine da nicht das romantische Streben gewisser, der lit. Bewegung nahestehender Kreise, die alte Kirche in ihren äußeren Formen zu kopieren. Die liturgische Frömmigkeit greift tief in das religiöse Leben des deutschen Volkes: es gilt, aus der allzu subjektiven, individualistischen Ich-Frömmigkeit, in die unsere Nation infolge ihrer Veranlagung durch Jahrhunderte immer tiefer verfallen, herauszukommen und die objektive Gemeinschafts-Frömmigkeit der katholischen Kirche wiederzufinden. [...] Also die Gemeinschafts-Frömmigkeit der Kirche, Anschluss an das objektive Heilswerk, wie es in der Kirche vergegenwärtigt fortlebt, aktive Teilnahme an den hl. Mysterien, das ist Kern und Geist der liturgischen Frömmigkeit, und diese müssen wir selbst immer tiefer erfassen und anderen einflößen.⁸⁷

2.2.5.1.1. Parsch's Criticism on Individualism and Subjectivism

Parsch explicated how the popular devotion has taken the subjective and individual bend over the past years. He noticed that already towards the end of antiquity and still more in the Middle Ages subjectivism and individualism began to supersede the objectivism of the ancient times.⁸⁸ This turn had a radical consequence on the devotion of the people. The communal devotion, which had its foundation and basis in the Mystical Body of Christ, gave way to the individual piety of the medieval mysticism.⁸⁹ The subjectivism gave an overemphasis to the individual and his deeds. Parsch emphasised it by saying that the mysticism of the Middle Ages paid homage to individualism; it separated the individual from the community of the Mystical Body and stressed the importance of the union between the individual soul and Jesus. As a result the communal aspect of piety lost importance.⁹⁰

Parsch criticised the individualism and the subjectivism of the Middle Ages. He substantiated his argument by citing the example of the early Christians, who shared everything with each other and who were one in heart and soul (cf. Acts 4: 32). He

⁸⁷ P. Parsch, *Wesen und Zweck der volksliturgischen Erneuerung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926/27), 303-310, here 307.

⁸⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 235; cf. N. Höslinger, *Pius Parsch und die Erneuerung der christlichen Frömmigkeit*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 155-174, here 157.

⁸⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 235.

⁹⁰ P. Parsch, *Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 260; cf. N. Höslinger, *Pius Parsch und die Erneuerung der christlichen Frömmigkeit*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 155-174, here 157.

believed that Christians should be one family, brothers and sisters. They were not only to pray and offer together, but also come to experience their togetherness through various other activities and entertainments, like picnics, agape etc. He valued these things as important for growing a community like the model of the early Christian community.⁹¹

Based on this community spirit as a prerequisite, Parsch developed his teaching on the ‘pursuit of devotion within the community of the Church’. “Der Christ soll mit und in seiner Kirche leben [...]. Aus der Lehre vom Gnadenleib ergibt sich die wichtige Folgerung der Gemeinschaft unseres religiösen Lebens. Das Christentum ist nicht individuelle, sondern Gemeinschaftsreligion im höchsten Sinn: Gemeinschaft des Opfern, Gemeinschaft des Betens, Gemeinschaft aller religiösen Betätigung.”⁹²

The more a member participates in the rhythm of the life of the Church the better he prospers in his life, that is, participation in the seasons of the liturgical year, the Sunday celebration, in short in all the liturgical activities of the Church.⁹³ Thus, according to his perceptions, the individual member is not plunged into an anonymous multitude, but he is a living organism in the Church, called to “active participation” in the life of the Church.⁹⁴

2.2.5.1.2. Parsch’s Criticism on the Shallowness of Devotion

Secondly, Parsch also strongly criticised the shallowness of popular devotion. He wrote repeatedly about the negligence of the basic Christian principles, above all, concerning the pastoral activity of the Church in general and individual matter. We find a synopsis of the same idea in his article titled ‘Die subjektive und objektive Frömmigkeit’.⁹⁵ The focus of subjectivism was on the individual and his activities. “Der Subjektivismus lenkte wieder mehr den Blick auf den Menschen und auf menschliches Tun. An die Stelle des freudigen Erlösungsbewusstseins trat Sündenbewußtsein; durch die Betonung der menschlichen Akte wurde das

⁹¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Wesen und Zweck der volksliturgischen Erneuerung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 1* (1926/27), 303-310, here 310; cf. N. Höslinger, *Pius Parsch und die Erneuerung der christlichen Frömmigkeit*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 155-174, here 157.

⁹² P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 285-286.

⁹³ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 286; cf. N. Höslinger, *Pius Parsch und die Erneuerung der christlichen Frömmigkeit*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 155-174, here 157.

⁹⁴ P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 3* (1928/29), 27-33, here 27.

⁹⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 7* (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289.

Augenmerk auf periphere Dinge der Religion gerichtet. Die Quantität trat an Stelle der Qualität. Lehre und Moral traten in den Vordergrund und drängten Gnade und göttliches Wirken zurück.”⁹⁶ To Parsch, the post-Tridentine devotion appeared to be very peripheral and he observed that it was not theocentric nor Christocentric, but rather it was anthropocentric.⁹⁷ And he noticed that from that time on there were two separate types of devotion: the objective theocentric or Christocentric devotion, which focuses on the redemptive work of Christ, which sees the religion from the perspective of God and on the other hand the subjective or anthropocentric devotion, which emanates from human beings and emphasised the importance of individual sanctity.⁹⁸

2.2.5.1.3. Parsch’s Criticism on the Scantiness of Devotion

Parsch’s third critique was on the scantiness of devotion. He observed that the devotion of the people was very meagre and scanty. It offered very little room for change of form. The prayer books too were flaccid. He ascertained that even in the celebration of the Holy mass, there was no matter of joy. The liturgy was very dry, with little participation from the side of the faithful.⁹⁹ He pursued this critique as a theologian, pastor and liturgist.¹⁰⁰ According to Parsch the solution for these problems lay in overcoming the subjective devotion by objective devotion.

2.2.5.2. The Changes in the Image of Christ

Since the High Middle Ages a profound alteration occurred in the concept of the image of Christ. The image of the glorified Christ was often overlooked: instead, the Christians of this period sought all the more after the image of the earthly or historical Jesus.¹⁰¹ The crusades reminded the Christian of the earthly life of Jesus

⁹⁶ P. Parsch, Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 235.

⁹⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 236; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 145; cf. N. Höslinger, Pius Parsch und die Erneuerung der christlichen Frömmigkeit, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 155-174, here 159.

⁹⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 236.

⁹⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, Ist das Laienbrevier berechtigt? in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926/27), 52-54, here 54; cf. N. Höslinger, Pius Parsch und die Erneuerung der christlichen Frömmigkeit, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 155-174, here 159.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. N. Höslinger, Pius Parsch und die Erneuerung der christlichen Frömmigkeit, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 155-174, here 159.

¹⁰¹ Here Parsch uses the term “Jesus” intentionally. For he says: „Ich sage mit Absicht Jesus; denn der Name Jesus wird Ausdruck des menschlichen und subjektiven Christusbildes.“ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die*

and more particularly the passion of Christ. So there was an overemphasis on the suffering of Jesus. During this period, the Christians in the western countries began to crave for relics, pictures and devotion, depicting the passion of Jesus with a ravenous hunger. The religious congregations concentrated more on reflecting the passion of Christ. The emphasis was not only on the suffering saviour but also the human Jesus as a child in the crib, as a wonderworker etc. Parsch observed that this kind of radical transformation regarding the image of Christ was also drastically influenced by St. Francis of Assisi. There was a shift of importance from Christ in heaven to the earthly Jesus, to crib and cross.¹⁰²

The emphasis of the Early Christians was not so much on the physical suffering of Christ but rather the purpose of that suffering i.e. the redemption of humanity. In other words, the stress was on the blessed and beatific suffering of Christ but the people of the Middle Ages gave too much accent to the bitter suffering of Christ on the cross. To give an example, the cross was seen a symbol of victory and a sign of salvation in the ancient time, but in the Middle Ages the cross became an image to depict the suffering of Christ. To Parsch these two types of the presentation of the cross obviously symbolise the two types of devotion: the subjective and objective devotion, which I have already discussed.¹⁰³

In Parsch's view, the realism of the Middle Ages demanded palpable proximity. As a result the Christians of that time could not understand and grasp the symbols of the early Church. For example, the Christians of the early Church experienced the presence of the glorified Christ in various symbols: "Christus ist nahe im Symbol und Mysterium, Symbol im Sinne der Antike, wirklichkeitserfülltes Symbol. Der Altar war Christus, die Evangeliumverkündigung war Christus; im hl. Opfer erschien der verklärte Christus vor der feiernden Gemeinde; im Opfermahl verband sich der Gläubige mit dem verklärten Herrn. Die Kirche und der einzelne Christ wusste sich durch den mystischen Leib mit dem Haupte verbunden, ja fühlte sich als

objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 259.

¹⁰² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 259; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 149.

¹⁰³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932-33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 259; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 149.

Christus.”¹⁰⁴ We find a similarity in the Liturgical Constitution of the Second Vatican Council. The article no. 7 of *Sacrosanctum concilium* speaks about the manifold ways of Christ’s presence. A fivefold presence of Christ is portrayed here: a) Christ is present in the person of the priest, b) he is present in the Eucharistic species, c) he is present in the sacraments, d) he is present in the scripture and e) he is present in the prayer and singing of the Church.¹⁰⁵

On the other hand, the Christians of the Middle Ages wanted to perceive, grasp and count.¹⁰⁶ According to Parsch, the belief in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist is awakened in this way and became a special feature of that time:

Sie [die Christen] wollen die heilige Hostie sehen. Diese wird aufbewahrt, herumgetragen, weil die Christen in ihr die menschliche Persönlichkeit Jesu schauen. Im Tabernakel, der bald zum Mittelpunkt des Gotteshauses wurde, ist der Herr gegenwärtig wie als Kind in der Krippe, wie als Gekreuzigter auf dem Kreuze. Wenn man zu Jesus betete, wandte man sich nicht mehr zu dem, *qui sedet ad dexteram Patris*, sondern zu dem Seelenbräutigam, der wartet im Tabernakel, zu dem Gefangenen der Liebe. Aus der Sehnsucht nach dem wiederkommenden Herrn wurde glückliches Bewusstsein des Besitzes: Er wohnt unter uns wie der Hirt unter den Schafen, so wie in seinem irdischen Leben. Der Tabernakel wird in der Neuzeit der Mittelpunkt der Christusfrömmigkeit.¹⁰⁷

Parsch affirmed that the Christians of the modern era went far away from the early Christian perception of Christ. He ascertained that they have no relation to the glorified Christ in heaven. For them, what was important was the presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament and that was the gist of their devotion to Jesus. The mysticism of the Middle Ages encouraged the personal relationship of the individual soul with Jesus rather than the community of the Mystical Body of Christ. The people of the present time were treading the paths of the Middle Ages deviating from the ancient perception of Christ by stressing the presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.¹⁰⁸ Parsch believed that the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was also

¹⁰⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 259.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. LG 7.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 259; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 149.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 259-260.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 260; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 150-151.

a true child of the subjective devotion.¹⁰⁹ On the other hand, he viewed that the devotion to the Good Shepherd calls the objective truth of the redemption to our mind: Christ has laid down his life for his sheep, he nurtures our divine life through the Holy Eucharist and he pastures his lambs in the heavenly pasture. These are the noblest truths of Christianity.¹¹⁰

To sum up what we have discussed above, Parsch marks the contrasts of both the objective and subjective devotion in the following schedule:

Objective devotion	Subjective devotion
Christ	Jesus
Glorified Christ	the historical (Eucharistic) Jesus
Mystical Body	personal relationship
Longing for the Second Coming	possession in the tabernacle
Crux gemmata (jewelled cross)	cross with crucifix
Passio beata (blissful suffering)	bitter suffering
To die with Christ	contemplation on suffering
The good Shepherd	sacred heart of Jesus ¹¹¹

It is also to be noted that after World War II Parsch preferred the expressions “Gnadenfrömmigkeit”¹¹² and “Gebotsfrömmigkeit”¹¹³. This is seemingly influenced by Matthias Scheeben. This point of view is clearly expressed in his expositions at the first German Liturgical Congress in 1950¹¹⁴ and at the Eucharistic Congress in

¹⁰⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 151.

¹¹⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 260.

¹¹¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 261; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 152-153; cf. N. Höslinger, *Pius Parsch und die Erneuerung der christlichen Frömmigkeit*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 155-174, here 159; cf. R. Pacik, *Pius Parsch (1884-1954)*, in: *LQF* 98, vol. 2, 886-900, here 897; cf. B. J. Krawczyk, *Der Laie in Liturgie und Theologie bei Pius Parsch*, 153.

¹¹² Devotion based on the grace of God, achieved by Jesus Christ through his work of redemption.

¹¹³ Devotion based on observing the commandments. Avoid sins and fulfil the commandments of God.

¹¹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949-50), 329-340.

Barcelona¹¹⁵. Grace, which is the new relationship worked by Christ between God and man, was esteemed by Parsch as the centre and the essence of Christianity. He also regretted devotion which is based on the commandments, a fact that prevailed in the Middle Ages. The devotion which was based on the commandments concentrated on the observance of the commands and the avoidance of sins. He was convinced that only the active participation in the Holy Mass would help the faithful to enter into the new spirit of the devotion based on grace especially through the reception of the Holy Communion, which is the nourishment of grace.¹¹⁶ The type of Christian spirituality and devotion that Pius Parsch promotes and proposes is found under various designations in his writings: objektive Frömmigkeit, liturgische Frömmigkeit, Gemeinschafts-Frömmigkeit.¹¹⁷

2.3. SACRAMENTS AND THE SACRAMENTAL CHARACTER

2.3.1. The Sacramental Character as an Indelible Mark on the Soul

The word ‘character’ signifies a mark by means of which one thing is distinguished from another. It is, moreover, a persistent, permanent mark, or an indelible mark: a stamp or imprint on the soul which will never be effaced. This permanent stamp persists throughout this life and the life to come.¹¹⁸ There are three sacraments which impress this stamp on the soul: baptism, confirmation and holy orders.¹¹⁹ The sacramental character is an indelible mark on the soul which distinguishes a Christian from a non-Christian. The baptized, the confirmed, and the ordained are in

¹¹⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, „Schenke allen, denen du Glauben gabst, auch den Frieden,“ in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951-52), 310-317.

¹¹⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, „Schenke allen, denen du Glauben gabst, auch den Frieden,“ in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951-52), 310-317; cf. R. Pacik, Pius Parsch (1884-1954), in: *LQF* 98, vol. 2, 886-900, here 898.

¹¹⁷ Cf. B.J. Krawczyk, *Der Laie in Liturgie und Theologie bei Pius Parsch*, 149.

¹¹⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 100; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 8, 474.

¹¹⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 100 and 389; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 8, 474. The Catechism of Catholic Church teaches: “The three sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders confer, in addition to grace, a sacramental character or ‘seal’ by which the Christian shares in Christ’s priesthood and is made a member of the Church according to different states and functions. This configuration to Christ and to the Church, brought about by the Spirit, is indelible, it remains for ever in the Christian as a positive disposition for grace, a promise and guarantee of divine protection, and as a vocation to divine worship and to the service of the Church. Therefore these sacraments can never be repeated.” CCC 1121. The term ‘character’ was taken from the ancient pagan cultures where it is referred to a seal by which a soldier or a slave was marked for identification. Tertullian and Augustine took up the same term and applied it to the sacramental ritual to mean the rite of sealing by which a person became Christian for life. Cf. E. D’Lima and T. P. Urumpackal, *Sacraments in General*, 14.

some way different from those that are not baptized, not confirmed or not ordained and this difference lasts for ever – in this life, in heaven or in hell.¹²⁰

There are sacraments which have only a transient effect and do not impress any character on the soul. Examples of these are the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist. When I go to confession my sins are forgiven provided I confess them properly and am sorry for them. But my confession is no guarantee that I will not sin again, and if I do sin again I must go to confession again. Hence, the sacrament of penance does not impress a character on my soul.¹²¹ The same is true of the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. It replenishes the energy of grace but not permanently. I must receive communion often. Both these sacraments must be received often for we are continually in need of the strength which they give.¹²² But the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and holy orders give something permanent, something invisible and spiritual that lasts in a lifetime and beyond. They may be received only once. They cannot be repeated, even though we may have lost the grace of the sacrament and indeed every bond of union with the Church. It is this permanent matter that we call the sacramental character.¹²³

According to Parsch, in order to penetrate into the doctrine of the sacramental character¹²⁴ we must get into the doctrine of the Mystical Body of the Church. Christ is the head of this body, the Church itself is the body and the Christians are the members. The incorporation into this body is permanent. The baptized person is a permanent member of Christ's Body both on earth and in heaven. When a baptized person loses sanctifying grace, he does not thereby cease to be a member of Christ's

¹²⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 389; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 61.

¹²¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 100.

¹²² Cf. *ibid.*, 100-101.

¹²³ Cf. *ibid.*, 101.

¹²⁴ The council of Florence taught that baptism, confirmation, and orders impress an indelible spiritual sign or character upon the soul. Cf. Council of Florence: Bull *Exultate Deo*: Decree for the Armenians, in: Denzinger, 1313. The Council of Trent condemned those who deny that these three sacraments imprint a character upon the soul, a spiritual indelible sign, wherefore these sacraments cannot be repeated. Cf. Council of Trent: Decree on the Sacraments, in: Denzinger, 1609. St. Thomas Aquinas taught that this character was a sharing in the priesthood of Jesus Christ. The doctrine of sacramental characters is derived by St. Augustine from the knowledge that baptism cannot be repeated. Cf. W. H. Woestman, *Sacraments: Initiation, Penance, Anointing of the Sick*, Bangalore 2005, 20. Vatican II spoke several times of sacramental characters: Incorporated into the Church by baptism, the faithful are appointed by their baptismal character to Christian religious worship; reborn as sons of God, they must profess before men the faith they have received from God through the Church. By the sacrament of Confirmation they are more perfectly bound to the Church and are endowed with the special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread the faith by word and deed. LG 11.

body. A broken, withered member he may be, but still a member. He cannot be compared with a pagan. The pagan is not a member of Christ. The baptized person remains as a member even when he has lost grace. This brings us closer to the understanding of the sacramental character. The purpose of the character is to bind the member to the Mystical Body.¹²⁵

Parsch makes his point even clearer by means of an illustration. A stone statue falls from its pedestal and an arm is broken off. Now when a living man breaks his arm, it does not break off; it can be set again and once more becomes a sound, healthy limb.¹²⁶ Here Parsch points out the difference. A statue's arm has no life. It is not bound to the body by living tissue, muscles and ligaments. But the living arm of a man is bound. It remains a part of the body even when it is broken. Now the sacramental character is like this bond of living tissue and muscles. It binds a Christian so closely to Christ's Body that even when he loses grace he remains a member of the body. Parsch sees it as an advantage because the healing process, the restoration of grace, is easier than it would be if the Christians were completely separated from the body.¹²⁷

In Parsch's opinion, the sacramental character is like the ligaments and muscles and blood-vessels of Christ's Body. Our muscles and blood-vessels keep the members united with the body. They convey nourishment to them and keep them alive and healthy, strong and serviceable. This is true even in the instance of the sacramental character. In his view, the sacramental character is the vessel of sanctifying grace – not sanctifying grace itself but the vessel of sanctifying grace. The vessel may be empty but at least it is there and it is able to conduct the streams of grace. Therefore, we can say that the sacramental character is the vessel through which grace flows. Since our baptism that vessel has been there permanently, ready to conduct grace.¹²⁸

2.3.2. The Sacramental Character and the Degree of Incorporation into the Church

As already mentioned above, the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and holy order confer a character on a person. Three levels of incorporation of members into the

¹²⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 101; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 61-62.

¹²⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 100-101.

¹²⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 102; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 62.

¹²⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 62-63.

Body of Christ are enhanced through their sacramental character.¹²⁹ Each sacramental character impresses a mark on the soul, which is absolutely indelible. It is in fact a certain confirmation to Christ in his priesthood and it is the basis and cause of the hierarchical order in the structure of the Church. This explains a remarkable difference between sanctifying grace and the sacramental character: grace can be lost but the sacramental character cannot be lost.¹³⁰ According to Parsch, it is not grace which incorporates the individual into the Mystical Body, but the possession of the baptismal character.¹³¹

By the character of baptism a person becomes a member of Christ and a temple of the Holy Spirit and as such remains forever. The sacrament of confirmation gives him a higher incorporation into the Body of Christ: he becomes a soldier and a missionary. He has the responsibility of spreading God's kingdom and of fighting against the powers of evil.¹³² The sacrament of ordination to priesthood attains an even higher level of incorporation: the priest is incorporated to Christ, who is the head of the Mystical Body; he is made a representative of Christ on earth and an instrument of the Holy Spirit.¹³³ "His work henceforth is to do the work of Christ in all its fullness and extent. In him Christ stands before the world dispensing grace with lavish hand."¹³⁴ It is through this threefold sacramental character that Christ's Mystical Body is built up and co-ordinated so magnificently. And all these three grades serve to attain the life of grace.¹³⁵

Pius Parsch was convinced that the sacramental character is intimately bound up with the royal priesthood of Christians¹³⁶. Baptism itself gives us a share in this royal priesthood by making us bearers of grace. The sacrament of confirmation is pre-eminently the sacrament of the royal priesthood of the laity. Holy order, however, gives an even higher degree of participation in Christ's priesthood. Therefore the sacramental character is the Christian's kingly and priestly dignity.¹³⁷ We see it in

¹²⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 475.

¹³⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

¹³¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 475 and 479; cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ's Body*, 42.

¹³² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 475.

¹³³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 389 and 476; cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ's Body*, 42; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 63.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹³⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 63; cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ's Body*, 43.

¹³⁶ We shall discuss the priesthood of Christians in detail in the chapter on the sacrament of Baptism.

¹³⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 64.

the Apocalypse of St. John, who put this hymn into the mouths of the blessed, “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slaughtered and by your blood you ransomed for God saints from every tribe and language and people and nation; you have made them to be a kingdom and priests serving our God, and they will reign on earth” (Rev. 5: 9-10). In virtue of his sacramental character a baptized person must do his utmost to keep his vessel filled to the brim with grace, and not allow any of it to be wasted. In addition to this the confirmed person has a duty to care for the life of other members. He is a pastor of souls, nothing less. He must see to it that those members committed to his care “have life and have it more abundantly”. He is himself a branch on which leaves and twigs must grow. He is an arm to convey life and nourishment to the fingers.¹³⁸

The sacramental character is not just a personal privilege. It involves duty. The sacrament of confirmation imposes on us a responsibility towards those in our charge. For example consider the parents’ responsibility towards their children, the superiors’ responsibility, and indeed most people’s towards their subjects, acquaintances and relatives. But the priest, by the reason of the special character he has received has a position of the highest responsibility in the Mystical Body. He is invested with Christ’s authority. He is Christ’s visible presence, a mediator, and as such is entrusted with the work of mediating the life of grace by administering the sacraments. He has the authority to forgive sins, to offer Christ’s sacrifice, to provide the food of grace. Thus these degrees of the sacramental character are entirely in the service of sanctifying grace: to bear it, to spread it far and wide, to give it.¹³⁹

2.3.3. The Sacramental Character and Priesthood

Through the sacrament of ordination a priest receives the sacramental character. This remains as a permanent mark on his soul. By means of the sacramental character a priest is inseparably united to the High Priesthood of Christ. Through this, he is enabled to participate and carry on the priesthood of Christ. By the sacramental

¹³⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 64.

¹³⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 389; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 63-64. Parsch quotes here St. Thomas, who expressed this exactly when he said, “The sacramental character is a share in the priesthood of Christ.” Christ’s priesthood consists in sanctifying and giving life to the world. And Christians are permitted to share in this work by bearing and preserving grace in the vessels of our own souls, by mediating it to others.

character he is enabled to administer the mysteries of God.¹⁴⁰ “Der sakramentale Charakter des Priesters ist eine Würde, um die ihn Engel beneiden können, eine Würde, vor der sich Fürsten und Könige beugen müssen, ja, die nicht einmal der Gottesmutter zuteil geworden ist.”¹⁴¹

Parsch stressed the fact that the character is granted primarily for the good of the Church and only secondarily for the benefit of the priest himself.¹⁴² This character does not depend on sanctifying grace or on the personal virtue of the priest – a fact which is of great benefit to the faithful and to the Church as a whole. The priest being the representative of Christ is an instrument through whom the Holy Spirit can work no matter whether he is a personally good man or not.¹⁴³ Parsch viewed that it would have the gravest consequences for everybody if the sacramental character of the priesthood were dependent on the priest’s state of grace;¹⁴⁴ for in this case the faithful could never be absolutely certain that any particular Mass or sacrament was valid. But as things are the Mass and the sacraments are always valid if they are properly enacted by a validly ordained priest because they are totally independent of the personal state of his soul. They depend on his permanent character.¹⁴⁵

The priestly character is an immense benefit for the Church. In Parsch’s opinion it is in the confessional, in the pulpit, and above all, at the altar that the sacramental character of the priest is most evident.¹⁴⁶ The sacramental character of the priest is of supreme importance in the Holy Mass. Indeed, all faithful offer the Mass, but the priest, in virtue of the sacramental character, visibly and actually represents Christ,

¹⁴⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 390.

¹⁴¹ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁴² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 389; cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ’s Body*, 54.

¹⁴³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 185-190, here 186; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 148-149 and 485.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 148-149 and 485. Here Parsch refers to the principle of *ex opere operato*. The council of Trent speaking about sacraments in general cites, “if anyone says that a minister in the state of mortal sin, though he observes all the essentials that belong to the effecting and conferring of the sacrament, does not effect or confer the sacrament, let him be anathema.” Cf. Council of Trent: Decree on the Sacraments, in: Denzinger 1612. The article 1128 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church speaks of this principle: “This is the meaning of the Church’s affirmation that the sacraments act *ex opere operato* (literally: “by the very fact of the action’s being performed”), i.e., by virtue of the saving work of Christ, accomplished once for all. It follows that the sacrament is not wrought by the righteousness of either the celebrant or the recipient, but by the power of God. From the moment that a sacrament is celebrated in accordance with the intention of the Church, the power of Christ and his Spirit acts in and through it, independently of the personal holiness of the minister. Nevertheless, the fruits of the sacraments also depend on the disposition of the one who receives them.” Cf. CCC 1128.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 101 and 389; cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ’s Body*, 54.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 484.

who is at the same time the High Priest and victim of the sacrifice. Above all this is expressed in the canon of the Mass. At the consecration the priest is so identified with Christ that he does the very actions and says the very words which Christ used at the Last Supper. It is in the place of Christ that he says, "This is my body, this is my blood." The priest's power to consecrate is derived immediately and solely from his sacramental character.¹⁴⁷ But apart from these most fundamental instances, all the pastoral actions of the priest are reinforced by an appreciation on the part of the faithful of his sacramental character. Any word of exhortation or admonition, whether inside or outside the Church, has a greater impact if the people are truly convinced that through the priest Christ and the Holy Spirit are at work. The sacramental character of the priesthood is, therefore, a primary source of strength in his pastoral work.¹⁴⁸

The possession of the sacramental character has tremendous implications for the priest himself. According to Parsch, it is a constant reminder to the priest that he must ever strive to live up to the dignity which he bears. The faithful rightly expect that the one who represents Christ to them should be Christ-like. He should attempt to model his own way of life and his outlook on the teaching of Christ.¹⁴⁹ "The more the priest realises the consequences of the sacramental character, the more he will find it and inspiration for his pastoral zeal and a motive for virtuous living."¹⁵⁰ "The priest by his sacramental character is organically united with Christ, the head of the Church. In him Christ stands before the Christian Community."¹⁵¹

2.3.4. The Sacramental Character and the Holy Mass

In Parsch's opinion, the Holy Mass expresses a clear picture of the sacramental character because the Mass is a gathering of the baptized, the confirmed, the ordained and Christ himself is in their midst, present in the symbolism of the altar, and present in the word of God and the sacrament. All three grades of Christians share in the priestly dignity of Christ in the holy sacrifice that he himself offers.¹⁵² All three enter into his divine-human life. As baptized, a person rejoices in being a

¹⁴⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 485; cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ's Body*, 56.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ's Body*, 56.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, 56-57.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 57.

¹⁵¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ's Body*, 82.

¹⁵² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 105 and 388; cf. B. J. Krawczyk, *Der Laie in Liturgie und Theologie bei Pius Parsch*, 71; cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ's Body*, 65.

living member of His Body; as confirmed, a person rejoices in being allowed to share his messianic work: for the Eucharist enables us to be the warriors, victors, pastors and apostles. As ordained, one rejoices to be the representative of the great High Priest, steward of his holy mysteries, and sharer in his preaching office. The Holy Mass makes all of us aware of that high dignity, which is ours through the sacramental character. We are exhorted anew to place the precious fruit of grace on this golden paten of the sacramental character.¹⁵³

2.3.5. The Sacramental Character and Sinners

Answering the question whether the sinners belong to the Mystical Body of Christ Parsch would say that if they are baptized into the Church, they have sacramental character which incorporates them; and this character is not lost by sin. Therefore, sinners do not lose membership. What they have lost by their sin is grace.¹⁵⁴ It is only those who have grace who are living and healthy members of the Body; those in mortal sin are thus atrophied or dead members, but they are still members as long as they are in this life. “Wer die Gnade verloren hat durch Todsünde, wer sich durch Unglauben von der Kirche losgesagt hat, gehört immer noch zum Leibe der Kirche, doch er ist ein gebrochenes und krankes Glied, solange er lebt.”¹⁵⁵ It is a merciful provision of the Almighty God that a sinner can still be a member of the Mystical Body; for as long as he survives here below there is always the possibility that he might repent, remove the obstacle to grace, and become an alive and healthy member again. This possibility exists only because of the permanence of sacramental character.¹⁵⁶ Therefore, we should all pray for sinners and do whatever we can to win them back: all healthy members of the Mystical Body have a responsibility towards sick members. Of course, if the sinner dies unrepentant he is cut off from the body and perishes. His fate is that of the branch of which Christ said, “Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned” (Jn. 15: 6). This is final reprobation – the amputation of the member.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 105 and 388; cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ's Body*, 65.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 476.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 476; cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ's Body*, 43.

2.3.6. The Sacramental Character as a Strong Motive for Mutual Love

The sacramental character is also particularly a powerful motive for mutual charity and for a proper attitude in all things towards our fellow Christians. In Parsch's view, whenever I love my neighbour I do not love just the weak, erroneous or sinful person, but a member of Christ or even Christ himself. It is only through this thought that we truly understand what Christ meant when he said that he is, so to speak, hidden in a child, in a poor man, or in a superior.¹⁵⁸ On judgement day he will say to us, 'I was hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sick in prison' and he will add, "Whatsoever you did unto one of my least brethren, you did unto me" (cf. Mt. 25: 31ff). The Christian is a member of Christ; so whatever we do for our fellow Christian we do it to Christ himself. We can really love Christ only in our neighbour; good is done to Christ in him. At the same time, we can also understand the imprecation of Christ uttered against those who mislead one of his members into sin.¹⁵⁹ "If any one of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Mt. 18: 6).

The sacramental character is therefore a strong motive for mutual love and honour among the Christians. "In der Liturgie wird der Christ z. B. bei der Opferung oder Vesper inzensiert, als Glied Christi geehrt; auch die Ehrung einer christlichen Leiche ist das begründet; denn der sakramentale Charakter betrifft nicht bloß die Seele, sondern auch den Leib."¹⁶⁰ Therefore, in all our fellow-Christians we are to honour and love Christ's members.¹⁶¹ Parsch believed that the doctrine on the sacramental character is not just a dry theory but it is something that has the most important practical consequences in spurring us on in God's service. We are Christ's members, intimately united with his grace-filled Body. Therefore, in his view, we should be immensely grateful to God for binding us weak and vacillating human beings so closely to the very source of grace by means of the sacramental characters.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 482; cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ's Body*, 52.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ's Body*, 52.

¹⁶⁰ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 482.

¹⁶¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 482; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 52-53.

¹⁶² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 482; cf. P. Parsch, *We are Christ's Body*, 57. Parsch based his doctrine on the sacramental character in relation to the Mystical Body of Christ. "Ich halte diese Lehre vom sakramentalen Charakter in Verbindung mit dem Leibe Christi für überaus wichtig zum Verständnis tieferen Christentums." Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 476.

2.4. EFFECTS OF THE SACRAMENTS

2.4.1. Sacraments Foster Divine Life

Our life is consecrated through the sacraments and other means of grace. The sacraments foster divine life in us. Pius Parsch makes his point clear by showing how each sacrament promotes divine life in a person. He begins with the sacrament of priesthood. In the sacrament of priesthood Christ has given his Church a special sacrament, as a distributor of the means of grace, so to say as a generator of the life of grace. The priest is the distributor of the mystery of God. For this reason, every Christian must value the priesthood and pray for the priest.¹⁶³ According to Parsch, God has instituted the sacrament of marriage as pre-requirement for divine life. The sacrament of marriage too is at the service of divine life. Through the sacraments of priesthood and marriage the foundation is created for the divine life of each one. Marriage is the originator of earthly life and priesthood is the originator of divine life.¹⁶⁴ “Die Ehe ist die Pflanzstätte des göttlichen Lebens. Die Eheleute empfangen im Sakrament der Ehe die Gnadenkraft, die Leibeskinder zu machen.”¹⁶⁵

Parsch demonstrates how the sacrament of baptism fosters divine life in us, “Sie [die Taufe] ist die Wiedergeburt, also die zweite, viel wertvollere Geburt des Menschen zu einem höheren Leben. Die Taufe erhebt also zu einer neuen Lebensweise, da empfängt der Mensch heiliges Leben, er wird Glied des Leibes Christi. Der Christ soll daher das Taufbewusstsein eifrig pflegen.”¹⁶⁶ Parsch states that the sacrament of the Eucharist was instituted by Christ for the renewal of our baptism. The sacrament of Eucharist has the task to preserve the divine life, to feed it, and bring into growth and maturity.¹⁶⁷ For Christ says, “Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them” (Jn. 6: 56). Parsch makes this point more obvious by comparing the sacrament of the Eucharist to the earthly nourishment: I eat in order to grow, used energy will be substituted, I will be protected from death, I will overcome sickness, I will be able to work; this is the same with the case of the

¹⁶³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 127.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 127-128; cf. P. Parsch, *Zur Belebung des Taufbewußtseins* (Seelsorgsbrieft Nr. 8), Klosterneuburg [n.d.], 1-7.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, „Schenke allen, denen du den Glauben gabst, auch den Frieden“, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 310-317, here 313; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 307-308.

sacrament of the Eucharist; I receive the Eucharist in order to nurture the divine life in me.¹⁶⁸

The sacrament of confirmation fosters divine life too. In Parsch's words, "Die Feier der Eucharistie und der Empfang derselben ist eine priesterliche Tätigkeit, zu deren Erfüllung ein eigenes Sakrament bereitsteht: die Firmung. Sie ist auch das Sakrament der Reife, der Befestigung im göttlichen Leben, zugleich der Befähigung, anderen das göttliche Leben zu vermitteln."¹⁶⁹ The sacraments of reconciliation and the anointing of the sick are the sacraments that heal the sickness of divine life.¹⁷⁰ Thus, Parsch affirmed that "all the sacraments are at the service of the divine life."¹⁷¹

2.4.2. Sacraments Impart Holy Spirit

The sacraments, which are the sources of grace, have the Holy Spirit as their author and minister.¹⁷² During his life on earth Christ did everything for his little band of disciples. He was their consoler, their guide, their teacher, their forgiver, their father. They themselves bear witness that they lacked nothing while he was there to guide them. Therefore we can imagine how painful it was for them to learn that their master was going to leave them. Christ consoled them at the Last Supper. He told them that he would not leave them orphans, but would send someone else to be their friend, to remain with them, to work in them, to teach them everything, and to remind them of what he himself had taught them. This other friend is the Holy Spirit.¹⁷³ "All the sacraments derive their power and effectiveness from the Holy Spirit."¹⁷⁴ It is for the Holy Spirit to do in the Church whatever Christ did for his disciples during his life on earth. Christ did it visibly; the Holy Spirit will do it invisibly. Christ did it mainly corporally; the Holy Spirit will do it spiritually and interiorly.¹⁷⁵ How then is the Holy Spirit going to do all this? In Parsch's opinion the ordinary means that the Holy Spirit will use are the sacraments. We must nevertheless notice that the sacraments are not merely means and instruments

¹⁶⁸ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 128.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ *Cf. ibid.*

¹⁷¹ P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 285.

¹⁷² *Cf. P. Parsch, Volksliturgie und Kirchenmusik, in: Bibel und Liturgie 9 (1934/35) 369-374, here 369; cf. P. Parsch, Die liturgische Predigt, vol. 6, 395.*

¹⁷³ *Cf. P. Parsch, Die liturgische Predigt, vol. 6, 395; cf. P. Parsch, Sermons on the Liturgy: For Sundays and Feast Days, 193.*

¹⁷⁴ P. Parsch, *We are Christ's Body*, 34; *cf. P. Parsch, Die liturgische Predigt, vol. 6, 395.*

¹⁷⁵ *Cf. P. Parsch, Die liturgische Predigt, vol. 6, 148.*

whereby the Holy Spirit brings grace into our souls; they are also channels through which He Himself will come into the soul.¹⁷⁶

Parsch now takes the sacraments one by one. In most cases we find that the bible and the liturgy will bear witness that the Holy Spirit himself is their author and minister. First of all, he speaks of the three sacraments which impress a sacramental character. According to him these stand under the sign of the Holy Spirit by the virtue of their character.¹⁷⁷ In the olden days the rite of baptism contained the following words, “Depart, thou unclean spirit, and make room for the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete”. Another prayer reads: “Depart from this creature of God, whom our Lord has graciously chosen to be His temple, so that it may be a pure temple of the living God and the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit”. Thus in baptism a man becomes a Church of the Holy Spirit, a Church into which the Holy Spirit does not come merely occasionally, but in which he dwells continually through His grace. By means of the sacramental character the whole Christian, body and soul, is consecrated as Church is consecrated.¹⁷⁸

The sacrament of confirmation stands under the special protection of the Holy Spirit. Parsch calls this sacrament a sacrament of the Holy Spirit.¹⁷⁹ This sacrament is a perfection of baptism. Therefore, it brings the sevenfold Holy Spirit – in stronger measure than in baptism. The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit denote the perfection of the Christian status. They give us the strength to overcome our fallen nature and to receive grace in full measure into our souls. The sacrament of baptism lays the foundation, makes us temples of the Holy Spirit; the sacrament of confirmation perfects this work in us and makes this temple into a consecrated Church.¹⁸⁰

In Parsch’s view, the effect of the Holy Spirit is even greater in the sacrament of holy orders. This might be proved from the prayers of the rite of administration. Here he draws our attention particularly to the priestly greeting which is used so often in the Mass and in other parts of the liturgy: *Dominus vobiscum – Et cum spiritu tuo*. By

¹⁷⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 148-149; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 326.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 326; cf. P. Parsch, *The Church’s Year of Grace: Easter to Pentecost*, vol. 3, 45.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 326; cf. B. J. Krawczyk, *Der Laie in Liturgie und Theologie bei Pius Parsch*, 143.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 395; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 326-327.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 395.

these words the priest reminds the faithful of their great calling.¹⁸¹ They are men in grace; Christ dwells within them; they are members of Christ. Then the faithful remind the priest that he is a bearer and an instrument of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is united so intimately with the priest that he is his spirit.¹⁸² In the Church the Holy Spirit operates through the priest and by means of the priest. Thus in these three sacraments which give a sacramental character we see the power and indwelling of the Holy Spirit working in ever increasing measure, “In der Taufe ist der Mensch Tempel des Hl. Geistes, der in ihm wohnt. In der Firmung wirkt der siebenfältige Geist mit seinen sieben Gaben im Menschen. In den priesterlichen Weihen entfaltet sich die sakramentale Kraft des Hl. Geistes für die Kirche.”¹⁸³

The sacrament of penance also stands under the power of the Holy Spirit. When Christ first appeared to the disciples after his resurrection, he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained” (Jn. 20: 22-23). Through this, Christ granted the apostles and their successors the full authority to forgive sins and they received this power and authority through the Holy Spirit.¹⁸⁴ Finally, the Holy Eucharist is also a sacrament of the Holy Spirit. To give a metaphor the Eucharist is the Holy Spirit’s loom; it is there that he weaves the robe of grace. Where Christ’s Body is present there is the Holy Spirit. He came down upon Jesus at his baptism in Jordan and gave him his messianic consecration. Thus, the Christians who receive the body of the Lord in the sacrament of Eucharist also receive the Holy Spirit with his power of grace. More on the relationship between Eucharist and the Holy Spirit will be discussed in the chapter on the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.¹⁸⁵ In Parsch’s opinion of a Christian is a fortunate creature because he is overshadowed by the Holy Spirit as often as he receives a sacrament. He has with him a power which is both mighty and gentle. He is a holy creature for he is the dwelling-place and the Church of the exalted Spirit of God.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 397; cf. P. Parsch, *Die Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 1* (1926/27) 311-317 here 313; cf. „Schenke allen, denen du den Glauben gabst, auch den Frieden“, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 19* (1951/52), 310-317 here 316.

¹⁸² Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 327.

¹⁸³ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 396-397.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 397; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace* 328.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 406; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 328-329.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 406; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 329.

2.4.3. Sacraments as Healing Remedies

The sacraments are great means of healing the wounds of original sin in mankind. They are sources and instruments of grace and at the same time they are primarily means for remedying sin. In order to affirm his point Parsch divides the sacraments into two groups: consecratory and medicinal. The first group brings us sanctification and grace, the second group brings healing. The first group includes five sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Priesthood and Matrimony. These five sacraments are primarily intended to incorporate us into Christ's Body. The second group includes two sacraments: Penance and Anointing. These are designed to free us from sin and its consequences.¹⁸⁷

All the sacraments produce two effects: healing and holiness. Baptism is the gateway leading into the paradise of God's kingdom. Baptism, as mentioned earlier, gives us the great gift of grace, divine sonship, incorporation into Christ's Body, and the Holy Spirit as our abiding possession. These are the purely sanctifying effects. But we must not overlook the fact that baptism also calls us out of the darkness of sin. It takes away the guilt of original sin which had separated us from God. It also takes away all personal sins however grievous they may have been. Formerly a sinner man becomes a saint. Admittedly, baptism does not put him in the state of the original justice which Adam enjoyed. His tendency towards evil, his concupiscence, is still there. But by infusing the three theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, baptism gives him the healing strength that he needs to overcome his lower nature.¹⁸⁸

The sacrament of confirmation is also a sacrament which makes us holy. It confirms our incorporation into Christ's Body. But here again we must not overlook the healing properties of this sacrament. It strengthens us to fight against evil and makes us stronger to overcome our weaknesses.¹⁸⁹ "Die Firmung drückt uns jeden Tag das Schwert in die Hand, um gegen den bösen Feind zu kämpfen. Wir stehen am Rand eines Abgrundes, die Firmung ist uns ein Seil, Klammer und Haken, die uns vor dem Absturz in die Tiefe bewahren."¹⁹⁰ The Eucharist is the most magnificent of all the sacraments which unite us to Christ's Body. The Eucharist contains two things:

¹⁸⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 370; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 306.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 370.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 371; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 307.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 371.

healing and sanctification, medicine and food; food which strengthens and conserves the life of grace and brings it to maturity, medicine which brings us full health. It is the Eucharist, which particularly gives evidence to our thesis that as God's children we are still not free from the consequence of original sin.¹⁹¹

The sacrament of penance is a wonderful means of grace. According to Parsch it is a great blessing for us sinful persons to hear the priest in the place of God saying: "I absolve you from your sins".¹⁹² Then he poses a question: "Suppose there were no such thing as the sacrament of penance?"¹⁹³ Certainly, we could hope that Christ had forgiven our sins, but we would have no certainty to that fact. As it is, when we have confessed our sins with remorse and have received absolution, we have Christ's word and the Church that God has truly forgiven us our sins and we are His children once more.¹⁹⁴

The sacraments of states, matrimony and holy order, seem to have the least healing power in them. They are sanctifying sacraments. They raise the Christian and give him a share in Christ's priesthood or Christ's mystical union with his Church. Nevertheless there is something medicinal in these sacraments, too. To make it clearer Parsch poses a couple of questions, "Is not the priest the inn-keeper who looks after and heals those sick people who are brought to his inn?" "Is not a priest an exorcist to cast out devils?"¹⁹⁵ The Church is the institution for the healing of mankind; the priest is the physician and healer of the human soul. It is he who must continue Christ's healing work here on earth.¹⁹⁶ The anointing of the sick has two distinctive effects: it restores bodily health and prepares for a holy death.¹⁹⁷ "Wir können also in diesem Sakramente zwei verschiedene Gnadenmittel unterscheiden: ein Charisma oder Sakramentale und ein Sakrament. Das Charisma ist ein Heilmittel für den Leib, das Sakrament ist die Todesweihe des Christen."¹⁹⁸

¹⁹¹ Cf. P. Parsch, „Schenke allen, denen du den Glauben gabst, auch den Frieden“, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 310-317, here 313; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 307-308.

¹⁹² Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 308.

¹⁹³ *Ibid*

¹⁹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 372; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 308.

¹⁹⁵ P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 308-309.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 372; P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 308-309.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 440.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, 362.

2.5. SACRAMENTS AS SACRED SIGNS

2.5.1. Sacraments as Visible Signs Confirm an Invisible Reality

In order to substantiate sacraments as sacred signs Parsch extracts an instance from the bible, from the life of Jesus. Jesus worked many miracles in his life here on earth. One example is Jesus' healing of the deaf man (cf. Mk. 7: 31-37). Parsch points out a difference in this miracle: Christ's usual practice was to bring healing by his word, but in this particular instance he makes use of certain outward signs.¹⁹⁹ Christ did so because he had an important object in his mind. He was obviously thinking of the sacred signs which his Church would use so frequently in ministering her sacraments and sacramentals. What Christ did here was to establish an important principle in administration of the sacraments. He touched the ears and the tongue of the deaf man, saying "be opened", with the result that the sick man was able to hear and speak. There were visible signs which produced a visible effect.²⁰⁰ It was something similar or rather something even greater that Christ instituted in his Church. For example, at baptism, water is poured on one's head and the words²⁰¹ are pronounced. The result is not something visible such as the healing of deafness or dumbness, but something invisible, yet infinitely greater: from being a sinful creature one becomes a child of God, in whom the Holy Spirit takes his dwelling; he puts on Christ as a garment. Therefore, though invisible, the effect is much greater here. This gives a deeper insight into the effect of the sacraments.²⁰²

The Catechism teaches that a sacrament is an outward sign of inward grace, ordained by Jesus Christ. It is a sign which gives invisible grace to our souls. According to Parsch, Christ wanted to link grace with special outward and visible signs.²⁰³ We have the pouring of water in the rite of baptism and the pronouncement of baptismal formula; laying-on of hands in confirmation and the anointing with chrism accompanied by the words of the bishop; the bread and wine which are changed by

¹⁹⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 300.

²⁰⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 364.

²⁰¹ "I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

²⁰² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 364. A sacrament is a sacred sign. It is a language that invests the material reality with meaningfulness. Jesus used language – pronouncing the word of healing – to bring wholeness to persons who were suffering. The prayers that accompany the celebration of a sacrament should always bring home to the recipients the care and goodness of God for them. Further, the visible word is meant to evoke faith in the community and in the recipient. Cf. E. D'Lima and T. P. Urumpackal, *Sacraments in General*, 53.

²⁰³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 364; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 300.

the words of consecration in the Eucharist, etc. Parsch opines that obviously Christ could have given us grace in a different way, without special signs, but it was his declared will to bestow the invisible grace to the visible signs instituted by him and preserved by the Church.²⁰⁴

Therefore, according to Parsch, if we want the effect of sacramental grace in our souls, we must receive these sacred signs with humility and obedience. The signs give us the assurance that we have really received the grace.²⁰⁵ “Stellen wir uns nur vor, die Kirche hätte nicht solche sichtbare Zeichen, wo gäbe es für uns eine Sicherheit des Empfanges der Gnade.”²⁰⁶ At baptism, when the Church pours water on a person’s head and pronounces the baptismal formula, the one to be baptized can be quite sure that the original sin and all his personal sins have been forgiven and that he is in grace. The fact that through these outward signs we have the assurance of having really received the grace of the sacrament is in itself a wonderful blessing especially as grace is something over which we have no control, something invisible. When we receive Holy Communion that is the visible sign of the consecrated species of the bread, we are quite certain that we have become most intimately united with Christ.²⁰⁷ Therefore, sacraments as visible signs are very important for the life of grace of a person for they are a confirmation and an external indication that a particular person has received grace.

2.5.2. The Purpose of Sacraments as Visible Signs

A person consists of both body and soul. His soul and body form a unity in him. The body acts upon the soul and the soul upon the body. They belong together and cannot be separated permanently. Through original sin these two parts have opposed. “The flesh lusts against the spirit” and *vice versa*.²⁰⁸ Christ came in order to bring these two into harmony. He did not work our redemption by abandoning sinful flesh to its fate and merely concentrating on the soul, making it holy and directing it to the Father. He took upon himself the burden and misery of human flesh – though not its sins – brought it to the cross, sacrificed it to the Heavenly Father as a sin offering for the world and finally brought it to salvation and glory. Thus with matter, i.e. the

²⁰⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 300-301.

²⁰⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 364; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 301.

²⁰⁶ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 365.

²⁰⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 364; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 301.

²⁰⁸ P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 301.

body, he did two things: he took it in humility upon himself and raised it on the cross. He linked matter to his own Godhead and glorified it. He humbled it and glorified it; that is what Christ did with sin-spoiled matter. That is how Christ brought the world to redemption.²⁰⁹

The Son of God himself first assumed human nature; human nature, which was weak and which existed under the curse of the original sin. He humbly took this upon himself and raised it upon the cross, and thereby paid the price of our redemption.²¹⁰ St. Paul is quite overcome when he writes about this twofold act of humiliation, “Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross” (Phil. 2: 6-8). Basing on this, Parsch speaks about the twofold humiliation: the incarnation and the death on the cross. Christ’s entire life on earth can be summed up in one word: humility. That was the content of his saving work.²¹¹

The Mystical Christ, the Church, must also tread the same path of Christ and every Christian who would follow his Lord must do likewise. Just as people were scandalized by the lowliness of Christ’s life on earth, so is the world scandalized by the human element in the Church, by her weakness and her human institution. From this viewpoint we can gain a better understanding of the purpose of the outward signs of the sacraments. Just as Christ assumed an earthly body, these signs take up matter and introduce it into the redemption. Therefore they have a twofold purpose: to make us share in Christ’s lowliness, and also to prepare and to foreshadow the glorification of matter.²¹²

2.5.2.1. Sharing in Christ’s Humiliation

Pius Parsch infers that the natural man may in his pride even refuse these sacred signs in his life by stating that he does not need them or by saying he wants to have grace directly from God without the medium of the sacraments. For example, many people decline the sacrament of confession. In Parsch’s opinion, a Christian has to

²⁰⁹ Cf. Die liturgische Predigt, vol. 6, 365-366; cf. P. Parsch, Seasons of Grace, 301.

²¹⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, Seasons of Grace, 301.

²¹¹ Cf. Die liturgische Predigt, vol. 6, 366; cf. P. Parsch, Seasons of Grace, 302.

²¹² Cf. P. Parsch, Seasons of Grace, 302.

learn to sacrifice his own will. He has to learn the lesson which the Syrian Naaman (cf. 2 Kings 5: 1-14) learned. Naaman considered it below his dignity to bathe seven times in the waters of Jordan: because he thought the waters of his own native place were more curative. But God has attached grace to this particular sign and one must accept this with humility. It is Parsch's conviction that this is a lesson that every Christian has to learn. We must accept with humility all the signs that the Church and her liturgy use.²¹³ These include: the sacramentals, signs of the cross, genuflection, holy water etc. They are all bearers of invisible grace, just as Christ's body was the bearer of his Godhead. Let us not say in our pride that the spiritual person has no need of such things. It is in humbly accepting all the Church's signs, and indeed the visible Church as such, that we share in 'Christ's humiliation', and make it the instrument and the means of grace.²¹⁴

2.5.2.2. Sharing in Christ's Glorification

Christ was not stagnated by the humiliation and kenosis he had to endure. As St. Paul rightly puts it: "Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2: 9-11). By the humiliation of his flesh Christ raised human nature to the heights of the Godhead. He sits at the right hand of the Father.²¹⁵ And he also brings the redeemed to glory, uniting them and incorporating them as members into his own Mystical Body. Indeed, the whole of creation is to be brought to glory through Christ.²¹⁶ According to Parsch this is the second purpose of these outward signs: the glorification of matter. Here on earth, creation becomes the instrument and the bearer of grace in the sacraments while foreshadowing its own eventual glorification. Creation, as St. Paul realized so vividly, yearns and groans for its glorification.²¹⁷

The Holy Eucharist is the fairest and most striking symbol of this glorification of nature. Bread and wine are the best and noblest things that nature yields by way of food. Through the sacred rites of the Church these are changed into the loftiest things

²¹³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 366-367.

²¹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 366; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 302-303.

²¹⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 367.

²¹⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 367.

²¹⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, 367.

of all: i.e. into the Body and Blood of the Son of God; indeed into that body which is glorified and raised to the Godhead in Heaven. Since we ourselves have given these gifts in the offertory, their consecration and their reception in communion already constitute a glorification of our lowly human nature.²¹⁸

Thus, according to Parsch, as often as we make use of an outward sign in the liturgy, we are symbolizing and preparing the glorification of matter and of creation. Humiliation and glorification was Jesus' lot in his earthly life. Humiliation and glorification is the way that the Church has to go through in this world. Therefore, the whole purpose of the visible signs of our sacraments is to lead us through humiliation to glorification. Parsch holds that the sacraments as visible signs are of paramount importance in the life of every Christian because as visible signs, the sacraments confirm an invisible reality.²¹⁹

2.6. THE PRIMACY OF THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY EUCHARIST

2.6.1. The Holy Eucharist as the Queen of all the Sacraments

In order to affirm the centrality of the sacrament of the Eucharist Parsch shows its connection and relation with other sacraments. The sacraments are intimately connected with each other. In the opinion of the Canon from Klosterneuburg they are but one sacrament with different powers and effects. They have, so to say, but one focal centre, and that is the Eucharist. The remaining sacraments prepare for the Eucharist and are embedded in the Eucharist.²²⁰

Parsch considers each of the sacraments in their relation to the Holy Eucharist. According to him, the sacrament of baptism is a preparation for the Holy Eucharist. In the early Church, the neophytes were well prepared to celebrate the Eucharist as soon as they had been baptized. The white robe in which they were clothed and the burning light they took in their hands, symbolized their active participation in the priesthood of the faithful. With these they entered the church in order to take part in the celebration of their first mass and to receive Holy Communion for the first time. Thus their baptism led them to the Holy Eucharist.²²¹

²¹⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 303.

²¹⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

²²⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 374; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 311.

²²¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 374; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 311-312.

The same is true of the sacrament of confirmation. It is the sacrament of the royal priesthood of the faithful. Anyone who had not been confirmed was not allowed to receive the Holy Communion in the early Church.²²² Penance too is a preparation for the Eucharist. It removes the sins, which would prevent the faithful from receiving and celebrating the Eucharist.²²³ Here Parsch observes the practices of the early time. In the olden times, penitents and catechumens were not allowed to be present at the sacrificial part of the Mass.²²⁴

The two sacraments of state, matrimony and priesthood, are also embedded in the Eucharist and grow out of it. As it is well known, the sacrament of matrimony should be ministered and received in conjunction with the nuptial Mass. The various grades of the priesthood are also given in the course of Mass. The main purpose of the priesthood is to bring forth the Eucharist by the act of consecration. Thus all the sacraments converge upon the Eucharist as their centre.²²⁵

2.6.2. The Holy Eucharist enlivens all other Sacraments

The sacrament of the Holy Eucharist is the most excellent among all the sacraments.²²⁶ Through the Holy Eucharist all other sacraments are renewed and enlivened: “Die Eucharistie aber ist wie das Herz der Kirche, von dem aus das Blut in alle Glieder geführt wird, von dem alle Sakramente Erneuerung und Belebung empfangen.”²²⁷ All sacraments give grace; but the Holy Eucharist brings us the author of grace, Jesus Christ himself.²²⁸ It is a sacrament above all other sacraments, for Christ bequeathed it to us as a memorial of his suffering and death. Moreover it

²²² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 374; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 312. Here it is to be kept in mind that Parsch speaks in the context that existed in the early Church. In the early Church it was the practice that by the adult initiation, the administration of the sacrament of Confirmation followed immediately after the Baptism. The order of the sacrament was then Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

²²³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 374; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 312.

²²⁴ Cf. P. Parsch *Seasons of Grace*, 312. What Parsch here observes cannot be generalised. Because there were differences in the observances according to face and time. For a better understanding of the same confer: R. Meßner, *Einführung in die Liturgiewissenschaft* (UTB 2173), 2nd ed., Paderborn 2009.

²²⁵ Cf. P. Parsch *Seasons of Grace*, 312.

²²⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 326; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 273.

²²⁷ Cf. *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 384.

²²⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/1950), 329-340, here 335. Stating the pre-eminence of the Most Holy Eucharist over the other sacraments, the council of Trent cites, “But the Eucharist also has this unique mark of distinction that, whereas the other sacraments have the power of sanctifying only when someone makes use of them, in the Eucharist the Author of sanctity himself is present before the sacrament is used.” Cf. Council of Trent: Decree on the Sacrament of the Eucharist, in: Denzinger, 1639.

makes present for us his sacrificial death on the cross. But before all else it is the nutrient of the life of grace.²²⁹ Christ has told us in so many words that the Christian cannot remain in a state of grace without the Holy Eucharist. Just as our bodily life requires earthly food the life of grace needs the Eucharist. Just as earthly food gives a man health, growth, strength for work, so does the Holy Eucharist give the Christian a healthy, strong and sturdy life of grace, ready for labour and toil.²³⁰

Man's final goal is the life of glory – his own glorification, body and soul. We are waiting for the Redeemer, our Lord Jesus Christ. He will change the lowliness of our body and make it conform to the body of his glory. The Eucharist is the pledge of this future glory. For Christ himself said, "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day" (Jn. 6:54). The Eucharist, therefore, is the sacrament of our glorification, that is, the change of our grace into glory.²³¹

2.6.2. The Holy Eucharist as "Fountain of Youth"

Parsch adds yet another respect in which the Holy Eucharist is the focal centre of all other sacraments. Those sacraments, which can be received only once, have their "fountain of youth", their renewal in the Eucharist. Baptism, confirmation, priesthood, and matrimony are the sacraments which we can be receive only once, but we can renew their effect and their power by receiving the Holy Eucharist.²³² In Parsch's own words, "Wenn wir also würdig und recht die Sonntagsmesse feiern und die Kommunion empfangen, dann werden wir neu getauft, neu gefirmt, neu zum Priester geweiht und neu verehelicht."²³³ Therefore, according to Parsch we must stir up in ourselves the awareness of this fact. At every celebration of the Mass we open wide the floodgates of these four sacraments. We become new children of God like in baptism; the Holy Spirit comes with his sevenfold gift upon us as he did in our

²²⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/1950), 329-340, here 335; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 273

²³⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Liturgie und Arbeiter*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/1950), 2-12, here 3; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 273. The Catechism of the Church speaks about the unique place that the sacrament of the Eucharist has. According to it, it is the "Sacrament of sacraments": "all other sacraments are ordered to it as to their end." Cf. CCC 1211. The presence of Christ in the Eucharist makes this sacrament above all other sacraments as "the perfection of the spiritual life and the end of to which all the sacraments tend." Cf. CCC 1374.

²³¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here 333; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 273.

²³² Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 273.

²³³ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 375.

confirmation; we receive the grace to exercise the two sacraments of state: Christ's priesthood and matrimony, the mystical union of Christ with his Church. This is what Parsch means when he says that the Eucharist is the great "fountain of youth" in which the Church and Christians are renewed, strengthened and refreshed.²³⁴ For him, the Mass and most especially Sunday Mass, is the most important event in the life of the Church and of the individual Christian. It must stand in the centre. From the Eucharist all strength, grace and blessing proceed.²³⁵

²³⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 312.

²³⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 373.

PART TWO

PIUS PARSCH AND THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

CHAPTER ONE

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

The sacrament of baptism is the first stage of the rite of Christian initiation. Among all the sacraments, holy baptism holds the primary place because it is the gateway to spiritual life; by it we are made members of Christ and belong to his body, the Church.¹ Baptism has been practiced from the very beginning of the Church as the rite of entrance to it. Jesus' own baptism by John the Baptist in the Jordan is considered as the prototype of Christian baptism.² It was foreshadowed in the Old Testament by circumcision and typified by the crossing of the Red Sea.³ Christian baptism is regarded as the New Testament fulfilment and replacement of circumcision (cf. Col. 2: 11). Just as Jewish circumcision meant reception into the Old Covenant, Christian baptism means reception into the New Covenant.⁴ Baptism is regarded necessary for salvation. As Christ himself said, "No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit" (Jn. 3: 5). The Council of Trent declared: "If any one says that Baptism is optional, that is not necessary for salvation, let him be anathema."⁵

The early Church presumed that it is through baptism that one becomes a member of the Christian community, that is, the community of those who believe in the salvific meaning of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The people who had gathered at the Pentecostal event and had listened to Peter regarding the life, death

¹ Council of Florence: Bull *Exsultate Deo*: Decree for the Armenians, in: Denzinger, 1314. The name "baptism" came from the Greek noun βάπτισμα, "the dipping, washing", less commonly βαπτισμός, stemming from the verb βάπτω, "to dip" or "immerse". In the New Testament (NT) this verb is used only in the literal sense (cf. Lk.16: 24; cf. Jn. 13: 26; cf. Rev. 19: 13). From this form the iterative from βαπτίζω is derived, which in classical Greek, was used in the literal sense of "dipping" and in the figurative sense of "being overwhelmed" with suffering and miseries. The latter figurative meaning occurs in the NT where Christ and his Apostle are described as "baptized" with suffering (cf. Mk. 10: 38-39). For the rest of the NT, however, the verb βαπτίζω has its technical sense signifying the religious ceremony of baptism. The nouns are also used in a technical religious sense: βαπτισμός designates the act of baptizing; βάπτισμα, used only in the NT and by later Christian writers, signifies baptism as an institution; and ὁ βαπτιστής (the baptizer) become the title of John the Baptist. This development of technical terminology demonstrates that baptism was considered something special, something new; therefore, these technical terms were merely transliterated, not translated, into the Latin alphabet as baptizo, baptisma, and baptista. Cf. H. Mueller, Baptism (in the Bible), in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 2, 56-60, here 56.

² Cf. A. Kavanagh, The Shape of Baptism: The Rite of Christian Initiation (Studies in the Reformed Rites of the Catholic Church 1), New York 1978, 10.

³ Cf. H. Mueller, Baptism (in the Bible), in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 2, 56-60, here 56.

⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

⁵ Council of Trent: Decree on the Sacraments, in: Denzinger, 1618.

and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth and its salvific meaning, asked Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” Peter’s response to them was the expression of the faith of the whole Church: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2: 37-38). Baptism thus marks the entrance and incorporation into the community of believers, the presupposition of being a Christian.⁶ In this chapter we shall discuss Parsch’s teaching and understanding on the sacrament of baptism.

1.1. THEOLOGY OF BAPTISM IN THE WRITINGS OF PIUS PARSCH

1.1.1. Baptism as a Great Turning Point in One’s Life

Pius Parsch cites the example of St. Paul and the incident that led to his conversion in order to illustrate the idea of baptism as a turning point in the life of a Christian. Saul was well known as a bitter enemy of the Church. He persecuted Christians wherever he found them. Christ, however, appeared to him before the gates of Damascus and said to him, “Saul, Saul why do you persecute me?” (cf. Acts 9: 4). Blinded by his vision Saul was led into Damascus. For three days he ate and drank nothing. It was then when his conversion took place. A disciple named Ananias was sent to him to baptize him. And through this Saul became a believer. Immediately he arose and began to preach Christ.⁷ But Paul was no mere firebrand. His conversion was complete. He had now to suffer many hardships and was moved to tears when in the following years he thought of what Christ had done for him. From being a persecutor of the Church, he became Christ’s disciple and an apostle.⁸ The Damascus experience, that is, Paul’s encounter with the Risen Lord, was a watershed in his life. In his epistle to the Galatians St. Paul writes, “You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. [...]. But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles” (Gal. 1: 13-16). Extracting these instances from the life of St. Paul, Parsch affirms, “St. Paul was aware that his baptism had not merely brought

⁶ Cf. A. Jungmann and K. Stasiak, *Baptism, Sacrament of*, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 2, 60-67, here 65.

⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 332; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 278; cf. Acts 9: 1-30.

⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 332; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 278.

about a conversion in his way of life, but that something fundamental had altered in his soul, in his whole being. He had become a man in grace, from being a man deprived of grace.”⁹

Parsch brings up yet another example from the early Christians to show how important and significant the sacrament of baptism is, and how it really becomes a landmark in the life of an individual. For he says: “So conscious were the early Christians of their baptism as being the great turning-point in their lives, that after baptism they would often leave the world. If they held any public office, they would lay it aside. They realized that every department of life was saturated with paganism.”¹⁰ Parsch adds, “So conscious were they of the supreme importance of baptism and of the fact that it made a complete break in their lives, that they often delayed receiving it until they had reached adult life.”¹¹ He observed that St. Augustine and many of the saints received baptism at a later age in their lives. According to Parsch, they delayed the reception of baptism because they wanted to make a firm and clear-cut decision: for they had a horror of falling into any serious sin once they had been baptized.¹² Bringing forth the above illustrations, Parsch affirms firmly that the sacrament of baptism is very vital in an individual’s personal life. It is a turning point in one’s life. Through baptism a person is transformed and made anew. “Er wird vom natürlichen zu einem übernatürlichen, ganz neuem Wesen gemacht; er wird ein vergöttlichtes Wesen.”¹³ The sacrament of baptism along with

⁹ P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 278. St. Paul speaks about this transition most emphatically in his letter to the Ephesians: “Once you were all darkness; now, in the Lord, you are all daylight. You must live as men native to the light” (Eph. 5: 8).

¹⁰ P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 278.

¹¹ *Ibid.* With the conversion of Constantine there was an end to persecution of Christians, there came a new phase in the history of Christianity, with the increasing number of conversion it proved impractical to retain the old system. Moreover, partly because of the severity of the penitential discipline for those who relapsed into serious sin after baptism, partly because the obligations of baptism were taken seriously, it became common in these centuries to postpone the baptism even of the children parents; to fill the gap created by the postponement of baptism a child could be admitted into the catechumenate early in life and remain indefinitely in this state, which involved a degree of attachment to the Church and entitlement to the name “Christian”, but not yet the name “faithful”, which was reserved to the baptized. Cf. E. Yarnold, *Catechumenate*, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 3, 249-254, here 250.

¹² Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 279. It is to be noted that these sorts of attitude later led to the abuse of delaying the reception of baptism until the hour of death. People did not consider they would be strong enough to live without sin after baptism, and they realized how wonderful it was to die in baptismal innocence. The Church never sanctioned this abuse, but the fact that there was such an abuse shows how convinced the early Christians were to receive the sacrament of baptism. Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 279.

¹³ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 420. St. Paul expresses this in the words: „It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me” (Gal. 2: 20).

the sacrament of confirmation is seen as foundation of grace.¹⁴ “In der Taufe empfängt er die Kindschaftsgnade.”¹⁵

1.1.2. Baptism is a Kind of Vocation

Parsch observes that in normal speech when we use the term “vocation”, there is always a tendency to limit it to the sacrament of priesthood or to religious vocation. But in his opinion when St. Paul uses the word “vocation” or “calling”, it does not mean the priestly or religious vocation, but it rather depicts the status of a Christian. This shows that a Christian’s status and the dignity of baptism were formerly regarded in the same way as we now esteem the dignity of the priestly status.¹⁶ “Was macht denn einen Priester? Ein zweifaches: 1. Die Berufung von Gott und 2. Die Weihe und Heiligung seiner Person. Gott hat von ihm Besitz genommen. Diese zwei Dinge geschehen aber auch in der Taufe.”¹⁷

In baptism, we are claimed by God and forever marked as Christ’s own. We are adopted into the Body of Christ and given our true identity. Our call and vocation is to love and serve the Lord in all we say and in all we do. Our response – the response to the grace that God has shown us in baptism – is to live a life worthy of our calling. In Parsch’s opinion when we live our baptismal identity, we live our vocation as Christians too.¹⁸ He affirms, “Der Christ wird von Gott gerufen und berufen. Gott hat ihn aus der Finsternis in sein wunderbares Licht gerufen. Der Mensch wird aber auch in der Taufe geweiht und geheiligt. Deshalb nennt die Hl. Schrift die Christen: Berufene und Heilige.”¹⁹ Thus, baptism is regarded as a call, a vocation and a consecration.

1.1.3. Baptism is a Kind of Priesthood

Baptism is also a kind of priesthood, which gives a share in the High Priesthood of Christ.²⁰ This, in Parsch’s opinion, is especially symbolised by the solemn anointing

¹⁴ P. Parsch, *Liturgie und Arbeiter*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 2-12, here 3.

¹⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, „Schenke allen, denen du Glauben gabst, auch den Frieden,“ in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 310-317, here 311; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Jahr des Heiles: Nachpfingstteil*, vol. 3, Klosterneuburg 1952, 106.

¹⁶ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol.6, 334.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 128; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol.6, 334.

¹⁹ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 334.

²⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 334; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 281.

of the forehead with the chrism oil, which immediately follows the rite of baptism.²¹ “Chrisam ist Salböl zur priesterlichen Würde, jenes besondere, christverbundene heilige Öl, welches die Gläubigen mit königlicher, prophetischer, priesterlicher Würde bekleidet.”²² In his perspective, the clothing with the white garment after the baptism also displays the priestly character of the baptized:

Die Übergabe des weißen Kleides nach der Taufe hat auch etwas priesterliches, wir wissen alle, daß zur liturgischen Kleidung des Subdiakons, des Diakons, des Priesters und Bischofs ein weißes Gewand gehört. Sogar im Augenblicke, wo jemand überhaupt nur in besonderer Weise dem Amtsliturgischen sich widmen will und mit der ersten Tonsur in der Klerusstand eintritt, also als niederer Kleriker, wird ihm auch eine weißes Amtskleid übergeben, der sogenannte weiße Chorrock. Wenn also die Gläubigen liturgisch ein weißes Gewand erhalten und tragen, erstmals nach der Taufe, wird ihre Gewandung der amtspriesterlichen in der Kirche ähnlich und zugeordnet. Der Taufwunsch der Kirche, daß man das weiße Kleid durch das Leben trage, wird durch die Gnaden und Pflichten des allgemeinen Priestertums viel mehr unterstützt und miterfüllt, als man gewöhnlich ahnt.²³

To Pius Parsch even the presentation of the lighted candle following the baptism is an enactment of the priestly act. Although the light has different meaning and significance in various religions, for Christians, the light represents Christ. Parsch

²¹ Cf. P. Parsch, Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung [Referat auf der 2. Volksliturgischen Tagung in Klosterneuburg 11.-15.08.1928], in: Bibel und Liturgie 2 (1927/28), 433-450, here 444; cf. P. Parsch, Die liturgische Predigt, vol.6, 334.

²² P. Parsch, Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung, in: Bibel und Liturgie 2 (1927/28), 433-450, here 444; cf. P. Parsch, Volksliturgie 1940, 107.

²³ P. Parsch, Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung, in: Bibel und Liturgie 2 (1927/28), 433-450, here 444. It is to be noted that certain ministries were established by the Church from the ancient times for a better governing of the people of God. By these ministries, the offices to be carried out in the liturgy and the practice of charity were entrusted to the faithful. Some of these functions slowly came to be considered as training in preparation for the reception of sacred orders. As a result, the offices of porter, reader, exorcist, and acolyte were called minor orders and the offices of sub-deacon, deacon, and priest were called major orders in the Latin Church. Generally, these minor orders were reserved to those who received them as steps toward the priesthood. Cf. Council of Trent: Doctrine and Canons on the Sacrament of Orders, in: Denzinger, 1767. Later on, in the course of time the Church has done away with the terms of major and minor orders. By his *motu proprio Ministeria quaedam*, promulgated on 31st August 1972, Pope Paul VI decreed the following regarding the orders: i) First tonsure is no longer conferred; entrance into the clerical state is joined to the diaconate. ii) What up to now were called minor orders are henceforth to be called ministries. iii) Ministries may be assigned to lay Christians; hence they are no longer to be considered as reserved to candidates for the sacrament of orders. iv) Two ministries, adapted to present-day needs, are to be preserved in the whole Latin Church, namely, those of reader and acolyte. The functions heretofore assigned to the sub-deacon are entrusted to the reader and the acolyte; consequently, the major order of sub-diaconate no longer exists in the Latin Church. Cf. AAS 64 (1972), 529-534. For the Latin Church there are thus now only three orders, as stated in the Code of Canon Law: “The orders are the episcopate, the priesthood and the diaconate.” CIC 1009 §1. Here, in understanding Parsch, it is to be kept in mind that he speaks in the context of his time, where the liturgical reform had not yet taken place.

sees the symbol of light in a priestly-liturgical way. For him it means “an intimate integration in Christ.”²⁴ Thus, according to him, everyone should hold the dignity of the sacrament of baptism in high esteem and love.²⁵ This call to share in the priesthood of Christ is unfolded in the triple functions of prophet, priest and king.²⁶ In speaking about the roots of the priesthood of the faithful, Parsch quotes the following verses from the Old Testament, where God makes a reference to His “chosen people”: “you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation” (Ex. 19: 6); “you shall be called the priests of the Lord, and you shall be named ministers of our God” (Is. 61: 6).

The vocation to share in the priesthood of Christ is both a privilege and a task. It is a privilege since it delegates us to share in the cultic acts of the Christian community gathered for its liturgical and sacramental actions. In a broad and fundamental sense, our whole life is thus a priestly act. This call is also a task since it commissions every Christian to continue Christ’s mission, the realization of the Kingdom; it indicates the prophetic dimension of the priesthood. Thus all are to give Christian witness in their familial, parochial or professional milieu. The Second Vatican Council makes this point clear when speaking of the apostolate of the lay people: “They are consecrated a royal priesthood and a holy people (cf. 1 Pet 2: 4-10) in order that they may in all their actions offer spiritual sacrifices and bear witness to Christ all the world over.”²⁷ The sacrament of baptism gives a share in the common priesthood of all believers, the ‘people of God’.²⁸ To Parsch, the sacrament of baptism is a kind of priesthood and as priest a baptized person is called upon to share in the High Priesthood of Christ and in the common priesthood of all believers.²⁹ So it is also important to discuss Parsch’s view on the common priesthood of the faithful.

1.1.3.1. The Common Priesthood of all the Faithful

Christ as the head of the Church lets the whole Church and all its members participate in his redemptive work. And thereby, he allows the faithful to share in his

²⁴ P. Parsch, Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 2* (1927/28), 433-450, here 444-445.

²⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 334; cf. P. Parsch, „Schenke allen, denen du Glauben gabst, auch den Frieden“, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 19* (1951/52), 310-317, here 31.

²⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 106.

²⁷ Cf. AA 3.

²⁸ Cf. LG 1.

²⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 106.

ministries as king, prophet and priest. Christ is priest and king, therefore his body, the Church is also queen and priestess and the Christians participate in the kingly priesthood of Christ.³⁰ In the Church there is only one priest: that is Jesus Christ, the eternal High Priest, and all the priesthood here below is the adumbration or shadowing and participation in the divine High Priesthood of Christ. It is Christ, who celebrates the Mass, who baptises, who is prayed in the breviary and who lives in a spiritual way in the liturgical year of the Church.³¹ Christ is the principal priest in every sacramental action.³² We see a parallel to this idea in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council. The article 7 of *Sacrosanctum concilium* clearly states that “every liturgical celebration is an action of Christ the Priest.”³³

The priesthood of Christ is shadowed in his Church in two ways; first of all through ministerial priesthood of the holy order and through the common priesthood of the faithful, in other words, through the priesthood of the clergy and the laity.³⁴ Therefore, it is a right to say that the faithful participates in the celebration of the Holy Mass of the priests pontifically. The faithful actively participate in the Holy Mass under the guidance of the ministerial priests.³⁵ According to Parsch, this is applicable not only in the celebration of the Holy Mass, but also in the whole liturgical divine service of the Church.³⁶ “Wo der Christ an einer priesterlichen Aufgabe der Kirche mittun kann und mitwirkt, übt er sein allgemeines Priestertum aus.”³⁷ The common priesthood is conferred to the faithful through the sacraments of

³⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 105; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt: Wortverkündigung im Geiste der liturgischen Erneuerung*, vol. 9: *Die liturgische Predigt der Nachpfingstzeit*, Klosterneuburg 1955, 439.

³¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 2 (1927/28) 433-450, here 444; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie und Kirchenmusik*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 9 (1934/35) 369-374, here 370; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 105; cf. R. Pacik, „Aktive Teilnahme“ – zentraler Begriff in Pius Parschs Werk, in: *Pius Parsch in der liturgiewissenschaftlichen Rezeption*, 31-52, here 46.

³² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 2 (1927/28), 433-450, here 444; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 105.

³³ SC 7.

³⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 2 (1927/28), 433-450, here 444; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 106; cf. R. Pacik, „Aktive Teilnahme“ – zentraler Begriff in Pius Parschs Werk, in: *Pius Parsch in der liturgiewissenschaftlichen Rezeption*, 31-52, here 46.

³⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 2 (1927/28), 433-450, here 444; cf. R. Pacik, „Aktive Teilnahme“ – zentraler Begriff in Pius Parschs Werk, in: *Pius Parsch in der liturgiewissenschaftlichen Rezeption*, 31-52, here 46.

³⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 106.

³⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 2 (1927/28) 433-450, here 444; Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 106.

baptism and confirmation. Through these sacraments every faithful receives the dignity of the prophet, priest and king.³⁸

In order to highlight the doctrine of the common priesthood of the faithful, Parsch quotes the letter of St. Peter: “you are chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people” (1 Pet. 2: 9). He cites yet another passage from the book of Revelation: “[...] by your blood you ransomed for God saints from every tribe and language and people and nation; you have made them to be kingdom and priests serving our God and they will reign on earth” (Rev. 5: 9-10). Parsch refers to both of these texts from the New Testament, which speaks about the royal priesthood of the faithful, almost every time, when he treats with the concept of the common priesthood in his writings.³⁹

Whenever Parsch refers to the participation of the people in the liturgy he draws attention to the common priesthood of the baptized and the confirmed laity.⁴⁰ The importance that he attached to the sacrament of confirmation in connection with the common priesthood of all the members of the people of God was so great, that he named it as the “sacrament of common priesthood.”⁴¹ Parsch also differentiated between the ministerial priesthood and the common priesthood. He explained the degrees of the priesthood, how it exists stepwise and how it is practiced in the Church:

So ist also die ganze Kirche priesterlich gruppiert: über allen steht Christus der Hohepriester als Haupt; sein direkter Stellvertreter ist der Papst. Unter diesem stehen zwei Gruppen: das amtliche Priestertum und das allgemeine; ersteres gestuft in Bischof, Priester, Diakon, Subdiakon und die niederen Weihen; letzteres in Gefirmte und Getaufte.⁴²

³⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 2 (1927/28) 433-450, here 445; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 106.

³⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 634; cf. P. Parsch, *Die Mitarbeit der Frau in der liturgischen Bewegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 436-444, here 438.

⁴⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Mitarbeit der Frau in der liturgischen Bewegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 436-444, here 438.

⁴¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Mitarbeit der Frau in der liturgischen Bewegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 436-444, here 439; cf. B. Krawczyk, *Der Laie in Liturgie und Theologie bei Pius Parsch*, 89-90.

⁴² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Mitarbeit der Frau in der liturgischen Bewegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 436-444, here 439; cf. B. Krawczyk, *Der Laie in Liturgie und Theologie bei Pius Parsch*, 89-90. See also: the subtitle 1.3.4 in: “Pius Parsch and Sacraments in General”.

For Parsch, the kingly priesthood of the people is not only a mere dignified title, but it is also an ontological reality of all the Christians, that initiate them to the active participation in the liturgy. He ascertained that every Christian is a king and a priest. This authority was given to a Christian by Christ at the Last Supper. From this time on, the Church ordains and sanctifies her members through the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist: that is, she appoints people to become co-priests in the only priesthood of Jesus Christ.⁴³ Parsch presents the implication of the participation in the Christian's common priesthood, as follows:

a) Wir erweisen Christus, den Christen und der Kirche einen großen Dienst, wenn wir wieder die priesterliche Arbeit und Tätigkeit der Kirche ans Licht bringen: d.h. die Liturgie ist nicht etwas Nebensächliches in der Kirche, sondern gehört zu dem Wesentlichen, was die Kirche in ihrem Herzen trägt, es ist das teuerste Vermächtnis Christi, das sie verwaltet. b) Doch wir wollen selbst liturgisch werden, Liturgie soll das Formprinzip unsers religiösen Lebens werden, wir wollen gern und feierlich und ehrfürchtig unsere Liturgie feiern. Wir wissen, dass wir das Priestertum Christi auf unsere Schultern nehmen und ausüben.⁴⁴

Parsch also speaks of the essence of the common priesthood. According to him, every baptized Christian is a priest. A priest is a mediator between God and man.⁴⁵ Since every Christian is incorporated to Christ through his baptism he is already related to Christ, who is the Mediator and Priest of God. And therefore, he has also access to the Heavenly Father. Thus, every believer, through Christ, with Christ and in Christ, can speak to God, praise Him, offer himself to Him, plead with Him and reconcile to Him.⁴⁶ This is considered by Parsch as the essence of the common priesthood. Through our priestly participation in the liturgy we help the Church to continue the priesthood of Christ in this world.

1.1.3.2. Common Priesthood in the Church's Documents

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church and in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, the concept of the "common priesthood of the faithful" is substantially highlighted and is given due consideration. The Catechism of the Catholic Church says: "The whole Church is a priestly people. Through Baptism all the faithful share

⁴³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 384.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 386.

⁴⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 161-165, 185-190, here 185; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 440.

⁴⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 440.

in the priesthood of Christ. This participation is called the ‘common priesthood of the faithful.’ Based on this common priesthood and ordered to its service, there exists another participation in the mission of Christ: the ministry conferred by the sacrament of Holy Orders, where the task is to serve in the name and in the person of Christ the Head in the midst of the community.”⁴⁷

The following article clearly highlights the essential difference between the ministerial priesthood and the common priesthood:

The ministerial or hierarchical priesthood of bishops and priests, and the common priesthood of all the faithful participate, “each in its own proper way, in the one priesthood of Christ.” While being “ordered one to another,” they differ essentially. In what sense? While the common priesthood of the faithful is exercised by the unfolding of baptismal grace—a life of faith, hope, and charity, a life according to the Spirit—, the ministerial priesthood is at the service of the common priesthood. It is directed at the unfolding of the baptismal grace of all Christians. The ministerial priesthood is a means by which Christ unceasingly builds up and leads his Church. For this reason it is transmitted by its own sacrament, the sacrament of Holy Orders.⁴⁸

The documents of Second Vatican Council, especially the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church and the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy clearly expresses the concept of “common priesthood of the faithful.” In its article 10, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, depicts how every baptized share in the priesthood of Christ:

Christ the Lord, High Priest taken from among men, made the new people ‘a kingdom and priests to God the Father.’ The baptized, by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit are consecrated as a spiritual house and a holy priesthood, in order that through all those works which are those of the Christian man they may offer spiritual sacrifices and proclaim the power of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. Therefore all the Disciples of Christ, persevering in prayer and praising God, should present themselves as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. Everywhere on earth they must bear witness to Christ and give an answer to those who seek an account of that hope of eternal life, which is in them.⁴⁹

The same article further highlights how they are interrelated even if they differ from one other in essence: each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ:

⁴⁷ Cf. CCC 1591.

⁴⁸ CCC 1547.

⁴⁹ LG 10.

Though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated: each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ. The ministerial priest, by the sacred power he enjoys, teaches and rules the priestly people; acting in the person of Christ, he makes present the Eucharistic sacrifice, and offers it to God in the name of all the people. But the faithful, in virtue of their royal priesthood, join in the offering of the Eucharist. They likewise exercise that priesthood in receiving the sacraments, in prayer and thanksgiving, in the witness of a holy life, and by self-denial and active charity.⁵⁰

The Constitution on the Liturgy of the Church too depicts the rights and duty of the baptized in the participating in the liturgy of the Church. “Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as ‘a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people’ (1 Pet. 2: 9; cf. 2: 4-5) is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.”⁵¹

1.1.4. Baptism and Sacramental Character

As mentioned earlier, in the chapter on “Pius Parsch and Sacraments in General”, the sacrament of baptism is one of the three sacraments that imprint a character⁵², an indelible mark, on the human soul. The sacramental character is a gift that a person obtains by the reception of the sacrament of baptism.⁵³ Through the obtainment of this gift a baptized person remains as a permanent member of Christ’s Body, on earth and in heaven. Parsch makes it clear that this membership is not dependent on the state of grace, but on the baptismal character.⁵⁴ Through the following he elucidates his thoughts on the baptismal character:

Der Mensch empfängt die Taufe; es wird ihm die Erbsünde nachgelassen, wenn er erwachsen ist, auch alle persönlichen Sünden. Er braucht nicht zu beichten. Er wird ein Kind Gottes; er empfängt die heiligmachende Gnade, das ist das kostbarste Geschenk. Doch nach der Taufe kann der Mensch

⁵⁰ LG 10.

⁵¹ SC 14.

⁵² Baptism, once validly conferred, can never be repeated. For details on “Sacramental Character” see the foot notes nos. 121 and 126 in: “Pius Parsch and Sacraments in General”. The other two sacraments which confer character are confirmation and priesthood.

⁵³ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 423.

⁵⁴ P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 62. About the permanence of the membership effected through the sacramental character is discussed in the previous chapter under the subtitle: “The Sacramental Character as an Indelible Mark on the Soul”. See: 1.3.1. in: “Pius Parsch and Sacraments in General”.

wieder sündigen, er kann die Gnade verlieren, er kann vom Glauben abfallen, aus der Kirche austreten; er kann in seinem Leben heidnisch und gottlos werden. Aber etwas kann er nie verlieren: das unauslöschliche Merkmal oder den sakramentalen Charakter. Diesen verliert er weder in diesem Leben noch im Jenseits. Im Himmel oder in der Hölle trägt er ein unterscheidendes Merkmal, das unauslöschlich ist.⁵⁵

In order to express the permanent nature of our incorporation through baptism, the Church teaches that the baptized persons are endowed with an indelible spiritual mark called character. “Incorporated into Christ by baptism, the person baptized is configured to Christ. Baptism seals the Christian with the indelible mark (character) of his belonging to Christ.”⁵⁶ Baptism imprints on the soul an indelible spiritual sign, the character, which consecrates the baptized person for Christian worship. Because of the character baptism cannot be repeated.⁵⁷ The Second Vatican Council makes it more explicit in its dogmatic constitution on the Church: “Incorporated in the Church through baptism, the faithful are destined by the baptismal character for the worship of the Christian religion; reborn as sons of God they must confess before men the faith which they have received from God through the Church.”⁵⁸

1.2. EFFECTS OF THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

1.2.1. Baptism Makes us a New Creation

The concept “new creation” is a notion that is frequently used by Christian tradition to explain the state being cleansed. Jesus says: “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit” (Jn. 3: 5). To Paul, baptism is the rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit through the water (cf. Tit. 3: 5). “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation” (2 Cor. 5: 17; cf. Gal. 6: 15). By baptism a person is washed clean, and sanctified and justified (cf. 1 Cor. 6: 11). Baptism raises a person to a new mode of being; according to St. Paul’s conception it makes him a new creature, a new being in Christ Jesus. Through baptism he receives a life that is holy, spiritual and supernatural.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 385.

⁵⁶ CCC 1272.

⁵⁷ CCC 1280.

⁵⁸ LG 11

⁵⁹ P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish*, trans., W. Tunink, Missouri 1950, 1. This is an English translation of the original German, “Die lebendige Pfarrgemeinde” published in Parsch’s “Volksliturgie”, 1940, pages 277-313.

According to Parsch, the transformation that occurs through the sacrament of baptism cannot be apprehended by our external senses: it is something invisible that happens within a person: For example, at baptism we do not see the heavens opened with our naked eyes. We do not hear God the Father's voice saying; "You are my beloved son" (cf. Mt. 3: 17). Nor does the Holy Spirit appear to us in the visible form of a dove from above. But still there is an inner change that occurs.⁶⁰ Parsch clarifies this idea by explaining the invisible transformation that takes place in the sacrament of Eucharist: "The same is true of the Eucharist. Here again, there is not much for our eyes to see, but we believe that a real change has come about. Bread and wine are changed into Christ's body and blood. We taste and see nothing other than bread and wine, but we believe in their change."⁶¹ He proceeds saying:

In der Taufe geschieht auch eine unsichtbare Verwandlung, wobei die Gestalt bleibt. Aus einem sündigen Wesen ist ein heiliges geworden, aus dem Eigentum des Teufels ist ein Gotteskind geworden. Aus Finsternis ist Licht, aus Tod Leben geworden. Dabei sieht man äußerlich gar nichts. Äußerlich ist es noch immer der bestimmte Mensch mit seinen Eigenschaften, Schwächen und Gebrechen; aber es ist doch eine Verwandlung geschehen, die gemessen werden kann an der Verwandlung des Fleisches und Blutes Christi. Bei der Taufe ist aus einem Sünder ein Glied am Leibe Christi geworden.⁶²

From the fourth century onwards, baptism was taken for granted. Persecution had ceased. The state was officially Christian. To be baptized was no longer a great risk. It was then that many Christians, who took their baptism seriously, resolved to retire voluntarily from the world and take religious vows.⁶³ Parsch here makes use of the example of monastic consecration to explicate what the sacrament of baptism to the early Christians had meant. For the monks their monastic profession was what baptism had been for the early Christians. The monk took a new name by their

⁶⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish*, 1.

⁶¹ P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish*, 1. Here Pius Parsch refers to the transubstantiation. Transubstantiation is the change or conversion of one substance into another. Its usage is confined to the Eucharistic rite, where it signifies the change of the entire substance or basic reality of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, while the outward appearance (species, accidents) of the bread and wine are unaffected. Cf. C. Vollert, *Transubstantiation*, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 14, 158-160, here 158. The council of Trent declared: "If any one says that in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist the substance of bread and wine remains together with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ and denies that wonderful and unique change of the whole substance of the bread into his body and of the whole substance of the wine into his blood while only the species of bread and wine remain, a change which the Catholic Church very fittingly calls transubstantiation, let him be anathema." Council of Trent: *Decree on the Sacrament of the Eucharist*, 1652; see also 1642.

⁶² P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 335.

⁶³ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 335; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 280.

consecration to religious life. This signified that he had laid aside his former self and was now a new creature. According to Parsch, the new name that a person receives at his baptism has the same significance.⁶⁴ A shroud was stretched over the newly consecrated monk to symbolize the death of his old self. He was divested of his former clothing and assumed another kind of clothing: the monastic habit. This act of self-surrender to God was sealed by a solemn vow.⁶⁵ Thus, Parsch opines that the monastic profession was an imitation of baptism. It was a second baptism, a complete break with the old life.⁶⁶ From this copy of baptism he says, “We can gain some idea of the magnificence of the original. In those early days the baptized Christian was conscious of his special dignity. He was a new being. His name, his habit, his whole being was new.”⁶⁷

According to Parsch, the reverence which we have for the professed religious, we should also have for ourselves, that is, for the baptized persons. He elaborates it further by saying that just like a professed religious; we too, have left the world and by our baptism have entered into a new life consecrated to God. We all belong to an order. Its founder is Christ, its rule is the Gospels, and its cloister is the Church. Its habit, as described St. Paul, is “the Lord Jesus Christ” himself.⁶⁸ However, it is to be noted that Parsch does not identify baptism with monastic profession. But he merely draws a comparison to show how by baptism we become new creatures and die to the world.

Parsch also observed that the early Church lived in the strength of her baptism and therefore, according to him we should also strive to do likewise today. By the virtue of the sacrament of baptism, one becomes a part of Christ. From Christ one receives all power and grace; and with his grace a person becomes a new creature.⁶⁹ Although the sacrament of baptism cannot be repeated Parsch stresses the importance of renewing it, by awakening it and becoming more conscious of our baptismal grace. According to him, we have to revive the awareness of baptism, and so renew it. The Church often offers the opportunity to do this. Her whole system of education is

⁶⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 280.

⁶⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

⁶⁶ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 335; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 280.

⁶⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 280.

⁶⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 280; cf. Rom. 13: 14.

⁶⁹ P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 298.

designed to renew in us the awareness of baptism.⁷⁰ The entire season of Lent, the baptismal renewal of the Easter Vigil, the whole of Paschal tide is devoted to the renewal of our baptism. To Parsch, every Sunday is a baptismal and Easter day, a day of our baptismal renewal.⁷¹ In his opinion if we make use of these given times to renew our baptismal awareness, we shall always have before our eyes the following things: i) the Holy Spirit has set up his dwelling within us; ii) we have put on Christ; we die and rise again with Christ. In short, through baptism we become entirely new creatures.⁷²

Parsch also draws a comparison between baptism and Christmas and says, “at Christmas it was the Divine child that was born: In baptism it is we who are born again becoming children of God. Baptism is our soul’s Christmas. At baptism the grace of God is drawn into our souls, and Christ is born for us – born into our souls.”⁷³ This new life in Christ, through our baptism, is symbolized by the emersion from the baptismal font, the clothing with white garment and the lighted candle that is held.⁷⁴

1.2.2. Baptism Incorporates us into Christ

The second effect of baptism is the incorporation into Christ. Parsch makes use of the imagery of vine and branches which we see in the gospel of St. John, to exhibit how a person is united to Christ by the virtue of the sacrament of baptism. As the branch has no existence separated from the vine, neither has a Christian existence apart from Christ.⁷⁵ Through the sacrament of baptism we are made Christ’s own, we are consecrated and betrothed to him, we are made as his member, like the branches to the vine. Baptism is a birth into the new life in Christ.⁷⁶ “Sie ist die Wiedergeburt, also die zweite, viel wertvollere Geburt des Menschen zu einem höheren Leben. Die Taufe erhebt also zu einer neuen Lebensweise, da empfängt der Mensch heiliges

⁷⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 298.

⁷¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Das Kirchenjahr in der Pfarre*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 497-506, here 500; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 128; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 298.

⁷² Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 298.

⁷³ Cf. *ibid.*, 44.

⁷⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 106-107; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 44. In the baptism by immersion; the act of immersion signifies dying with Christ and the act of emersion signifies the rising with Christ into a new life.

⁷⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 359; cf. Joh. 15: 1-11.

⁷⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Das Jahr des Heiles: Nachpfingsteil*, vol. 3, 106; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 295.

Leben, er wird Glied des Leibes Christi.”⁷⁷ Through baptism one is integrated into Christ. Christ is the head of the human race and of all creation. His mission is to bring all things under one head, to incorporate all things in him, to restore all things in him – not only human beings, but even the Angels. According to Parsch, our whole Christian life is an organic union with Christ; and only in association with Christ can we perform anything good and meritorious. Without Christ we can do absolutely nothing. He stresses the fact that this union with Christ and the incorporation into him is achieved and realised through the sacrament of baptism.⁷⁸

Pius Parsch makes his statement clear by the use of a comparison, just as our clothing is a part of ourselves, so too, through the sacrament of baptism one becomes mystically one with Christ. And this mystical union with Christ does away with all differences based on our nationality, race, rank and sex.⁷⁹ He strengthens his argument further by quoting St. Paul who says: “For in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ (Gal. 3: 26-28). Parsch considers this passage as very significant. He elaborates it further by asking: First of all, what does it mean to be baptized in Christ? Surely we were baptized in the name of the most Holy Trinity?⁸⁰ And yet how often it is said in Holy Scripture that we are baptized in Christ, or “in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 8: 16; 9: 5). That means, in baptism we make Christ as our own; we are one with him, we honour him and praise him, and become his members, like branches of the vine-stem. And this mystical union of the individual with Christ by the virtue of his baptism does away with all the individual differences.⁸¹

1.2.3. Baptism Makes us the Temples of the Holy Spirit

Baptism makes us bearers of the Holy Spirit. Parsch viewed the Holy Spirit to be the greatest and lasting gift of the sacrament of baptism. And it is on us to bear this gift

⁷⁷ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 127-128.

⁷⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 295-296.

⁷⁹ Cf. *ibid.* 297.

⁸⁰ Jesus’ baptism at the Jordan was accompanied by a Trinitarian manifestation or theophany. Later tradition incorporated the Trinitarian formula into the baptismal ritual, “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Mt. 28: 19). This formula meant a consecration to the three persons of the Trinity. Baptism, thus, is a participation in the Trinitarian mystery that elevates us to become sons and daughters of God.

⁸¹ P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 296-297.

in our lives; to preserve it in us consciously and responsibly and to devote it for the achievement of highest goals of our lives.⁸² “Bei der Taufe steigt der Hl. Geist in unseren Leib und unsere Seele und wohnt und bleibt in uns.”⁸³ The Holy Spirit works in the baptized and gives them various charismas and spiritual gifts, special functions in the Church, even the power to work miracles.⁸⁴ Through baptism a Christian is inexpressibly sanctified, so that his body becomes the temple of God.⁸⁵ This is rightly expressed by St. Paul: “Do you not understand that you are God’s temple, and the God’s Spirit has his dwelling in you, if anybody desecrates the temple of God, God will bring him to ruin. It is a holy thing, this temple of God, which is nothing other than yourselves” (1 Cor. 3: 16-18).

Christian baptism is before all else a baptism of the Spirit. Parsch also carefully distinguished the baptism of penance and baptism of the Spirit or the Christian baptism and the baptism of St. John the Baptist: “Weil der Hl. Geist in der Taufe den Menschen bewohnt, wird die christliche Taufe zum Unterschied von der Johannestaufe: Geistestaufe genannt. Seit der Taufe sind wir daher Träger des Hl. Geistes.”⁸⁶ He adds: “Das Wort ‘wohnen’ ist im vollen Sinn zu nehmen: der Hl. Geist wohnt seit der Taufe in uns; deshalb sagt immer wieder die Hl. Schrift und die Kirche, dass wir Tempel des Hl. Geistes sind.”⁸⁷ The Holy Spirit comes to us already in baptism, which gives the baptism of the Spirit and the forgiveness of sins.⁸⁸ By the character of baptism a man becomes a member of Christ and a temple of the Holy Ghost.⁸⁹

Through the sacrament of baptism the Holy Spirit becomes our guide and driver of our soul; like a horseman who directs his horse does the Holy Spirit directs our soul.⁹⁰ It is also important to observe how the Holy Spirit establishes a wonderful relationship between the individual soul and God. The relationship that the Holy Spirit establishes between the individual soul and God through baptism is not that of

⁸² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 346 and 358; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 295.

⁸³ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 343.

⁸⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 161-165, 185-190, here 163; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 359; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 295.

⁸⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 344. See also the subtitle 1.4.2. in: “Pius Parsch and Sacraments in General”.

⁸⁶ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 344.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 295.

⁸⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *We Are Christ’s Body*, 48.

⁹⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 346.

slavery or compulsion, but rather as children of God. This allows us to call God “Abba Father”:

Also der Hl. Geist allein kann das wunderbare Verhältnis zu Gott herstellen, in dem wir seine geliebten Kinder sein dürfen. Der Hl. Geist läßt uns aber auch dieses Kinderverhältnis spüren, bringt es uns zu Bewußtsein. Der Christ spürt es in seinem Inneren: Ich bin Gotteskind; aber noch mehr, der Hl. Geist bringt auch Bewußtsein: Ich bin ein Erbe der ewigen Seligkeit. Und wie groß diese ist, sagt das Wort: Miterbe Christi; die Seligkeit, die die heilige Menschheit Christi zum Lohn für sein Erlösungswerk empfangen hat, wird auch unser Anteil sein.⁹¹

The Holy Spirit enables the baptized to acknowledge Jesus as their master. In other words, the baptism enhances us to enter into an intimate relationship with Christ through the Holy Spirit. It gives the faithful the healing grace and makes them the children of God and a dwelling place of the Holy Spirit.⁹²

1.2.4. Baptism Makes us Members of the Mystical Body of Christ

Through the sacrament of baptism a person is made a member of the Mystical Body of Christ⁹³, which is the Church. And as long as he is not cut off from this body, the Christian remains a member of Christ.⁹⁴ Here Parsch refers to St. Paul, who articulates that Christ is the head and the Church is his Body and the baptized

⁹¹ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 346. We see this clearly expressed by St. Paul in his letter to the Romans: “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry “Abba! Father!” it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ – if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.” (Rom. 8: 14-17).

⁹² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 359.

⁹³ The phrase “Body of Christ,” as applied to the Church is both Pauline and patristic, but the adjectival modifier “mystical” is neither. The phrase “Mystical Body” is first used to designate the militant Church in Latin theological writings of the second half of the 12th century; and the first official document using it is Boniface VIII’s bull *Unam Sanctum* (Nov. 18, 1302), in: Denzinger, 870-875. From the time of the Eucharistic controversies in the 9th century until 1150, the Latin Phrase *Corpus mysticum* occurs frequently, but it always means Christ’s Eucharistic Body. From 1150 onward, Berengar’s errors touching Christ’s Eucharistic Presence occasioned by way of reaction such an emphasis on the identity of Christ’s Eucharistic Body with his “physical” Body that the Eucharist began to be called Christ’s “true” Body (*verum Corpus*), and by a gradual inversion of the two earlier formulas Christ’s Church-Body began to be called his Mystical Body to distinguish it from his true physical Body present in the Eucharist. At first, the qualifier “mystical” applied to the Church-Body kept its traditional Eucharistic resonances; the Church-Body is thought of as a “mystically” or sacramentally signified and realized Body. With the passage of time, however, this Eucharistic sense of the qualifier “mystical” gradually disappeared. In St. Thomas this dissociation of the adjective “mystical” from its Eucharistic context seems already well begun and by the time of the Reformation the Eucharistic connection was wholly lost. Pius XII’s *Mystici corporis* explicitly identified the Mystical Body of Christ with the Roman Catholic Church. Cf. F.X. Lawlor and D. M. Doyle, *Mystical Body of Christ*, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 10, 99-105.

⁹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 281; cf. P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish*, 6.

Christians are its members.⁹⁵ Through his baptism, a Christian is not only incorporated into Christ, becoming his member, but he even shares in the important activities of his life, especially in his death, resurrection and ascension into heaven.⁹⁶ According to St. Paul, through our baptism we become other Christ. Christ is continuing his mortal, earthly life in a Mystical Body, of which each baptized person is a member and a part. This membership is made possible through the sacrament of baptism and thereafter we partake in all the activities of Christ as well as in all the fruits of his works.⁹⁷ St. Paul uses the metaphor of the body to represent the Church. Baptism makes us members of the Body of Christ: “Therefore [...] we are members of another” (Eph. 4: 25). “We are limbs of his body” (Eph. 5: 30). Baptism incorporates us into the Church. From the baptismal font, the one People of God of the new Covenant is born, which transcends all the natural or human limits of nations, cultures, races and sexes: “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body” (1 Cor. 12: 13).⁹⁸

Parsch recapitulates his teaching on the Mystical Body of Christ by saying, “Die Kirche ist ein geistiger, aber metaphysisch wirklicher Organismus, ist ein göttlicher Organismus, das Corpus Christus mysticum, dessen Lebensprinzip Christus, dessen Leib und Fülle die Ecclesia, dessen Glieder die durch die Taufe geheiligten Menschen sind.”⁹⁹ In his opinion, the image of the Mystical Body is more precise. Christ assumed a human body, which he offered up on the cross for our redemption. But he assumed also another body, the Mystical Body of his Church. He is the head

⁹⁵ The teaching on the “Mystical Body of Christ” is a central idea in St. Paul. He draws from it profound inferences for the moral life of the Christian and for the relationship to the fellow human beings. Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 28. For example, in admonishing Christians to live chaste lives, St. Paul says, “Do you not know that our bodies are members of Christ? Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute?” (1 Cor. 6: 15).

⁹⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Church’s Year of Grace*, vol. 4, 75; cf. 1 Cor. 12: 27; 1 Cor. 6: 15; cf. Rom. 12: 4-5.

⁹⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Church’s Year of Grace*, vol. 4, 75.

⁹⁸ St. Paul takes this membership of Christ’s body seriously; for baptism really brings about this incorporation into Christ. He is unambiguous in emphasizing this ecclesial aspect. “Baptized into the body” (1 Cor. 12: 13) that knows no barriers between nations (Eph. 2: 14), between castes and communities, since “as many of you as were baptized into Christ [...] there are no longer Jew or Greek [...] for all of you are one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3: 27-29). “There are one body [...] one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Eph. 4: 4-5). “Christ is the Head of the Church: he is the Saviour of his body” (Eph. 5: 23).

⁹⁹ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 283-284.

of this body, and he is surrounded with different types of members.¹⁰⁰ Parsch elaborates this in his own words:

Stellen wir uns nur einen solchen Riesenleib vor, der beständig wächst, der Tausende, Millionen Glieder, sagen wir Hände, ansetzt; jeder begnadigte Mensch wird in diesen Leib eingliedert und bleibt Glied auch nach dem Tode, auch im Himmel. Daraus sehen wir, daß dieser Leib teils im Himmel, teils auf Erden lebt; oder vielmehr dieser große Leib taucht allmählich hinein in den Himmel. Die Glieder dieses Leibes sind teils begnadigte Glieder, die noch auf Erden leben, teils sind es bereits verklärte Glieder, die schon im Himmel sind. Daraus verstehen wir, daß die Kirche teils ein himmlisches, teils ein irdisches Wesen ist. Sobald das letzte Glied auf Erden heimgegangen ist, hat die irdische Kirche aufgehört und ist zur himmlischen Kirche geworden. Das ist das innere und zugleich wahre Gesicht der Kirche, der Gnadenleib Christi.¹⁰¹

Parsch substantiates his understanding about the “Mystical Body”, further by saying; “Just as the members of a human body have different duties and functions – the hand, the foot, the eye, the ear – so too the members of the body of the Church: they are not alike, they have a variety of qualities, a variety of talents. Each Christian must recognize his own duty and fulfil it. There is no room for envy or jealousy. Each has his place and his purpose.”¹⁰² He adds, “The eye must not think itself more important than the ear, nor the hand more important than the foot. For every member is necessary to the body, and when one is paralysed or crippled the whole body is sick. The hand must not work solely for its own good. All members are concerned for the well-being of the whole body.”¹⁰³ Parsch also states the importance of these considerations for the conduct of our lives. In his opinion, each baptized Christian must recognize his own responsibility as a member of Christ’s Body and devote himself to it with all his heart. The Christians, the faithful, as member of Christ’s Body, must help the Church to grow, by their prayers, by their good example, and by their zeal for the apostolate. Each individual member has his own part to play. Each must open his veins to allow the stream of grace to flow unchecked from the head to his members.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 20-21.

¹⁰¹ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 40-41.

¹⁰² P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 21. Parsch bases this on St. Paul who says: “For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members of one another.” (Rom. 12: 4-5).

¹⁰³ Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 22.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 22- 23.

All those who are baptized into the Catholic Church are certainly members of the Mystical Body (provided they have not repudiated the authority or doctrine of the Church). Baptism is the great sacrament of incorporation; among its several effects there is nothing that should be valued more highly than this one that it inserts us into and makes us members of the mystical Body of Christ.¹⁰⁵ It is to be noticed that, stressing on the importance of the revival of the sacramental life in the “minimal programme of the popular liturgical movement”¹⁰⁶, Parsch advocated the administration of the baptism in the church with the parish community: “Die Taufe soll wieder öffentlich, wo möglich vor der versammelten Pfarrgemeinde, in der Kirche (nicht in der Sakristei, schon gar nicht in den Wohnhäusern) gespendet werden.”¹⁰⁷ To him the parish church is the Mystical Body of Christ in miniature. Thus, he resolved that the parish priest is the representative of Christ the head in a parish, he is the visible expression of Christ; the parish is the body and the parishioners are the members of this body.¹⁰⁸

1.2.4.1. Pius Parsch and Pius XII’s *Mystici Corporis*

Parsch acknowledged and greatly appreciated the doctrine of Pope Pius XII on Christ’s Mystical Body in his encyclical *Mystici corporis*¹⁰⁹. He even dedicated a

¹⁰⁵ P. Parsch, *We Are Christ’s Body*, 41-42.

¹⁰⁶ P. Parsch, *Das Mindestprogramm der volksliturgischen Bewegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 393-397; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 58-65; cf. J. Zabel, *Pius Parsch*, 50; cf. A. Ruff, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform*, 233.

¹⁰⁷ P. Parsch, *Das Mindestprogramm der volksliturgischen Bewegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 393-397, here 395; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 60. The administration of baptism in the parish church depicts the ecclesial and communal dimension of this sacrament.

¹⁰⁸ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 287.

¹⁰⁹ Parsch was inspired by the encyclical *Mystici corporis*, of Pius XII. Written in 1943, it has become known as one of the most important papal teachings since it shows the true nature of Christ’s Church. This well researched document is full of Scripture and the Church Fathers and is written in a way that the modern world can easily understand. Some of the most interesting passages deal with the Holy Spirit as the “soul” of the Mystical Body. The Holy Father quotes the words of Leo XIII who stated “Let it suffice to say that, as Christ is the Head of the Church, so is the Holy Spirit her soul.” Pius XII also brings out the idea that the Eucharist is the source and symbol of unity in the Mystical Body since the Incarnate Word unites men to Himself in a real way by means of His presence in the Eucharist. He also touches on an earlier point made by Aquinas concerning solidarity, stating that the union between Christ and the faithful is not only a moral union, but a union on the ontological order as well. It is true that there is a union in the moral order between Christ and us, but a supernatural principle of unity is the more important, and this lies on the ontological level. This is the doctrine of St. Paul. It has no connection with pantheism, and the ontological union does not deny the personalities of the faithful. Cf. *AAS* 35 (1943), 193-248.

cycle of ten sermons¹¹⁰ in order to popularise the teaching on the Mystical Body of Christ. He summarised the encyclical of the pope as follows:

i) Christ is the head of this Body and as such the guide, the source, the focal point of this union of grace. ii) The Church is the body that is united to Christ. The Church is the extension of Christ. iii) Its members are men in the state of grace, who with Christ have one life, one activity. iv) The life of this body is the divine life, Christ's life, the life of grace. v) The soul of this body is the Holy Spirit, who holds this Body and its members in life. Still further: vi) The breath of this body is the prayer of the Church. The body and its members must co-operate in this breathing. vii) The sickness of this body is sin. This sickness may even lead to the death of a member and its severance from the Body. viii) The organs of this body are the sacraments, and the great commandment of this body is the commandment of love.¹¹¹

Pius XII's *Mystici corporis* used the Mystical Body of Christ to tie the Church understood as a social institution to the Church of grace and love imbued with the Holy Spirit. In this encyclical, the pope explicitly identified the Mystical Body of Christ with the Roman Catholic Church.¹¹² Many theologians whose work was to be influential on the Second Vatican Council, such as Yves Congar and Charles Journet, developed the mystical body as a major theme. Vatican II's *Lumen gentium* also used the Mystical Body of Christ as prominent images of the Church, such as the People of God, the Pilgrim Church, the Communion of Saints, and the Church as Leaven in the World.¹¹³ Moreover, although *Mystici corporis* was not lacking in ecumenical sensitivity, in *Lumen gentium* the identification of the "Mystical Body" with the Catholic Church was expressed in a yet more ecumenically sensitive manner: "this church of Christ [...] subsists in the Catholic Church [...]. Nevertheless, many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside its visible confines."¹¹⁴ The Mystical Body of Church continues to function in official

¹¹⁰ These ten sermons are found in the appendix to his book: *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 452-518. An English translation of the same is found under the title: "We are Christ's Body" translated by C. Howell in 1962. Parsch says about these sermons "Ich habe bald nach dem Bekanntwerden der Enzyklika in einem Gebirgsdorf in Tirol die folgenden zehn Predigten über den Gnadeneib gehalten, habe Verständnis und Widerhall gefunden." P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 452.

¹¹¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 41; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 21.

¹¹² Cf. AAS 35 (1943) 193-248.

¹¹³ Cf. F.X. Lawlor and D. M. Doyle, *Mystical Body of Christ*, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 10, 99-105, here 104.

¹¹⁴ LG 8.

church documents as well as the work of theologians as primary and indispensable image of the Church.¹¹⁵

1.2.5. Baptism Enables us to Participate in the Death of Christ

Parsch draws a seemingly impossible parallel between baptism and death. According to the Scripture, through baptism we are actually dead to the world. We have left death behind us. Death is segregation from this world. This painful separation from the world, which for the rest of the humanity takes place only at natural death, has already come about for a person when he becomes a Christian through the sacrament of baptism.¹¹⁶ By his baptism a Christian is drawn into the death of Christ. St. Paul expresses the same by saying, “Do you not know that all of us who were baptised in Christ were baptised into his death?” (Rom. 6: 3). “You have undergone death” (Col. 3: 3). According to Pius Parsch, the natural death, which the world fears has but slight importance for a baptised Christian. His separation from the world is already accomplished in baptism.¹¹⁷ “Was noch zu sterben ist, das ist nicht mehr wesentlich. Freilich, dieses Gestorbensein muss im Leben gepflegt werden.”¹¹⁸

As Christians, we are people who have left death behind us, in consequence of our baptism. In baptism, a Christian has already dead once. And so he does not die essentially any more. He must be raised above the world and its possessions and sorrows.¹¹⁹ To make his point clearer Parsch presents an imaginary situation, “Stellen wir uns einen Toten vor, der nach seinem Tod kurz auf die Erde zu Besuch käme: wie würde er die irdischen Güter geringschätzen, wie würde er die Leiden und Wechselfälle des Lebens verachten. So soll der Christ sein. In der Taufe ist er schon einmal gestorben, er stirbt wesentlich nicht mehr. Wie erhaben sollte er über Welt, Gut, Leid sein.”¹²⁰

We are baptised into Christ’s death. That means, through baptism we share in the fruits of the Christ’s death. Since we have become Christ’s members, we are

¹¹⁵ Cf. F.X. Lawlord and D. M. Doyle, *Mystical Body of Christ*, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 10, 99-105, here 104.

¹¹⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 335.

¹¹⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 335; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 281-282.

¹¹⁸ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 335.

¹¹⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 335; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 282.

¹²⁰ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 335-336.

members of him who died on the cross, rose again from the death, and went into heaven. Since the member shares in the activities of the body, so through baptism we have become crucified, risen and ascended with Christ.¹²¹ Parsch depicts a symbol of the early Church at baptism. The candidate for baptism was wholly immersed in the baptismal water. This immersion symbolised his death and burial with Christ, and his emerging from the water after his baptism, symbolizes his resurrection with Christ.¹²² Here he bases his argument on the teaching of St. Paul. St. Paul would call it as crucifixion of our former self with Christ in baptism, “With Christ I hang upon the cross, and I am alive, or rather, not I; it is Christ who lives in me” (Gal. 2: 19). “You know well enough that we who were taken up into Christ by baptism have been taken up, all of us, into his death. In our baptism, we have been buried with him, died like him, that so , just as Christ was raised up by the Father’s power from the dead, we too might live and move in new kind of existence” (Rom. 6: 3-4). This calls for a participation in the Paschal Mystery of Christ.¹²³ The paschal mystery of Christ’s death and resurrection is virtually present in every baptism. Traditionally, baptism was given on Easter Vigil, thus expressing its close link with the mystery of Christ’s death and resurrection. In Parsch’s terms: “Durch die Taufe sind wir Gottgeweihte, wie Mönche geworden, zu Priestern Gottes berufen, in Christus wie der Leib Christi verwandelt, sind für die Welt gestorben.”¹²⁴

¹²¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 297.

¹²² Cf. *ibid.* As mentioned previously, the baptismal rite of immersion suggests dying and rising with Christ. Being buried with him means forgiveness of sins, and the emergence from this burial with him means walking “in newness of life” (Rom. 6: 4; cf. Col. 2: 12), or walking “in the Spirit” (Gal. 5:16). St. Paul sees baptism as a new life, a second creation (Eph. 2: 10). The typology of the crossing of the Red Sea presents baptism as incorporation by immersion, as it were, into Christ (1 Cor. 10: 1-5). “Baptism is to be conferred either by immersion or by pouring, in accordance with the provisions of the conference of bishops.” CIC 854. Baptism is performed in the most expressive way by triple immersion in the baptismal water. However, from ancient times it has also been able to be conferred by pouring the water three times over the candidate’s head. Cf. CCC 1240.

¹²³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 297. The Second Vatican Council expresses it clearly in its Constitution on the liturgy. Cf. SC 6.

¹²⁴ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 336.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

The sacrament of Confirmation is one of the three sacraments of initiation. As Catholics we believe that Confirmation is a true and proper sacrament.¹ Through this sacrament, Christians “are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit.”² However, in the first centuries we do not find the practice of Confirmation in the Church as a specific rite separate from Baptism. There was only one process of initiation, which took place in number of actions. Among other reasons, the multiplication of infant baptisms all through the year, the increase of rural parishes, and the growth of dioceses often prevented the bishop from being present at all baptismal celebrations. In the West the desire to reserve the completion of Baptism to the bishop caused the temporal separation of the two sacraments. A custom of the Roman Church facilitated the development of the Western practice: a double anointing with sacred chrism after Baptism.³

The first anointing of the neophyte on coming out of the baptismal bath was performed by the priest; it was completed by a second anointing on the forehead of the newly baptized by the bishop. The first anointing with sacred chrism, by the priest, has remained attached to the baptismal rite; it signifies the participation of the one baptized in the prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices of Christ. If Baptism is conferred on an adult, there is only one post-baptismal anointing, that of Confirmation.⁴

¹ Council of Trent: Decree on the Sacraments, in: Denzinger, 1628. Etymologically the term “confirmation” comes from the Latin “confirmatio”, meaning to firm or to strengthen. The designation Confirmation, on the one side points at the confirmation of the Baptism and on the other side the strengthening of the baptismal grace. The term “confirm” pertained to a ritual performed by a bishop when another minister had baptized on a separate occasion. In practice, the bishop had been the primary minister of an elaborate rite of initiation. But when another minister is baptized due to danger of the candidate’s death or distance from the cathedral, the bishop would “confirm” the baptism. If candidates formerly adhered to a heresy with authentic initiation, the bishop would “confirm” them, reconciling them with orthodox Christianity. The term originated as a juridical concern in documents written by bishops concerning the ministry of bishops. In the Christian East, this sacrament is called “chrismation” and the ordinary minister of this sacrament is a priest. Cf. P. Turner, Confirmation, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 4, 84-92, here 84. “In the West, the term *Confirmation* suggests that this sacrament both confirms baptism and strengthens baptismal grace.” CCC 1289.

² LG 11.

³ Cf. P. Turner, Confirmation, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 4, 84-92.

⁴ Cf. P. Turner, Confirmation, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 4, 84-92; cf. CCC 1290 and 1291.

A certain Faustus of Riez from the 5th century was influential in the understanding of Confirmation as a separate sacrament. He delivered a homily on Pentecost that would be frequently quoted and would play an important role in history. This homily is the first doctrinal explanation of a separated confirmation ceremony, in terms of strengthening, outside cases of rebaptism and reconciliation of heretics.⁵ The Synod of Elvira calls Confirmation the completion of Baptism.⁶ And this has been reaffirmed by the Constitution on the Liturgy of Second Vatican Council.⁷ In 1274 the Second Council of Lyon listed Confirmation among the seven sacraments of the Church.⁸ The Council of Florence in 1439 spoke of the effect of the sacrament of Confirmation as strengthening.⁹ Although the early Church imposed hands, prayed for the gift of the Holy Spirit, and anointed in the baptismal rite, the later Church did so only if the bishop was present.¹⁰ The sole factor determining the occasion for the administration of Confirmation was not the age or readiness of the candidate, but the availability of the bishop to perform a ritual that had become associated with his ministry: conferring the Holy Spirit on the baptized.¹¹ In this chapter we shall analyse and discuss Pius Parsch's views and notions on the sacrament of Confirmation.

⁵ Cf. R. Meßner, *Einführung in die Liturgiewissenschaft*, 2nd ed., Paderborn 2009, 138-139; cf. P. Turner, Confirmation, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 4, 84-92, here 84; cf. M. Kunzler, *The Church's Liturgy (AMATECA 2)*, trans., P. Murray, Münster 2001, 266. Faustus states that Baptism is complete as to innocence, but as to grace there is a question of its augmentation through Confirmation. In Baptism we are regenerated to life; after baptism we are confirmed for battle. In Baptism we are washed; after Baptism we are strengthened. Confirmation brings augmentation in grace enabling one to take part in the struggle of human life. Baptism is what is passively received, while Confirmation stresses human effort and involvement. Cf. R. Meßner, *Einführung in die Liturgiewissenschaft*, 139.

⁶ Synod of Elvira, in: Denzinger, 120.

⁷ SC 71.

⁸ Cf. Second Council of Lyon: Profession of Faith, in: Denzinger, 860.

⁹ "The effect of this sacrament is that in it the Holy Spirit is given for strength, as he was given to the apostles on the day of Pentecost, in order that Christians may courageously confess the name of Christ." Cf. Council of Florence: Bull *Exsultate Deo*: Decree for the Armenians, in: Denzinger, 1319. Besides the role of strengthening, the role of this sacrament's orientation towards the fellow human beings (as stressed by Petrus Lombardus or Thomas Aquinas) is also important in the theology of Confirmation. Basing their theology on this same foundation, the 20th century theologians stress the importance of Confirmation as a sacrament of maturity, adolescence, lay apostolate, lay ordination etc. Cf. R. Meßner, *Einführung in die Liturgiewissenschaft*, 140.

¹⁰ Here it is to be noted that the ordinary minister of the sacrament of Confirmation is a bishop. Cf. Council of Florence: Bull *Exsultate Deo*: Decree for the Armenians, in: Denzinger, 1318; cf. Council of Trent: Decree on the Sacraments, in: Denzinger, 1630. The Code of Canon Law states: "The ordinary minister of confirmation is a bishop; a presbyter provided with this faculty in virtue of universal law or the special grant of the competent authority also confers this sacrament validly." CIC 882. But *Lumen gentium* in its article 26 depicts the bishop as the original minister of the sacrament of Confirmation. Here we see a variation in the usage of the term "ordinary minister" to "original minister".

¹¹ Cf. P. Turner, Confirmation, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 4, 84-92 here 87.

2.1. THEOLOGY OF CONFIRMATION IN THE WRITINGS OF PIUS PARSCH

2.1.1. Confirmation as the Sacrament of the Holy Spirit

Parsch designates the sacrament of Confirmation as “the sacrament of the Holy Spirit”.¹² He opines that the sacrament of Confirmation enables us to remain under the special protection of the Holy Spirit. In this sacrament a person receives the Holy Spirit for strength in the spiritual fight, so that he might confess the faith of Christ even among the adversaries of faith. By virtue of it, a person becomes the fortified church of the Holy Spirit.¹³ In his notion, one of the ways, in which a Christian is united with God, is through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. “Der Hl. Geist steht als die dritte Person an der Grenzscheide der Hl. Dreifaltigkeit; ihm wird daher die Verbindung Gottes mit den Geschöpfen zugeeignet. Da ferner die Verbindung mit Gott durch die Liebe bewirkt wird, so geschieht dies durch den Geist der Liebe, den Hl. Geist.”¹⁴

The Holy Spirit is that divine person who effects grace in the soul of a baptized person. He does so through his permanent indwelling in the soul.¹⁵ The Holy Spirit is already given to us through the sacrament of Baptism and thereby we become bearers of the Holy Spirit: but according to Parsch, we become bearers of the Holy Spirit in a greater extent in the sacrament of Confirmation.¹⁶ “Die Taufe hat den Grund gelegt, hat den Menschen Tempel des Hl. Geistes gemacht, die Firmung soll die Ausgestaltung und Befestigung vollziehen, soll den Tempel zu einer Wehrkirche machen.”¹⁷ Parsch also speaks of the special privilege the Christians have: “Was sind wir doch für glückliche Geschöpfe, wir sind umhüllt und durchflutet vom Hl. Geist, sooft wir ein Sakrament empfangen. Uns steht zur Seite eine Kraft, die stark

¹² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 395 and 397; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt: Wortverkündigung im Geiste der liturgischen Erneuerung*, vol. 4: *Die Messhomilie*, Klosterneuburg 1949, 181; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 307, 326 and 327. See also the subtitle 1.4.2. in: “Pius Parsch and Sacraments in General”.

¹³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 395 and 397; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 4, 181; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 307, 326 and 327.

¹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 149.

¹⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 148; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Jahr des Heiles: Klosterneuburger Liturgiekalender*, vol. 2: *Osterteil*, Klosterneuburg 1952, 9 and 539; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 101.

¹⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 307. For details about the sacrament of baptism and the indwelling of Holy Spirit see the subtitle 1.2.3. in: “The Sacrament of Baptism”.

¹⁷ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 396.

und milde in uns wirkt. Wir sind heilige Geschöpfe, weil wir Wohnungen und Kirchen des erhabenen Gottesgeistes sind.”¹⁸

In Parsch’s view, John the Baptist foretold the doctrine of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit when he said; “I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me [...]. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Mt. 3: 11). At Pentecost, the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit, when he came down upon them and made his abode in them.¹⁹ In the same way, in Parsch’s opinion, a Pentecost is realized in a Christian when he receives the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of Confirmation.²⁰ The Canon of Klosterneuburg, highlighted the importance of reviving the existing practice of the administration of the sacrament of Confirmation.²¹ In his ‘minimum programme’²² of the liturgical renewal Parsch observed that the sacrament of Confirmation is often externalized. He also criticized the centralisation of the administration of this sacrament in the cathedral churches and advocated for its decentralisation for a better and effective administration:

Die Firmung ist vielfach veräußerlicht. Da ihre Spendung meist in der Domkirche zentralisiert ist, haben sich manche Mißbräuche eingebürgert. Eine Abhilfe wäre die Dezentralisation der Firmung, wie sie bereits in manchen Diözesen mit großem Erfolg geübt wird. Der Bischof firmt in möglichst vielen Pfarren, wo dann auf die Vorbereitung und Spendung größere Sorgfalt verwendet werden kann. Auch die geistige Seite dieses Sakramentes als Teilnahme an dem königlichen Priestertum Christi sollte wieder mehr betont werden.²³

Parsch depicts three images of the Holy Spirit from the Holy Scripture to illustrate the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the souls of the baptized: namely, the image of a temple, a seal, and a pledge.²⁴ We shall discuss each of these images in the following.

¹⁸ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 398.

¹⁹ “All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them the ability”. Acts 2: 4.

²⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 4, 181; cf. P. Parsch, *Sermons on the Liturgy: For Sundays and Feast Days*, 193.

²¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 61.

²² Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 58-65; cf. J. Zabel, *Pius Parsch*, 50; cf. A. Ruff, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform*, 233.

²³ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 61. See also the subtitle 1.2.3 in: “The Sacrament Baptism”. Here we have discussed at length how through the sacrament of Baptism a person becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit.

²⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 149; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 101.

2.1.1.1. The Image of the Temple

Parsch viewed that a baptized person's body and soul becomes a temple, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. A temple is a house – God's house. The purpose of this image is to show that God really dwells within the individual soul.²⁵ As referred previously, we become the temple of the Holy Spirit already at Baptism: but the sacrament of Confirmation embodies and fortifies this indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the human soul.²⁶ Parsch quotes St. Paul who says, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own?" (I Cor. 6: 19). Therefore the Holy Spirit is truly present therefore in the bodies and the souls of the just. This presence is something quite different from God's natural presence in all His creatures: for "in him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17: 28). Through grace the Holy Spirit becomes far more intimately present. In the words of Parsch, "in creatures He is present as Creator, in the just as Sanctifier. Creation is God's house, the souls of the just His sanctuary. Creation is God's footstool, the soul God's throne."²⁷ Moreover, the Holy Spirit makes his permanent dwelling in the soul through the sacrament of Confirmation. Parsch puts it explicitly in the words of Christ himself, who says: "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you" (Jn. 14: 16-17).²⁸

Parsch compares the existence of the Holy Spirit in the soul with the Holy Communion: "Wir könnten noch diese Geisteseinwohnung mit der Kommunion vergleichen. Der Gottmensch kommt mit seinem Leib in unser Inneres, bleibt aber nur für Augenblicke, so lange die Gestalten dauern; die Gottheit des Hl. Geistes kommt und bleibt dauernd durch die Gnade in uns. Wir könnten dem Hl. Geist in unserem Herzen dieselbe Ehre erweisen, wie Christus im Tabernakel."²⁹ In this context, he draws our attention to St. Paul, who makes an important conclusion from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit: since our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, on

²⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Das Jahr des Heiles*, vol. 2: Osterteil, 9; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 149; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 101.

²⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 396.

²⁷ P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 102.

²⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁹ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 149-150.

no account must we desecrate this temple by sin; rather we must keep our body and soul pure and holy: “If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple” (1 Cor. 3: 17). Parsch says: since our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, St. Paul commands the Christians to be aware of the impurity. “For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from fornication, that each one of you knows how to control your own body in holiness and honour, not with lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God” (1 Thess. 4: 3-5). He then warns the Christians: “Do not grieve the Holy spirit of God” (Eph. 4: 30), the guest-friend of your soul.³⁰

2.1.1.2. The Image of the Seal

The Holy Spirit is also called a seal. First of all, Parsch clarifies the term “seal”. According to him, “a seal is a metal object - a ring, for instance - with which to make an impression on wax.”³¹ The same is precisely the action of the Holy Spirit too in the soul:

The Holy Spirit is the seal of God’s hand, stamping the imprint of His divine nature on the waxen tablet of the soul in grace. The soul receives a divine stamp, a sacramental character. This is not a mark that can be seen at present, this indelible mark on the soul – but it should show itself outwardly in a virtuous life. Just as the seal must be pressed into the wax and held there, so too the Holy Spirit remains personally united with the soul. Indeed, he does not leave the soul even when the imprint has been made.³²

The Holy Spirit dwells in us like in a church, he prevails and operates in us. He is the seal of our souls.³³ Our souls, then, must be pliant as wax, in order to receive the Christian character imprinted on them by the seal of the Holy Spirit. For the image that is engraved on this seal is the image of Christ.³⁴

³⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 150; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 103; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Jahr des Heiles*, vol. 2: Osterteil, 9.

³¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 150; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 103.

³² P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 103.

³³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 4, 180; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Jahr des Heiles*, vol. 2: Osterteil, 9. The rite of Confirmation very evidently demonstrates the image of the Holy Spirit as the seal. The sacrament of Confirmation is conferred through the anointing with chrism and through the words: “Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit”. Pope Paul VI in his apostolic constitution *Divinae Consortium Naturae*, promulgated on 15th August 1971, explicitly stated, “the sacrament of confirmation is conferred through the anointing with chrism on the forehead, which is done by the laying on of the hand, and through the words: ‘Accipe signaculum doni Spiritus Sancti’”. Cf. AAS 63 (1971), 657-664, here 663.

³⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 150; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 103.

2.1.1.3. The Image of the Pledge

Finally, the Holy Spirit is also called a pledge. Parsch defines the term “pledge”. What is a pledge? “A pledge”, he says, “is a security for some possession which I wish to assure for myself.”³⁵ He continues, “The possession which I want to secure is Heaven – the happiness of Heaven – and my pledge is the Holy Spirit. So surely as He dwells within me now, so surely will I one day possess my Heaven. The guest-friend of my soul dwells within me now in grace; in Heaven the Holy Trinity will fill us to overflowing with the joy of its presence.”³⁶ As St. Paul said: “The Holy Spirit is the pledge of our inheritance toward the redemption as God’s own people” (Eph. 1: 14). Thus, according to Parsch, this faith must sink deep into our hearts: the Holy Spirit has come to us in grace, and set up his abode in our souls.³⁷

2.1.2. Confirmation as the Perfection of Baptism

The sacrament of Confirmation is seen as the perfection and completion of the sacrament of Baptism; because by the sacrament of Confirmation the baptized are bonded more stably to the Mystical Body of Christ and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. “Durch die Taufe wird der Mensch einfaches Glied am Leibe Christi, durch die Firmung wird er gefestigtes und lebenspendendes Glied.”³⁸ The sacrament of Confirmation brings the sevenfold Holy Spirit in stronger measure than in Baptism.³⁹ “In der Taufe ist der Mensch Tempel des Hl. Geistes, der in ihm wohnt. In der Firmung wirkt der siebenfältige Geist mit seinen sieben Gaben im Menschen.”⁴⁰ “Die sieben Gaben des Hl. Geistes bedeuten die Vollendung des Christenstandes, verleihen Kraft, die Widerstände der erbsündlichen Natur zu überwinden und die Gnade in vollem Maße in die Seele aufzunehmen.”⁴¹ The sacrament of Baptism lays the foundation for our spiritual life and the sacrament of

³⁵ P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 103.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 150; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 103.

³⁸ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 325.

³⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 325 and 396; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 327. The article no. 11 of *Lumen gentium* and the article no. 1285 of the Catechism speaks of the same.

⁴⁰ P. Parsch, *Die Liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 396-397. When we say that the sacrament of Confirmation is a perfection or completion of the sacrament of Baptism, it does not mean that there was something deficient in the sacrament of Baptism which need to be perfected or completed. It meant rather something structural which would only later be filled with theological meaning having to do with Holy Spirit, maturity, fullness of initiation etc. Cf. A. Kavanagh, *Confirmation: Origins and Reform*, New York 1988, 3.

⁴¹ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 396.

Confirmation perfects this work in us. The spiritual organism received at Baptism acquires a new vigour by the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation.⁴²

Christian Baptism, in contrary to the baptism of John the Baptist, is first of all a Baptism with the Holy Spirit.⁴³ It is clearly stated in the New Testament (cf. Mk. 1: 8). The Christian Baptism is understood as a re-birth out of water and Spirit, and it is a condition for entering the Kingdom of God (cf. Jn. 3: 5). And numerous other passages of the bible tell us, that baptism is a sacrament that communicates the Holy Spirit to us. After the sermon of Peter on the Pentecost day, those who believed were baptized and they received the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 2: 38). The life of grace that is communicated to us through the sacrament of Baptism is life in the Spirit. In the bible life in the Spirit is often represented as an “anointing” with the Spirit. Taking up this thought of anointing with the Spirit in the Old Testament (cf. 1 Sam. 16: 13; cf. Is. 61: 1), Jesus is shown as one anointed with the Holy Spirit (cf. Lk. 4: 27; 10: 38). And Christians participate in the anointing of Jesus by the Holy Spirit. So the New Testament considers them also as anointed by the Spirit (cf. 2 Cor. 1: 21-22; 1 Jn. 2: 20, 27) this is of course an image or metaphor of what the Holy Spirit does interiorly and does not mean an external or ritual action of anointing.⁴⁴ It should be observed that for Parsch the anointing with Chrism means the sign of the coming of the Holy Spirit. “Das Chrisam ist eben Träger des Hl. Geistes.”⁴⁵

The Synod of Elvira affirms clearly that the sacrament of confirmation is the completion of baptism:

If someone is travelling by sea in a foreign place or if there is no church in the vicinity, a believer who has kept his baptism intact and is not a bigamist may baptize a catechumen if there is an exigency of sickness, on

⁴² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 396; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 327.

⁴³ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 395.

⁴⁴ These passages from the Scripture are often used to discuss the origin of the sacrament of Confirmation. Anointing, in biblical and other ancient symbolism, is rich in meaning: oil is a sign of abundance and joy; it cleanses (anointing before and after a bath) and limbers (the anointing of athletes and wrestlers); oil is a sign of healing, since it is soothing to bruises and wounds; and it makes radiant with beauty, health, and strength. Anointing with oil has all these meanings in the sacramental life. The pre-baptismal anointing with the oil of catechumens signifies cleansing and strengthening; the anointing of the sick expresses healing and comfort. The post-baptismal anointing with sacred chrism in Confirmation and ordination is the sign of consecration. By Confirmation Christians, that is, those who are anointed, share more completely in the mission of Jesus Christ and the fullness of the Holy Spirit with which he is filled, so that their lives may give off the aroma of Christ. Cf. CCC 1293 and 1294.

⁴⁵ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 107.

condition that, if (the catechumen) survives, he will bring him to the bishop, so that he might be perfected by the imposition of hands.⁴⁶

Calling for a renewal of the sacrament of Confirmation the Liturgy Constitution of Second Vatican Council shows evidently its relation to the sacrament of Baptism: “The rite of Confirmation is to be revised also so that the intimate connection of this sacrament with the whole of the Christian initiation may more clearly appear. For this reason the renewal of baptismal promises should fittingly precede the reception of this sacrament.”⁴⁷ The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults explains the significance of Confirmation in its relationship to Baptism. “The conjunction of the two celebrations signifies the unity of the paschal mystery, the close link between the mission of the Son and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the connection between the two sacraments through which the Son and the Holy Spirit come with the Father to those who are baptized.”⁴⁸

2.1.3. Confirmation as the Sacrament of the Priesthood of the Faithful

Through the sacrament of Baptism a Christian is initiated to participate in the priesthood of Christ. This participation is effected in a greater way through the sacrament of Confirmation. Parsch even designated the sacrament of Confirmation as the “sacrament of common priesthood”.⁴⁹ In his view the anointing with chrism is a clear indication of the granting of the priestly dignity to a person.⁵⁰ According to him, the substance of a priest lies in spiritual bridge building. The ordained priest has got the responsibility and mission to lead all the people to God. The baptized Christian receives the opportunity to create bridge for his own soul. The confirmed has a greater responsibility than the baptized; he does not only have to care for his

⁴⁶ Synod of Elvira, in: Denzinger, 120.

⁴⁷ SC 71.

⁴⁸ RCIA 215. “When Confirmation is celebrated separately from Baptism, as is the case in the Roman Rite, the Liturgy of Confirmation begins with the renewal of baptismal promises and the profession of faith by the confirmands. This clearly shows that Confirmation follows Baptism. When adults are baptized, they immediately receive Confirmation and participate in the Eucharist.” CCC. 1298.

⁴⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, Die Mitarbeit der Frau in der liturgischen Bewegung, in: Bibel und Liturgie 7 (1932/33), 436-444, here 439; cf. P. Parsch, Volksliturgie: Ihr Sinn und Umfang (Pius-Parsch-Studien 1), unveränderter Nachdruck der 2., erweiterten Auflage, Würzburg 2004, 473; cf. B. Krawczyk, Der Laie in Liturgie und Theologie bei Pius Parsch, 89-90. See also the subtitle 1.1.3.1. in: “The Sacrament of Baptism”. Here we have aptly dealt the theme on the common priesthood of all the faithful.

⁵⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung, in: Bibel und Liturgie 2 (1927/28), 433-450, here 444; cf. P. Parsch, Volksliturgie 1940, 107. As mentioned earlier the sacrament of a Confirmation is conferred by the anointing with chrism. Through this anointing a person becomes king, prophet and priest.

own soul, but he has also the responsibility of building bridges for the other people, of course, in a smaller circle.⁵¹ Therefore, in Parsch's opinion, every Christian, baptized and confirmed, has two responsibilities: first of all, he has to work for the salvation of his own soul; secondly, he has to also work for the salvation of his neighbour.⁵² "Wir sind einesteils Blüten am Baume der Kirche, die reifen und Frucht bringen müssen, wir sind aber auch Zweige, die Blätter und Blüten ansetzen sollen. Der Zweig ist die Voraussetzung des Wachstums und der Vergrößerung des Baums."⁵³

In Parsch's view, a confirmed Christian should be a priest, a mediator, a leader and a pastor in his environment. By virtue of his Confirmation a person is entitled to work for the salvation of souls. He makes it clear through the following: Firstly, Parsch speaks about the responsibility of the father and mother in a family. In his opinion both of them have a priestly office for their children. That means, they are responsible for the salvation of their souls in the family.⁵⁴ To him, a father is primordially a priest in his family.⁵⁵ Besides the father, the mother should also work as a priest. She has the special responsibility of leading her children to God. In the same way, both spouses should be priest for each other; they are responsible for each other's salvation.⁵⁶ Parsch furthermore speaks about the responsibility of the superior, foreman and chief: "Der Vorgesetzte, der Meister, der Chef; er hat nicht bloß seinen Untergebenen Arbeit und Brot zu geben, er hat auch für ihr Heil zu sorgen."⁵⁷ He emphasises that each Christian even if he is lonely without a family or a community, should also be a priest for his surroundings. In this way each Christian becomes a benefactor for the community, in which he lives. Thus, Parsch exhorts every

⁵¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 440; cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 2* (1927/28), 433-450.

⁵² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 440.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 442; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 4, 214. Parsch notes here unhappily, that many of the parents are not aware of their responsibility for their children and do not practice this office of the priesthood granted to them by virtue of the sacrament of Confirmation. Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 442.

⁵⁵ Here Parsch calls our attention to Abraham and Jacob in Old Testament and how they have fulfilled their priestly ministry as fathers. Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 441.

⁵⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 442; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 4, 214.

⁵⁷ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 441; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 4, 214.

confirmed in a special way to care for the salvation his environment. Because it is a priestly task that is entrusted to him through the sacrament of Confirmation.⁵⁸

In this context Parsch also highlights that the pastoral care is not only the monopoly of the priests: “Alle Christen haben die Aufgabe Menschenfischer zu sein. Dazu haben sie sogar ein eigenes Sakrament empfangen, die Firmung.”⁵⁹ Based on the sacrament of Confirmation a Christian is specially invited to participate actively in the liturgy:

Auf Grund der Firmung nimmt der Gläubige an dem Messiasante Christi teil und so ist er ebenfalls Seelsorger. Er tritt auch ein ins Heiligtum, die Kirche überreicht ihm die drei Bücher: die Bibel, das Stundengebet und das Messbuch. Er hat seine aktive Rolle in der Liturgie. Er ist Mitspieler an dem heiligen Drama. Nur das ausschließlich Hohepriesterliche überläßt er dem geweihten Priester, den Vollzug und die Spendung der heiligen Geheimnisse. Im übrigen tut er aktiv mit.⁶⁰

2.1.4. Confirmation as a Sacrament of Maturity

Pius Parsch also designates the sacrament of Confirmation as a sacrament of maturity and fullness: “Sie ist auch das Sakrament der Reife, der Befestigung im göttlichen Leben, zugleich der Befähigung, anderen das göttliche Leben zu vermitteln.”⁶¹ To him, Confirmation is a sacrament of empowerment which facilitates the divine life to others. It confirms, strengthens and solidifies a person into divine life. It equips and obligates a person to avoid all sin and every occasion of it and to use every opportunity of time and place as a means of leading others to a similar share in the life of God.⁶² In one of his discourses speaking about Christians’ leading a life of grace, Parsch appeals that the disorder in our lives affected through the original sin should be corrected through the sacrament of confirmation: thereby

⁵⁸ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 441; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 4, 214.

⁵⁹ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 4, 214; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt: Wortverkündigung im Geiste der liturgischen Erneuerung*, vol. 1: *Grundlegung der Liturgischen Predigt*, Klosterneuburg 1948, 78. Parsch also observes that the early Church expanded not through the pastoral care of the priest but through the laity. In his own words: “Die alte Kirche ist nicht durch die Seelsorge der Priester, sondern durch die der Laien groß geworden.” P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 4, 214.

⁶⁰ P. Parsch, *Erziehung zur Meßopfereteilnahme*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 14 (1939/40), 121-125, here 122; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 395-396.

⁶¹ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 128 and 192. Prior to Second Vatican Council, emphasis was placed on confirmation as making one a soldier of Christ, ready for the spiritual combat to life as a Christian and even die for the faith. Cf. AAS 38 (1946), 349-354. Neither the Council nor the post conciliar documents highlight confirmation as the sacrament of Christian maturity. The magisterium now insists that confirmation is part of Christian initiation: it complements baptism by conferring the Holy Spirit and is closely linked with the Holy Eucharist. Cf. CCC 1302-1303.

⁶² Cf. P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish*, 13.

he refers to the sacrament of Confirmation as a “Sakrament des Vollchristentums”.⁶³ By this he means that the reception of this sacrament should enable us to withstand the powers of evil and fight against them. The Spirit confirmed in Confirmation effects spiritual growth, growth to supernatural maturity. From this growth and ripening to maturity as a full Christian, the duties of a confirmed Christian are deduced: he has to work for his sanctification, fight against spiritual enemies, be a soldier of Christ and courageously confess his name.⁶⁴

2.1.5. Confirmation Confers a Character

As we have already discussed in detail under the title “Sacraments and Sacramental Character” in the chapter on “Pius Parsch and Sacraments in General”, the sacrament of Confirmation too imprints an inerasable spiritual mark, a character, on the soul, because of which this sacrament, once administered, cannot be repeated.⁶⁵ This character, according to Parsch, perfects the common priesthood of the faithful, received in Baptism.⁶⁶ By it the baptized person is more firmly empowered to share in the priestly activities of Christ. The reception of this sacrament obligates him to a higher participation in the Body of Christ.⁶⁷ By the character of Baptism a person becomes a simple member of Christ and a temple of the Holy Spirit: but the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation, according to Parsch, gives him a further character with a higher rank than mere membership; he has now the responsibility to work for the salvation of souls and fight against the powers of evil.⁶⁸

Der sakramentale Charakter der Firmung steht in der Mitte zwischen der Taufe und der Priesterweihe. Wir könnten am besten sagen, die Firmung ist das Sakrament des Laienpriestertums oder mit Pius XI., das Sakrament der Katholischen Aktion. Ja, die Firmung ist es erst, die uns die volle aktive Teilnahme an der Liturgie gewährt. Ein Ungefirmter sollte eigentlich nicht die Kommunion empfangen. Das ist schon eine priesterliche Tätigkeit, die erst durch die Firmung gegeben ist. Ganz

⁶³ P. Parsch, „Schenke allen, denen du den Glauben gabst, auch den Frieden“, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 310-317, here 311.

⁶⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish*, 13.

⁶⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 135 and 475; cf. P. Parsch, *We Are Christ's Body*, 35. See also the subtitle 1. 3. in: “Pius Parsch and Sacraments in General”. The sacrament of Confirmation is given only once, for it too imprints on the soul an indelible spiritual mark. Cf. Council of Trent: Decree on the Sacraments, in: *Denzinger*, 1609; cf. CCC 1302.

⁶⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 2 (1927/28) 433-450, here 445; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 106; cf. P. Parsch, *We Are Christ's Body*, 42.

⁶⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish*, 13.

⁶⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 475; Cf. P. Parsch, *We Are Christ's Body*, 42.

besonders gibt die Firmung die Fähigkeit und das Recht zur Seelsorge und zum Apostolat in der Kirche.⁶⁹

2.2. EFFECTS OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

2.2.1. Confirmation Effects Grace

In his writings, Parsch often speaks of sacraments as source and medium of grace.⁷⁰ As in the case with all other sacraments, the sacrament of Confirmation too primarily effects grace. Since grace has already been bestowed on the neophyte by the conferring of the Holy Spirit at Baptism, what Confirmation effects is the increase and deepening of this grace, received in the Baptism. It is evident from its celebration that the effect of the sacrament of Confirmation is the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost.⁷¹ As discoursed previously, the Holy Spirit is the bestower of grace.⁷² The Church first received him on the feast of Pentecost (cf. Acts 2: 1-4). Parsch notes the close relation between the Holy Spirit and grace. Grace came on this earth in the instant of the descent of the Holy Spirit.⁷³ Parsch affirms this as, “a most mysterious truth, so full of mystery that we have difficulty in grasping it.”⁷⁴

The Holy Spirit is the donor of grace and grace itself. We may say that the Holy Spirit comes in the first place to our soul as a quartermaster, bringing with him all the adornments for making both body and soul a palace of the Triune God. Then he also comes as the divine Majesty Himself, and enters into the habitation prepared by him. Hence the Holy Spirit is grace and the guest of the soul at one and the same time. The Holy Spirit is so bound up with the life of grace that we can scarcely distinguish between him and his gift of grace.⁷⁵ The Holy Spirit consecrates the body and the

⁶⁹ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 2004, 473. Parsch's opinion about the unconfirmed should not be allowed to receive Holy Communion, invites criticism since it is against the existing practice in the Latin Church. He holds this view because he bases the theological reason for the participation in the liturgy in the common priesthood of the faithful. The participation in the liturgy is a priestly action. And he considers the sacrament of Confirmation as the sacrament of “common priesthood of the faithful”. In the practice, the sacrament of the Holy Communion precedes the sacrament of Confirmation in the Latin Church; except in the case of the adult Baptism and Baptism of the children of catechetical age.

⁷⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Das Kirchenjahr in der Pfarre*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 497-506, here 497; cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/1950), 329-340, here 334; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 323; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 270.

⁷¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 492; cf. P. Parsch, *We Are Christ's Body*, 63.

⁷² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 323. See also the subtitle 1.2.3. in: “Pius Parsch and Sacraments in General”.

⁷³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 245.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 246.

⁷⁵ P. Parsch, *The Church's Year of Grace: Easter to Pentecost*, vol. 3, 44.

soul of a Christian by making him a temple and a church, and then he immediately enters as God into the consecrated dwelling.⁷⁶ “The Holy Spirit is the divine Person who now is closest to the soul of a person. He is the life-giver, the Paraclete, the Consoler and the Soul of our souls.”⁷⁷

According to Parsch, the Holy Spirit is the greatest distributor of grace. He weaves our life like a long robe of grace.⁷⁸ He pours out upon us in abundant measures the grace which Christ has brought us. He brings to completion in our souls that work which Christ began at Bethlehem. Parsch would further affirm that, “Christmas is the beginning; Pentecost the fulfilment; both are in the service of grace.”⁷⁹ In Baptism we were given our grace-life; in Confirmation we were endowed with strength to preserve and protect it.⁸⁰

2.2.2. Confirmation Increases the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The sacrament of Confirmation confers the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit to a person. “In Confirmation the sevenfold Spirit descends on us, bringing his seven gifts: the gift of wisdom and understanding, the gift of counsel and fortitude, the gift of knowledge and piety, the gift of fear of the Lord. Endowed with these divine powers, the soul resembles a beautiful garden filled with the fragrant virtues of the Christian life.”⁸¹ The graces and helps given by God to enable one to live a genuine Christian life are frequently referred to as the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. In the rite of Confirmation, the ordinary minister of this sacrament, the bishop, with hands extended over those to be confirmed, prays as for the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit: namely, for the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and fortitude, the Spirit of knowledge and piety; and for the Spirit of the fear of God. To which the confirmands respond, amen.⁸² According to Pius Parsch, this is the most

⁷⁶ P. Parsch, *Sermons on the Liturgy*, 194.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 200.

⁷⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Das Jahr des Heiles*, vol. 2: Osterteil, 538; cf. P. Parsch, *The Church’s Year of Grace: Easter to Pentecost*, vol.3, 45.

⁷⁹ P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 45.

⁸⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *We Are Christ’s Body*, 63.

⁸¹ P. Parsch, *Sermons on the Liturgy*, 172.

⁸² Cf. P. Parsch, *The Church’s Year of Grace: Easter to Pentecost*, vol. 3, 233. According to the present rite of Confirmation the prayer over the whole group of confirmands is said by the minister in the following manner: “All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by water and the Holy Spirit you freed your sons and daughters from sin and gave them new life. Send your Holy Spirit upon them to be their helper and guide. Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right

solemn and likewise the most significant mentions of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost in the entire liturgy.⁸³ From this, it is clear that the entire sacrament of Confirmation conferred upon us the same seven gifts of the Holy Ghost.

In order to highlight, the pre-figuration of these gifts in the Old Testament, Parsch quotes prophet Isaiah, who says: “A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord” (Is. 11: 1-3). This is the earliest text mentioning the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. Here Parsch poses a question: Now what did the prophet wish to say? According to him, the prophet was speaking of the Messiah, who would be born in David’s family. And the Spirit of God would rest upon him and this Spirit would be a Spirit of wisdom, of understanding, of counsel, of fortitude, etc.⁸⁴

The gospel actually does tell us that at the Baptism of Jesus the Holy Ghost “descended” as a dove and came upon him (cf. Lk. 3: 22). It was our Saviour who first received the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Ghost. Parsch considers this of paramount importance: “For if God sends us the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost in the sacrament of Confirmation, it implies a similarity between ourselves and Christ, it implies that we should become other Christs. And to discover how the seven gifts should influence us, we need only study the life of Jesus, for upon Him rested the Holy Ghost together with His sevenfold gifts.”⁸⁵

Parsch also classified the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit under three headings. The first consists of wisdom, understanding, and counsel, with knowledge included under wisdom. Fortitude, or moral strength, comprises the second heading. Piety and fear of the Lord constitute the third. Upon examining this arrangement more closely, we find that it corresponds to three basic human faculties. The first is proper to the intellect, the second to the will, and the third to the heart.⁸⁶ The four gifts which refer to the intellect impart true wisdom in the practical affairs of life. It is the

judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence. Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence. We ask this through Christ our Lord.” CCC 1299.

⁸³ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Church’s Year of Grace: Easter to Pentecost*, vol. 3, 233.

⁸⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 234.

⁸⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

wisdom praised in the Sapiential Books of the Old Testament, a wisdom that is identical with morality and virtue, a wisdom that aligns one with the will of God in all the actions of life. Fortitude confers the moral courage needed to struggle against the cravings of lower nature, to overcome obstacles, to suffer in patience, to be a martyr.⁸⁷ By the sin of our first parents the human intellect was darkened and the will weakened; this condition is sought to be remedied by the Holy Ghost by aiding in us with his gifts. The two last gifts in the series serve to bind us most intimately to God, to make Him the focal point of all our activity. The purpose of the Spirit's seven gifts is to make us perfect Christians. In Confirmation, therefore, the indwelling and operation of the Holy Spirit is increased beyond what was given in Baptism.⁸⁸

Apart from these gifts of the Holy Spirit, St. Paul speaks about the fruits of the Holy Spirit: charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, forbearance, gentleness, faith, courtesy, temperance, purity (cf. Gal. 5: 12). These also come from the Holy Spirit. He lifts the soul up to the heights of the spiritual life, as long as we allow him to carry on the work of adorning his habitation. Besides, the Holy Spirit also gives other extraordinary gifts and graces, such as prophecy, miracles, and healing powers.⁸⁹ Parsch also observes the relationship between the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and the threefold office of Christ: as king, prophet and priest. In his view, as partakers of Christ's threefold office, every baptized Christian should possess these gifts of the Holy Spirit. For a king needs wisdom, counsel, fortitude; a priest, piety; a prophet must have every gift, for he is the agent through whom God works among men.⁹⁰ In the sacrament of Confirmation the Holy Spirit pours in abundance all these seven gifts.⁹¹

2.2.3. Confirmation Perfects our Membership in the Mystical Body of Christ

The sacrament of Confirmation confirms us in a unique manner into the Mystical Body of Christ.⁹² A special incorporation into Church is enhanced through this

⁸⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *We Are Christ's Body*, 50.

⁸⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 481; cf. P. Parsch, *We Are Christ's Body*, 50.

⁸⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *We Are Christ's Body*, 50.

⁹⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Church's Year of Grace: Easter to Pentecost*, vol. 3, 235.

⁹¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *We Are Christ's Body*, 48.

⁹² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 371; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 307; cf. P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish*, 13. One of the effects of the sacrament of Baptism is that it makes us members of the Church. See the subtitle 1.2.4. in: "The Sacrament of Baptism". The sacrament of Confirmation increases and strengthens this membership initiated by the sacrament of Baptism.

sacrament. The baptized are made strong and more firmly obliged by word and deed to witness Christ in the Body of Christ, the Church.⁹³ Through the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation the Christians are ready for action for the sake of Christ. They are expected to spread the good odor of Christ around them. It makes the Christians active in their mission of prophet, priest and apostle. They have to proclaim the Word of God courageously as the prophets did; they will have to live the Word of God like Christ and the Apostles, who gave their lives for the Word of God; they will have to spread the power of the Word into the lives of men and women, by working for the expansion of the kingdom of God in this world.⁹⁴

The Church is in the first place a very holy and divine institution, in which the life of Christ pulsates. This life streams forth on us through the sacraments, whose author is the Holy Spirit.⁹⁵ Ever since Pentecost, Christ has breathed a soul into his Mystical Body. In Parsch's view only because of the Holy Spirit the Church can remain ever pure and holy in spite of the sins of her members. It is the Holy Ghost who confers all Graces; all the sacraments derive their power and effectiveness from him. And the Holy Ghost dwells in the members of the Mystical Body just as the soul dwells in all the members of a physical body. Everyone who holds an office in the Church is empowered for it by the Holy Ghost, and every gift of grace conferred throughout the Church is given by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is the motive power behind every activity of the Mystical Body of Christ and of each of its members. Christ, the head, and the Holy Ghost, the soul, maintain the life of that body which is the Church.⁹⁶

2.2.4. Confirmation Makes us Full-fledged Members of the Eucharistic Community

The sacrament of Confirmation is also very closely related to the sacrament of the Eucharist. The celebration of the Holy Eucharist is the reenactment of the death and

⁹³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish*, 13. *Lumen gentium* in its article no. 11 highlights and speaks about the perfection of this bondage of a baptized achieved through the sacrament of Confirmation.

⁹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 2 (1927/28) 433-450, here 445; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 106; cf. P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish*, 13.

⁹⁵ P. Parsch, *Sermons on the Liturgy*, 171.

⁹⁶ P. Parsch, *We Are Christ's Body*, 34.

resurrection of Christ. Here we bear witness to our faith in the Risen Christ.⁹⁷ The participation in the Holy Mass is a priestly action:

To celebrate the Eucharist as a sacrifice, to partake of the Eucharist as food, these are priestly activities. To perform them we need some share in Christ's priesthood. Baptism gives the initial share. As the sacrament of new birth it empowers man to partake of new food, Christ's body. Confirmation increases this initial share. It obligates Christians to a more complete role in the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice-Banquet.⁹⁸

According to Parsch, at every celebration of the Holy Eucharist, the Holy Spirit is coming anew into our souls with his mantle, his breath, his grace, bringing us renewed strength and an increase of divine life. We, too, are "filled with the Holy Spirit."⁹⁹ "Die Eucharistie ist der Webstuhl des Hl. Geistes; da ist er an der Arbeit, das Kleid der Gnade zu weben. – Wo der Leibe Christi, da ist immer der Hl. Geist: Der menschliche Leib Christi ist vom Heiligen Geist geschaffen und gezeugt worden; der Hl. Geist kam auf Jesus am Jordan und gab ihm die Messiasweihe. So empfängt der Christ, der den Leib des Herrn in der Eucharistie genießt, auch den Hl. Geist mit seiner Gnadenkraft."¹⁰⁰ Hence, for Parsch, by the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation, the Christians become full-fledged members of the Eucharistic community and their participation in the Eucharist acquires greater meaning for their life of Christian commitment. In his opinion, the celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation during the Eucharist has the special purpose of putting in evidence this close relationship of the sacrament of Confirmation with the Holy Eucharist.¹⁰¹

2. 3. THE REFORM OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

2.3.1. A Synopsis of the Reform of Confirmation in the Second Vatican Council

Through the centuries the sacrament of Confirmation has undergone tremendous and radical changes till its present shape in the contemporary time. Naturally, we cannot

⁹⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 374; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 312.

⁹⁸ P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish*, 13. This once again reemphasises Parsch's argument about the sacrament of Confirmation as "sacrament of common priesthood".

⁹⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 294; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 247.

¹⁰⁰ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 398.

¹⁰¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish*, 13. The Code of Canon Law states: "It is desirable to celebrate the sacrament of confirmation in a church and during Mass; for a just and reasonable cause, however, it can be celebrated outside Mass and in any worthy place." CIC 881. The Liturgy Constitution of the Second Vatican Council too manifestly expresses the connection of Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist and the importance of celebrating this sacrament within the Holy Mass. Cf. LG 71.

discuss them here in detail.¹⁰² Here I would just highlight the reform of Confirmation that effected from the Second Vatican Council. It is also because Pius Parsch lived as pre-conciliar liturgist and he presented his ideas and teaching on the sacraments from pre-conciliar perspectives. The reform of Confirmation which resulted from the Second Vatican Council cannot be grasped adequately except in view of a larger reform which it is part of. The larger reform of Christian initiation itself was laid down by the Council's Constitution on the Liturgy¹⁰³. The restoration was to be carried out in such a way that the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist should be clearly related and integrated.¹⁰⁴ The conciliar reform is a restoration meant to reintegrate the various parts of Christian initiation which had over the centuries become separated from each other and had thus lost intelligibility. Ultimately, as opposed to the idea of restoration for novelty, this was really a restoration for intelligibility.¹⁰⁵ Hence, the reform for the Sacrament of Confirmation was to be done in such a way that "the intimate connection of this sacrament with the whole of Christian initiation may stand out more clearly".¹⁰⁶

It must be remembered that the Council's fundamental outlook on initiation although contained as a whole in the Constitution on Liturgy¹⁰⁷, it is not exhausted there. Some of the later documents expanded the fundamental outlook on initiation first expressed in the Constitution of the Liturgy. The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church¹⁰⁸ stressed the priority of faith and baptism and the need for catechumens to be received with open arms. The decree on missions¹⁰⁹ develops this and details how catechumens are to be treated by the whole community which receives them for baptism. The reform of Confirmation meant two things: First of all, it was meant to bring confirmation into a closer relationship to Baptism. Secondly, it was meant to reiterate the sacrament's relationship to the Eucharist, which consummates both baptism and confirmation.¹¹⁰

¹⁰² For a comprehensive idea of the origin and reform of the sacrament of Confirmation please refer: A. Kavanagh, *Confirmation: Origins and Reform*, New York 1988.

¹⁰³ Cf. SC 64-71.

¹⁰⁴ A. Kavanagh, *Confirmation*, 81. This outlook is fundamental to understand the reform of the sacrament of Confirmation.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. A. Kavanagh, *Confirmation*, 81.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. SC 71.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. SC 64-71.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. LG 3-14.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. AG 13.

¹¹⁰ Cf. A. Kavanagh, *Confirmation*, 96.

2.3.2. The Apostolic Constitution *Divinae Consortium Naturae* of Paul VI

In his Apostolic Constitution, *Divinae consortium naturae*, Pope Pius VI introducing the reformed rite of Confirmation specified that the sacrament is conferred by anointing with chrism on the forehead, the effect of which is sealing with the gift of the Spirit. The document embodies a short descriptive summary of teachings about baptism and confirmation, avoiding controversy and maintaining throughout the necessity of keeping Confirmation in the closest possible contact with Baptism in order to sustain Confirmation's intelligibility.¹¹¹ *Divinae consortium naturae* clearly states that: "The faithful are born anew by baptism, strengthened by the sacrament of confirmation, and finally are sustained by the food of eternal life in the Eucharist. By means of these sacraments of Christian initiation, they thus receive in increasing measure the treasures of divine life and advance towards the perfection of charity."¹¹² Hence we see the move towards the restoration of the order of the sacraments of initiation: baptism, confirmation and then Eucharist.

This Apostolic Constitution put the sacrament of Confirmation in a strongly baptismal context which counsels that it should be celebrated earlier rather than later for those who were baptized in infancy. The Apostolic Constitution also changes the liturgical structure on which the rite is based from the old episcopal *missa* structure of Apostolic Tradition, which was pneumatized by the time of Innocent I, to one based on the Byzantine postbaptismal chrismation by a presbyter. This shift has the logical effect of diminishing the old Roman postbaptismal chrismation by a presbyter and of alleviating in law that the centuries-old hegemony bishops had in administering Confirmation, thus moving Confirmation even more closely to Baptism.¹¹³ The historic connection of Confirmation with Baptism is thus more clearly evident today than at any time perhaps since the early Middle Ages.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Cf. AAS 63 (1971), 657-664. See also the footnote no. 30 of this chapter.

¹¹² Cf. AAS 63 (1971), 657-664, here 657.

¹¹³ Cf. A. Kavanagh, Confirmation, 106.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Ibid.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SACRAMENT OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

The sacraments are seven sources and means of grace. The Holy Eucharist is the most productive source of them all. It is the queen among the sacraments. Its purpose is to preserve and increase the divine life of grace, to stimulate its growth, and to bring it to perfection. In receiving the Eucharist we become God's children most perfectly for we become one body with Christ the Son of the Heavenly Father, bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh.¹ One of the primary concerns of Pius Parsch was to bring the Holy Eucharist closer to the life of the faithful and lead them to an active participation in it. He designates the Holy Eucharist as a "treasure" of great value. According to Parsch this treasure of great value lies hidden and buried from many Christians. For he says, "The holy sacrifice of the Mass lies unappreciated and unknown in the treasury of the Church. Those who have discovered it will strive to make it their own and will spend their lives, living with the Church in the presence of this divine sacrifice."² In this chapter we shall discuss Parsch's teaching on the third sacrament of initiation, the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

3.1. THEOLOGY OF THE EUCHARIST IN THE WRITINGS OF PIUS PARSCH

3.1.1. The Name "Eucharist"

Parsch designates essentially three terminologies and explains them in short historically and contextually: "The Breaking of Bread", "Eucharist" and "Mass".³

- a. The Breaking of Bread: The breaking of bread was the first name of the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. This name is closely connected to the Jewish meal. The Jews broke bread at the beginning of every meal and to do this was the prerogative of the father of the house. Jesus does the same during the Last Supper with his disciples. That is the reason why the celebration of the Mass is known as "breaking of bread" in the apostolic time (cf. Acts 2:

¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 314.

² Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung* 1935, 7; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 1.

³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung* 1935, 80; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 56.

42, 46; 20: 7. 11; 1 Cor. 10: 16). This name shows that in the early Church the meal aspect of the Eucharist was very much to the fore.⁴

- b. Eucharist: The name “Eucharist” originated from the thanksgiving prayer of the consecration. It came in the second and third century. This name indicates the words of Jesus at the Last Supper “thanked”. It would seem, therefore, that at this period the Eucharist prayer was one of the most salient features of the celebration.⁵
- c. Mass: The term “Mass” (Missa) became popular from 4th century onwards. It is derived from the dismissal or closing of the assembly. It is certainly peculiar that the whole rite should have been called after the closing ceremony. Parsch however was not very comfortable to use the term Mass (in German “Messe”), because of the word’s number of secular associations. It is for this reason that Parsch prefers to use such titles as the Eucharistic celebration, or the rite of the Lord’s Supper.⁶

Parsch defines the Holy Mass as follows: “Die Messe ist die Gedächtnisfeier an Christi Tod, ist das große und einzige Opfer der Christenheit und Vergegenwärtigung des Kreuzesopfers, ist endlich das Opfermahl, das uns das Gnadenleben verbürgt und bewahrt.”⁷ Let us now discuss the theological aspects of the Holy Eucharist in Pius Parsch’s writings.

3.1.2. The Holy Eucharist as Memorial of Our Lord

The Holy Eucharist is a memorial. In order to give a clear-cut understanding of the Eucharist as memorial, Parsch depicts the scene of the Last Supper, where our Lord is seated at the table with his twelve apostles. He designates it as a great and solemn

⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 204; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1952*, 486; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 56; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1952*, 486.

⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 204; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1952*, 486; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 56; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 70. In greek eulogein, eucharistein. The word “Eucharist” means thanksgiving. In the East the name *Liturgia* came to be applied to the Mass. The Eucharistic prayer was always called the *Eucharistia*; in the West it was divided into a sung portion, the preface, and a silent part, the canon (canon actionis). The Greeks called this latter part the Anaphora. Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 56.

⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 204; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1952*, 486. Parsch uses the terms like „Abendmahlfeier”, „Eucharistiefeier”, „Herrenmahl”, „Meßopfer”, „Meßfeier”, „das eucharistische Opfer”, „das heilige Opfer“. Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 204; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1952*, 486; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 70-71. H. B. Meyer gives a detailed account of the various names for the celebration of Eucharist. Cf. H. B. Meyer, *Eucharistie: Geschichte, Theologie, Pastoral*, (Gottesdienst der Kirche: Handbuch der Liturgiewissenschaft 4), Regensburg 1989, 34-43.

⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 204; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1952*, 486.

moment. Parsch compares this instant to that of a father who gathers his children around his deathbed and acquaints them with his last wishes.⁸ In the same way, in his opinion, Our Lord expresses his last will and testament to his apostles at the Last Supper. He gives them his own body and blood and says to them: “Do this in remembrance of me”.⁹ To understand this mandate of Jesus to his apostles, we should look back to the Old Testament and the Passover meal that the Jews have celebrated since the time of their exodus from Egypt. At the celebration of the Passover meal the father of the family held a short speech making the participants aware of the great deeds of God. Then they ate the Paschal lamb and thereby gratefully remembered the great deeds of God, who has freed them out of the slavery of the Egyptians. This memorial meal mentioned in the Old Testament becomes prototype of the memorial meal mentioned in the New Testament. And Jesus fulfils this by making us free from the slavery of the devil. According to the commandment of Jesus the Holy Eucharist should remain the memento of this deliverance till he comes again.¹⁰

With the objective of substantiating the Holy Eucharist as memorial, Parsch brings in an imaginary situation, “Suppose your own mother called you to her deathbed and said to you ‘My child, when I am gone, I want you to say Our Father for me every Sunday without fail.’ Would you not do so? Unless your heart were of stone you would certainly respect this last wish of your mother and consider its fulfilment a

⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 53; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 24; cf. P. Parsch, *Study the Mass*, trans. W. Busch, Collegeville 1953, 5-6. This book is the English translation of the Pius Parsch’s “Lernet die Messe verstehen”.

⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung* 1935, 25; cf. P. Parsch, *Study the Mass*, 5-6; cf. Lk. 22: 19; cf. 1 Cor. 11: 24.

¹⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung* 1935, 19, 29, 32, 41. Memorial, in the sense of Sacred Scripture, is not merely the recollection of past events but it is the proclamation of the mighty works wrought by God for men. In the liturgical celebration of these events, they become in a certain way present and real. This is how Israel understands its liberation from Egypt: whenever Passover is celebrated, the Exodus events are made present to the memory of believers so that they may conform their lives to them. In the New Testament, the memorial takes on new meaning. When the Church celebrates the Holy Eucharist, she commemorates Christ’s Passover, and the sacrifice Christ offered once for all on the cross is made present and remains ever present. Cf. CCC 1363 and 1364J. H. Emminghaus speaking about the Eucharist as the Passover of the new covenant gives an elaborate description of it in his book on “The Eucharist”. Cf. J. H. Emminghaus, *Die Messe: Wesen, Gestalt, Vollzug* (SPPI 1), 2nd ed., Klosterneuburg 1976, 45f. Meyer deals with the meaning of Pascha feast and also the course of this event. Cf. H. B. Meyer, *Eucharistie*, 58-60, 63-68. The Pascha of the Jews was a commemoration. In the same way the feast meals of the Jews too were commemoration of the creative and saving work of Yahweh. Cf. H. B. Meyer, *Eucharistie*, 71. R. Meßner gives the form of a Jewish meal in his book “Einführung in die Liturgiewissenschaft”. Cf. R. Meßner, *Einführung in die Liturgiewissenschaft*, 2nd ed., 154.

sacred duty.”¹¹ If human affection thus binds us to fulfil the last requests of those who are dear to us, and if we attach so great an importance to the last wishes of those whom we hold dear, surely we will prove ourselves more faithful to the last request of Our Divine Lord.¹² In Parsch’s opinion, something similar happens at the Last Supper too. Jesus gathers around him his whole flock, the Christians of every age and place in the persons of his twelve apostles, and he Our Lord and God, Lawgiver and Saviour, man’s greatest benefactor, more dear to us than father or mother, speaks to each one of us: “My child, if you love me, do what I have done at this supper; do it in remembrance of me.” Is there any duty we will hold more sacred?¹³ And the same occurs in every sacrifice of the Eucharist: “Ganz dasselbe, was Jesus beim letzten Abendmahl getan: Brot und Wein in seinen Leib und sein Blut verwandeln, das tut der Priester bei der Messe. Die Meßfeier ist also das Andenken an das Teuerste, was du hast, an Jesus Christus.”¹⁴

It is therefore important for Parsch that when we approach the Holy Mass, first of all we should think about the Lord. Christ should not be forgotten. According to him, it is not for him, but it is for us that Christ became our Redeemer, Saviour and Judge. He is the light, without him there is only night and darkness. He is the way, the truth and the life.¹⁵ “Es wäre also das größte Unglück für die Welt, wenn er [Christus] aus dem Gedächtnis der Menschen verschwinden würde.”¹⁶ So, whenever we go to the Mass, we should remember and keep in mind that we celebrate the memorial of our Lord: Our Saviour is at the Last Supper with his apostles and we are there among them. He sees us and speaks to us, “If you love me, if you wish to be my disciple, do this in remembrance of me.”¹⁷

¹¹ P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 24; cf. P. Parsch, *Study the Mass*, 5-6; cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung 1935*, 12.

¹² Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung 1935*, 12; cf. P. Parsch, *Study the Mass*, 5.

¹³ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 25; cf. P. Parsch, *Study the Mass*, 6. Meßner speaks of the Last Supper as the symbolic anticipation of the eschatological meal of humanity with God in his kingdom. Cf. R. Meßner, *Einführung in die Liturgiewissenschaft*, 156.

¹⁴ P. Parsch, *Lernet die Messe verstehen*, 5. H. B. Meyer presents the motive and meaning of the Last Supper. He stresses the importance of the institution of the Holy Eucharist. The eating and drinking is a great sign of communion. What is important here is not the satiety of the meal but the sacramental eating and drinking from one bread and cup, in which Jesus gives himself. Meyer also speaks about the normative meaning of the Last Supper. Cf. H. B. Meyer, *Eucharistie*, 68-72, 83-86.

¹⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 24.

¹⁶ P. Parsch, *Messerklärung 1935*, 12.

¹⁷ P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 25-26.

3.1.2.1. The Holy Eucharist as Memorial of Christ's Death

What do we remember in the celebration of the Mass? In Parsch's opinion, above all and first of, all we remember Christ's death. "Die Messe ist das Todesgedächtnis des Herrn. Denn er sagt ja selbst: 'Das ist mein im Tode geopferter Leib, das ist mein im Tode vergossenes Blut – dies tut zu meinem Andenken.'"¹⁸ These words and actions of Our Lord at the Last Supper can be only one meaning. He is enshrining in a ritualistic setting his death on the cross, which is to take place on the following day; a ritual which renders his death present here and now, and will stand for all time in his Church for his ever-living memorial.¹⁹ To Parsch the Holy Scripture itself contains the first commentary of Our Lord's words of institution in these words of St. Paul, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor. 11: 27).²⁰

Just as at the Jewish paschal meal the father of the household at the instance of his youngest son explained the circumstances of the institution of the celebration, so the president of the Christian community would proclaim the circumstances of Our Lord's death. The expression "proclaim the Lord's death" implies more than a mere proclamation. It is also the fulfilling of Christ's admonition: "Do this for a commemoration of me". The rite which Christ instituted for all time was to be, in its entirety, a remembrance of the death of our Lord, a memorial celebration of his death. As often as the Christians congregate for the celebration of this ritual which is so rich in signification, they are to think of the death of their Lord and Master.²¹

To the question what Christ's death means to the Christian, Parsch would answer: If someone saves us from a drowning situation and thereby he himself is drowned, how will we recollect our saviour's death? Christ's death is much more than that. Through his death he has made us the children of God and heirs of heaven. This is the death of God for his sinful creations. The sacrifice that Christ has offered as High Priest at

¹⁸ P. Parsch, Messerkklärung 1935, 12-13; cf. P. Parsch, Das heilige Meßopfer, in: Bibel und Liturgie 2 (1927/28), 4-9, 21-25, 38-41, 72-76, 98-102, 116-121, 133-137, 148-154, 195-200, 239-243, 283-287, here 7; cf. P. Parsch, The Liturgy of the Mass, 13.

¹⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, The Liturgy of the Mass, 18.

²⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, The Liturgy of the Mass, 18. The word "proclaim" suggests at least three things. Firstly, there must have been current a liturgical custom whereby the death of Our Blessed Lord was heralded or proclaimed by someone, possibly the president of the feast; as a custom from which the account of the Last Supper, which is contained in the Mass of today, and the prayer *Unde et memores* originated. Cf. P. Parsch, The Liturgy of the Mass, 18-19.

²¹ Cf. P. Parsch, The Liturgy of the Mass, 19.

Golgotha for mankind and the same sacrifice that is anticipated by him at the Last Supper are reproduced in every Holy Mass. The Holy Mass renders present Christ's death upon the cross.²² In Parsch's view, when we celebrate Mass, something tremendous happens: "The Lord's death on the cross is in our midst."²³

3.1.2.2. The Holy Eucharist as Living Memorial

The Holy Eucharist as a memorial of Christ is totally peculiar and unique in its nature. It is not a dead memorial; rather it is a living memorial. Parsch illustrates this point more evidently by using two examples from the day today life of the people. i) At home we keep the photograph of the deceased person of the family to keep afresh the memory of the departed, we look at it, but it does not speak, it remains dumb; it is a dead memorial. But the Mass is a living memorial of Our Lord, for in that instant when we celebrate the memorial, Our Lord himself, veiled it is true beneath the appearances of bread and wine, yet in very actuality, stands in the midst of us.²⁴ "Aus dem Gedächtnis wird Wirklichkeit und Gegenwart Christi."²⁵ ii) We visit the graves of our loved ones because the proximity of their earthly remains makes us feel in some way closer to them. We lay wreath or flowers upon a grave. All these are lifeless memorials. The flowers fade and die. But the Mass is quite different. Here the beloved dead one is truly close to us. He is present and living in our midst. Here is no more grave. Before us lies the living body and blood that was sacrificed for us on the cross, for the Eucharist is the living memorial of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.²⁶

²² Cf. P. Parsch, Messerkklärung 1935, 13; cf. P. Parsch, Das heilige Meßopfer, in: Bibel und Liturgie 2 (1927/28), 4-9, 21-25, 38-41, 72-76, 98-102, 116-121, 133-137, 148-154, 195-200, 239-243, 283-287, here 7; cf. P. Parsch, The Liturgy of the Mass, 19.

²³ Cf. P. Parsch, The Liturgy of the Mass, 19.

²⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 25.

²⁵ P. Parsch, Die liturgische Predigt, vol. 1, 200.

²⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, The Liturgy of the Mass, 25; cf. P. Parsch, Study the Mass, 7. The liturgical memorial is no "remembrance" of something past in the sense of a linear understanding of time, but rather "anamnesis", according to Casel "memorial of mysteries", that means, that which was fulfilled once in a historical manner, is set before us again in mystery. Strictly speaking it is a question of "presence", but for us men in our present condition it remains a memorial, only faith sees the presence. Outwardly it is a memorial, but for the believer it is a presence, and moreover a presence of the *pneuma*. Cf. O. Casel, Das Christliche Opferymsterium: Zur Morphologie und Theologie des eucharistischen Hochgebetes, Graz 1968, 487-489.

3.1.3. The Holy Eucharist as a Sacrifice

Besides, the Holy Mass being a memorial of Christ our Lord, the Mass is also a sacrifice. It is the re-presentation of Christ's death on the cross, the greatest sacrifice of all time, compared with which every other sacrifice is a mere shadow.²⁷ In Parsch's view, to overlook this fact would be completely misunderstanding the Eucharist. To him, the Holy Mass is the renewal of the realisation of Christ's sacrifice: "Das Kreuzopfer, das der Preis unserer Erlösung war und ist, hat Christus aus seinem geschichtlichen Geschehen herausgehoben, es zur liturgischen Kulthandlung gemacht, er hat es beim letzten Abendmahl vorausgenommen und seiner Kirche zum Vermächtnis gegeben, dass sie es durch alle Zeiten, bis Christus wiederkommt, vergegenwärtige. Das ist die Messe."²⁸ It is the real renewal or the realisation of the sacrifice of redemption of Jesus Christ. Here Christ is again, like on the cross, victim and priest, but in an unbloody manner, priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.²⁹

Pius Parsch observed that for many Christians the idea of sacrifice has lost much of its original connotation. The term survives in ordinary speech in such phrases as "demanding great sacrifices", as applied to something the performance of which will entail hardships which will need to be overcome, but which one takes on oneself for the sake of higher good. A mother, for example, makes sacrifices for her children. In war-time everyone must make sacrifices for his country.³⁰ But the religious signification of this word is not very clearly understood nowadays. Among the various sacrificial customs of the Old Testament, there was the sacrifice of the scapegoat. In the ceremonies of the annual Day of Atonement the high priest laid hands upon the head of this animal which was thus regarded as bearing the sins of all

²⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 26. The Catechism of the Catholic Church speaks of the sacrificial character of the Holy Mass: "The sacrificial character of the Eucharist is manifested in the very words of institution: 'This is my body which is given for you' and 'This cup which is poured out for you is the New Covenant in my blood.' In the Eucharist Christ gives us the very body which he gave up for us on the cross, the very blood which he 'poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.'" CCC 1365. The encyclical *Mediator Dei* speaks of the Holy Eucharist as a sacrifice: The Eucharist is a renewal of the sacrifice on the cross. Christ is the Priest, the Sacrifice and the Purpose of the Eucharistic sacrifice. Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595.

²⁸ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 490.

²⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 490; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol 1, 123; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 387; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Priestertum*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 2 (1927/28), 337-339, here 337.

³⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 26.

people and which was then led forth and driven into the wilderness.³¹ The idea of sacrifice includes the consciousness of man's sinfulness and the desire to make reparation to the offended goodness of God. These animal sacrifices among the ancient Jews and pagans were symbolic. They could not of themselves take away human sin. But they expressed man's longing for a real redemption.³²

Parsch explains what a sacrifice is: It is the offering of some visible gift; I give to God something that I have. It is an earthly good, a part of one's own possessions, which one surrenders to God in order to symbolize dependence upon him and the desire for union with him.³³ In a sacrifice thus understood there are four elements: i) a divinely constituted priest to make the sacrifice: no ordinary man will suffice; ii) a victim, that is, an earthly good which man possesses and makes over to God; iii) the intention of self-surrender outwardly symbolized by the gift; iv) union with God, the end and purpose of sacrifice.³⁴ Parsch seeks a deeper understanding of these four elements by examining the sacrifices in the Old Testament.

Firstly, the priest is divinely appointed. In earliest times the priest was the father of the family; the patriarch, like Noah, Abraham and Jacob. Later God appointed one family, the descendants of Levi, to the priestly office. And the priest alone had the right to offer sacrifice. Parsch then defines a priest. A priest is a mediator between God and man. He stands between God and man, with one hand extended towards God, and the other towards man, bringing them together. Clearly, therefore, he must enjoy the confidence of both parties. He must be well-pleasing to God and therefore

³¹ This typifies the two great gospel privileges, of the remission of sin and access to God, both of which we owe to our Lord Jesus. Christ is both the Maker and the Matter of the atonement; for he is the Priest, the High Priest, that makes reconciliation for the sins of the people. And as Christ is the High Priest, so is he the Sacrifice with which atonement is made; for he is all in all in our reconciliation to God. Thus he was figured by the two goats. The slain goat was a type of Christ dying for our sins; the scape-goat a type of Christ rising again for our justification. The atonement is said to be completed by putting the sins of Israel upon the head of the goat, which was sent away into a wilderness, a land not inhabited; and the sending away of the goat represented the free and full remission of their sins. He shall bear upon him all their iniquities. Thus Christ, the Lamb of God, takes away the sin of the world, by taking it upon himself (cf. [Jn.1: 29](#)). The entrance into heaven, which Christ made for us, was typified by the high priest's entrance into the most holy place. See Hebrews 9: 7. The high priest was to come out again; but our Lord Jesus ever lives, making intercession, and always appears in the presence of God for us. This typifies the two great gospel duties of faith and repentance. Cf. Leviticus chapter 16.

³² Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 26.

³³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung* 1935, 14; cf. Parsch, *Study the Mass*, 6; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 26-27.

³⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 27; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 74.

chosen by him; and must be able to represent man, understanding his lowliness and his need. The more pleasing he is to God and the greater his understanding of man's needs, the better priest and mediator he will be.³⁵

Secondly, Parsch speaks of the victim of the sacrifice. This is something which belongs to man. The greater the gift, the greater the renunciation, the better the sacrifice. In the Old Testament several rules were laid down regarding sacrifice. The victim had to be without blemish, the first-born, and so forth. But the main point was that the victim represented the giver. Man really needs to offer himself in sacrifice, but, since that is not possible, he instead brings something that belongs to him and that he holds very precious.³⁶ He would offer an animal victim, because a living animal was better representation of man than is something inanimate. On one occasion God demanded of Abraham that he should even sacrifice his own son, humanly speaking a hard sacrifice indeed, but the more precious the gift the better the sacrifice, and the more representative of the man himself the victim is, again, so much the better will the sacrifice be.³⁷

Thirdly, Parsch deals with the question of the aim of sacrifice. The aim of a sacrifice could be manifold: appropriation, thanksgiving, worship; but whatever the external form of the sacrifice, it must have, as it were, a soul; and the soul of every sacrifice is self-surrender. The victim must express man's self-surrender. Without this, all external sacrifice is valueless.³⁸ In this respect sacrifice resembles the making of a gift; for this, too, is inspired by love and self-surrender. Parsch makes it clearer through an example: When I make a gift to someone, I do so to express my love for him. The gift itself expresses this for the giver gives himself in the gift. It is not so much a question of the value of the gift, as of the intention behind it. If no love is there the gift is valueless, such is with sacrifice.³⁹

Parsch also portrays two instances from the Scripture to justify his above argument. First of all, he speaks about the sacrifices of Cain and Abel. Both Cain and Abel sacrificed and both gave of the best they had: Abel a lamb and Cain the fruits of the

³⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 27; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1952*, 245; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 74.

³⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 27; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 74.

³⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 27.

³⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, 27-28.

³⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, 28.

field. In the actual offering nothing was amiss in either instance. Yet only Abel's sacrifice was pleasing to God; Cain's was not.⁴⁰ Parsch analyses the reason for this. According to him, it was because Abel brought with his offering his love and self-surrender to God, whereas Cain's sacrifice was merely external. His heart was not given. Secondly, Parsch speaks about the example of Abraham: God asked of Abraham the hardest sacrifice conceivable, the immolation of his own son. He wished to test Abraham's surrender. When God saw that Abraham was ready to make such a sacrifice in perfect surrender to his will, he was dispensed with the sacrificial act. From these instances we learn that self-surrender is so much of the essence of sacrifice that without it the sacrifice is void. Parsch observes that in certain circumstances self-surrender suffices even without the gift. The more complete the surrender, the better the sacrifice.⁴¹

Lastly, Parsch examines the final purpose of a sacrifice. Usually the sacrifice involves the destruction of the victim. The animal victim is slain. That, however, is not the main purpose of sacrifice. Rather, it is the union with God. Man's aim is to unite himself with God through sacrifice. So, too, when we make a gift, we do not stop at merely parting with what belongs to us, we aim at the union with the recipient by means of the gift. The priest, as we have already seen, is the mediator between God and man. He brings the two together, and sacrifice is the means he uses, for no better means is to hand of expressing and effecting union with God. For this reason a meal would often be celebrated in conjunction with the sacrifice. Men ate the flesh of the victim which had been sacrificed and thus belonged to God. Now God was the giver. The flesh they ate was God-given food, and in eating the sacrificial banquet they symbolized their union with God.⁴² For example: When Noah emerged from the ark after the flood, he offered sacrifice in thanksgiving for his safety. God was well-pleased with his sacrifice and demonstrated His good pleasure by tracing the rainbow in the sky, like a bridge uniting earth with heaven, a graphic representation of His covenant with man (cf. Gen. 8: 18-22). The more perfect the sacrifice is the more effectual is it of its inner purpose, union with God.⁴³

⁴⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 28.

⁴¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 28; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 74-75.

⁴² Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 28.

⁴³ Cf. *ibid.*

These four elements of sacrifices, priest, victim, surrender and union with God, were present in all the sacrifices of the Old Testament though not in their full perfection. The priest was certainly called by God, but he was, nevertheless, a sinful man, standing on man's side rather than on God's, and so he was an imperfect mediator. The victim was an animal or some lifeless thing; and how could a dumb animal truly represent mankind? No, the sacrificing animal victims in the Old Testament rather symbolised mankind's yearning for a perfect sacrifice.⁴⁴ As for self-surrender, this, of course, was not absent in the Old Testament. We have only to consider that the very great self-surrender in the face of God can be only a weak thing at its best. Finally, the purpose of sacrifice, union with God, was only imperfectly realized, for man was weighed down by original sin. A great gulf still separated him from God. Heaven was closed to him. Even sacrificial meal expressed little more than man's great longing for union with God.⁴⁵

3.1.3.1. Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross as the Culmination of all the Sacrifices

All the sacrifices of the Old Testament looked forward to a perfect sacrifice that would combine the above mentioned four elements of sacrifice in supreme perfection, and such was the sacrifice of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His whole life on earth was in itself a great sacrifice offered for mankind, yet he willed to crown his life's work with a sacrifice so eminently supreme that it outshone all the sacrifices of the past. This was the sacrifice of the cross. The sacrifice of the cross is so immeasurably great that we can scarcely hope to comprehend it.⁴⁶ Let us discuss how the four elements of sacrifice are realized here in all their fullness.

i) Christ as the High Priest: The first requisite in a sacrifice, as we saw, was a priest as mediator. Christ is the only perfect High Priest.⁴⁷ Christ is mediator in the truest sense of the word. The mediator must be able to represent both parties. Christ could do this to perfection since, in his own person, he united Godhead with humanity. For this cause he was anointed by the Father: "For it was fitting that we should have such

⁴⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 29; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 75.

⁴⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 29; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 75.

⁴⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 29.

⁴⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 29; cf. P. Parsch, *Die Priesterweihe (Volksliturgische Andachten und Texte, Nr. 30)*, Klosterneuburg 1951, 3. The letter of Hebrews gives an elaborate account of the High Priesthood of Christ.

a high priest, holy, blameless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. Unlike the other high priests, he has no need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for those of the people; this he did once for all when he offered himself” (Heb. 7: 26-27). Yet he stands no less really on the side of man: “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4: 15). So in his sacrifice on the cross Christ was, and remains for all time, the supreme High Priest.⁴⁸

ii) Christ as the Victim: The second element of a sacrifice is the victim. As we have seen, an animal is no real representative of man. A man would be a better victim; better still, an angel. Yet in the sacrifice of the cross the victim is no mere man or angel, but none other than the Divine Son of God. Furthermore, we saw that the victim is merely representative of the giver. The one who offers the sacrifice must surrender himself to God. This is what Christ did in very truth: For he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption (cf. Heb. 9: 12). Hence the death of Christ on the cross was the greatest sacrifice conceivable. On the altar of the cross Christ was at once priest and paschal victim, and in both capacities divine, exalted, perfect, ineffable and supreme.⁴⁹

iii) The self-surrender of Christ: We have considered the great self-surrender of many such Old Testament characters as Abel, Noah and Abraham. How does their surrender compare with the self-surrender and free-will offering of Christ? His whole life was a state of perfect obedience to his Heavenly Father. As he said so often, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work” (Jn. 4: 34). Yet when he was about to crown his life’s work with the sacrifice of the cross, he was resolved to awaken in himself the greatest possible spirit of surrender.⁵⁰ In his festive

⁴⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1952, 245; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 112f; cf. P. Parsch, *Heiligung des Priesters durch die Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 33-42, here 33; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 30; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 75.

⁴⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 387; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt* vol. 1, 127; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 30; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Priestertum*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 2 (1927/28), 337-339, here 337; cf. P. Parsch, *Die Priesterweihe*, 3; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 76.

⁵⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 123; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 4, 227; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 30-31; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 76.

entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday we see this royal resolve at work; but it was on the Mount of Olives that he wrestled with his Father for complete and utter self-surrender: “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done” (Lk. 22: 42). And it was only then, after he had won the victory over himself that he arose to offer the sacrifice of salvation, freely, consciously, and with utter self-surrender.⁵¹

iv) Christ’s union with God, the Father: The fruit and purpose of this sacrifice was union with God. For Jesus says, “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” (Jn. 12: 32) The sacrifice of the cross was to gather mankind around him and bind them to his Heavenly Father. Immeasurably great was the fruit of this sacrifice: salvation, grace and glory for mankind; for the cross is the source of all salvation, of all grace and of all holiness.⁵² The book of Hebrews sums it up very beautifully saying: When Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.⁵³ Such is the sacrifice of the cross. Since that time the bloody sacrifices of the Old Testament, which were never more than foreshadows of this sacrifice, have been superfluous. All the sacrifices ever offered by man flow into this sacrifice. This is the sacrifice wherein earth and heaven meet. Thus, we see that all the four elements of sacrifice are perfectly fulfilled in the sacrifice of Christ.

3.1.3.2. The Holy Eucharist as the Continuation of Christ’s Sacrifice

Every religion has its sacrifices. The Christians too have their sacrifice, and it is no other than the sacrifice of the cross. For his Church Christ instituted a ritual that would render present and ever fresh his sacrifice of the cross. That same sacrifice which Christ offered on the cross he anticipated on the evening before at the Last supper, and enshrined it in a memorial celebration, commanding his Church to renew

⁵¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 123; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 4, 227; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 30-31; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 76.

⁵² Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 31; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 124.

⁵³ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 31; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 124; cf. Heb. 9: 11-12.

this sacrificial celebration repeatedly until he comes again.⁵⁴ Therefore, in Parsch's opinion we should rejoice that we have a sacrifice; a sacrifice of our own; the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. For such is the Eucharist. And in this sacrifice, too, are those four essential elements present, and that in their most perfect degree.⁵⁵

Who is the priest at the Eucharistic celebration? Here we distinguish three priests. Firstly, the faithful are priests; for they truly offer the sacrifice, and herein lies the basis for their active participation in the Mass.⁵⁶ Then there is the ordained priest, who stands at the altar in his official robes and celebrates the Mass. Yet he is but the representative of the divine High Priest, Jesus Christ. Strictly speaking, it is Christ, who is priest at the Holy Sacrifice. The human priest lends his own visible presence, and the people are priests inasmuch as they belong to the Mystical Body of Christ; according to Parsch, when we see the human priest standing at the altar, we should see in him Christ, the divine High Priest, as St. Paul does, with the eyes of faith.⁵⁷

The victim in the Mass is not the bread and wine, nor the people's offering at the altar, but precisely the same as in the sacrifice of the cross: the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. That is why it is the office of the priest to consecrate the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. This precious victim is placed on our altars and we are permitted to offer it to God. In the Mass, therefore, Christ is both priest and victim.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, the sacrifice is really our own. It is placed in our hands and we must offer it to God; or rather, Christ, our brother, offers it for us. The

⁵⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 110 and 202; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1952, 411; cf. P. Parsch, *Eine neue Meßklärung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926/27) 110-111, here 110; cf. *Erziehung zur Meßfeier*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 14 (1939/40) 101-111, here 107-108; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 31.

⁵⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 31.

⁵⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, 32-33. Here Parsch refers to the common priesthood of all the faithful; all the baptized and confirmed.

⁵⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 32.

⁵⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 32. The remarks of Parsch about the consecrated gifts, the Eucharistic Body and the Eucharistic Blood of Christ, are rather incomprehensible. Parsch supports the opinion that is until today widely propagated in the western Catholic Church that the offering of consecrated gifts to God (*consecrata*) is a part of the Holy Mass. This theory is based on the interpretation of the Roman Canon from the Middle Ages. This, however, contradicts the age old tradition of the Church and also the text of the Canon which, in fact, speaks of the gifts of bread and wine to be offered to the altar at the Holy Mass so that they will be consecrated through the power of the Holy Spirit. Cf. R. Meßner, *Einige Probleme des eucharistischen Hochgebetes*, in: *Bewahren und Erneuern: Studien zur Meßliturgie* (Innsbrucker theologische Studien 42), eds., R. Meßner et al., Innsbruck 1995, 174-201, here 174; cf. H-J. Schulz, *Ökumenische Glaubenseinheit aus eucharistischer Überlieferung*, (Konfessionskundliche und kontroverstheologische Studien 39), Paderborn 1979, 56-72; cf. H-C. Seraphim, *Messopfer und Eucharistie: Weg und Irrweg der Überlieferung*, in: *Protokolle zur Liturgie* 4 (2011) 92-148.

sacrifice causes us no pain, since Christ has taken all that upon himself on our behalf, but there is something that we must bring what we alone can bring: our self-surrender. This is the thing, according to Parsch, which is required of us; we must unite our willing surrender to the free-will offering of Christ. This is the purpose of the offertory of the Mass.⁵⁹ Finally, the aim of the purpose of the Holy Sacrifice is union with God, and for this reason Christ linked with his sacrifice a sacrificial meal, Holy Communion, which unites us most intimately with God. The reason why the body and blood of Christ are present in the Holy Sacrifice under the appearance of bread and wine is such that the faithful may unite themselves intimately with Christ.⁶⁰

The great sacrifice, which our Lord offered on Calvary, was anticipated at the Last Supper. This same sacrifice that was anticipated at the Last Supper and consummated on Calvary is made present in our midst again in the sacrifice of the Holy Mass. The Mass is not only a living memorial of our Lord; it is also a sacrifice making present the sacrifice on the cross among us. At the Eucharist we are not merely re-enacting our Lord's passion and death; we behold his body given for us and his blood shed for us. It is Calvary again: our Saviour's offering to the Father of the sacrifice which redeems the world. The Mass, therefore, is our one and perfect Christian sacrifice and the greatest act of worship possible on earth. Thus for Parsch, when we go to the Mass, we go to Calvary and are united with our Saviour in his sacrifice.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Study the Mass*, 8; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 11. The gifts we offer at Mass are the bread and wine. Bread is the symbol of man's toil, for it is earned in the sweat of his brow. Wine is the symbol of his suffering in the wine-press of life. At the altar, therefore, we offer the bread of our daily toil and the wine of the suffering of life. Toil and suffering are the warp and woof of our lives. In offering them we offer ourselves. The gift at the offertory stands for the one who gives. Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 172.

⁶⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Study the Mass*, 8-9; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 11.

⁶¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Study the Mass*, 8-9; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 11. The Catechism of the Catholic Church clearly brings forth this idea: "The Eucharist is thus a sacrifice because it re-presents (makes present) the sacrifice of the cross, because it is its memorial and because it applies its fruit: [Christ], our Lord and God, was once and for all to offer himself to God the Father by his death on the altar of the cross, to accomplish there an everlasting redemption. But because his priesthood was not to end with his death, at the Last Supper 'on the night when he was betrayed', [he wanted] to leave to his beloved spouse the Church a visible sacrifice (as the nature of man demands) by which the bloody sacrifice which he was to accomplish once for all on the cross would be re-presented, its memory perpetuated until the end of the world, and its salutary power be applied to the forgiveness of the sins we daily commit." CCC 1366; cf. Council of Trent: *Doctrine and Canons on the Sacrifice of the Mass*, in: Denzinger, 1740.

3.1.4. The Holy Eucharist as Banquet

As the living memorial of our Lord, and making present again his sacrifice of the cross, the Eucharist is also the food of our Christian life. Christ appears to us in the Mass, in the work of his redemption, not only to be present among us, to comfort us, and to teach us, but also to unfold the divine life and preserve it in us. Therefore this memorial rite is at the same time a banquet: it is the bread of heaven, the bread of life, the meal of sacrifice. It is the bread that unites us intimately and inseparably with the source of all life, with Christ, who nourishes the life of grace within us.⁶² To elaborate and substantiate this point Parsch refers to the sacrifices of the Old Testament. A sacrificial meal was conjoined to the majority of sacrifices in the Old Testament, and indeed, to the majority of pagan sacrifices, too. The reason for this is not far to seek. Whenever a family brought a calf or a lamb to the temple to be sacrificed, the priest immolated it for them and burnt a part of it on the altar in their presence “it is an offering by fire to the Lord”.⁶³ The burning signified that God had graciously received the sacrifice. The entire victim was sanctified and belonged to God. It was the “food of God”, for it had been given to Him, and a part of it was consumed by Him. Now, however, He invited those who had offered the sacrifice to His own table. He was host now, and all His guests, who partook of the sacrificial meal, received the food of God, and entered into intimate union with Him. Union with God was the purpose and effect of their sacrifice.⁶⁴

The sacrifices of old were shadows and types of the infinite, perfect sacrifice of Christ on the cross. The divine victim was immolated and God was well pleased to accept this sacrifice for the whole human family.⁶⁵ Christ, in instituting the Eucharist, found a wonderful means not merely of rendering the sacrifice of the cross truly present to us, but also of making his flesh and blood, which was sacrificed for us, in very truth a sacrificial meal. And so the sacrificial procedure of the Old Testament is repeated today on a far higher plane.⁶⁶ The family of God offers in sacrifice the Lamb of God, the body and blood of the Lord. We offer up the gifts – our victim, because it is we who have brought the matter of the sacrifice, the bread and the wine,

⁶² Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung* 1935, 20; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 14.

⁶³ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 258-259; cf. Lev. 2: 16.

⁶⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 259.

⁶⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung* 1935, 266; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 259.

⁶⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung* 1935, 266; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 259.

at the offertory of the Mass. We offer it to God, and straightway God invites to his table, and gives us the true food of God, the fruits and blessing of sacrifice, the most intimate union with himself. In this way Christ made of the Eucharist at once a sacrifice and a banquet – the sacrifice of the New Law, and the nourishment of the divine life within us.⁶⁷

Having spoken about the sacrifices of the Old Testament, Parsch calls our attention to the words of our Lord in the synagogue at Capernaum, “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh. [...] Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them” (Jn. 6: 51-56). According to him, we must take these words in conjunction with words of institution: “Take, eat; this is my body [...]. Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (cf. Mt. 26: 26-28). It is clear that the holy sacrifices comprise a sacrificial meal that imparts to us the fruits of the sacrifice of our redemption: divine life, union with Christ, and the resurrection of the body on the last day, when our redemption will be fully accomplished.⁶⁸ Thus, in the Holy Sacrifice the tree of the cross becomes the tree of life in the paradise of the New Testament. Its branches reach down to the earth, and the children of God who wish to preserve the divine life within themselves must eat continually of its divine fruit. The sacrificial meal must be thought of as belonging inseparably to the Holy Sacrifice.⁶⁹

The Eucharist is therefore, in this third aspect, a banquet, a most significant banquet, which imparts everlasting life in union with Christ. It is also a memorial banquet. It is a banquet in remembrance of our Lord. The Last Supper was the observance of the paschal ceremony, in which the paschal lamb was eaten in sacrifice. It was thus itself a banquet in remembrance of the freeing of the people of Israel from their bondage in Egypt. The paschal lamb was a figure representing the divine Redeemer. St. Paul would exclaim it as “For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed” (1 Cor. 5: 7). Therefore, the Eucharist is a banquet in remembrance, and also a sacrificial banquet.

⁶⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung* 1935, 266; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 259.

⁶⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 260.

⁶⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 258-259.

For the sacred body and blood which we receive are the same, once offered for us at the altar of the cross.⁷⁰

3.1.5. The Holy Eucharist as Mystery

The Holy Eucharist is a mystery. In the Mass Christ renders present the whole of his redemptive work: “The Eucharist puts before us, renders present to us, and makes us sharers in, the whole of his redemptive work on earth, in every generation, at every moment and in every place.”⁷¹ The sacrificial death of Christ is merely the consummation and crowning act of that work of our salvation which began with the incarnation and ends with the Ascension, or rather with his second coming. As in the mortal life of Christ on earth, so too in the Eucharist throughout the ages, Our Lord pursues his work of our redemption and brings it to fruition in those who believe. Here is our first glimpse of the priceless value of this treasure we are labouring to uncover.⁷² The Mass makes present to us the whole life of Our Redeemer: His birth, his miracles, his death, his resurrection and glorious ascension.⁷³ It is in this sense that the Mass is a mystery.

In the ancient Christian sense, Parsch defines the mystery as the re-enactment of the work of our salvation under the symbolic and mystic veil of the sacraments.⁷⁴ He refers to the Holy Mass as a mystical action in which the salvific act of Christ is envisioned. In the Mass the Lord appears, as he will come on that last day, hidden now indeed under the sacred appearances. Thus the Holy Mass is an anticipation of

⁷⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Study the Mass*, 11; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 259. It should be kept in mind, however, that the Mass is not just eating and drinking in community, a meal that Jesus’ disciples consume together; it is the continuation of his Eucharist, the very specific giving of thanks over the elements of bread and wine. Cf. J. H. Emminghaus, *Die Messe*, 59-60.

⁷¹ P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 19-20. That is the reason why the secret for the night Sunday after Pentecost in the Roman missal reads: “As often as the memorial of this Sacrifice is renewed, the work of our redemption is accomplished.” Odo Casel sees the Holy Mass as the supreme and immersive mystery, in which the essence of Christianity, the redemptive work of Christ is mystically present. Cf. O. Casel, *Das Weihnachtsmysterium*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 123-135, here 133. It is to be noted that Odo Casel too had a great influence on Parsch and his theology on the Eucharist. For a detailed account of the same see in: R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 224-231. About Casel see the foot notes no. 52 and 53 in the chapter “Pius Parsch: An Apostle of Popular Liturgical Movement”.

⁷² Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 20.

⁷³ Cf. *ibid.*, 20. The Mass is seen as the transmission of Christ’s earthly life and deeds in a conceived and mystical manner. Cf. P. Parsch, *Ein vergessenes Königsfest*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926-27), 84-86, here 84; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 228.

⁷⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Kurze Messerklärung*, 18; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 12-13; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 228. Parsch also stresses and gives great importance to symbols and symbolic actions in the liturgy. Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 148-149.

Christ's second coming, with this great difference: then his coming will mean the eternal enjoyment of his divinity for us; now it is a *transitus Domini*, a *pascha*, a passing of the Lord.⁷⁵

3.1.6. The Holy Spirit and the Holy Eucharist

3.1.6.1. The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Holy Eucharist

As already mentioned in the chapter "Pius Parsch and Sacraments in General" the Holy Eucharist, too, is a sacrament of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁶ Parsch speaks about the role of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist. The Holy Spirit was the begetting principle in the incarnation. He dwelt and operated in an especial way in the human body of Christ. In Parsch's view this is also true in Christ's sacramental body, in the Eucharist. The Holy Spirit dwells and works in a Christian through the Eucharist. Therefore one can say that the Eucharist blends him into one body with Christ, blends him into one spirit with the Holy Spirit.⁷⁷ In speaking of the relation between the Holy Eucharist and the Holy Spirit, Parsch brings in the instance of consecration in the Mass. The begetting of the Eucharistic body of Christ at the consecration is the work of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁸ The priest who says the words of consecration is the bearer and instrument of the Holy Spirit. It is only in the power of the Holy Spirit that the priest has the authority to consecrate, just as it was only in the power of the Spirit that Christ's body was fashioned in the womb of the Mother of God. Thus every Mass is a Christmas, and the priest is like the Mother of God who gave birth to the Saviour. He lays the Lord's body on the altar, as Mary laid her divine Child in the manger. And just as the Holy Spirit prepared Christ's humanity for the sacrifice of the Cross, so it is again the Holy Spirit who makes present the sacrifice of redemption in the Mass.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 12-13; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 227.

⁷⁶ See the subtitle 1.4.2. in "Pius Parsch and Sacraments in General".

⁷⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 313-314.

⁷⁸ This action is known as the "Epiclesis". The traditional Eucharistic theologies of the East and West agree that the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit changes the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, and that the properly disposed participants of the Holy Communion are fully united to Christ through the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit. All classical Eucharistic prayers reflect this theology of sanctification by including a twofold invocation: for the sanctification of the bread and wine, and the communities. Cf. G. A. Maloney and E. J. Kilmartin, *Epiclesis*, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 5, 279-280, here 280.

⁷⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 332.

But the Holy Spirit is not only the begetter. He it is who works and operates with the Eucharistic body of Christ in the souls of Christians. The sacrificial fruit of the Mass is the conservation and perfection of sanctifying grace, incorporation into Christ's Mystical Body. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. If we want to express in concrete terms what the fruit and effect of Communion is, we can say: the renewal of Baptism, the renewal of Confirmation. In Baptism we become temples of the Holy Spirit. The divine Spirit comes to us in the Eucharist and visits his temple and fills it anew. In Confirmation we received the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit as it were in embryo; in the Eucharist these gifts are brought to fruition. Our Confirmation did not make us prodigies of wisdom, counsel, understanding, fortitude, piety; we have merely received the dispositions towards these things. It is by the Holy Eucharist that these dispositions are to develop into virtues and skills.⁸⁰ "Die Eucharistie ist ferner der Lebenssaft im Baume unseres Gnadenlebens, der Früchte des Hl. Geistes in uns zur Reife bringt."⁸¹ The Eucharist is moreover the sap in the tree of the life of grace, the sap which ripens the fruits of the Spirit. And these fruits are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, forbearance, gentleness, faith, courtesy, temperance, purity. Whenever we receive Communion all these wonderful fruits of the Spirit are ripened within us, though not, of course, without our co-operation.⁸²

Where Christ's body is, there is the Holy Spirit at work. It was so during the human life of our Lord on earth, for he was filled to overflowing with the Holy Spirit. It is so with the Lord's Eucharistic body. Parsch quotes here St. John Chrysostom who calls the Eucharist, the maternal breast of the Church, from which we, her infants, must drink the grace of the Holy Spirit. In early times the Blessed Sacrament used to be kept in the Eucharistic dove: a container shaped in the form of a dove and hanging over the altar. This, according to Parsch, was indeed an impressive symbol. As often as we celebrate Mass, the dove of the Holy Spirit hovers over the altar; whenever we receive Communion, the dove of the Holy Spirit comes down upon each one of us and inspires us to love, obedience and patience, and leads us to perfection.⁸³

⁸⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 332.

⁸¹ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 407.

⁸² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 407; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 332-333.

⁸³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 408; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 334.

3.1.6.2. The Holy Eucharist Intimates the Relation with the Holy Trinity

In receiving the Eucharist one becomes God's child most perfectly; for we become one body with Christ the Son of the heavenly Father, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh. Another reason, according to Parsch, why one becomes most intimately united in this sacrament with the Blessed Trinity, is because in the Eucharist the Holy Spirit enters into our souls. "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them" (Jn. 14: 23). These words are fulfilled in a special way in the Eucharist when the Holy Spirit comes to a person and takes up his dwelling in him, in his body and in his soul. In his great high priestly prayer Christ prayed, "Father, the glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one" (Jn. 17: 22-23). It is grace which brings about this union with God, but the means, according to Parsch, is the Eucharist.⁸⁴

Pius Parsch sees the aim of the Eucharist as the perfection of Christ's redemptive work: For that is the reason why our Saviour became man. The Father has made him the Head of the whole of creation. Everything that is capable of redemption must be incorporated and assumed in him. To bring this about Christ himself found a truly wonderful means: in the Eucharist his own divine human Body must be sown in our souls like a grain of wheat, there to spring up and to effect this incorporation in Christ.⁸⁵ Christ does not come down from Heaven for a few minutes in order to visit the human souls. He wants to be the grain of wheat in the souls of the faithful, the leaven to permeate them, their soul and body. He wants to work this effect in the faithful silently, unostentatiously. He wants to hide his divinity, his divine personality, even more than he did in his incarnation. To explain this Parsch uses the simile of wheat. A grain of wheat is outwardly insignificant, lifeless, and yet it contains tremendous power, the very nature of the full-grown plant. Yet this power can only become operative when the grain of wheat falls on fertile soil; otherwise it remains without fruit and alone. It is the same with the Eucharist.⁸⁶ "Outwardly it is lifeless, indistinguishable from ordinary bread, and yet it contains the power of grace.

⁸⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 314.

⁸⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 376.

⁸⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 376; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 331.

This power can only become operative when planted in the soil of a receptive heart.”⁸⁷

The Eucharistic grain of wheat is now put into the hands of the divine sower, who scatters it in the soul. This sower, according to Parsch, is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has been the sower since Christ’s ascension into Heaven; he is the architect of the Kingdom of God. And yet he does not go his own way. He does not make use of his own means. As Christ said, “He has received of mine”. It is with this “mine” of Christ – Christ’s very own possession – that the Holy Spirit is to build up the kingdom of God and to incorporate Christians in the Body of Christ. Christ’s Eucharistic body is the bread which nourishes the Church, which is Christ’s Mystical Body. It is the medicine which heals the ills of this body; it is the grain of wheat which must spring up and bring forth the fruit. Thus, the Eucharistic body lies quietly, unobtrusively, in the hands of the Holy Spirit, to bring the power of redemption to men of good will.⁸⁸

In order to gain a better understanding of the connection between the Eucharist and the Holy Spirit, Parsch draws our attention to Christ’s earthly life. In the inscrutable designs of God’s providence the second Divine Person was to assume human nature and by his self-giving to effect the redemption of mankind. But since this design was an outpouring of divine love, the Holy Spirit, who is the very essence of divine love, was to beget the humanity of Christ, anoint the Saviour for his task, and lead him to sacrifice of redemption. The Holy Spirit accompanied Christ’s humanity from beginning to end.⁸⁹ It was thus that the angel could say to Mary, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you” (Lk. 1: 35). Christ’s human body is a work of the Holy Spirit. When Christ entered upon his messianic office, the Holy Spirit was to descend in visible form upon him, and from that time Christ was to be in a most especial way the bearer of the Holy Spirit. St. Luke says expressly, “Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness” (Lk. 4: 1). “It was the Holy Spirit who finally led Him to the redemptive sacrifice of the cross.”⁹⁰ Here Parsch quotes St. Paul who says, “For if the blood of goats and calves sanctifies [...], how much more will the

⁸⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 376; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 331.

⁸⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 331.

⁸⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 406.

⁹⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 406; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 332.

blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God” (Heb. 9:13-14). The Holy Spirit was the fire that consumed this holy offering of Christ’s body on the altar of the cross. When, however, Christ had accomplished his saving work, he handed over the continuation of it to the Holy Spirit. Just as the Holy Spirit effected the work of redemption in Christ’s humanity, so he wishes to perfect this work in the Church with Christ’s Eucharistic body.⁹¹

3.1.7. Consequences of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist

3.1.7.1. The Holy Eucharist Achieves the Incorporation of Christians into Christ’s Mystical Body

According to Pius Parsch the Holy Eucharist has a special purpose in the total organism of the Church. It achieves the incorporation of Christians into Christ’s Mystical Body: which is the Church. St. Paul calls the great aim of the whole of creation “to gather up all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth” (Eph. 1: 10). Christ then has become the head of the whole creation. Everything must be restored and incorporated in him. As far as Christians are concerned, this work is begun in Baptism, but it is the purpose of the Holy Eucharist to perfect this incorporation, and this is done in two ways: first of all, whatever remains in us of sinful nature must be set aside and then we must be converted into Christ. Just as the little drop of water at offertory of the Holy Mass blends with the wine and is then changed into the Blood of Christ, so must man be united body and soul with Christ. St. Paul would express it as: “it is no longer I who live, but is Christ who lives in me” (Gal. 2: 20). Parsch sees this as the special purpose of the Eucharist.⁹²

3.1.7.2. The Holy Eucharist as Food and Healing Remedy for the Life of Grace

Parsch opines that some time there is a tendency to overlook the important aspect of the Eucharist: the Eucharist as the bread of life. Jesus compares the Eucharist with manna of the Old Testament on two scores: as the bread of heaven and as the bread of life. In both these respects the manna fell short. It did not really come down from heaven and it did not preserve forever the lives of the fathers in the desert. The Holy Eucharist, on the other hand, the fulfilment of this type, is the true bread from heaven

⁹¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 332.

⁹² Cf. *ibid.*, 313.

since it brings us the Son of God himself.⁹³ It is also the true bread of life because it gives eternal life: “I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh” (Jn. 6: 48-51). Christ speaks plainly of this bread: “The bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh” (Jn. 6: 52). This was bombshell to the Jews in the synagogue. They clearly saw that Jesus was not speaking metaphorically, he was speaking of really eating bread that was his own flesh: “The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, ‘How can this man give us his flesh to eat?’” (Jn. 6: 52). Christ, however, in a few sentences, the meaning of which admits of no misunderstanding, insists that his flesh and his blood are food and drink indeed, and that to partake of these gives eternal life.⁹⁴ These words of Christ contain his greatest revelation to mankind.

There are three kinds of life: the natural life of the body, the eternal life of bliss, and the supernatural life of the soul. Parsch poses a question of which of these three our Lord is speaking: Clearly not of the natural life of the body, for we will all die in spite of the Eucharist. Neither is he speaking of eternal life in heaven, for the life he mentions is not a future life but one present in us: “you have no life in you” (Jn. 6: 53). He can only mean the supernatural life of the soul, which he expressly distinguishes from the future life in the words: “Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day” (Jn. 6: 54).⁹⁵

Parsch shows the close connection between the Eucharist and the supernatural life of grace. Without the Eucharist there is no supernatural life. The Eucharist procures this life of grace and at the same time gives a pledge of eternal life of glory. Here there is a connection similar to that which exists between natural food and the natural life of the body. Nourishment preserves life, promotes growth, renews strength, and brings health. The lack of food brings in its train the evils of under-nourishment, debility, sickness and even death. Similarly, the Eucharist worthily received promotes the life

⁹³ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 33.

⁹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 33; cf. Jn. 6: 53.

⁹⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 33-34.

of grace, renews spiritual vigour, shields from the malady of sin, and preserves us from spiritual death.⁹⁶

According to Parsch, it is this aspect of the Eucharist that we can never appreciate enough. Why did Jesus enshrine the re-presentation of his sacrifice on the cross, his memorial, in the outward form of a meal? It was because he wished to give his Church the food of the supernatural life of grace. He wished to bring back that life which Adam had lost through his sin in the Garden of Eden, the life of adoptive sonship with God, and for this he willed a new tree of life, the Eucharist, bearing the mature fruit of the tree of the cross.⁹⁷ The Eucharist is placed in the centre of God's kingdom: the heart, as it were, of Christ's Mystical Body. From it the blood pulsates throughout the body, cleansing and renewing, repairing the ravages of sin, building up the tissues, and bringing health, vigour and strength. Such was the divine purpose in instituting the Eucharist; such is the function of the Eucharist in the supernatural life of the Church.⁹⁸

The Holy Eucharist is considered as medicine for the sickness of our fallen nature. In Parsch's opinion it is not true to say that the Eucharist is the reward of virtue, to be received only by good Christians, and not by those who are struggling against sin and temptation. It is those who are sick who need the physician and his medicine. For the Christian who is honestly trying to do his best, the Eucharist is no death-dealing poison, but a healing remedy. The most important, dual purpose of the Eucharist, therefore, according to Parsch is to be nourishing and healing remedy for the life of grace.⁹⁹

3.1.7.3. The Holy Eucharist as the Continuation and Extension of Christ's Humanity

Parsch sees the Holy Eucharist as the continuation and extension of Christ's humanity. The Son of God assumed human nature from Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. The consecration of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood is

⁹⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here 333; cf. *Schenke allen, denen du den Glauben gabst, auch den Frieden*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 310-317, here 313; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 308; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 34.

⁹⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 34.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 374; cf. P. Parsch, *Schenke allen, denen du den Glauben gabst, auch den Frieden*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 19 (1951/52), 310-317, here 313; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 311.

the extension and continuation of this wonderful fact of the incarnation. At his birth the Son of God entered into the world for the first time in order to accomplish the work of redemption. In the Holy Eucharist, Christ comes again into the world: into time and space, and into the souls of individual Christians. Just as Christ became human in order to become the head of creation, so does he come in the Eucharist in his sacramental body in order to incorporate the faithful into himself, and with him to establish a fellowship of life and possessions.¹⁰⁰ “Wir werden durch den Genuss des Leibes Christi in der Eucharistie eines Leibes und Blutes mit ihm, wir werden Christusträger. So erweitert sich in uns die Inkarnation.”¹⁰¹

3.1.7.4. The Holy Eucharist as the Real Actuation and Fulfilment

The Holy Eucharist is the noblest source or strength for a Christian. The celebration of the Holy Sacrifice, without doubt, should hold the central place in the life of a person and parish. Indeed, the Sunday Mass, according to Parsch, is the very heartbeat of a parish.¹⁰² In order to make the parish a community he gives the key: “To rebuild the parish truly into a unified family of God, with but one heart and soul, the Eucharistic celebration must be the starting point.”¹⁰³ The zeal and earnestness with which the parishioners participate in this celebration Sunday after Sunday “will be the gauge of their religious fervour and family spirit. The entire parish is one body in Christ.”¹⁰⁴ No matter how vibrant the parish’s other activities may be the heart of them all is the Eucharist: “The centre, the source, the focus of this growing parish communion will always be the altar, the Eucharistic sacrifice-banquet.”¹⁰⁵

In Parsch’s opinion, the celebration of Sunday is not only a hard obligation, but it is the fairest service of the children of God. Grace alone is the basis of a real celebration of Sunday. The Sunday is the baptismal renewal, the celebration of Easter, that which again presume grace. On Sunday, according to Parsch, the Christian scoops from two sources of salvation; from the Word of God and the Eucharist: these are the two important functions of the pastoral work. A Christian activates his nobility, the kingly priesthood, through the active celebration in the

¹⁰⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 376; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 313

¹⁰¹ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 376.

¹⁰² P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish*, 23.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 40.

Holy Eucharist. On Sunday he fills up the grace, in order to remain strong in the life of struggle, work and suffering throughout the week.¹⁰⁶

3.1.8. Images of the Liturgy

3.1.8.1. Liturgy as Lung and Heart

In speaking about the aim and goal of the Popular Liturgical Movement, Pius Parsch compares the liturgy to lung and heart of the human organism.¹⁰⁷ The liturgy is the lung of the entire organism of the Church.¹⁰⁸ The lung and heart are the vital organs of the human body without which the existence of man is impossible. Through this symbolic comparison of the lung and heart he places the liturgy with clear and fascinating words as the centre of the Christian religion:

Liturgie ist, tiefer gefasst, der Kultus der heiligen Kirche. Diesen wollen wir wieder zu seinem Recht verhelfen. Unsere Religion ist nicht bloß ein philosophisch-dogmatisches Lehrgebäude, nicht bloß eine Moralanstalt, sie ist vor allem eine Kulturreligion, für die der Kult nicht ein bloßes Anhängsel ist. Der Kult ist für unsere Religion das, was Lunge und Herz für unseren Organismus ist. Diesen Kultus wieder unserem Volk zu geben in seiner ganzen Fülle, Tiefe und Wirksamkeit, auch das Volk in diesen Blutkreislauf einzuhalten, also zur aktiven Teilnahme zu führen, das ist das Ziel unsers volksliturgischen Arbeit.¹⁰⁹

Through this image Parsch depicts the predominance of liturgy and especially of the Holy Mass in the religious life of the people and in the life of the Church as a whole. As lung and heart are vital to the human existence, so is liturgy and especially the Holy Mass vital to the Church and the religious life of the faithful.

3.1.8.2. Liturgy as a Drama

In order to explain the nature, substance and scope of the active participation¹¹⁰ in the liturgy Parsch uses the image of a drama or an opera.¹¹¹ At first he poses a question about the role that is to be played by the faithful in the liturgy. As an answer to this

¹⁰⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, Liturgische Lebensgestaltung, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 8 (1933/34), 5-7, 25-27, 53-54, here 25; cf. *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here 340.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 69 and 285.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 178.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 69-70.

¹¹⁰ The theme of "active participation" will be discussed in detail in the second part of this chapter.

¹¹¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 300; cf. P. Parsch, *Die Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926-27), 311-317, here 313; cf. *Das Kirchenjahr in der Pfarre*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 497-506, 501; cf. *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here 337; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 393.

question he gives the different kinds of participation in a drama. He takes the example of a drama, something like an opera. And thereby he employs the example of three types of people who attend the play.¹¹²

3.1.8.2.1. Types of Participation

Parsch starts with the example of a spectator, who goes to a play and watches it; he does not know the language of the play. This spectator hardly understands the plot and the course of the action. Since he does not know the language, he cannot follow the delivered text. This makes him bored. Parsch views that out of his boredom in order to pass away the time he would even take a book and read it. He would watch the play only now and then, especially when the external effects call for his attention. Parsch considers this as a kind of participation. It is a participation that does not go beyond the external presence. That means, the person is present at the play, but the play does not have any effect on him, because of the fact that he does not understand anything of it.¹¹³

Parsch gives a second example to illustrate the types of participation. A second visitor attends the same play. This spectator knows the play, the music and the language. He participates in it with a great interest of an average public or expert. He acknowledges his participation with the majority of the spectators through applause or displeasure. Here Parsch sees a greater form of participation. But in his opinion, this too is only a passive participation of the spectator and hearer.¹¹⁴ “Noch besser sind die Zuschauer daran, die sich völlig mit Kunstsinn in das Stück eingelebt haben und rege und innige Anteilnahme beim Anwohnen mit den Schauspielern mitempfinden. Immerhin es sind außen nur passive Teilnehmer.”¹¹⁵

Thirdly, Parsch brings in the example of the actors themselves. They participate actively in the action of the play. Of course, the degree of participation varies: The

¹¹² P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 99; cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here 337.

¹¹³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 99; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 179. For a practical example of this Parsch mentions a Japanese who goes to a German drama; there he sees the stage-decoration, but he does not understand anything of the drama itself, as a result he catches hold of a book, he reads it and whiles away the time. Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 16.

¹¹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 99; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 180. For the second instance Parsch uses the example of a German who goes to a German play and he tries to follow the course of the play attentively. Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 16.

¹¹⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 99.

supernumeraries and the choir participate in a distant way, and the actors who play the main roles participate in an immediate way. He also observed that in the modern play and piece of entertainments there are occasions when even the spectators are asked to sing with the characters. Here we see an active participation by the characters and a partially immediate active participation of the spectators who cooperate with the singing.¹¹⁶

These three examples, according to Parsch, are suitable to point out the nature of the active participation in the liturgy. The first instance was prevailing before and outside of the Liturgical Movement: At the rear of the church the choir sang and in front at the altar, the priest recited inarticulately the prayers, the people could hardly see him; and in the middle the people sat spending their time praying something.¹¹⁷ In his observation, in many cases the people resemble the spectator who does not know the language of the play. They only watch the sacred drama, but understand very little. He compares the spectator with the foreign language to the people who attend the liturgy by reading prayers from some devotional books in their own languages in order to pass away the time. In Parsch's view, the liturgy does not intend such kind of participation. He says that most of the people are inactive in the liturgy with their mere presence. For him it is something unpleasant to see such a situation in the Mass, in which the celebrating priest in front and the people sitting behind are busy with their prayer books, turning the pages and when the bell goes they make the sign of the cross. Many of them have no books, and they just wait for the Mass to be over.¹¹⁸ This could be seen as just fulfilling the obligation to attend the Mass, for he makes it clear "Das Teilnehmen an der Liturgie ist kein bloßes Gegenwärtigsein und kein bloßes Abwarten der Dauer ihrer Feier, ohne selbst sich an dieser Feier irgendwie zu beteiligen."¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 99-100; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 180. In the third instance Parsch uses the example of the villagers of Oberammergau: In Oberammergau the whole village is engaged in playing the Passion of Christ; in this instance all are fellow players. Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 16; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie und Kirchenmusik* (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 23), Klosterneuburg [n.d.], 2. Oberammergau is a municipality in Bavaria, Germany. The town is famous for its Passion Play. Every ten years the Passion of Christ is staged here.

¹¹⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 16.

¹¹⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 99.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 100-101.

The second instance can be applied to the Liturgical Renewal Movement, which appeared mainly in the great monasteries: Here the monks celebrated delightful liturgy, and the people followed the holy actions piously: but there was no real participation.¹²⁰ The third instance is about the Popular Liturgical Movement; here the community masses were celebrated, it is a pray-sing-mass and everyone participated in it. They pray, sing, give, offer and receive together. Certainly not everyone has the same role: “Freilich sind nicht alle Hauptspieler, wie auch in der Oper nicht alle Solosänger sein können. Hauptspieler oder Chorführer sind die Priester, aber das Volk ist im wahren Sinne des Wortes aktiv beteiligt. Das ist Sinn und Wesen der aktiven Teilnahme.”¹²¹

In this connection Parsch poses an important question. Is the genuine participation same as a spectator and a hearer who knows and understands the play? He observes that most of the Catholics are happy and satisfied with this sort of participation, which appears externally very passive. Parsch wishes and expects the sort of participation with due knowledge and understanding, with mind and soul, as spectators and hearers. He also observes that for film, for drama and all kinds of entertainments and gatherings the people participate with great interest, with lot of efforts and expenses. Thus, according to him, it is high time for the Christians to take their divine service seriously.¹²² Parsch’s sole aim was the promotion of the active participation of the people in the liturgy. In his opinion, the liturgy is not a drama that is to be performed by the priest or clergy alone, while the people only hear and watch. For him it means much more: “Das Volk darf und soll die Messe vielmehr mitfeiern, mitopfern, das Volk soll mitbeten und mitleben in der Kirche, also selbst mittätig mit der liturgisch tätigen Kirche.”¹²³

3.1.8.2.2. The Liturgy as a Sacred Drama with Definitive Roles

The liturgy, especially, the Holy Mass, is a drama, in which the priest and the people are fellow players at the same time. Of course each has a different role to play: the priest has the main role, the people have a subordinate role. Parsch cautions us not to be shocked when we hear the concept that the Holy Mass is a drama. Because the

¹²⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 16.

¹²¹ Cf. *ibid.*, 17.

¹²² Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 101.

¹²³ Cf. *ibid.*

concept of drama has been seen as something profane for centuries, it has even become something sinful. This according to him lies however not in the essence of the drama itself.¹²⁴ He understands the Mass as a drama on a higher level, in a sacred sense:

Die Messe ist ein Schauspiel in höherem, heiligem Sinne, wo auch wirklich eine Handlung vor sich geht, nicht bloß zum Schein. In der Messe erneuert sich die Opferhandlung des Gottmenschen von Golgotha, ja es entfaltet sich vor uns sein ganzes Heilswerk, wie die Anamnese so schön ausführt. Auch die äußeren Umstände ähneln einem Schauspiel: der Altar auf einer erhöhten Bühne, die Hauptspieler mit eigenen Gewändern; herrliche Worte und Gesänge mit verteilten Rollen.¹²⁵

The Holy Mass as a drama is a sacred reality, in which the people play their roles along with the priest. The main role is of the priest or the bishop, mostly is the role of Christ; and along with it deacon, sub-deacon, the choir and the faithful. Parsch warns the people of false and exaggerated participation, in which the people think and take for granted that they have the same role as that of a priest. He goes on to say that the community has its definite role, and they should abide by it.¹²⁶ They should not take up the role of the priest. In the same way the choir should not take the main role of the priest by singing lengthy songs. In his opinion, the ordained priest has a special place in the liturgy and that should not be encroached upon by others.¹²⁷ To substantiate it, Parsch uses the simile of the prima donna in an opera. The role of the prima donna in an opera is not allowed to be touched by the entire choir.¹²⁸ Each role is unique: The role of the priest is unique, the role of the choir is unique, the role of the mass servers is unique, and the role of the people is also unique. The laity however are not passive spectators in the drama of liturgy. They are active players and participators under the subordination of the choir leader and the ordained priest. Negatively speaking, the ordained priests are expected only to perform acts of consecration, to administer the sacrament and to preach the homily. Otherwise, for further extent the laity is authorised to perform like the priest. The laity is allowed to pray, sing, give, offer and receive.¹²⁹ For Parsch it is important that the priest should

¹²⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 102; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 292.

¹²⁵ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 102; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Kirchenjahr in der Pfarre*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 497-506, here 501.

¹²⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here 337; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 292.

¹²⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 103.

¹²⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here 337.

¹²⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 103.

educate the people to play their roles accurately. According to him, no good drama can be performed without preparation and practice. Therefore, the people should be disciplined and trained in the active participation.¹³⁰

Real, true, complete fostering of the liturgy demands participation, namely active participation. According to Parsch, the liturgy is not realistic without the real active participation; liturgy suffers without a real active participation. The liturgy does not only demand mere presence of the people, but more of their active involvement and participation. It is to be noted that when Parsch names the liturgy as a drama, he means it in a sacred sense: In it the priest and the people play their roles in different ways in the same action; namely in the sacrifice of Jesus.¹³¹ Through the presence of Jesus and people who participate in it, the work of salvation unfolds in the liturgy.

3.2. PIUS PARSCH AND THE CONCEPT OF ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

3.2.1. Popular Liturgical Movement and Active Participation

One of the important agendas of the Popular Liturgical Movement was the active participation¹³² of the people in the liturgy in general, and in particular, the active participation in the celebration of the Holy Mass. This theme occupies a predominant place in Parsch's writings. In his opinion the faithful should not sit inactive during the celebration the Holy Mass, which he observed was often the case; on the other hand, they should participate in it actively by taking part in the prayer, singing, offering and receiving the Holy Communion.¹³³

It is to be kept in mind that before the Second Vatican Council it was not self-evident for Catholics to participate actively in the liturgy as members of the parish

¹³⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 104.

¹³¹ Cf. *ibid.*, 104-105.

¹³² It is to be clarified that the expression "active participation" does not originate from Pius Parsch. This concept appears first in Pius X's *Motu Proprio Tra le sollicitudini* promulgated on 22 November, 1903. *Tra le sollicitudini* is an instruction on the Sacred Music. In this *Motu Proprio* the Pope uses the expression "active participation" for the first time. Cf. ASS 36 (1903/04), 329-339. Parsch was fascinated by this great reform Pope and he includes this expression in his liturgical programme. The concept of "active participation", emerged in him during World War I time, when he was military chaplain. In his own words he would say, "Ich hielt oft die Messe für den Soldaten, sowohl vor ganzen Abteilungen als im kleinen Kreis, am Hilfplatz mit Verwundeten und Maroden. Da empfand ich es als einen Mangel, dass die Soldaten von der Messe nichts verstanden. Andererseits hatte ich gerade in Galizien und der Bukowina die Aktivität der Gläubigen im griechischen Gottesdienst kennengelernt. Da stieg ein neuer Gedanke in mir auf, der allerdings erst nach einigen Jahre zur Reife kam: Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes." P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 15.

¹³³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 5 (1930/31) 76-79, 106-110, 162-166, here 76.

community. It was the concern of the Liturgical Movement first of all to remove this sort of bias from people's minds, to make them conscious of their common priesthood, to show them that liturgy is the celebration of every one and not only of the priests alone. The Liturgical Movement wants to go back to the original role of the people in the celebration of the Mass. And the original role of the people in the celebration of the Mass according to Pius Parsch is a twofold communion: the communion of hearing and the communion of receiving.¹³⁴ Thereby, he means the Word of God and the Eucharist. To put it into his own words, "Das Volk muss, wenn es wesensgemäß an der Messe teilnimmt, eine zweifache Kommunion empfangen: die Kommunion des Hörens und des Mundes. Das ist wesenhafte Aktivität der Meßfeier."¹³⁵ The first one, the communion of hearing, was difficult those days because Latin was the official language of the liturgy and the second one, the reception of the Holy Communion was difficult because those days the Communion was distributed outside the Mass and also because many received Communion very seldom.¹³⁶

Pope Pius X gave a very important impulse in his *Motu proprio* on the Church Music.¹³⁷ In *Tra le sollecitudini*, the pope twice mentions the active participation of the people in the Liturgy. In the introduction he mentioned it as the first and irreplaceable source of the Christian spirit. Article no. 3 demands the re-introduction of the Gregorian chorale to the people, so that the faithful may participate in the liturgy more actively, as it was the case before. Among all the statements of this *Motu proprio* the part on the active participation had the strongest influence. Because the Liturgical Movement of the 20th century had the active participation as its programme.¹³⁸ The appeal of Pope Pius X to active participation was a primary concern of Pius Parsch's writings.¹³⁹ In order to gain a proper understanding of Parsch's concept of active participation, it is important to know about the situation that

¹³⁴ Cf. R. Pacik, *Aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *HID* 58 (2004), 122-132, here 122; cf. R. Pacik, *Pius Parsch (1884-1954)*, in: *LQF* 98, vol. 2, 886-900, here 891.

¹³⁵ P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here, 337.

¹³⁶ Cf. R. Pacik, *Aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *HID* 58 (2004), 122-132, here 122.

¹³⁷ Refer the foot note no. 132.

¹³⁸ Cf. *ASS* 36 (1903/04), 329-339; cf. R. Pacik, *Aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *HID* 58 (2004), 122-132, here 122.

¹³⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *In den neuen Jahrgang*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 6 (1931/32), 1-2; cf. *In den neuen Jahrgang*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 8 (1933/34), 1; cf. *Zum neuen Jahrgang*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 13 (1938/39), 1-2, here 1; cf. N. Höslinger, *Ein Leben für die „Liturgische Erneuerung“* (Gedanken zum fünften Todestag von Pius Parsch), in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 26 (1958/59), 97-98, here 97.

existed in the early Church and the situation of contemporary time. In this he speaks of the ideal situation of the early Church, then he also speaks of the decline of the active participation in the Middle Ages, and criticises the condition and bases his argument on the theological-dogmatic foundation and proposes practical implications for the active participation of the people in the liturgy.

3.2.2. The Ideal Situation of the Early Church

Parsch regards the early Church as the ideal for the active participation and from it he draws inspiration for his arguments on “active participation”. He recalls the situation that existed in the early Church and how the people of that time participated in the liturgy. He names some of the special features of this time: the altar stood in the middle, the priest celebrated Mass facing the people, it was celebrated in the language of the people, the people took part in processions, chants accompanied the entrance and gospel processions, a homily was held, the canon was loudly recited or sung, people exchanged the sign of peace, the Holy Communion was distributed under both species.¹⁴⁰

In Parsch’s terms, the celebration of the Mass was a drama in the first six centuries, a sacred play, in which the whole community cooperated with the clergy.¹⁴¹ According to him, it began dramatically already with the entrance procession. The pre-mass was dedicated to common prayer and instructions. The people accompanied the solemn entrance procession of the clergy by singing. The readings (the epistle and gospel) and likewise the homily were celebrated in the language of the people and they addressed the life of people. The procession to the proclamation of the gospel was accompanied by chants. The offertory procession of the people with the accompaniment of singing depicted a really active participation of the faithful in the Mass. The least participation of the faithful, according to Parsch, was during the canon, and even there was participation: for example; preface, Sanctus, the reading out of the diptych.¹⁴² At the time of the sacrificial meal there was great participation

¹⁴⁰ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1952, 135; cf. P. Parsch, *Liturgische Erneuerung*, 26; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 139-140.

¹⁴¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 92. Whenever Parsch speaks and teaches about the concept of active participation, he refers to the time of the early Christian Community. In his opinion the people of that time involved themselves actively in the various liturgical activities of the Church, especially in the celebration of the Mass.

¹⁴² Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 92-93; cf. P. Parsch, *Die Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926-27), 311-317, here 313. Diptychs are small folding tablets used for

and movement again: namely during the exchange of peace and during the communion procession. Parsch sees that the real participation and dramatic art found its expression especially in the fourfold procession, namely: i) the entrance procession, ii) the procession with the gospel, iii) offertory procession and iv) communion procession accompanied by singing, in giving and receiving. The whole pre-mass was meant for the people, because the reading and instructions were focused on them.¹⁴³ Here Parsch noted that the Holy Mass was a real joint venture, and the people got together and cooperated with the priest in the real sense: in praying, singing, listening, giving, offering and receiving.¹⁴⁴

What was applied in the offering of the Mass was also employed in the life and prayer of the Church. The people chanted the psalms and canticles. The breviary of the Church was the prayer book of the people. The vigils were celebrated by the people. There was almost no private or public devotion separated from the spiritual life of the Church which went on its own way. All the celebrations of the ecclesiastical year were like the sacred plays of the liturgy, in which the people joined and cooperated. The Easter vigil, for example, according to Parsch, was a great dramatic action, in which the folk, especially the catechumens actively cooperated.¹⁴⁵ He esteems this ideal situation of the early Church. His attempt was to lead the people to this sort of activation and participation.¹⁴⁶

3.2.3. The Gradual Evanescence of the Active Participation

After having cited the ideal situation of the early Church Parsch observes the gradual decline of the active participation of the people in the sacrifice of the Mass in the course of history. According to him, the gradual dissociation of the active

writing notes, letters, appointments or lists of names. Christians adapted these diptych tablets to liturgical use, inscribing on them the names of martyrs or of bishops or faithful to be remembered in liturgical functions. After 313 they were also used for recording the names of catechumens, baptismal candidates, and the clergy. In the course of time the diptych tablets were used to record three different sorts of lists of names: those of the newly baptized, those of a certain number of the living who were to be remembered at the altar, and those of the faithful departed. The diptychs were read aloud by the deacon in the Greek Church, sometimes near the altar, sometimes at the ambo; in the Latin West the sub-deacon read them in a low voice, sometimes near the priest, sometimes behind the altar. Diptychs fell into disuse in the West about the 12th century and in the East around the 14th century. Cf. A. J. Gibson, Diptychs, Liturgical use of, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 4, 758-759.

¹⁴³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 93.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 93.

¹⁴⁶ Parsch enthused over the early Church. In speaking of the active participation, he often refers to the ideal situation of the participation of the early Church.

participation is the result of thousand years of development.¹⁴⁷ The first weakening of this happened in the Roman liturgy through the development of singing schools and the choir. As long as the community sang the simple songs, the people could participate in it very actively. But as the choir began to sing sophisticated and artistic hymns, the choir became gradually the representative of the people: the people only sang the short refrains. Thereby, the people were denied of their important role in the sacred play of the Mass as people's choir. With this the course of liturgy began to change, it was not like it used to be, it was no longer a cult of the people.¹⁴⁸

Secondly, according to Pius Parsch the hindrance was the language. Most of the people did not understand Latin, which was the official language of the liturgy. Adding to that, there was the decadence of the ecclesiastical life, even in the Romance countries. The regular reception of the Holy Communion of the people died out. All this contributed to the decline of the interests and cooperation of the people in the liturgy. The sung mass became more dormant. The silent private masses¹⁴⁹ were introduced. Instead of the active and lively communal liturgy of the clergy and the people, it became more and more a liturgy for the clergy and religious.¹⁵⁰

There was also a notable change in the life of the piety of the people too. Instead of the old mystical or cultic piety of the universal Church, the subjective individual piety¹⁵¹ of the Middle Ages emerged and as a result the active participation of the people came to an end. The external evidence of this situation, in the opinion of Parsch, is the jube in the cathedrals in the Middle Ages. Between the high altar and

¹⁴⁷ Parsch shows the decline of the active participation in the Mass from Middle Ages till the 20th century. Thereby he names in a special way the problems and hindrances that caused the active participation during the Middle Ages. In general there was a changeover from the communal conscious to the individualism. He sees the causes of these in Enlightenment, Josephinism and Rationalism. Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1952, 136, 142 and 387; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 140. J. H. Emminghaus briefs about "the subjective shift" that occurred down through the centuries in the liturgy, especially in the Middle Ages. Cf. J. H. Emminghaus, *Die Messe*, 117-132.

¹⁴⁸ This knowledge and realisation was important for Pius Parsch, so that he may not leave the dominion of the songs and liturgy to the choir. Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 94.

¹⁴⁹ J. H. Emminghaus celebrates about the "Private Mass". Cf. J. H. Emminghaus, *Die Messe*, 121-124.

¹⁵⁰ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 95.

¹⁵¹ Refer also "Pius Parsch and Popular Devotion" in the chapter on "Sacraments in General".

the people there was a wall, which almost blocked the view of the people to the altar. The solemn liturgy was celebrated in the enclosed presbytery of the clergy.¹⁵²

Now there was a change in many a thing in the house of God. The changing of the altar was a sign of the abandoning of the active participation. In the early time the altar stood as the centre: the sacrificial table was turned to the people. The faithful gathered around this altar as a community for the divine service.¹⁵³ Thus, the celebration was seen as a family celebration. The altar signified Christ. Behind the altar was the elevated cathedra of the bishop surrounded by his clergy. In front of the altar there was the choir as the mediator between altar and nave, and also partly the mediator between the people and the clergy. In front of the people, both sides there were the ambos: the reading and the singing pulpit.¹⁵⁴ Now there was an alteration in this situation too:

Nun aber wurde der Altar immer mehr an die Ostwand gerückt, und der Priester wendet dem Volke den Rücken zu, statt sein Antlitz. Der Priesterchor schiebt sich zwischen Altar und Volk. Dadurch wurde Trennung und Scheidewand immer größer. Die Kanzel rückt ebenfalls vom Altar weg, zugleich löst sich die Predigt von Kultus und von der Liturgie zunehmend ab. Der Sängerchor geht mehr rückwärts, verliert ganz die Verbindung mit dem Altar; früher war der Sängerchor beim Altar und in organischer Verbindung mit dem Priester, ein wesentlicher Faktor des Mysterienspiels der Messe.¹⁵⁵

Parsch observed that till this particular point of time, the Mass was celebrated like an old classical drama and ancient sacred mystical play and the choir played a vital role as a mediator between the clergy and the people. Now here occurred a change, too, and as a result the participation of the faithful in the Holy Mass was obscured:

Bei den altklassischen Dramen hatte der Chor die Aufgabe, an manchen Stellen den Gang der Handlung zu verbinden, wichtige Taten oder Worte der Hauptpersonen zu verdeutlichen oder zu verstärken, die Reflexionen des zuschauenden Volkes mit dessen Gefühlen und Affekten auszusprechen. Diese Aufgabe wie bei den alten Dramen hatte auch der Sängerchor vielfach bei der Liturgie zu erfüllen und damit hat er als Vermittler dem Volke die Teilnahme erleichtert. Der Chor beim Altar war somit größtenteils der Dolmetsch des Volkes für die aktive Teilnahme.

¹⁵² P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 95. J. H. Emminghaus too speaks about the advent of private devotions and piety in the place of communal devotions and piety. Cf. J. H. Emminghaus, *Die Messe*, 137-138.

¹⁵³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 95-96.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 96.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

Sobald der Chor räumlich getrennt wurde, hörte bald die geistige und besonders die unmittelbare Verbindung auf.¹⁵⁶

3.2.4. The Milieu of Pius Parsch and Active Participation

Having discussed the ideal situation of the early Church and the gradual evanescence of the active participation in the course of history, Parsch briefs the existing situation of his time the way people participated in the Roman liturgy and in the celebration of the Holy Mass. In his opinion, the people allowed themselves to be represented by the ministrants (mass servers) and the Church choir. In the true sense, the people did not participate actively in the Mass any more.¹⁵⁷ During this time every one fostered his or her own private devotion and only a few times they really paid attention to what was taking place at the altar, for example: standing up for the gospel, kneeling when the bell has gone for the Sanctus, making the sign of the cross at the consecration and the communion.¹⁵⁸ Because of their private devotions during the Mass, the faithful knew the course of the action only approximately and a little about the existing prayers. For most of the Christians the Sunday's and feast day's obligation meant sitting in the Mass without any kind of real participation. The private devotion was practiced during the celebration of the Holy Mass: for example, the praying of the rosary, litany, singing of Marian hymns or any other hymns. Parsch views that, even the clergy encouraged these sorts of wrong practices and defended the situation. And this was what he found worst of all.¹⁵⁹

There were three forms of the Masses that were celebrated during this time: the High Mass (Hochamt), Sung Mass (Singmesse) and Private Mass (Stillmesse), the latter two are *missa lecta*. According to Parsch in all these three forms of Masses there was no real participation. In the High Mass the choir undertook the variable and invariable parts and the people participated very little. The music was not organically built up in the Mass. In Parsch's observation, it was only a making of music in the

¹⁵⁶ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 96. Parsch compares Medieval Masses to the Gothic cathedral, wherein we notice the full flowering of those trends which characterized the transitional period. This style leads logically to the devotional private Mass. The characteristics of this period according to him are threefold: i) The principal part of the Mass assume a compact, settled form. The service of the word takes on an invariable pattern, the offertory procession is dispensed with, the canon is prayed silently, and at the same time the Communion of the laity becomes less frequent and under one kind only; ii) The processional chants are shortened; iii) Private devotional prayers make their appearances in the liturgy. Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 327.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 90.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, 91.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 91; cf. J. H. Emminghaus, *Die Messe*, 138.

Mass.¹⁶⁰ What was sung by the choir and at the altar was normally not understood by the ordinary people. The Sung Mass had the most participation; the so called Mass hymns were sung and they will be accompanied by the action of the Mass (for example, the Haydn-Mass and Schubert-Mass). At the same time, the participation rarely went out of the primitive aspect. In his opinion, the private Mass opened way for the subjective private devotions; here every one prays what he wants and what he can.¹⁶¹ “Die Teilnahme durch das Opfermahl wird auch noch in seltenen Fällen geübt; kurz, das Volk überlässt das Opfer dem Priester und nimmt nur teil durch Gegenwart und durch lose Beachtung der Hauptteile.“¹⁶²

Parsch also observed people’s participation in the liturgical year of the Church: How they participated in the sacraments and sacramental; how the people regarded the house of God; how the people participated in the prayers in the Church. In his opinion, here a sad song must be intoned. Because the people had their own piety, they had created their own devotions, which had become parallel and separated from the prayer life of the Church, which had practically nothing to do with prayers of the Church.¹⁶³ On the other hand he noted that there were certainly some celebrations in which the people still participated but with very little understanding:

Wohl gibt es gewisse Feiern, an denen das Volk noch teilnimmt, z.B. Advent (Roratessen), Weihnachten, Lichtmess, Aschenweihe, Palmsonntag, Karwoche – doch auch bei diesen ist wenig Verständnis des Volkes. Sonst aber ist das Andachtsleben des Volkes sehr dürftig [...]. Auch der Rosenkranz kann mit dem reichen liturgischen Gebetsleben der Kirchen keinen Vergleich aushalten. Beobachten wir genauer, wie die Menschen z. B. bei einem Begräbnis, einer Taufe sich verhalten: sie verstehen nichts von dieser Liturgie.¹⁶⁴

Thus, we see by and large the spiritual life of the people was very shallow. Parsch poses here a serious question: can it be the sound life of the cult, when today’s Christians do not know, do not understand, what happens in their worship, which should be the most important thing in the spiritual life of the people.¹⁶⁵ Observing the prevailing situation of his time Parsch concludes that, what they have at present is almost a liturgy of the clergy. Only the priests and religious are the bearers and

¹⁶⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 91. Parsch criticised the type of music that was in use.

¹⁶¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 91.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ Cf. *ibid.*, 91-92.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 92.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

consummators of the sacrifice, prayers and life of the Church.¹⁶⁶ He illustrated these situations in order to show how the liturgy, which was in the early days an active participation of the people, in course of time had become inactive and passive. It is in this background that he comes up with the nuances of active participation in the liturgy, and very specially, in the liturgy of the Mass.

3.2.5. The Dogmatic and Ecclesiastical Foundation of the Active Participation

To the question whether the active participation has a dogmatic and ecclesial foundation, the answer is in the affirmative. Pius Parsch sees the foundation of the active participation of the people, first of all, in the teaching of the Mystical Body of Christ and the common priesthood of the faithful in the Church.¹⁶⁷ When speaking about the dogmatic foundation of the active participation of the people Parsch has the following say:

Zuerst muss uns das Prinzip klar sein: Der Christ soll sich bei der Meßfeier nicht passiv verhalten, ja soll diese nicht bloß “hören”, kein “stummer Zuhörer”¹⁶⁸ sein, sondern er ist zur aktiven Teilnahme berufen und befähigt. Dieses ist der wichtige Grundsatz, der zuerst einmal in der Kirche, in der Pfarre und in jedem Christen lebendig werden muss. Diese aktive Teilnahme gründet sich auf dem Dogma vom allgemeinen Priestertum der Gläubigen und noch tiefer auf der Lehre vom Corpus Christi mysticum; sie gründet auch auf dem Glaubensbewusstsein, dass die Kirche, also auch jeder Christ, wirklich und wahrhaft an dem Opfer der Messe teilnimmt, also mitopfert.¹⁶⁹

In the latter part of his life and work Parsch was enthused by the encyclical of Pope Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*, issued on 20th November 1947.¹⁷⁰ In this too he finds

¹⁶⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 92.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 105; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 77 and 181. We have already discussed these two points in the chapter on the sacrament of Baptism. See the subtitles 1.1.3.1. and 1.2.4.1. in the chapter on “The Sacrament of Baptism”.

¹⁶⁸ It is an extract from Pius XI’s apostolic constitution *Divini cultus sanctitatem* promulgated on 20th December, 1928. Active participation of the people, as theme sounded in *Tra le sollecitudini*, 1903, receives an extended treatment here. So that the people might “take a more active part”. They are to participate not “as mere outsiders or mute spectators”, but as worshippers thoroughly imbued with the beauty of the liturgy. Cf. AAS 21 (1929), 33-41. This words of the Pope has encouraged all the more Parsch to the concept of active participation in the Mass. Cf. P. Parsch, *Liturgische Erneuerung*, 82; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 181.

¹⁶⁹ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 78; cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 5 (1930/31) 76-79, 106-110, 162-166, here 76; cf. *Das Kirchenjahr in der Pfarre*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 497-506, 501; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 25-26.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595. Pope Pius XII directed this encyclical on the Sacred Liturgy to all bishops and ordinaries. *Mediator Dei* is primarily concerned with the renewal of the liturgy and questions stimulated by the Liturgical Movement. It is to be noted that at the beginning, Parsch was unhappy with this encyclical: It was due to his misinterpretation that the encyclical was a declination of the liturgical movement. In 1948 March and April Parsch provided his reactions to *Mediator Dei* in

the dogmatic foundation for the active participation of the people in the liturgy. In the second edition of his work “Volksliturgie” published in 1952 Parsch dedicates a section to this encyclical.¹⁷¹ This encyclical dealt with the whole of liturgy and defined the liturgy as “the worship rendered by the Mystical Body of Christ in the entirety of its Head and members.”¹⁷² As a liturgist and very specially as popular liturgist Parsch greatly appreciated this document as a milestone of liturgy: “Für uns, die Liturgiker und dazu Volksliturgiker, ist dieser Papstbrief ein aufschlußreiches und vielsagendes Dokument, das uns kündigt, wie die oberste kirchliche Behörde zu unserer Bewegung steht, was sie bejaht und verneint. Sicher ist diese Enzyklika ein Markstein auf der Straße, die sich die liturgische Bewegung durch die Kirche und Welt bahnt.”¹⁷³ According to him the document is clearly deposited; it encloses four main sections, excluding the introduction. The first of the document’s four large sections concerns the liturgy in general. The second section concerns the Eucharistic Liturgy, the centre of the Christian religion. The third section of *Mediator Dei* treats Divine Office and the liturgical year. The fourth section speaks about the relationship of the liturgy to other devotions, art, singing, etc.¹⁷⁴

Christ is the greatest liturgist of humanity. In his earthly life he fulfilled his priestly actions of prayer and sacrifice and now he continues the same through his Mystical Body, the Church. Therefore he lays the visible priesthood, in order to offer a pure offering in every place. Thus, according to Parsch, the liturgy is nothing other than the continuation of the priesthood of Christ here on earth: It is expressed specially in the offering of the Holy Mass, which is the everlasting realization of the sacrifice on the cross; in the sacraments, which are the source of life of grace; and in the prayers of the Church, which are offered to God daily.¹⁷⁵

two of his articles in his periodical named “Lebe mit der Kirche”. These articles appeared under the title “Die neue Enzyklika und unsere Bewegung”. Cf. P. Parsch, Die neue Enzyklika und unsere Bewegung, in: Lebe mit der Kirche 14 (1947/48), 137-144 and P. Parsch, Die neue Enzyklika und unsere Bewegung: II. Teil, in: Lebe mit der Kirche 14 (1947/48), 169-178. In spite of the inherently positive attitude of the pope to the renewal of the liturgy Parsch was strangely dreaded by this document: “Er ahnte damals nicht, daß die künftige Entwicklung gerade über jene Aussagen der Enzyklika hinweggehen werde, an denen er sich am meisten gestoßen hatte.” Th. Maas-Ewerd, Zur Reaktion Pius Parschs auf die Enzyklika „Mediator Dei“, in: Mit sanfter Zähigkeit, 199-214, here 200-201.

¹⁷¹ Cf. P. Parsch, Volksliturgie 1952, 77-113. Here he deals with the encyclical in detail, part by part.

¹⁷² AAS 39 (1947), 521-595, here 528-529.

¹⁷³ P. Parsch, Volksliturgie 1952, 77.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, Volksliturgie 1952, 78.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

Parsch sees this encyclical as a great encouragement and appreciation for the Liturgical Movement because many of the themes of the Popular Liturgical Movement were also discussed with clarity in this encyclical.¹⁷⁶ In the second part of the encyclical the pope invites the faithful to active participation in the liturgy. For Parsch this section is very important since it was the main concern of the Liturgical Movement. Here he finds the dogmatic and liturgical basis for the active participation. “Die Gläubigen haben Recht und Pflicht zur Teilnahme an der Messe. Weil Christus in diesem Opfer Priester und Opferlamm zugleich ist und die Gläubigen auf Grund des Corpus Christi mysticum als Glieder mit dem Haupt verbunden sind, so nehme sie auch als Priester und als Opfer an der Messe teil.“¹⁷⁷ According to Parsch this reality should prompt the faithful to partake in the Holy Mass. The task that the faithful should not remain as the mere spectator in the celebration of the Holy Mass, but to participate actively in the liturgy was the first programme of Parsch and it remained on the flag of the apostolate of Popular Liturgical Movement.¹⁷⁸

3.2.6. Practical Measures for the Promotion of Active Participation

3.2.6.1. Active Participation Demands Understanding of the Ceremony

The starting point of the Parsch’s work is his realisation that the Christians do not understand the liturgy correctly and due to this they are not able to participate in it genuinely.¹⁷⁹ The lack of understanding leads to deficiency of interest and participation. Therefore, it was his priority to explicate the Mass regularly to the people through catechism and sermons. Parsch held that the understanding of the liturgy and the active participation in it as mutual requirements.¹⁸⁰ His priority was to

¹⁷⁶ For example: Objective piety, active participation of the people in the Holy Mass, the importance of the reception of the Holy Communion within the Mass, the necessity of fostering singing, very specially in the vernacular, praying the breviary, etc. Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1952, 78-113.

¹⁷⁷ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1952, 93.

¹⁷⁸ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1952, 26; cf. P. Parsch, *Zur aktiven Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 2 (1927/28), 330-334; cf. *10 Jahre volksliturgisches Apostolat*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 1-3.

¹⁷⁹ The time during which Parsch comes to realise the fact that the people do not correctly understand the liturgy was during the First World War. During this time he was the military chaplain. In his association with the soldiers he understood that the people knew very little about the most important activity in liturgical life of the faithful. He concluded here that one of the reasons why the people did not really participate in liturgy and the Holy Mass is because they did not know the meaning and essence of it. Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 14.

¹⁸⁰ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 12; cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 133. The Council of Trent demanded that the bishops and all others who have the official charge of teaching to instruct the people diligently on the various topics

make the liturgy understandable to the people. To accomplish this end he employed various practical methods.

Parsch designated the “Wiederbelebung der Messe”¹⁸¹ as the first and urgent assignment of the liturgical renewal led by him. For he says, “wir müssen den Christen ihr Kleinod zurückgeben, das sie verloren hatten.”¹⁸² The lack of understanding of the Mass by the faithful makes their participation in it imperfect and abortive. Not understanding leads to nonparticipation and boredom. “Wenn der Mensch nicht mittun kann, hat er weniger Interesse.”¹⁸³ To rightly understand the liturgy of the Mass three points were important for Parsch. They were: i) “Die wechselnden Teile müssen als Umkleidung des Opfermysteriums angesehen werden ii) man muss die Messe aus ihrer Versteinerung, Verkürzung zur lebendigen Gemeinschaftsfeier machen und iii) sie muss dramatisch angehen und erklärt werden.”¹⁸⁴ He was also busy with questions of priests understanding the various parts of the Mass properly and esteeming it. According to him, in the first place the priests should experience that the Mass has a central place in the life of the Church and in the life of piety. If only the priests themselves are convinced of the worth and centrality of the Mass in their individual life and in the life of the Church they can introduce the spirit of it to the people because the Holy Mass is the biggest pastoral activity of the priest. It has great importance in the parish. Parsch names the three-fold tasks of it. First of all, the Eucharist preserves the presence of Christ on earth; secondly, it is the food for the life of grace; and thirdly, it is a sacrifice, the realisation of the sacrifice on the cross. In short: presence, food and sacrifice.¹⁸⁵

Parsch resolved that by the mere activation of the people through recitation of prayers, the problem of active participation cannot be solved. In his writings, specially, that which appeared later, he turns his attention to the reality of the participation of the liturgy. Thus he writes in his sermons which were published in 1948:

concerning the liturgy and devotion. Cf. Council of Trent: Decree on Relics and Sacred Images, in: Denzinger, 1821.

¹⁸¹ P. Parsch, *Liturgische Erneuerung*, 19; cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 71-72.

¹⁸² P. Parsch, *Liturgische Erneuerung*, 19.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ P. Parsch, *Messerklärung 1935*, 350.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 281; cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 72.

Jede äußere Tat muss eine Seele haben, sie muss im Inneren durch Bewusstsein und Willen getragen sein. So muss auch die äußere Teilnahme an der Messe von einer inneren Teilnahme begleitet sein, die im Verstand und Willen wurzelt. Ohne diese innere Teilnahme ist die äußere Teilnahme wie ein 'tönendes Erz und eine klingende Schelle'. Deshalb muss man zuerst auf die innere Teilnahme achten und oft wird diese die äußere ersetzen müssen.¹⁸⁶

Parsch also speaks of the constitutive elements of internal participation. According to him it consists of all the actions and words which are internally grasped, thought and felt, for it is not the words alone that are essential, but the thoughts and motive, which stands behind these words. We must get used to animate all the words of the liturgy. We can therefore, participate in the mass through internal participation without text and book.¹⁸⁷ So it is very important to understand the various parts of the Mass. And this understanding should enable us to participate actively in it both externally and internally.

3.2.6.2. Education and Schooling in the Liturgy of the Mass

Pius Parsch laments the situation of the liturgy of his time. There was lack of active participation of the people in the liturgy and in the life of the Church. As observed earlier the celebration of the Holy Mass was always represented by the ministrants and the choir. Everyone fostered their private devotion and forgot about the communal dimension of the celebration.¹⁸⁸ He presents the paradox of his time in nutshell: "Die Christen verstehen ihre Haupthandlung nicht."¹⁸⁹ In his view, in order to celebrate the liturgy with one another, everyone including the clergy and laity must understand the mystery of salvation. In order to realise this purpose Parsch conducted various activities¹⁹⁰ to educate the people of his parish.

¹⁸⁶ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 183. Mediator Dei explicitly speaks about the exterior and interior participation in the worship of the Church. It is exterior because the nature of man as composite of body and soul requires it to be so. But the chief element of divine worship, according to the encyclical, is interior, "For we must always live in Christ and give ourselves to him completely, so that in him, with him, and through him the heavenly Father will be glorified." AAS 39 (1947), 521-595, here 531.

¹⁸⁷ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 183.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Liturgische Erneuerung*, 150.

¹⁸⁹ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 40; cf. P. Parsch, *liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 12.

¹⁹⁰ Some of the activities that Pius Parsch employed in explaining the liturgy of the Mass were: i) *Die liturgische Woche*: Here he explained the liturgy step by step and various liturgical exercises were given to the people and the crowning closure of it was the community Masses on Sundays. ii) *Die liturgische Stunde*: that means regular community evening in the presbytery, this will lead to the celebration of the Sunday and the time in the liturgical year. iii) *Die Gemeinschaftsmesse*: The

It was Parsch's argument that in order to enhance and to foster an active participation in the liturgy, the Holy Mass must be explained to the faithful, for he says; "Aktive Teilnahme verlangt eine liturgische Erziehung und Vertiefung in Text und Form."¹⁹¹ Therefore, he gives priority to the explanation of the Mass in the liturgical formation. He is of the opinion that when the people know and understand the various parts of the Mass and its meaning, they will be in a better position to participate in it actively.¹⁹² Here he proposes two methods for explaining the liturgy of the Mass. The first one is a genetical method¹⁹³ and the second is a dramatical method (genetische und dramatische Methode). The first method deals with the origin and development of the Mass. It concerns the history of the Mass, the meaning of it and it ends with a practical method: a trail of the celebration. The dramatical method deals with the concrete and practical construction and designing of the celebration of the Holy Mass.¹⁹⁴ Here he introduces the Mass in its order and how it is really celebrated, the importance of each part and how the people can actively participate in it.

The Holy Mass is the foundation of the community. Therefore, according to Pius Parsch, one of the elements that should be dealt with in the sermon is the Mass. It is important to explain the meaning and content of this great mystery of our cult to the faithful.¹⁹⁵ In his words, "Die Stellung des Christen zur Messe ist eines Kennzeichen seiner Rechtgläubigkeit. Wer Sonntags die Messe mitfeiert, ist praktizierender Christ; wer es nicht mehr tut, scheidet aus der kirchlichen Gemeinschaft aus."¹⁹⁶ Parsch also observes that many people neglect and ignore the Mass, only because they do not know about it. Since the Mass is also anamnesis¹⁹⁷, it is the advice of the

Gemeinschaftsmesse itself was instructed in the community in order to make possible the active participation. Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 77f.

¹⁹¹ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 397.

¹⁹² Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung* 1935, 345.

¹⁹³ Josef Andreas Jungmann is one of the great authors who employed the genetical method in his writings. This is very evident in his popular work "Missarum Sollemnia: Eine genetische Erklärung der römischen Messe" (2 vols. 1948). The main portion of this work is concerned with a genetic explanation of the various rites and prayers of the Roman Mass. Cf. J. A. Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite: Its origins and Development (Missarum Sollemnia)*, 3. This method enables exposing the meaning of liturgical forms: its prototype and archetype; its original form and basic principles. Cf. R. Pacik, Josef Andreas Jungmann SJ (1889-1975), in: *LQF* 98, vol. 1, 538-555, here 544.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung* 1935, 345; cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 72; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 329-330; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 68.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 69; cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 73.

¹⁹⁶ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 69.

¹⁹⁷ From the Greek ἀνάμνησις, meaning remembrance, commemoration, memorial, re-presentation in the sense of "making present" once again here and now. It takes up Christ's injunction, "Do this in

popular liturgist of Austria to include a brief view of the last supper in the catechism. He gives an outline of the celebration of the Mass: we pray, we hear, we give, we offer, we receive.¹⁹⁸ In his lectures he explained every part of it in detail. For him what is important is the Christians should grasp the structure and important features of the Mass.¹⁹⁹ We should be able to make a difference between the essential and the non-essential. The meaning of the prayers and the action is more important than the explanation and the wording.²⁰⁰ For Parsch the canon is the most difficult part of the Mass to explain, especially the connection with the sacrifice on the cross and its meaning. The sacrificial meal or the Holy Communion is the easiest to explain.²⁰¹ The first part is the explanation and second must be the education to right participation.

Discoursing on the theme of active participation in the liturgy, Parsch also speaks about the false notion of it. He brings in an example: At the beginning of the liturgical renewal out of over enthusiasm, the people were allowed to recite almost all the texts of the Mass, because of the belief that the more the people with priest loudly recited the prayers, the more liturgical is the Mass. So there was unrest, there was haste in the Mass. But later on in the Church there was an order regarding it and it differentiated between the part of the Mass that belongs to the faithful and the part that does not belong to them. It also distinguished the portions that are reserved only for the priest.²⁰²

remembrance of me” (1 Cor. 11: 24) and recalls the purpose of Eucharistic rites as a commemoration of Christ and his salvific work. The anamnesis interprets the mystery of the Mass, trying it to the events of salvation history; it serves to bring out a basic aspect the Mass, that it is a memorial of Christ and his salvific acts. Because it is a relative sacrifice, the Eucharist does not only recall by reflection the personal relationship God established by Christ’s death and Resurrection, but also represents these acts sacramentally, so that the worshipping community enters effectively into the everlasting sacrifice of the risen Lord, which is thus made present on earth. Cf. F. A. Brunner, Anamnesis, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 1, 382-383. An elaborate description on anamnesis can be found in: R. Meßner, Die Einführung in die Liturgiewissenschaft, 161-169.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 390; cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung* 1935, 49; cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 3 (1928/29), 27-33; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 182-183; cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 76.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 69.

²⁰⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 390.

²⁰¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 76; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 392.

²⁰² Cf. P. Parsch, *Liturgische Erneuerung*, 83.

Pius Parsch wanted to lead his community to the full and worthy celebration of the liturgical year. For this he established a press apostolate²⁰³ as the means for the understanding of the liturgy: there were mass texts that could be used for the active celebration of the liturgy, besides there were also books, writings and devotions. These enabled the lay people to deepen their understanding in the liturgy autonomously. It is also decisive for Parsch to use German language. Although the Latin was the official and real liturgical language, for him the translation of the liturgical text into German was a great means for the understanding of the liturgy. He believed that the combination of both the languages, Latin and German, could ensure the conscious participation of the people.²⁰⁴

3.2.7. The Structure of the Holy Mass and the Element of Active Participation

3.2.7.1. The Ground Plan and the Structure of the Mass

Comparing the Holy Mass with one of those churches of ancient Christendom, which were divided into two parts: the atrium or vestibule, and the church proper or holy place, Parsch makes it clear its ground plan and structure. The Holy Mass too is divided into two parts: the Mass of the Catechumens²⁰⁵ and the Mass of the Sacrifice.²⁰⁶ The Mass of the Catechumens offers us the Word of God: Here God speaks to me, I should hear and follow his word in reverence and readiness. It should be the affair of my heart that I accept the Word of God happily, like a mother takes her child gently, in the same way I have to take the word gently and carry it along the week. The word should be a light for my feet throughout the week.²⁰⁷ The task of the Mass of Sacrifice is different. It should fulfil the admonition (reminder) of the Lord: “Do this in memory of me”. The mass of the sacrifice places the Holy Eucharist in the centre, the Eucharist as memorial, as sacrifice and meal.²⁰⁸ Let us discuss them in detail in the following.

²⁰³ For details refer the subtitle 1.9.1. in the chapter “Pius Parsch: An Apostle of Popular Liturgical Movement”.

²⁰⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 77f.

²⁰⁵ For Parsch the Mass of the Catechumens combines the entire introductory rite and the liturgy of the Word. Today’s Holy Mass is structured into 4 parts: i) The Introductory Rite ii) The Liturgy of the Word, iii) The Liturgy of the Eucharist and iv) The Concluding Rite. Cf. GIRM 46-90. Still at the eve of the Second Vatican Council Jungmann distinguishes the liturgy of the Word as “Fore-Mass” from the “Sacrifice-Mass. Cf. A. Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite*, vol. 1, 261.

²⁰⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 220; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 40.

²⁰⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 221.

²⁰⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

3.2.7.1.1. The Mass of the Catechumens

In the Mass of the Catechumens we prepare our souls for the sacrifice. As the vestibule makes the transition for the public street into the house of God, so does the Mass of the Catechumens lead us from the life of this world into the holy place of sacrifice. “The dominant theme of the Mass of the Catechumens is the ‘Word’ (Logos); its end is the faith; its chief purpose is instruction.”²⁰⁹ The atrium is again divided into two parts. In the first part one approaches God; in the second, God descends to him; in the first, one speaks to God in opening prayer (introductory rite); in the second, God speaks to him in the readings and instruction (the liturgy of the Word); in the first, one offers his word; in the other, he receives the Word of God. Thus the Mass of Catechumens is divided into a service of prayer and a service of reading and instruction. Entering through the vestibule, we do two things: we pray and we listen.²¹⁰

The liturgy of prayer represents a kind of ascent into heaven. In it there are several steps: from the depth of our sinfulness we rise gradually to the throne of God: the first step is the contrition (the preparatory prayers at the foot of the altar); the second is longing and desire (the Kyrie); the third is the praise of God (the Gloria); the fourth step is the petition (in the Collect). By these steps we ascend from our own unworthiness to the throne of God. In the readings, according to Parsch, God the Father comes halfway to meet His children, He takes us by the hand, He speaks to us; first through one of His messengers (in the Epistle or in other readings); in the second place through His only-begotten Son (in the Gospel); thirdly, through the Church, by the mouth of the priest (in the sermon). Thus we have prayed and we have been instructed; now we are prepared to enter the holy of holies. The doorkeeper is faith (Credo), opening the portals to us, and now, we stand in the radiant glory of the house of God, ready to enter into the Mass of Sacrifice.²¹¹

²⁰⁹ P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 40.

²¹⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 221; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 41.

²¹¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung 1935*, 49-50; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 41. In the ancient Church the Mass of the Catechumens ended with the gospel and the sermon. Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 180.

3.2.7.1.2. The Mass of Sacrifice

In the Mass of Sacrifice the “Word” is made flesh. Its end is the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, which the Church offers to the Heavenly Father through the hands of the priest, and in which the faithful take an active part; in the sacrificial procession and in the sacrificial banquet.²¹² It has three parts: Offertory, Sacrifice and Communion.²¹³ The first part is the offertory: We manifest our participation in the sacrifice through the offertory by the offering of our gifts. The second part- the words of institution (consecration), in liturgical terms known as the canon - is the centre of the Mass of the Sacrifice. Since the consecration is a priestly act, the ordained priest offers the sacrifice on behalf of the faithful and the people participate in it. And the third part is the Holy Communion. In the sacrificial banquet or in the Holy Communion, the gift we offered in the offertory, having now become divine is returned to us. In other words, in the offertory I give my bread; in the Communion I receive it in return as the divine bread, the bread of God. Thus, according to Parsch, there are three actions which we perform in the Mass of sacrifice: I give, I offer and I receive.²¹⁴

To sum up what we have said: there are two main divisions in the Mass: the vestibule and the sanctuary; the Mass of the Catechumens and the Mass of the Sacrifice. There are five great actions: I pray, I listen, I give, I offer and I receive. These are of the utmost importance both for a proper understanding and for a worthy celebration of the sacrifice of the Mass.²¹⁵ There is a beautiful correspondence between these five actions: the sacrifice of Christ is enclosed within a twofold giving and receiving; in the Mass of the Catechumens I offer my word in prayer, and in return I receive the Word of God in the readings and in the sermon. In the Mass of Sacrifice I offer my bread in the offertory, and I receive the bread of God in the Holy Communion. In the

²¹² Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 40.

²¹³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung 1935*, 50; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 41.

²¹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Meßopfererziehung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 233-238, here 235; cf. P. Parsch, *Der Meßtext als Seelsorgsmittel* (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 14), Klosterneuburg [n.d.], 7-8; cf. P. Parsch, *Wie soll das Volk an der Messe aktiv teilnehmen?* (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 10), Klosterneuburg [n.d.], 4-7; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 41-42.

²¹⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 3 (1928/29), 27-33; cf. *Eine neue Meßerklärung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 10 (1935/36), 11-13 here 12; cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung 1935*, 49; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 182-183; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 42.

midst of this holy giving and receiving is the holy consecration, in which the Lamb of God (Christ) lies as the victim of the sacrifice on the altar to be sacrificed.²¹⁶

Parsch tries to give a clearer view of the two principal parts of the Mass with the following explanation. Our Christian faith bestows two gifts on us, faith and grace. We can possess Christ in our souls in a twofold manner: by faith and in the life of grace. In the Mass these two gifts are bestowed upon us and increased within us again and again.²¹⁷ “In the Mass of the Catechumens faith is given to us; therefore the Gospel is the climax, and the Credo is the finale.”²¹⁸ “In the Mass of the Sacrifice, that sacrifice of Christ is a re-enacted, which purchased for us eternal life, and we receive the Eucharist which preserves and nurtures this divine life within us.”²¹⁹ In Parsch’s opinion, in every celebration of the Holy Mass the vision, which Jacob saw in his dream (cf. Gen. 28: 12f), is realized. For the angels ascend carrying aloft our words and bread; and the angels descend bringing down to us the Word of God and the bread of Heaven. So it is the conviction of Parsch that through the Holy Mass the following word of Christ is fulfilled: “Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man” (Jn. 1: 51).²²⁰ In analysing the structure of the Holy Mass, Parsch sees the possibility of active participation by the faithful. Let us discuss it in the following.

²¹⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Eine neue Meßerklärung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 10 (1935/36), 11-13 here 12; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 42. See also the footnote nr. 58. Hans-Joachim Schulz gives a detailed account of the confrontation of problems in interpreting the Roman Canon in his book ‘*Ökumenische Glaubenseinheit aus eucharistischer Überlieferung*’, especially in the exposition on the problem of interpretation of the Roman Canon and the testimony of Alexandrian Anaphora. Cf. H.-J. Schulz, *Ökumenische Glaubenseinheit aus eucharistischer Überlieferung*, Paderborn 1979 (*Konfessionskundliche und kontrovertheologische Studien* 39), 56-72. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church: “The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice: ‘The victim is one and the same: the same now offers through the ministry of priests, who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of offering is different.’ ‘In this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and is offered in an unbloody manner.’” CCC 1367. The Mass and the cross are the same in so far as in both we have the same victim, the same offerer and same effects. They differ only in the manner of offering, Calvary is being carried out by Christ individually that is by his own blood, the Eucharist is being carried out through the instrumentality of priests and that is in an unbloody manner. Cf. Council of Trent: *Doctrine and Canons on the Sacrifice of the Mass*, in: Denzinger, 1743.

²¹⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 42.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 43.

²²⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 128; cf. B. J. Krawczyk, *Der Laie in Liturgie und Theologie bei Pius*, 123.

3.2.7.2. The Structure of the Mass and the Active Participation of the Faithful

The Holy Mass by its very nature and essence is a community offer. Each baptised person has the right to participate in the celebration of the Mass because of their vocation to common priesthood. Not only the ordained priest alone offers the sacrifice, but also the faithful offer the sacrifice through their participation: in the true sense as co-sacrificers, co-givers, and co-receivers.²²¹ Analysing the celebration of the Mass of his time Parsch makes two important observations: First of all, he observed that the fore-mass had lost its meaning as an instructive divine service. Therefore, there is the necessity and importance of the restoration of the fore-mass. And his practical suggestions were: i) the priest should proclaim the gospel clearly and loudly; ii) the priest should also preach a homily after the proclamation of the gospel.²²² Secondly, he suggests that in the Mass of the Sacrifice after the Communion of the priest he should also distribute the Communion to the people. The faithful should take care and should be accustomed to receive the Holy Communion within the Holy Mass itself and not outside of it.²²³ According to Parsch, when these two objects are realised and practiced, the people will participate in a greater way in the celebration of the Holy Mass.²²⁴

Parsch strongly believed that when the faithful pray under the guidance of the Church and when they hear the Word of God diligently, they participate in the fore-mass actively.²²⁵ To the question how the layman can participate in offering this sacrifice, Parsch gives the answer in a twofold way: “Dadurch, dass er eingeht in das Opfer im Opfergang und dadurch, dass er teilnimmt an der Opferfrucht im

²²¹ Cf. P. Parsch, Die Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926/27), 311-317, here 314.

²²² Cf. *ibid.* For Parsch the preaching of homily in the Mass was very important. The homily has an instructive role. It is also the integral part of Mass. Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 12; cf. P. Parsch, Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 5 (1930/31) 76-79, 106-110, 162-166, here 164.

²²³ It is to be noted that during this period the distribution of the Holy Communion within the Holy Mass was very rare. Very often it was unfortunately displaced outside of the Mass itself, so that most people communicated before, or after, or totally apart from the Mass. The meaning of Communion as an integrating part of the Mass was, under these circumstances, obscured. Cf. J. H. Emminghaus, *Die Messe*, 137.

²²⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, Die Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926/27), 311-317, here 314.

²²⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 3 (1928/29), 27-33, here 28; cf. *Meßopfererziehung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 233-238, here 235.

Opfermahl.”²²⁶ In his opinion these two important parts of the liturgy of the sacrifice, that is the offertory and the sacrificial meal, are there for the people, and thereby, they confirm their common priesthood in the celebration of the Mass evidently. Only in the part of canon the people have less chance for participation.²²⁷ So Parsch opines that out of five parts of the Mass, in four parts the people can fully participate; that is, in the fore-mass through prayer and hearing the Word of God and in the liturgy of the sacrifice through offertory and Holy Communion. “Das Opfer selbst bringt das Volk durch die Hand des geweihten Priesters dar.”²²⁸

Parsch makes a description to show how each part of the Mass has different possibilities for the active participation of the people. And he explains very practically how it could be realised and exercised.²²⁹ During the solemn entrance of the priest through the church with the mass servers, the choir could sing the entrance song (till the prayer at the foot is over). The Kyrie and Gloria will be sung by everyone (either in German or in Latin). The readings will be read by a lector in German language, the Graduale will be sung by all (cantor and every one). After a solemn procession the gospel will be proclaimed, the priest reads it in Latin, while the lector is reading it in German. Homily was part of the Mass. During the homily the priest turns to the people. The homily should serve as a means to interpret the

²²⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 3* (1928/29), 27-33, here 28. The key to our understanding of the inner significance of the offertory is the old offertory procession. The ancient world was accustomed to the idea of the people themselves providing the matter for the sacrifice. Such was the custom even in pagan sacrifices. The victim to be immolated was to be provided from the possessions of the person who wanted to offer the sacrifice. This was the symbolic expression of his close association with the sacrifice. It was in this ancient notion that the early Christian offertory procession was rooted. The custom arose at the time when the celebration of Mass was separated from Agape. Those who were to participate in the sacrifice had to bring or “offer” something of their own, and this was the guiding principle until late in the Middle Ages. For many centuries, therefore, the offertory procession was the dramatic expression of the people’s participation in the sacrifice, and hence an important element of the celebration of the Eucharist. Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 172.

²²⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 3* (1928/29), 27-33, here 28. The consecration, which is rendering present of the sacrifice of the cross, can be accomplished by Christ alone in the person of his ordained priest, and hence the prayer of thanksgiving, today called the canon, is the exclusive prerogative of the priest. The people merely express their assent to what he does by uttering the single word: Amen, the sign that it is his sacrifice and theirs. On the other hand, the bringing forward of the matter of the sacrifice, and the sacrificial meal shared in common, lay stress on the fact that the sacrifice is offered by the people and for the people. The first part of the sacrificial rite, which we call the offertory, or preparation for the sacrifice, is the approach of the community to sacrifice. Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 166.

²²⁸ P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 3* (1928/29), 27-33, here 28.

²²⁹ What will be explained in the following are things that Parsch practiced along with his liturgical community in Klosterneuburg.

liturgical happenings and the ceremony to the people. The credo will be recited by everyone either in German or Latin.²³⁰

After this every one raises from their places for the offertory. When one brings the paten with the hosts forward, others (each one) bring money and alternatively natural products.²³¹ These will be placed on a table in front of the altar. The community sings appropriate song along with it. Thereafter, the community responds to the preface and sings the Sanctus and Benedictus. After this, there is a silence followed by the pure priestly action. In Parsch's view, it is only in the Eucharistic Prayer, where the people cannot involve themselves actively. It is the time of contemplation on the Holy Eucharist. With the response "Amen" at the end the community affirms the sacrifice of the Mass. Then all pray together the "Our Father" and sings the Agnus Dei. The exchange of peace was passed on through a pax-board.²³² It is followed by the communion procession. The priest and the laity receive the communion. The communion procession is accompanied by a song. The communion verse will be prayed together. After the dismissal with the blessing of the priest, the priest recites the prologue of St. John; the people could also pray it together.²³³

Here Parsch makes an important observation that in spite of the active participation of the people, the priest could celebrate the Holy Mass according to the prescriptions and regulations given by Rome. When the priest himself reads the text in Latin, a prayer leader reads it in German language, and the faithful participate in it by praying and singing. The dialogue (response) will be spoken by the priest and the people loudly in Latin. In his opinion these short forms of dialogue (e.g. Alleluia, Amen) are an exhortation to active participation; they also constitute a link between the priest

²³⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 351-353; cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 3* (1928/29), 27-33, here 29-31.

²³¹ The offertory procession remained an important element in the liturgy until well into the Middle Ages. Later on, in the place of offertory procession there was substituted the offertory collection. A further instance in which the idea of offertory procession has been retained is in the practice of offering Mass stipends. Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 175-176.

²³² The exchange of peace united Christians among each other and with Christ. In this connection Parsch spoke about the pax-board (Kußtafel). The priest kisses the altar and then the tablet and then the tablet is circulated through the entire church. Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 117; cf. P. Parsch, *Der Priester und die Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 14* (1939/40), 133-138, here 137. Parsch connects the practice of the sign of peace to the Holy Communion. According to him it is the immediate preparation for the Communion; reconciliation of the faithful and the refinement of the hearts of everyone were important for a true union of the faithful. Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung* (Ed. 2006), 343.

²³³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 355-360; cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 3* (1928/29), 27-33, here 33.

and the faithful.²³⁴ According to Parsch every faithful must know the Latin formula *Dominus vobiscum; Et cum spiritu tuo.*²³⁵ “Das Dominus vobiscum ist geradezu der immerwährende Aufruf des Priesters zur aktiven Teilnahme.”²³⁶ Parsch is particular about singing hymns only at the allotted and allowed places; that is at Ordinarium and Proprium, and the texts should be apt and appropriate to the Mass book. To him for a correct and appropriate sequence of the Holy Mass there should be a good understanding and coordination among the priest, lector and organist.²³⁷ Thus, we see Parsch’s practical suggestions to enhance active participation in the given form of Mass.

3.2.8. The Role of Holy Communion in the Promotion of Active Participation

The Mass is essentially a sacrifice. Communion, therefore, must be regarded as a sacrificial meal.²³⁸ From the very beginning of his life in Klosterneuburg Parsch was a dashing protagonist of the frequent and daily Holy Communion.²³⁹ Later on in his life he too instructed the people about the importance and implication of receiving Holy Communion frequently. In his opinion, we should receive the Holy Communion as often as it is necessary for the life of grace to be properly nourished and sustained. People take bodily food as often as they are hungry. Parsch laments that only few Christian has the same appetite for the Eucharist.²⁴⁰ But our mother, the Church has made her own rules for her children. She insists that they nourish themselves by receiving communion at least once a year.²⁴¹ According to Parsch, that

²³⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 353.

²³⁵ In the observation of Parsch this short Latin formula cannot be appropriately translated. He also mentions that other short responses from different languages are used in the liturgy: for example; the Greek expression; Kyrie: the Hebrew expressions; Alleluia, Amen. Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 353.

²³⁶ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 353; cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 3 (1928/29), 27-33 here 29-30.

²³⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 353; cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 3 (1928/29), 27-33 here 29-30.

²³⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 258-259.

²³⁹ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 13; cf. R. Pacik, „Aktive Teilnahme“ – zentraler Begriff in Pius Parschs Werk, in: *Pius Parsch in der liturgiewissenschaftlichen Rezeption*, 31. Pius X encouraged and promoted the daily reception of the Holy Communion. Cf. ASS 38 (1905/06), 400-405. Pastoral liturgy enjoyed a new breakthrough as a result of the decree encouraging frequent communion from Pope Pius X. It also lowered the minimum age for the reception of the Holy Communion. This was an inspiration for Pius Parsch too. He believed in the frequent and daily Communion as an integral part of the liturgy. Through the encyclical *Mediator Dei* Pope Pius XII too encourages the faithful to participate in Holy Communion. Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595.

²⁴⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 276.

²⁴¹ As discussed earlier, the Middle Ages witnessed the decline of many good and sound religious practices. The procession to Holy Communion disappeared. The faithful no longer received the Holy

is the very minimum so that the life of grace is not be completely starved. For, if a Christian does not observe this minimum, the life of grace within him will certainly die of undernourishment. Parsch poses here a couple of questions to stress the importance of receiving the Holy Communion frequently. How many of us are content with the very minimum of our diet? How many of us eat little only just to avoid dying of starvation? We like to eat heartily and often. We would certainly have something to say to anyone who forbids us to eat more than once a day. In fact it is essential to eat regularly and sufficiently if we want to remain healthy and to be able to do a good day's work and live a vigorous life. Convalescents, particularly, and people engaged in strenuous manual work need a good nourishing diet. The same is true of the life of grace and its Eucharistic food.²⁴²

Pope Pius X extended an invitation to all Christians to come and nourish themselves on the food of grace more often. Christians can receive Communion more often nowadays, and they should receive it as often as possible. Parsch notes that few are fortunate to receive communion daily, but all can receive on Sundays. If one wants a vigorous, healthy life of grace, he will make it a rule to receive the bread of life every Sunday.²⁴³ For Parsch, there is nothing fanatical or over-pious about such practice. It is sheer good sense. It is the right use of an important means of grace. Moreover, the Holy Communion is a part of the Mass. Because, according to him, Christ did not command us "to go to mass" or "to hear mass", but he commanded us to eat his flesh and drink his blood.²⁴⁴ In his opinion, to receive Holy Communion every Sunday is the ideal of a true Christian, who takes the life of grace seriously. And it is necessary for living an active and vigorous Christian life.²⁴⁵

Communion at Mass. The Lateran Council of 1215 therefore found it necessary to sharply insist on the obligation to receive Communion at least during the Easter season as something required by commandment. Cf. Fourth Lateran Council: The Obligation of Annual Confession and Easter Communion, in: Denzinger, 812.

²⁴² Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 276.

²⁴³ Cf. *ibid.*, 277. In his sermons Parsch often reminds people of the invitation of Pope Pius X that all the people should be nourished by the meal of grace, through which the Christians are called to receive the Holy Communion often. For a healthy and vigorous life it is necessary to submit to the rule, and receive the bread of life, which is an extraordinary means of grace. Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 330f; cf. B. J. Krawczyk, *Der Laie in Liturgie und Theologie bei Pius*, 134.

²⁴⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 276.

²⁴⁵ Cf. *ibid.* Often in his writings, the Austrian liturgist mentions the frequent communion. He is convinced that the desired ideal would be the Sunday communion for the adult Christian. The participation in the Eucharistic meal is very essential for Parsch for the entire issue of the active participation of the people in the Mass. It is not enough to pray together, hear together, and offer

As already mentioned, Parsch was a strong proponent of frequent reception of the Holy Communion. He was of the opinion that by receiving the Holy Communion, which is the fruit of the sacrifice, one participates more actively in the liturgy. And in this way the people express their common priesthood in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist in a vibrant way:

Es ist der ausdrückliche Wunsch der Kirche, dass die Gläubigen bei der Messe die hl. Kommunion empfangen, und zwar nicht vor und nicht nach, sondern in der Messe nach der Kommunion des Priesters. Denn durch nichts betätigen sie ihr Priestertum, also die von Christus und der Kirche gewollte aktive Teilnahme am heiligen Opfer mehr als durch das Opfermahl nach vollbrachtem Opfer. Das ist wohl die primitivste Forderung der liturgischen Erneuerung, dass die Gläubigen wieder mit dem Priester in der Messe kommunizieren dürfen. Da kann wohl kein irgendwie gearteter Einwand dagegen stichhaltig sein.²⁴⁶

Parsch firmly advocates that the Holy Communion is part of the Mass. It is a constitutive element of the Holy Mass. It is the most important element of the Holy mass.

Die Kommunion gehört in die Messe. Das Opfermahl der Gläubigen ist der wichtigste Bestandteil der aktiven Teilnahme [...]. Es muss den Gläubigen der Gedanke genommen werden, als sei die Kommunion eine von der Messe getrennte Andachtsübung, sei eine Liebesvereinigung mit Christus, die mit der Messe in keinem Zusammenhang steht, ja, sie sei das Wichtigste der ganzen Messe.²⁴⁷

Parsch also clarifies the wrong disposition of a certain group of people. According to him, the Holy Communion does not have its own greatness. He observes that there are many pious souls and also religious sisters who want to receive the Communion even before the celebration of the Mass itself. They do so, in order to enter into a dialogue with their bridegroom during the whole Mass. For them the sacrifice itself is not important, but the Holy Communion is everything.²⁴⁸ But he opposed this

together, because the full and active participation in the mass is realised only by the participation in the holy meal. Cf. P. Parsch, *Der Priester und die Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 14 (1939/40), 133-138, here 137; cf. *Wie steht es mit der Kommunion in deiner Pfarre?* in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 14 (1949), 97-104, here 101.

²⁴⁶ P. Parsch, *Das heilige Meßopfer*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 4 (1929/30), 25-28, 48-53, 70-74, 95-100, 113-118, here 73.

²⁴⁷ P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 5 (1930/31) 76-79, 106-110, 162-166, here 79.

²⁴⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 76; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 392. In Parsch's opinion it is an abuse, for it would seem to reduce the Holy Sacrifice to a mere devotional exercise. Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 301. We should keep in mind that Parsch refers to a situation

attitude by saying the first act should be the sacrifice and then the fruit of the sacrifice follows.²⁴⁹ That is the reason why the principle, “Keine Messe ohne Kommunion, aber auch keine Kommunion losgelöst von der Messe.”²⁵⁰

Parsch makes it clear that the Communion is not an independent devotion, but on the contrary a constituting part and fruit of the sacrifice. Therefore, it should be distributed within the Mass. For him, a Holy Mass without Communion would be like a ring from which the precious stone has been prised away. By partaking in the sacrificial banquet we are actually receiving the fruit of the sacrifice, and in the best possible way manifesting our own participation in the Mass. In the ancient Church all who took part in the sacrifice of the Mass invariably “communicated”. Only those who had been formerly excluded from the community of the Church the “excommunicated” – were prevented from receiving Holy Communion.²⁵¹ Parsch sees it as the dearest wish of the Church that the faithful should return to this ancient discipline: that they should once again consider it the normal thing to receive Communion at every Mass, that is, “No Mass without Communion”.²⁵² Moreover, in the Sacred Banquet we receive that same bread which we presented at the offertory, but it is now consecrated, made divine. Our natural bread, the bread of men, has become the bread of God. But what is true of the gift is also of him who gave it. He came to Mass, as it were, a “natural man”. He returns home a “supernatural man”, a partaker in the divine life. According to Parsch this is the meaning of Mass as the sacrifice of redemption.²⁵³ In his opinion, the best way in which the people can

which prevailed before the Second Vatican Council, where the practice was quite different from the present time. Today the Holy Communion is distributed within the Mass and it is an important constitutive element of the Mass.

²⁴⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 34.

²⁵⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁵¹ P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 260.

²⁵² *Ibid.* Parsch observes that the word “Communion” has often been misunderstood. It comes from the Latin word *communio*, and means fellowship, or union. One naturally thinks of the union of the faithful with Christ, yet this was not the original significance of the term, but rather the communion of the saints, or the Mystical Body of Christ, or the union of the faithful with one another. This is the true *Communio sanctorum*. Through our baptism we become members of the Mystical Body of Christ and through Christ’s Eucharistic Body this union with Christ and with one another in Christ, is cemented and made more manifest. At the Communion it is not so much the union of Christ with the individual that the liturgy has in mind, as the great communion of saints into which we are drawn, the “edification” or building up of the Mystical Body of Christ through the Eucharist. Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 258.

²⁵³ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 260.

exercise their common priesthood and participate in the celebration of the Eucharist is through the frequent reception of the Holy Communion.²⁵⁴

Besides, Parsch also offered several practical suggestions regarding the Holy Communion in the liturgy of the Mass: He laid a greater stress on the meal aspect of holy communion; reintroduction of Holy Communion under both kinds²⁵⁵; Communion from hosts consecrated at each Mass (not those taken from the tabernacle)²⁵⁶; omission of the people's Confiteor before communion (a duplication, according to Parsch); revival of communion chant (a refrain sung between psalm verses, which he prefers perhaps even in the vernacular).²⁵⁷

3.2.9. The Role of Singing in the Promotion of Active Participation

The church music is an integral part and an essential element of the liturgy. The liturgy demands the active participation of all the faithful and according to Parsch singing is an important means of fostering congregational participation. He highly esteemed church music and included it in the agenda of the Popular Liturgical Movement. "Ein Volk, das nicht mehr singt, ist ein sterbendes Volk, eine Religion, die nicht mehr singt, ist eine sterbende Religion; Liturgie, die nicht singt, ist eine tote Liturgie."²⁵⁸ Parsch emphasised the importance of music by calling people's singing 'the yardstick of their piety and the religious life'.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 34; cf. R. Pacik, Pius Parsch (1884-1954), in: LQF 98, vol. 2, 886-900, here 899. Parsch observes that for many centuries Christians have failed to grasp the vital importance of the Holy Communion. During the Middle Ages even the great saints received Communion seldom. St. Elizabeth, for example, went to confession every day, but partook in the bread of life only a few times during the year. Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 34.

²⁵⁵ The Holy Communion has a more complete form as a sign when it is received under both kinds. Cf. R. Meßner, *Einführung in die Liturgiewissenschaft*, 221-222. However, Christ is present as much as under either of the two species as is present under both. For Christ, whole and entire, exists under the species of bread and under any part of that species, and similarly the whole Christ exists under the species of wine and under its parts. Cf. Council of Trent: Decree on the Sacrament of the Eucharist, in: Denzinger, 1641.

²⁵⁶ The Communion from hosts consecrated at each Mass shows the close factual coherence between the Eucharistic prayer and the Communion. Cf. R. Meßner, *Einführung in die Liturgiewissenschaft*, 221.

²⁵⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 311; cf. M. Kwatera, Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 31.

²⁵⁸ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 290. *Tra le sollecitudini*, is the first papal document entirely devoted to church music ever to be addressed to the universal Church. Cf. ASS 36 (1903/04), 329-339. It represents a papal desire to introduce greater uniformity in the area of liturgical music. This document is the foundation for Church teaching on worship music up to, and even including, the Second Vatican Council. Cf. Ruff, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform*, 273. The following papal documents too are important to understand Parsch's notions on music and active participation. Pope Pius XI issued *Divini cultus sanctitatem*, an apostolic constitution on liturgy, Gregorian chant, and

Parsch analysed the types of church singings, and categorises them into three: The Gregorian chant, church hymns and the polyphony. The Gregorian chant is the oldest and is the very own singing of the Church. It is the noblest expression of the liturgy, and according to him, it is better than all the modern music. But it is very demanding since it needs liturgical and musical schooling; above all, because of the Latin language, which is meant only for the educated. Parsch esteemed the German church songs very highly, but he also accentuated the importance of the selection of the appropriate hymns for the liturgy.²⁶⁰ The third form of the church music was the polyphony.²⁶¹ He observes that, since the choral is almost strange to the Christians, the art music has crept into the modern time in the church service, and mostly the High Mass is groomed by polyphony. He was very critical towards this form of music because according to him it makes the active participation almost impossible.²⁶² He characterized, somewhat sarcastically, the “blessing of polyphonic church music” as allowing the congregation, caught between a private celebration of priest and a performing church choir, to be edified or artistically enchanted, depending on its attitude. Parsch predicted that in fifty years the polyphonic Mass Ordinary would have its place only in the concert hall, and not in the worship of a liturgically renewed Church.²⁶³

In Parsch’s opinion, the role of the schola is to foster congregational singing.²⁶⁴ In strong language, he asserted that the choir had historically committed two sins: First of all, taking over the congregation’s Ordinary and secondly, moving to the choir loft

sacred music, on December 20, 1928, twenty five years after *Tra le sollecitudini*. The Gregorian chant was recommended being restored to the people, to enhance a more active participation in the liturgy. Cf. AAS 21 (1929), 33-41. Pope Pius XII’s *Mediator Dei* too speaks about the importance of church music. Pope Pius XII directed this encyclical on the Sacred Liturgy to all bishops and ordinaries on November 20, 1947. Although it does not make a direct contribution to the notion of sacred music, two emphases with respect to music are significant: the more favourable and tolerant attitude toward modern music and the mention of vernacular singing at Mass. Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595.

²⁵⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 290. In his article “Gesang und Musik” Rudolf Pacik highlights the applicable requirements and the importance of singing in the Mass. Cf. R. Pacik, *Gesang und Musik: Wünsche zur Revision der geltenden Bestimmungen*, in: *Bewahren und Erneuern*, 230-251.

²⁶⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 290-291; cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 67.

²⁶¹ Music arranged in parts for several voices or instruments.

²⁶² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 290-291; cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 67.

²⁶³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliutrige* 1940, 331; cf. A. Ruff, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform*, 244.

²⁶⁴ For Parsch congregation singing was an important medium of active participation. For his musical endeavours he relied on Vinzenz Goller, his musical college of the Popular Liturgical Apostolate at Klosterneuburg. Cf. R. Pacik, *Volksliutrige im Gottesdienst*, 19-72; cf. R. Pacik, *Pius Parsch (1884-1954)*, in: *LQF* 98, vol. 2, 886-900, here 890.

in the seventeenth century²⁶⁵: The first of the choir's sins Parsch judged as venial and the second as mortal.²⁶⁶ He stated that the goal of church singing is not to cultivate high art, but to lead the people to participation of the Holy Sacrifice. If high art must be cultivated, according to Parsch, it should be Gregorian chant²⁶⁷, which is the song proper to the liturgy, sung by the congregation and by a schola placed between altar and people. He views that the new assignment of the church musicians is to be a leader of congregational singing, rather than looking down (literally, for the choir loft, as well as figuratively) upon the people and their song.²⁶⁸ He emphasised the importance of a trained choir who will act as a link between the people and priest. He also wished as new schola of both boys and girls in the liturgical dress, who will exercise their volunteer work with dignity.²⁶⁹

One can notice here that Parsch harboured a certain suspicion toward high art musical traditions and displayed readiness to excise well-established practices from the liturgical life of the Church. In this respect he can be seen as transition figure spanning two generations. Like the earlier liturgical reformers upon whom he relied for inspiration, he understood the liturgy to be a treasured inheritance. But by pushing to the limits the possible ways of celebrating the inherited liturgy so as to

²⁶⁵ The spatial separation between the choir and the presbytery was seen a kind of cognitive separation between the church music and the liturgy. Regarding this, Pacik summarizes the standpoint of Goller in the following words: "Die räumliche Trennung von Chor und Altarraum, wie sie bis zur Gegenwart besteht, offenbart und bedingt die geistige Trennung der Kirchenmusik von der Liturgie. Diese besteht nun [...] einerseits in der Isolation vom Volk, andererseits in der Entfernung vom Geschehen am Altar." R. Pacik, *Volksgesang im Gottesdienst*, 36.

²⁶⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie und Kirchenmusik*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 9 (1934/35) 369-374; cf. A. Ruff, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform*, 244.

²⁶⁷ Although Parsch encouraged the Gregorian chant, he was not very much for it: "Das Choralamt hatte gewiß auch seine gute Wirkung; aber der Choral blieb bis heute noch immer Dessert, nicht aber kräftiges Kornbrot." P. Parsch, *Wo steht unsere Bewegung Ende 1937?*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 12 (1937/38), 168-172, here 170. Parsch knew the Gregorian chant was very demanding due to the Latin language. It is to be noted here that Pope Pius XI, in his encyclical "*Divini Cultus Sanctitatem*", stressed the importance of the restoration of Gregorian chant to the people, to enhance a more active participation in the liturgy. Cf. *AAS* 21 (1929), 33-41. The place of Gregorian chant in the Popular Liturgical Movement was well summarized by Joseph Kemper in an article in "Bibel und Liturgie". Cf. J. Kemper, *Liturgische Bewegung und gregorianischer Choral*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 10 (1935/36), 316-322.

²⁶⁸ Parsch stressed that the choir should leave the choir loft and come down and take the position between the altar and the people.

²⁶⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie und Kirchenmusik*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 9 (1934/35) 369-374; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie und Kirchenmusik* (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 23), Klosterneuburg [n.d.], 3; cf. A. Ruff, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform*, 244. Parsch was sure that his understanding would not be easily welcomed by the musicians. He was certain that musicians would think differently than he, but stood firm in his views that followed consequently from the principle of the Popular Liturgical Movement.

activate the congregation, Parsch very early anticipated a later stage of the Liturgical Movement that would be reformist with respect to the inherited liturgy.²⁷⁰

3.2.10. The Role of Homily in the Promotion of Active Participation

Liturgy is an artistic synthesis and formative principle of the Church. Therefore it demands a harmonious consonant of all utterances of Christian spirit. Thereby also Parsch stresses the importance of homily as the integral part of the Mass. He claimed to have compiled Sunday and even week day homilies for almost 25 years. There were around 1000 homilies and he summed them up into a 10 volume work, which is known as “Die liturgische Predigt”.²⁷¹ Still, he admits, “Ich muss gestehen, ich bin kein rednerisches Talent, weder in formeller noch gedanklicher Hinsicht. Man erwarte auch nicht fertige, kunstvolle Predigten; ich wollte bloß Stoff und Material für Predigten aus der liturgischen Gedankenwelt vorlegen.”²⁷² These sermons were intended to help the people and the priests. Parsch opines that when the priests hear the term “the liturgical homily” many think that it is about high aesthetic gourmet and high liturgical thinking, which in reality does not help the ordinary people. According to him, the homily should never be baubles; it should always aim at the fulfilment of Christ’s teaching office: “Die liturgische Predigt muss sich das hohe Ziel stecken, an der Erfüllung des Lehrauftrages Christi mitzuhelfen, das Gottesreich aufzubauen, und zwar nicht bloß für einen kleinen Kreis esoterischer Christen, sondern für alle Gläubigen, besonders für das Pfarrvolk.”²⁷³ For the parish the liturgy is community and therefore the homilies should also be made available for the whole parish and for the entire faithful and not just for a particular group of people or religious. The homily should wholly be intended for the proclamation of the word of God. It should aim at spreading and building up of the kingdom of God on earth. Every preacher should have this goal in their mind if they want to fulfil their responsibility as preachers. Parsch also warns the priests by saying that it would be a betrayal of their priestly responsibility if they misused the homily for their own vested interest. He sees such a diversion as liturgical atheism.²⁷⁴

²⁷⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie und Kirchenmusik*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 9 (1934/35) 369-374; cf. A. Ruff, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform*, 245.

²⁷¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 7.

²⁷² *Ibid.*

²⁷³ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

For Parsch the liturgical homily means not just a kind of lecture on various liturgical themes and topics. The homily should pay attention to the liturgy and liturgical education of the faithful. The liturgy is regarded as the most important expression of the life of the Church and therefore the Christians must be well taught and instructed in it. He observes that the homily was ignored by the priests and was not given enough attention and due importance for many decades.²⁷⁵ It was distanced from the altar. That is the reason why the Christians of Parsch's time know only very little about the Christian cult, Mass, sacrament, the liturgical year etc. Therefore, the liturgical sermons are of paramount importance and he considers it as an important task of the pastors to take the liturgical instruction and education seriously.²⁷⁶

What is meant by liturgical homily? According to Parsch, "Es ist eine Predigt die zeitlich und örtlich in die Liturgie eingebaut, die auch inhaltlich und gedanklich von der Liturgie beeinflusst und geführt ist. Es sind also zwei Elemente da, die eine Predigt zur liturgischen Predigt machen: Sie muss ein Bestandteil der Liturgie sein und sie muss vom liturgischen Geist getragen sein."²⁷⁷ The homily connects the word of God with the liturgy of the sacrifice and leads to life, and it binds Scripture, Eucharist and life together. Parsch also speaks about the transition that occurred in the Middle Ages; during that time, the liturgy became a kind of personal piety. The homily, too, broke up from the liturgy, in time, space and in its content. It was no more considered as the essential component of the Mass. The homily was delivered before the Mass and it was preferred and seen outside of the Mass. Even the pulpit was removed from the altar into the nave of the church: Parsch sees this as a spiritual separation from the liturgy. Since the liturgy had not much influence on the life of the faithful, the sermon was seen as non-liturgical, too. It was seen as moralistic, apologetic, doctrinaire, formalistic, and sometimes even profane. Separation from the liturgy has done a lot of harm to the sermon. The more it was separated from the

²⁷⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 62. In Parsch's term the homily was treated as an orphan for many years.

²⁷⁶ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 11; cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 17. Parsch treats the theme homily in depth in his first volume of the "Die liturgische Predigt".

²⁷⁷ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 12; cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 5 (1930/31) 76-79, 106-110, 162-166, here 164. By "zeitlich" Parsch means that the homily should be preached within the Mass, that is, followed by the gospel. By "örtlich" he means that the homily should be preached from the ambo besides the altar and not from a pulpit far from it. Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 19; cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 88.

altar, the more it was exposed to the currents of time and was one-sided. It meant the downturn of the sermon.²⁷⁸

To Parsch, the liturgy is a prayed bible; with grievance he observes the gap between the Scripture and the homily. In his opinion the sermons of this period scooped water from cisterns of human wisdom instead of the living spring, the Bible; it was hollow, hair-splitting, rational and lost the spiritual anointing.²⁷⁹ He also observes that the preaching of the past decades was more of thematic in nature. The gospel was mostly seen or taken just as a stepping stone to the theme. Mostly only a sentence was chosen to show the theme. There was only little liturgical consideration. The preaching of the past centuries had turned out to be very ethical and they had brought discredit. Between the homily and Holy Mass there was a rift and he emphasises the fact that the preaching was not liturgical.²⁸⁰

In Parsch's observance the liturgical renewal has brought about a difference in the content of the homily. The homily regained its dignity through the Liturgical Movement. It became a part of the liturgy again. He strongly advocated that the preaching should be integrated into the Mass and be a part of it.²⁸¹ It should not be placed before, after or between the two Masses, which was the case in the Middle Ages. The right and fitting place for the preaching is after the gospel. He was also against extended and long homilies during the Mass in order to avoid prolonged masses especially in the high and sung masses. Parsch insisted that the homily should be precise and short and it should not be veiled with prayers and singings. It should also be related with the thoughts of liturgy.²⁸² Liturgy of the word without the proclamation of the word of God and the homily is a contradiction. Listening and hearing within the liturgy is very essential. Without the proclamation of the word of God there should not be any fore-mass. The position of the pulpits – away from the altar, in the nave of the church – has in many cases proved to be less suitable to the

²⁷⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 18; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Kurzpredigt*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 10 (1935/36)*, 161-165, 187-192, here 164.

²⁷⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 18; cf. P. Parsch, *Zur Reform der Predigt (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 12)*, Klosterneuburg [n.d.], 6; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Kurzpredigt (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 27)*, Klosterneuburg [n.d.], 6.

²⁸⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 19.

²⁸¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 17; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 19; cf. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 62.

²⁸² Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 19; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Kurzpredigt*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 10 (1935/36)*, 161-165, 187-192, here 190; cf. P. Parsch, *Zur Reform der Predigt (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 12)*, 7.

liturgical preaching. In his view, the priest should either speak from the ambo or from the altar. He also suggested removing all the unwanted elements from the liturgy.²⁸³

Parsch considers making the homily conceptually incorporated in the liturgy an important challenge. Thus he foresaw the difficulties and objections. He was convinced that the liturgy itself was a source of material. The liturgy gives a wide source of material for the preaching.²⁸⁴ In order to make the liturgy the source of material for the preaching and sermons, Parsch makes a pre-condition that the priest himself must live in and out from the liturgy:

Das sollte eine Selbstverständlichkeit sein. Denn die Liturgie ist die eigentliche Domäne des Priesters; sie ist sein 'Handwerk', er ist an erster Stelle Liturge. Die Bücher: das Messbuch, Brevier, das Rituale müssen seine Lebensbücher sein, nicht mit sieben Siegeln verschlossenen Büchern. Das Kirchenjahr mit Fest und Zeit, das Stundengebet mit den Tagesstunden sollen Rhythmus seines Lebens bestimmen. Des Priesters Seele soll das Denken und Fülle der Kirche widerspiegeln und dieses bestimmt die Liturgie. Aus der Tagesliturgie schöpft er seine Betrachtung. Sein ganzes Denken ist davon voll. Dann ist es selbstverständlich, dass er seine Predigtgedanken aus der Liturgie schöpfen wird. 'Aus der Fülle des Herzens spricht der Mund'. Wir sehen daraus, liturgisches Leben und Erleben ist eine entfernte Vorbereitung auf das Predigtamt.²⁸⁵

3.2.11. The Architecture of the Church and Active Participation

3.2.11.1. Parsch's Perceptions of the House of God

Parsch had his own liturgical perceptions regarding the place of worship. In his opinion, the place of worship should enhance and foster active participation of the people in the liturgy. First of all a church should be a place of implementations, that means a place where the faithful can gather for liturgical services, a place where they can offer the Holy Sacrifice, a place where they can hear the Word of God, a place where they can assemble in prayer and receive the sacraments. In his perception the place of worship is a symbol and it personifies an idea which everyone should always keep in mind: "Das Gotteshaus stellt die mystische Verbindung Christi mit

²⁸³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 19. As a consequence when the sermon was not the part of the liturgy, the priests sometimes removed their chasubles when they went up to the pulpit for preaching while a sermon hymn was sung, after which the divine virtues were prayed and long pronouncements were made..

²⁸⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 23; cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 88.

²⁸⁵ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 23.

seiner Kirche dar.”²⁸⁶ It is the community of faithful, which makes a church and which subsists in Christ: “Das, was die Kirche, ich meine die Ekklesia, zur Kirche macht, nämlich dass die Gemeinschaft der Gläubigen aus Christus herauswächst, von Christus lebt, in Christus verwurzelt ist, das stellt das Gotteshaus sichtbar dar; drücken wir es kurz aus: die Kirche in Christus.”²⁸⁷

In order to strengthen his arguments and show the relationship between Christ and his Church Parsch uses three similes: i) The imagery of vine and branches: This imagery is used by Christ himself (cf. Jn. 15: 1f), like the branches which cannot exist without the vine stock, so too the Church cannot exist without Christ. The Christians are nourished from the vine stock of Christ. United with Christ they bring saps and fruits in their lives.²⁸⁸ ii) The imagery of marriage: This imagery is already portrayed in the Old Testament; but with the coming of Christ it receives a new meaning: Christ is the bridegroom and the Church is his bride. He gives his life and blood for his Church; he nurtures and cares for her. The Church lives and grows out of Christ.²⁸⁹ iii) The imagery of Church as the Body of Christ: This simile is used by St. Paul in his writings. The Church is the Body of Christ. Christ is the head of his body and the Christians are the members of this body. The members must live in union with the body.²⁹⁰ Through the above mentioned imageries Parsch establishes his idea that the Church is rooted in Christ. In his view these three similes find their stony manifestation in the structure of the church. The structure of the church means also something else: “Gott hat durch die Weihe der Kirche seine Gnadengegenwart hier aufgeschlagen; die Kirche ist das Zelt Gottes unter den Menschen. Doch der tiefste Sinn des katholischen Gotteshauses ist Christus, Christus, der von Altare aus seine Gemeinde nährt, erbaut und zur Verklärung führt.”²⁹¹ From this idea there

²⁸⁶ P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 14; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 27.

²⁸⁷ P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 14; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 27.

²⁸⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 27-28; cf. P. Parsch, *Der Seelsorger als Liturge (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 3)*, Klosterneuburg [n.d.], 2.

²⁸⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, 28.

²⁹⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 28; cf. P. Parsch, *Liturgie und Familie (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 2)*, Klosterneuburg [n.d.], 2; cf. P. Parsch, *Der Seelsorger als Liturge (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 3)*, 2. We have already discussed about it in the chapter on “The Sacrament of Baptism”.

²⁹¹ P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 14; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 28.

emerge three inferences, which have lasting consequences on the innovative art of the church. We will discuss them in the following.

3.2.11.1.1. The Altar as the Centre of the Church

Christ is the predominant centre of a church. Parsch presents the prevailing situation of his time and states that Christ in the tabernacle was a quiet lord, he was an exiled love; it was very evident in the churches of exposition, where He reigned his community from his throne of exposition. In Parsch's view this intuition displaces the essential meaning of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is first of all instituted as the sacrifice, as continuation of the realisation of the sacrifice of the Lord; then it is the sacrificial meal, which nurtures our life of grace.²⁹² "Daß die Eucharistie Anbetungsgegenstand und Fortführung der Gegenwart Christi in den Kirchen ist, das ist jedenfalls weder in der hl. Schrift noch in der altkirchlichen Tradition der Kirche als Zweck der Eucharistie verankert."²⁹³ According to Parsch this function of the Eucharist, which appeared in the Church since the Middle Ages, is not the predominant function of the Eucharist. Through this he makes it crystal-clear that not the tabernacle but the altar is the centre of the Church. He stresses it by saying: "Nicht der Aussetzungsthron, nicht der Tabernakel sind die Zentrale der Kirche, sondern der Altar, und zwar wieder nicht die Bilderwand und der Aufbau, sondern einzig und allein der Altar als Opfertisch."²⁹⁴

For Parsch an altar is a place of sacrifice, a place where the sacrifice of redemption takes place. The altar is venerated as Christ himself. That is the reason why the altar is the dominant place in a church. In his view it is important to build a church in such a way that the altar is given the centrality. The altar is the place of sacrifice of the community.²⁹⁵ He looks with a critical eye at the changes that had occurred during the centuries and how the altar had almost lost its significance as the place of sacrifice and the centre of the place of worship. He concludes that the church of yesterday had lacked a centre; it had lost the supreme importance of the sacrifice of

²⁹² Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 14; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 28-29.

²⁹³ P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 14; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 29.

²⁹⁴ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 29; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 64.

²⁹⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 29.

Christ. In his opinion the new church buildings should emerge from the altar, the altar should regain its centrality and nothing should hinder the place of sacrifice.²⁹⁶ “Unser Ideal muß also der schmucklose Altartisch in der Mitte der Kirche sein, womöglich ohne Aufbau, und zwar ein einziger Altar. Nebenaltäre nur äußerst wenige, und diese so gestellt, daß die beherrschende Stellung des Hauptaltars nicht beeinträchtigt wird. Die Kirche muß also wie der eine Meßopferkirche sein.”²⁹⁷

3.2.11.1.2. The Community of Faithful as the Pulse of the Church

The second implication is the intimate relationship between the structure of the church and the church as the community of the faithful. The architecture of the church is only the sheath; the community it encloses is the essential. The church is realised only by the community of people, which gathers in it. In Parsch’s terms the community of the faithful is the pulse of a church.²⁹⁸ A church should primarily be a family home, which has its root in Christ and which lives in Christ. Parsch emphasises that the church is not there to serve the needs of an individual’s private devotions but it is there to lead the faithful to a community.²⁹⁹ In this connection he disposes his ideas about the new architecture of the Church: “Deshalb muß der neue Kirchenbau einen wohligen Gemeinschaftsraum gestalten, nicht eine Halle für Massenversammlungen, sondern einen intimen Familienraum, der auch äußerlich angenehm wirkt, heizbar, mit bequemen Bänken versehen, mit Matten ausgelegt u.a. Alle Gegenstände der Privatandacht, Heiligenbilder und Statuen, Kreuzweg, Marienaltar sollen in eigenen Kapellen ihren Platz finden, daß sie der großen Gemeinschaft, die durch die Liturgie bestimmt wird, nicht Eintrag tun.”³⁰⁰

The community should focus on Christ. The altar should be placed in such a way that it serves as the centre of the community. Thus, Parsch puts forwards the following suggestions in the spirit of the liturgical renewal regarding the altar to enhance the

²⁹⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 15; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 29-30.

²⁹⁷ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 30.

²⁹⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 15; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 30. This is Parsch’s ideal view of the place of worship.

²⁹⁹ P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 29-30.

³⁰⁰ P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 15; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 30.

active participation of the people: “Er soll von seiner Vereinsamung an der Apsiswand in die Kirche gerückt werden. Der Altar gehört unter die Gläubigen, dass diese wieder circumstantes, d.h. Herumstehende werden. Und noch ein zweites Anliegen haben wir: der Altar soll dem Volke zugekehrt sein, d. h. der Priester soll dem Volke nicht den Rücken kehren, sondern ihm zugewandt das Opfer feiern. Das verlangt die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe.”³⁰¹

3.2.11.1.3. The Architecture of the Church and the Implication of Active Participation

Parsch observes that in the olden times the pagan priest alone entered in the sanctuary to offer the sacrifice in the name of the people; he also notices that this was partly true of the priest of the Old Covenant. But, to him it is not the same with Christians. In the Church all the faithful have the opportunity to participate in the sacrifice of the Mass. In his opinion this is the reason why Christ has instituted the priesthood in his Church. Although the priest administrates the sacraments and appropriates the sacrifice through the consecration, the people have the chance to participate in it fully and completely.³⁰² The community of the faithful is invited to take part and share in the priesthood of Christ. And the practical expression of this vocation is actualised in the celebration of the Holy Mass. “Denn Opferpriester ist und bleibt nur einer, Christus; dieser läßt aber seine ganze Kirche mit allen Gliedern an diesem Priestertum teilnehmen.”³⁰³ Parsch is of the strong opinion that the liturgy should be named as a sacred drama.³⁰⁴ If liturgy is a sacred drama, the church is the

³⁰¹ Cf. P. Parsch, Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen, in: Lebendige Liturgie, 27-36, here 31; cf. P. Parsch, Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie, 15. Here Parsch also expects objections because it touches the practices but he makes his stand clear: “Da rühren wir freilich an Bräuchen, die sich ein jahrhundertlanges Gewohnheitsrecht erworben haben. Und ich weiß gut, dass sich da Widerstände bei kirchlichen Behörden und auch beim Klerus erheben. Aber die Entwicklung wird sich nicht aufhalten lassen. Auch die kirchliche Gesetzgebung steht hier nicht gegen uns.” P. Parsch, Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen, in: Lebendige Liturgie, 27-36, here 30. Through the revulsion of the altar Parsch foresees the problem of preserving the Holy Eucharist in the tabernacle. In this regard he also speaks of various developments down through the centuries. His concern was to relocate the tabernacle from the high altar to a sacramental altar or on the side wall or behind the high altar. Cf. P. Parsch, Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen, in: Lebendige Liturgie, 27-36, here 31; cf. P. Parsch, Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie, 16.

³⁰² Cf. P. Parsch, Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie, 16.

³⁰³ P. Parsch, Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen, in: Lebendige Liturgie, 27-36, here 33; cf. P. Parsch, Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie, 16.

³⁰⁴ In case the people do not believe that the liturgy is a sacred drama, Parsch suggests, “Wer es nicht glaubt, sehe im Meßbuch nach, wo es im Kanon heißt: *infra actionem*, d. h. mitten der Aktion, im Schauspiel.” He continues: “Man scheue sich nicht, diesen Vergleich auszudenken. Das wird für die Kirchenkunst weittragende Folgen haben.” P. Parsch, Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie, 17.

sacred stage, and very specially the sanctuary of the church, where the action takes place and the whole church is there for facilitating this drama. The priest and people are the actors. To enhance this active participation, it is also important to build the church in such a way. Parsch puts his perception of the structure of the church in interrogative form:

Wird der Architekt eine Kirche bauen, in der der Hochaltar überhaupt nicht zu sehen ist? Wird er nicht viel mehr den Altarraum zu einer Bühne gestalten, die von allen Teilen der Kirche gesehen und gehört wird? [...]. Wenn die Liturgie heiliges Spiel ist, an dem alle teilnehmen, wird der Priester dem Volk den Rücken kehren, wird der Priester am Altar würdelos umherschließen; wird da nicht mit einem Schlag jeder Schritt, jede Bewegung neu gewogen und gemessen werden? Wenn die Liturgie heiliges Spiel ist, wird die Kircheneinrichtung täglich die gleiche bleiben? Die papierernen Blumen, die zerschlissenen Paramente, all der Kitsch? Wird nicht vielmehr der geistliche Regisseur trachten, die Bühne dem Kirchenjahr in Farbe, Schmuck und Stufung anzupassen? Wird er da Küster, Messdiener im Alltagsgewand herumlaufen lassen? Man denke das Gleichnis nur konsequent durch, Baumeister und Seelsorger werden eine ganz andere Kirche gestalten, als sie es bisher taten.³⁰⁵

In the above questions Parsch clearly expresses his ideas and perceptions about the new architecture of a church, how a church should be built, which he thinks would enhance the active participation of the people in the liturgy. For him an apt and fitting structure of the church is necessary for the participation of the people.

3.2.11.2. Liturgical Community of St. Gertrude as a Model of Active Participation

The little church of St. Gertrude in Klosterneuburg was the practical centre for the development and execution of the popular liturgical masses and other liturgical activities. In the course of time it became a model church of active participation. Parsch found this 800 year old pilgrim infirmary Church as the ideal place for his

³⁰⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 17. *Mediator Dei* discusses the need to have tasteful and beautiful houses of worship. Not necessarily rich in historical artifacts, but clean and not overburdened with Kitsch. While Pius XII was critical of those who stripped their churches of virtually all ancient art (including pictures and statuary), he disapproved of churches and altars overloaded with art-like trinkets and works. Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595. Parsch too envisages a moderate church, apt for the promotion of the active participation of the people. The Second Vatican Council in its Liturgy Constitution speaks about the importance of sacred art and sacred furnishing. SC 122-130. "The fine arts are considered to rank among the noblest activities of man's genius, and this applies especially to religious art and to its highest achievement, which is sacred art. These arts, by their very nature, are oriented toward the infinite beauty of God which they attempt in some way to portray by the work of human hands; they achieve their purpose of redounding to God's praise and glory in proportion as they are directed the more exclusively to the single aim of turning men's minds devoutly toward God." SC 122.

liturgical community. He strove to establish a model liturgy in this place and wanted to mould this as a model community.³⁰⁶ He considered it as ideal to include the whole parish in the process of liturgical renewal, but at the same time he knew that in practice it would be impossible to inspire the entire faithful of the parish. All the more he realised that it was difficult to change the tradition of the Church. Therefore, he settled on another variant, namely building up a small community within the parish, in which all are united and from which the reform movement could be spread. In this regard he thought of a church within the Church (*ecclesiola in ecclesia*), which means that the members of the liturgical community could feel that they are a chosen group within the community.³⁰⁷ Thus, the liturgical community of St. Gertrude came into existence.

Parsch remoulded the existing structure of St. Gertrude with the help of architect Robert Kramreiter in 1936 in order to realise his popular liturgical perceptions and to promote active participation. He did so in cohesion with his fundamental idea of the church: “Kirche muß wieder Opferstätte sein, der Altar muß als Opfertisch wieder in den Mittelpunkt rücken. Es muß sichtbar und spürbar sein, dass es sich um einen Gemeinschaftsraum handelt, nicht um einen Andachtsraum.”³⁰⁸ This little church portrayed Parsch’s perception of the architecture of the church and enabled the faithful to participate in a better way:

Da ist das Atrium der Ort der Katechumenen und Büsser, der Gläubigenraum für die Vollchristen, der Priesterraum für den Klerus; in der Mitte zwischen beiden der Opferraum; vor dem Altar der Raum für die Sänger. Am Eingang war die Taufkapelle. Im Atrium steht das Weihwasserbecken; da können auch die Beichtstühle stehen. Im Schiff der Kirche sind Stühle für Männer, für Frauen. Eigene Kinderbänke sollten vorne sein. Der Klerus hat seinen Platz hinter dem Altar. Der Altar aber ist in der Mitte als der Mittel- und Höhepunkt des ganzen Raumes.³⁰⁹

All Parsch’s liturgical perception and ideals found their expression in this community and he even compared this community to the early Christian Community: “St.

³⁰⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 53; cf. P. Parsch, *Die Liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 4 (1929/30) 501-509, here 508; cf. J. A. Jungmann, *Sankt Gertrud in Klosterneuburg*, in: *GrEnt* 8 (1952/53), 205-206, here 206; cf. N. Höslinger, *Die Liturgische Gemeinde St. Gertrud in Klosterneuburg*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 177-185; cf. T. Maas-Ewerd, *Liturgie und Pfarrei*, 97.

³⁰⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Liturgische Aktion in Österreich*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 4 (1929/30) 501-509, here 508; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 53. Refer also the subtitle 1.9.2 of “Pius Parsch: An Apostle of Popular Liturgical Movement”.

³⁰⁸ P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 17.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

Gertrud ist die Wiege der volksliturgischen Erneuerung geworden. Wer in die Gemeinde kam, spürte den Hauch des Urchristentums.”³¹⁰ Jungmann praises the new composition of St. Gertrude.³¹¹ He even describes the composition of the little church:

So nahm auch das Kirchlein allmählich die Gestalt an, die in den Abbildungen ersichtlich ist: im erhöhten, von der Kuppel überwölbten Opferraum, der einem Ziborium ähnlich ist, der Altar, ein einfacher, edel geformter Tisch (aus Salzburger Forellenmarmor), nur von den vorgeschriebenen Linnen bedeckt; die metallenen Leuchter stehen in Altarhöhe davor; darüber als Altarkreuz die Crux gemmata, das strahlende Kreuz, das vom erlösenden Leiden des Herr erzählt, aber auch schon durchleuchtet ist von der Herrlichkeit der Auferstehung; im Schiff der Ambo für die Verkündigung des Evangeliums und die Predigt; in der abschließenden Chorwand der Fries mit den Lämmern, die alle auf den einen Mittelpunkt zugehen, von dem das Heil kommt.³¹²

When the priest entered the sanctuary he could be seen by the faithful, at the altar he faced the faithful and thereby he had a better contact with the people. The faithful could also observe what was taking place on the altar. The priest wore the liturgical vestments, fitting to the liturgical season of the year. Jungmann had also a great appreciation for the liturgical dresses of the ministrants and even the singing schola. His fascination was so great that he says, “Hier ist verwirklicht, was jeder Gottesdienst sein sollte: ein Abglanz des Himmels unserer irdischen Welt.”³¹³ In this connection it is also important to speak of the influence of Jungmann on Pius Parsch.

In the development of his Eucharistic theology Parsch was influenced by Josef Andreas Jungmann³¹⁴. We see this especially in Parsch’s 3rd edition of

³¹⁰ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 40.

³¹¹ Cf. J. A. Jungmann, *Sankt Gertrud in Klosterneuburg*, in: *GrEnt* 8 (1952/53), 205-206, here 205.

³¹² J. A. Jungmann, *Sankt Gertrud in Klosterneuburg*, in: *GrEnt* 8 (1952/53), 205-206, here 206; cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Lebenslauf von Pius Johann Parsch*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 54.

³¹³ J. A. Jungmann, *Sankt Gertrud in Klosterneuburg*, in: *GrEnt* 8 (1952/53), 205-206, here 205.

³¹⁴ Josef Andreas Jungmann (1889-1975), was an Austrian Jesuit, inspirer of the liturgical and catechetical renewal. From 1925 at the University of Innsbruck, he taught pastoral theology, catechetical, and liturgy until 1963, with an interruption from 1938 to 1945 when Hitler closed the theology faculty of the university. He was editor (1926-63) of *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* (again with an interruption, 1938-45). After having contributed to creating the general theological and pastoral climate for Vatican Council II by his writings, he was chosen to be a member of the conciliar Preparatory Commission on Aug. 25, 1960. He continued his intensive and dedicated work during the council as highly esteemed *peritus* of the Commission for Liturgy and after the Council as consultant of the *Consilium* (the commission entrusted with the implementation of the Constitution on the Liturgy). He is acknowledged initiator and most prominent exponent of the second phase of modern catechetical known as kerygmatic renewal. It led to a shift of emphasis from method to content in all forms of the ministry of the Word. Cf. J. Hofinger, *Jungmann, Josef Andreas*, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 8, 61-63; cf. R.

“Messerklärung”. In the foreword to this book Parsch acknowledges the assistance that he received from Jungmann’s “Missarum Sollemina”³¹⁵: “Of the greatest assistance to me here has been the monumental work of J. A. Jungmann s.j., Missarum Sollemina, which sums up liturgical research during the past decade.”³¹⁶ He also expresses his gratefulness to Jungmann explicitly: “Jungmann’s recent work, Missarum Sollemnia, has occasioned many improvements in this book, a fact which I record with grateful acknowledgement.”³¹⁷ The association of these two liturgists of Austira was of great importance. Jungmann speaks of their first meeting together in 1912 in his hometown, Sand in Taufers, South Tirol: “Auf gemeinsamen Spaziergängen begannen verwandte Saiten mächtig zu erklingen: Aufgaben der religiösen Vertiefung und der Überwindung drückender Starre standen vor uns und weckten die gemeinsame Begeisterung; sie ließen uns in eine kommende Lebensarbeit hinausschauen, für die unsere hochstrebende Gebirgswanderung fast symbolisch war.”³¹⁸ Jungmann was fascinated by Parsch: “Als der junge Herr dann an einem Sonntag Predigt und Amt übernahm, war die klare, eindringende Art seiner Rede und die andächtige, fast überfeierliche Weise seines Zelebrierens ein kleines Ereignis in der Gemeinde.”³¹⁹

3.2.12. Different Forms of Popular Liturgical Masses

Let us discuss here first of all the basis of the popular liturgical Masses, which were developed by Pius Parsch in the course of time. The model, which he has developed for the active celebration of the Mass, has more than one root.

Peiffer, Josef Jungmann: Laying a Foundation for Vatican II, in: How Firm a Foundation, 58-62; cf. R. Pacik, Josef Andreas Jungmann SJ (1889-1975), in: LQF 98, vol. 1, 538-555, here 538-539

³¹⁵ Jungmann wrote number of books and articles which are world famous. The field of his special studies was liturgy and in particular the history of the Latin liturgy and the problems of an authentic liturgical renewal. His very first book “Die Stellung Christi im liturgischen Gebet” (1925) is a masterpiece of his own method. He used the academic exile imposed by Hitler for preparing his main work, which made him suddenly world famous, “Missarum Sollemnia: Eine gentische Erklärung der römischen Messe” (2 vols. 1948). It was soon translated into all major European languages: the complete English translation of F. A. Brunner, The Mass of the Roman Rite (2 vols., New York 1950). Missarum Sollemnia prepared for and favoured the conciliar reform of the Latin liturgy. Cf. J. Hofinger, Jungmann, Josef Andreas, in: NCE, vol. 8, 61-63; cf. R. Peiffer, Josef Jungmann: Laying a Foundation for Vatican II, in: How Firm a Foundation, 58-62. For detailed and specific references Jungmann’s “Missarum Sollemina” on Pius Parsch’s Eucharistic theology see in: R. Stafin, Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch, 231-235.

³¹⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, The Liturgy of the Mass, xi.

³¹⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

³¹⁸ J. A. Jungmann, Pius Parsch, in: GrEnt 9 (1953/54) 220; cf. N. Höslinger, Der Lebenslauf von Pius Johann Parsch, in: Mit sanfter Zähigkeit, 13-78, here 23.

³¹⁹ J. A. Jungmann, Pius Parsch, in: GrEnt 9 (1953/54) 220.

1. Praying commentary of the Mass: Parsch's experience in the World War I taught him to employ a new method in which, he let one of his confreres to celebrate the Mass, while he explained the Mass in a prayer form.³²⁰
2. Sung Mass: In the Middle Ages singing by the Church choir was common in the German speaking area; both in the solemn masses as well as in the *missa lecta*. In the so called Sung Mass the people sang stanzas after stanzas without considering the sequence of the celebration of the Holy Mass. Only during the consecration there was a silence. Parsch renewed this form of the sung mass, so much that only in Solemn Mass the people were allowed to sing the designated parts: that is; Ordinarium and Proprium.³²¹
3. Missa recitata: Parsch came to know about this form of mass from a group of students in Austria. From this form of mass he adopted joint prayers as well as the contact between priest and the community through dialogue and answer.³²²

Apart from the German High Mass (Deutsches Hochamt), which especially Parsch propagated after the World War II, his models of the Masses were based on the Missa lecta (die stille Messe) in which the priest prayed inaudibly. In this form of the Mass the faithful kept themselves busy in their own way, they exercised their private devotions by praying the rosary, by reading the prayers and reflections on the celebration of the Mass, by reading a translated text of the Mass etc. To overcome these problems and to make an active participation possible for the people in the Mass, Parsch provided liturgical text with chants and hymns.³²³ After many years of trials and experiments he consolidated two basic forms of Masses, which were differentiated in their musical structure and form: namely the so called Chormesse and Betsingmesse.

³²⁰ Cf. R. Pacik, Aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe, in: HID 58 (2004), 122-132, here 126; cf. P. Parsch, Volksliturgie 1940, 15. For details refer the subtitle 1.3. in "Pius Parsch: An Apostle of Popular Liturgical Movement".

³²¹ The music of the Mass consists of two main groups of pieces; the Ordinary (the texts sung at each service), and the Proper (those which change according to the season or saint being celebrated). The pieces which constitute the Ordinary are: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Benedictus and Agnus Dei. The chants of the Proper are: Introit, Gradual or Alleluia, Alleluia or Tract, Offertory and Communion.

³²² Cf. R. Pacik, Aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe, in: HID 58 (2004), 122-132, here 126.

³²³ Cf. *ibid.* For the details about the "Deutsches Hochamt" confer to R. Pacik, Volksgesang im Gottesdienst, 88-93. See also: A. Ruff, Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform, 300-301.

3.2.12.1. The Chormesse

The Chormesse is a quasi *Missa recitata*. According to Parsch: “Die Chormesse ist eine deutsche Meßandacht, welche eine mittätige Teilnahme des Volkes an der Meßfeier und innige Verbindung mit der Liturgie ermöglicht.”³²⁴ In this form of Mass the celebrant was obliged to recite all the texts in Latin. A prayer leader read the readings and the individual part of the priest in German.³²⁵ It was at the feast of the Ascension in 1922, Pius Parsch celebrated his first Chormesse.³²⁶ The day before, he assembled the group in St. Gertrude, the little Church which was destined to become the cradle of the Popular Liturgical Movement, and explained the action and meaning of the Chormesse.³²⁷ On that occasion a difference of opinion arose. Many a Catholic in the group, recruited in other circumstances, broke off from their association. The Chormesse was, frankly, still very primitive. The Kyrie, Sanctus and Agnus Dei were sung in German; Professor Vinzenz Goller had prepared simple, hymn-like melodies for it. The Proper parts and the Gloria and Credo were recited in chorus by the faithful. The prayer leader read the readings and prayers; meanwhile the priest recited the same in Latin. They also had an offertory procession, and even the kiss of peace was signified through a handshake. This was the first popular liturgical celebration of the Mass in German-speaking territory.³²⁸

Parsch saw the Chormesse, which he was instrumental in developing, as the most desirable form of the *missa recitata*. It allowed congregational singing and recitation of liturgical texts, in the vernacular as well as in Latin. But he acknowledged that he had difficulty and only very limited success in implementing this type of celebration

³²⁴ P. Parsch, *Klosterneuburger Chormesse* (Volkliturgische Andachten und Texte Nr. 8), Klosterneuburg 1928, 6. Parsch here emphasises the obligation and necessity of observing the rubrics of the Mass by the priest. The priest should not refrain from the rules and regulations. Cf. P. Parsch, *Klosterneuburger Chormesse*, 6.

³²⁵ P. Parsch, *Messgestaltung*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 50-54, here 51-52.

³²⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 18; cf. F. Kolbe, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 51; cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Lebenslauf von Pius Johann Parsch*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 40; cf. P. Tschinkel, *Homilie am Christi Himmelfahrtstag 1962 in St. Gertrud*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 35 (1961/62) 313-315; cf. F. Röhrig, *Pius Parsch und die biblisch-liturgische Erneuerung im historischen Kontext*, in: *HID* 58 (2004), 115-119, here 116. Parsch first heard about this type of Mass from a student cycle. “Um diese Zeit hatte von einer *Missa recitata* gehört, die in Studentenkreisen gehalten wurde.” And thereby he decided to celebrate this type of Mass in his community. Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 18.

³²⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 18.

³²⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 18; cf. P. Parsch, *Meine Erfahrungen mit der Chormesse*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926-27), 215-220 here 215-216; cf. P. Parsch, *Klosterneuburger Chormesse*, 6; cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Lebenslauf von Pius Johann Parsch*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 40. Parsch compiled a Mass text with its procedure. Cf. P. Parsch, *Klosterneuburger Chormesse*, 9-23.

in any parish besides his own. Catholics, faithful as well as clergy, were simply unaccustomed to and unprepared for this liturgical innovation. Therefore, it was important to convince and educate the faithful and the clergy in this regard before its implementation.³²⁹ Parsch places the Chormesse between the Betsingmesse and *missa recitata*. From the former it takes the prayers and singings in vernacular language and from the latter the contact with the priest.³³⁰

3.2.12.2. The Betsingmesse

The Betsingmesse is the most popular form of the Mass in the Liturgical Movement. It is a mixed form of the classical *missa cantata* and the *missa lecta*. This Mass was developed in the parish community of St. Gertrude. This form of Mass was shaped by means of ordinary German chants, dialogical respond from the faithful, vernacular readings etc. Parsch designates the Betsingmesse as “eine populäre Nachbildung der Idealmesse der Kirche, des Choralamtes.”³³¹ What was normally sung by the choir in Latin, will be sung by the people in the Betsingmesse whereby for the Ordinarium, mass hymns and for the Proprium seasonal hymns are used. The part which is sung by the priest in solemn Mass, such as oration, gospel, preface or Our Father, will be recited by a prayer leader in German. This prayer leader (lector) has a special function; he is at the same time a translator: the part which is spoken by the priest will be spoken in German by a prayer leader. The response³³² will be prayed loudly by the priest and the people in Latin.³³³

At the Catholic Congress in Vienna in 1933 a crowd of two hundred thousand people, who had not had any previous practice, enthusiastically took part in the Betsingmesse. Every participant had the mass text together with prayers and songs in their hand. It was a tremendous success, and since then this form of Mass became

³²⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Betsingmesse*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 9-12; cf. A. Ruff, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform*, 235. In Parsch's opinion, the Chormesse was difficult for the simple ordinary people. But it is very good for small communities and for an educated group of people. Cf. P. Parsch, *Wo steht unsere Bewegung Ende 1937?*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 12 (1937/38), 168-172, here 170; cf. R. Pacik, *Volksgesang im Gottesdienst*, 86.

³³⁰ P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 5 (1930/31) 76-79, 106-110, 162-166, here 163; cf. R. Pacik, *Volksgesang im Gottesdienst*, 82. It is to be taken into account that the Chormesse is still celebrated in the community of St. Gertrude with further modification in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. Cf. R. Pacik, *Volksgesang im Gottesdienst*, 88.

³³¹ P. Parsch, *Messgestaltung*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 50-54, here 53.

³³² Priest: *Dominus vobiscum*; all: *Et cum spiritu tuo*.

³³³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 409; cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 81; cf. P. Harnoncourt, *Betsingmesse*, in: *LThK*, 3rd ed., vol. 2, 340.

very popular. It is the general opinion of practical liturgists that, before the form of Mass ritual was reformed, the Betsingmesse was the most satisfactory and practicable of all possible form of active participation by the people.³³⁴

Parsch speaks about the integral elements required for the actual celebration of the Betsingmesse: It wants a willing and collaborative priest (celebrant), who will constantly have the people in mind and adapting himself to their needs and feeling himself as their leader; furthermore a liturgically trained lector, a practiced Schola, a competent and understanding organist, and the availability of texts for the faithful.³³⁵ The schola should be near the altar to act as a link between celebrant and people; the lector should be on a Rostrum facing on the people (If he is priest he can use the pulpit).³³⁶

Parsch then elaborates on the celebration of the Betsingmesse. The Introit verse is sung by all as the priest enters; it is followed by the Kyrie. During the singing the priest and server do the prayers at the foot of the altar, the priest goes up and reads the Introit, which he will finish about the time when people come to the end of the Kyrie. He then says the words Gloria in excelsis Deo and continues while the people sing their Gloria verse. He may have to wait a few moments, but far less than would be the case at a Sung Mass. The Gloria finished, he turns and says Dominus vobiscum, to which the people reply. He says Oremus and reads the Collect quietly while the Lector reads the translation. He comes out loud for the termination that all may answer the Amen. He reads the Epistle while the people (now sitting) hear it in their own tongue from the lector. He reads the Gradual while the people sing the

³³⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 407; cf. P. Parsch, *Liturgisches Mindestprogramm der Seelsorge*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 8 (1933/34), 38-40, here 40; cf. *Die Betsingmesse*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 9-12, here 11; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, ix; cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Lebenslauf von Pius Johann Parsch*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 52; cf. F. Röhrig, *Pius Parsch und die biblisch-liturgische Erneuerung im historischen Kontext*, in: *HID* 58 (2004), 115-119, here 117. Cardinal Innitzer, the then Archbishop of Vienna, recommended to celebrate this form of Mass once in a month in his diocese. He highly estimated Parsch and his popular liturgical work. Cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Lebenslauf von Pius Johann Parsch*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 33; cf. P. Parsch, *Die Betsingmesse* (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 11), Klosterneuburg [n.d.], 1. Parsch speaks of the importance of mass text in his article "Der Meßtext als Seelsorgsmittel". Cf. P. Parsch, *Der Meßtext als Seelsorgsmittel*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 8 (1933/34), 82-89; cf. P. Parsch, *Der Meßtext als Seelsorgsmittel* (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 14), Klosterneuburg [n.d.], 1-7.

³³⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 410-414.

³³⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

Gradual hymn-verse. Again he may wait for a moment till the people have finished.³³⁷

Thereafter the priest moves to the Gospel side, says *Dominius vobiscum*, etc., which the people answer; he reads the Gospel quietly while the lector reads the translation. After that the priest gives a short homily connected to the Mass.³³⁸ At the end of the fore-mass the priest intones the credo, and the people standing say (not sing) their creed in their tongue. When it is finished, he says *Dominus vobiscum* and *Oremus*; and the offertory and goes through his private prayers and actions. The hymn will finish in time for him to do the Preface response with the people; they sing the *Sanctus* hymn at the appropriate moment. Silence during the Canon (unless, for didactic reasons, in the case of an inexperienced congregation, the lector reads one or two Canon-prayers loud); all answer Amen, and *sed libera nos a malo* and *et cum spiritu tuo*, starting the *Agnus Dei* hymn immediately afterwards. The Communion hymn is sung during the distribution of Holy Communion, being repeated if the crowd is large. After the Post-Communion (the translation of which is read by the lector) and the Blessing responses, the recessional hymn is sung as the priest goes out.³³⁹

Thus, this form of Mass is an organic whole; song, prayer, reading and action are all fitted together, the people being able to follow everything and do all the differentiation of functions allotted to them. All the essentials are clearly brought out, the inessentials kept in the background, and the structure of the Mass, with the purpose of each part, made manifest.³⁴⁰ Parsch hoped that this form of Mass will continue to remain as the popular form of active participation in the coming couple of decades:

Nun ist in der Betsingmesse eine volkstümliche Form gefunden, die das Volk befriedigt, die an das beliebte Kirchenlied anknüpft, die doch das Volk an den wesentlichen Teilen aktiv teilnehmen läßt, und die so ausbaufähig ist, daß eine Gemeinde weitergeführt werden kann. Wir

³³⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 414-416; cf. P. Parsch, *Meßopfererziehung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 233-238, here 237-238.

³³⁸ According to Parsch, when a homily is given, other prayers and communiques should be dropped. For the homily he prefers a maximum 10 minutes. Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940.

³³⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 416-420. For an order of event of the Betsingmesse see in: R. Pacik, *Aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *HID* 58 (2004), 122-132, here 129.

³⁴⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 417-419.

glauben, die Betsingmesse ist für nächsten 10-20 Jahre die Form der pfarrlichen Gemeinschaftsmesse.³⁴¹

The common feature of the above mentioned two forms of masses are: while the priest recites the texts in Latin, a prayer leader reads the texts in German, the community participates in it by singing and praying. The Dialogue (e.g., “Dominus vobiscum”, “Et cum spiritu tuo”) will be said by the Priest and the people loud in Latin. For the application of the hymns two principles are binding: first of all, the hymns must be directed according to the structure of the liturgical celebration. In the Holy Mass the singing must be done only in the specified places (i.e., Proprium and Ordinarium). Secondly, in content it should be closer to the official text.³⁴² Thus, we see that by proposing these types of popular liturgical Masses it was the main concern of Pius Parsch to lead the people to the active participation in the liturgy.

³⁴¹ P. Parsch, *Wo steht unsere Bewegung Ende 1937?*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 12 (1937/38), 168-172, here 170; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 62; cf. T. Maas-Ewerd, *Liturgie und Pfarrei*, 99. Although the *Betsingmesse* made possible the active participation of the faithful, in as certain way it still lacked the direct contact of the priest with the people, since the people were often represented by the mass servers and the choir. But it was the best possible of the active participation one could think of this time. Cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 133.

³⁴² R. Pacik, *Aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe*, in: *HID* 58 (2004), 122-132, here 127. Pacik gives a detailed account of these two forms of Masses in his book “*Volksgesang im Gottesdienst*”. Cf. R. Pacik, *Volksgesang im Gottesdienst*, 80-88.

PART THREE: AN OUTLOOK

CONCERNS OF PIUS PARSCH, WHICH WERE TAKEN UP IN THE CONSTITUTION ON THE SACRED LITURGY

The Second Vatican Council was the twenty-first Ecumenical Council of the Catholic Church. It opened under Pope John XXIII on 11 October 1962 and closed under Pope Paul VI on 8 December 1965. The Council met in four sessions during this span of time. It was indeed a great event in the life of the universal Church. The Second Vatican Council has produced 16 documents, which include four constitutions, nine decrees and three declarations.¹

Pope John XXIII gave notice of his intention to convene the Council on 25 January 1959, less than three months after his election in October 1958. This sudden announcement, which caught the Curia by surprise, caused little initial official comment from Church insiders.² Reaction to the announcement was widespread and largely positive from both religious and secular leaders outside the Catholic Church. The Council was formally summoned by the apostolic constitution *Humanae Salutis*³ on 25 December 1961. In various discussions before the Council actually convened, Pope John often said that it was time to open the windows of the Church to let in some fresh air. He invited other Christians outside the Catholic Church to send observers to the Council. Acceptances came from both the Protestant denominations and Eastern Orthodox churches.⁴

One of the first matters to be addressed by the Second Vatican Council was the question of how to reform the sacred liturgy of the Church. This had been a matter of widespread concern for decades, not only among the so called “progressive” clergy

¹ Cf. A. Flannery, ed., *Vatican II: the Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, Bombay 1977, 5-9. The four Constitutions are: 1. *Sacrosanctum concilium*, the constitution on the sacred liturgy; 2. *Lumen gentium*, the dogmatic constitution on the Church; 3. *Dei verbum*, the dogmatic constitution on divine revelation; and 4. *Gaudium et spes*, the pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world. The nine decrees are: 1. *Inter mirifica*, decree on the means of social communication; 2. *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, decree on the catholic eastern churches; 3. *Unitatis redintegratio*, decree on ecumenism; 4. *Christus Dominus*, decree on the pastoral office of the bishops in the Church; 5. *Perfectae Caritatis*, decree on the up-to-date renewal of religious life; 6. *Optatam totius*, decree on training of priests; 7. *Apostolicam actuositatem*, decree on the apostolate of lay people; 8. *Ad gentes divinitus*, decree on the Church’s missionary activity; and 9. *Presbyterorum ordinis*, decree on the ministry and life of priests. The three declarations are: 1. *Gravissimum educationis*, declaration on Christian education; 2. *Nostra aetate*, declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions; and 3. *Dignitatis humanae*, declaration on religious liberty.

² Cf. H. Schmidt, *Die Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie: Text – Vorgeschichte – Kommentar* (Herder-Bücherei 218), Freiburg im Breisgau 1965, 51.

³ Cf. *AAS* 54 (1962), 5-13.

⁴ Cf. K. Rahner and H. Vorgrimler, *Kleines Konzilskompendium: Sämtliche Texte des Zweiten Vatikanums* (Herder-Bücherei 270/273), 6th ed., Freiburg im Breisgau 1966, 17 and 33.

and theologians, but of all those who were entrusted with pastoral duties. This concern was not confined to the rite of the Mass alone, but extended to sacraments, sacramentals, prayers, music and art. This call for the reform in the liturgy found its expression in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. The designation “Constitution” indicates its solemnity and authority, as it is intended to be a definitive statement on liturgical practice for the entire Church, which will affect her interior life in a fundamental way. The central idea was that there ought to be greater participation of the people in the liturgy.⁵

1. THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT OF THE CONSTITUTION ON THE SACRED LITURGY

1.1. The Liturgical Movement of the 20th Century

For most movements there is an event that is conveniently described as their beginning. The Liturgical Movement is no exception. The official beginning of the Liturgical Movement of the 20th century is usually traced to Lambert Beauduin’s address to the National Congress of Catholic Workers at Malines in 1909, which is designated as the “Malines Event” in the history.⁶ In his speech “The Prayer of the Church”, Beauduin called for full and active participation of all people in Church life and especially in its worship. He based his remarks on the *Motu Proprio* of Pius X

⁵ Cf. F. Arinze, Active Participation in the Sacred Liturgy, in: Cardinal Reflections, eds., F. Arinze et al., Chicago 2005, 15-25, here 15; cf. Hirtenschreiben der deutschsprachigen Bischöfe an ihren Klerus (Rom, am 4. Dezember 1963), in: LJ 14 (1964), 85-90, here 89-90.

⁶ Cf. R. Kaczynski, Theologischer Kommentar zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie: *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, in: Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil, vol. 2, Freiburg 2004, 11-227, here 24; cf. F. Kolbe, Die liturgische Bewegung, 33; cf. K. Rahner and H. Vorgrimler, Kleines Konzilskompendium, 37; cf. K. F. Pecklers, Liturgical Movement, I: Catholic, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 8, 670-676, here 672. See also foot note no. 71 in the Chapter on “Pius Parsch: An Apostle of Popular Liturgical Movement”. The 19th century was a time of tremendous intellectual activity in Europe. While great thinkers like Darwin, Hegel, Hume, Marx, and Engels were developing their own theories and philosophies, theological giants like J. M. Sailer, J. Hirscher, and especially J. A. Möhler and M. Scheeben were calling for a return to the Pauline concept of Church as the mystical Body of Christ. As the biblical movement and biblical theology served to focus the attention of liturgical pioneers on Sacred Scripture and salvation history, the patristic movement recovered a rich understanding of the Church and its communitarian sacramental system. The Liturgical Movement in Europe was born within such a milieu. The founding of the Liturgical Movement is usually attributed to Dom Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875), the restorer of the French Benedictine Congregation at Solesmes in 1833. It must be stated, however, that even prior to Guéranger one finds considerable movement toward liturgical reform through efforts at increasing lay participation in the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours. The 17th through 19th centuries in France was time of great liturgical creativity. Although these innovations began only as minor additions to the Roman liturgy, each diocese in France eventually had its own liturgy. Moreover, proposal of greater participation with the liturgy were voiced by the Fathers present at the Synod of Pistoia (1786), although without success. Cf. K. F. Pecklers, Liturgical Movement, I: Catholic, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 8, 670-676, here 670-671.

(Nov. 22, 1903) which described the liturgy as the Church's true and indispensable source.⁷ This event marks the beginning of the phase that many historians regard as the Liturgical Movement proper. At first, the movement was oriented not toward reform but simply toward education. It deepened its wisdom, broadened its knowledge base, and got more people involved in its work. The movement drew into its service brilliant pastoral thinkers, such as Odo Casel and Romano Guardini in Germany, Pius Parsch and Josef Jungmann in Austria, and Virgil Michel in the United States, to name only a few.⁸ The Liturgical Movement obtained a real boost with the recognition it received through the encyclical of Pope Pius XII's "*Mediator Dei*" in 1947.⁹

By 1947, the Liturgical Movement in Europe had been gaining momentum from the beginning of the century. Centres of liturgical study (e.g., Louvain, Trier, Paris) and the work of dynamic individuals had done much to revive popular participation in the liturgy in scores of cities and towns throughout Europe. Interest in liturgical music had been growing for more than a century. The famous "dialogue Masses" of the period brought the entire assembly to participation. Before the war, there were already wonderful examples of new church architecture. Activity on a more scholarly level was also increasing. Papal approval of historical biblical study led to the application of historical-critical methods to the study of the liturgy. Areas for liturgical reform were delineated and some experiments in reshaping the Easter Vigil has already taken place. Journals and other periodicals dealing with liturgy and music multiplied, as did the number of conferences and study weeks focusing on liturgical topics.¹⁰ The major theological, historical, and pastoral themes that marked the pre-conciliar liturgical movement came to play a significant role in the shaping of the Constitution on the liturgy.

⁷ Cf. R. Kaczynski, *Theologischer Kommentar zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, 11-227, here 24; cf. R. Ferrone, *Liturgy: Sacrosanctum Concilium* (Rediscovering Vatican II), New Jersey 2007, 7; cf. F. Kolbe, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 34; cf. K. F. Pecklers, *Liturgical Movement, I: Catholic*, in: NCE, 2nd ed., vol. 8, 670-676, here 672. The *Motu Proprio Tra le sollecitudini* had a great importance in the liturgical awakening. Cf. H. Schmidt, *Die Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, 51. Beauduin is considered to be a catalyst for the development of a whole new phase of the Liturgical Movement. Through his passion for liturgy and the Church, his practical orientation, and his pastoral focus, Beauduin played a pivotal role in bringing the Liturgical Movement to ever-widening circles. Cf. R. Ferrone, *Liturgy*, 7.

⁸ Cf. R. Ferrone, *Liturgy*, 7.

⁹ Cf. K. Rahner and H. Vorgrimler, *Kleines Konzilskompendium*, 37.

¹⁰ Cf. J. Pierce, *Pope Pius XII and Preconciliar Liturgical Reforms*, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 273-283, here 273. Ferdinand Kolbe gives a concise account of the Liturgical Movement of 20th century in his book titled "*Die liturgische Bewegung*" (1964).

1.2. The Encyclical *Mediator Dei*

It is fairly clear that the spread of the Liturgical Movement would never achieve its ultimate goals throughout the Catholic Church without some positive official encouragement from Rome. Official reaction to this liturgical ferment was mixed. By the end of World War II, the German episcopacy expressed some concern over a number of practical and theological issues in a letter to Pope Pius XII. His response to this list of 17 points, “disturbing elements in the liturgical movement,” was the encyclical *Mediator Dei* on November 20th, 1947.¹¹ The relationship between the Liturgical Movement and the Holy See was consummated by the promulgation of this encyclical.¹² This document is known as the Magna Charta of the Liturgical Movement.¹³ It is very much a document written “in response” and it is closely linked to the 1943 encyclical on the Church, *Mystici Corporis*, in its fundamental theological affirmation. *Mediator Dei*, however, focused exclusively on the liturgy itself (the first encyclical ever to do this). In the light of controversy brewing over the Liturgical Movement, it is clearly an attempt at a balanced discussion of the state of the liturgy, commending what is good and explicitly defining what is in error. Its language is most subtle and the nature of these “errors” was open to a number of contemporary interpretations.¹⁴

In its introduction, *Mediator Dei* gave official recognition to the Liturgical Movement, and it singled out the Benedictines for special mention. The encyclical made three important points: i) In the liturgy there were both human and divine

¹¹ Cf. J. R. K. Fenwick and B. D. Spinks, *Worship in Transition*, 32-33. One must acknowledge rightfully, that in the circumstances of the year 1947 it was not very easy to read the encyclical *Mediator Dei* as it is was originally intended. Many things remained decipher between the lines. It should be understood in the background of the happenings that took place between 1939 to 1944. It was a time of liturgical crisis, especially in the German speaking areas. Cf. Th. Maas-Ewerd, *Zur Reaktion Pius Parschs auf die Enzyklika „Mediator Dei“*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 199-214, here 202. For a detailed account about the liturgical crisis, see: Th. Maas-Ewerd, *Die Krise der Liturgischen Bewegung in Deutschland und Österreich: Zu den Auseinandersetzungen um die „liturgische Frage“ in den Jahren 1939 bis 1944 (Studien zur Pastoralliturgie 3)*, Regensburg 1981. Kolbe too narrates the struggle for Liturgical Movement. Cf. F. Kolbe, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 63-79.

¹² Cf. A. Reid, *The Organic Development of the Liturgy: The Principles of Liturgical Reform and their Relation to the Twentieth Century Liturgical Movement Prior to the Second Vatican Council*, London 2004, 126.

¹³ Cf. R. Kaczynski, *Theologischer Kommentar zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, 11-227, here 61; F. Kolbe, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 85. Parsch calls this encyclical as the landmark of the Liturgical Movement. Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1952*, 77.

¹⁴ Cf. J. R. K. Fenwick and B. D. Spinks, *Worship in Transition*, 32.

elements; the human elements may be modified.¹⁵ ii) Although modifications are due to the needs of the faithful, the ultimate determination of the changes rests with the ecclesiastical authority. iii) Changes in the liturgy are a positive good and are evidence of the Church's vitality.¹⁶

Mediator Dei begins with a vision of liturgy and ecclesiology in general. The laity not only encouraged but are duty-bound to take part in liturgical rites as well as to accept revealed truths and to obey divine law. In this encyclical the liturgy is seen as worship rendered by the Mystical Body of Christ, head and members, and in it the work of redemption and its fruits are continued and given through Christ, especially in the Eucharist. The Christian liturgy is discussed throughout the document as primarily related to individual prayer and salvation. The Divine Office is to correspond to the individual soul's devotion. The church year calls all to study and imitate Christ's mysteries (the events of his life), especially his passion. Each of these mysteries is present, not in a vague way, but each with its own special grace, through the prayers of Christ for our salvation. Christ's suffering is the centre of worship, the primary mystery of redemption as re-presented in the Mass. The Christian people take an active role in the Mass through song and by offering themselves in imitation of Christ's sacrifice, uniting their intentions with those of the priest.¹⁷

The fact that the encyclical placed such stress on the importance of the liturgy in the life of the Church and commended both theoretical study and practical attempts to increase lay participation (within the framework of existing laws and rubrics) was received with great satisfaction by many contemporary liturgists.¹⁸ Indeed, *Mediator Dei* clearly expressed official papal recognition of the vital importance of the liturgy in Christian life. It represented an important watershed in the Liturgical Movement.¹⁹

¹⁵ The liturgy in its human elements, is capable of evolution. This admits of gradual growth and even the recall of long discarded liturgical practices according to the needs of the Church. Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595, here 541-542. Pius Parsch has taken up this statement, concerning the divine and human elements in the liturgy, from *Mediator Dei* and pursued in his teachings and writings. Cf. P. Parsch, *Menschliches in der Meßfeier*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 245-248, here 245; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 67.

¹⁶ Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595; Cf. J. R. K. Fenwick and B. D. Spinks, *Worship in Transition*, 32-33.

¹⁷ Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595.

¹⁸ Cf. J. Pierce, *Pope Pius XII and Preconciliar Liturgical Reforms*, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 273-283, here 275.

¹⁹ Cf. J. R. K. Fenwick and B. D. Spinks, *Worship in Transition*, 33; cf. A. Reid, *The Organic Development of the Liturgy*, 141.

Despite the weakness of the document (its conservative standpoint theologically and ecclesiologicaly, extreme caution against any kind of liturgical experimentation, excessive fear of heresy and overwhelming focus on individual piety), *Mediator Dei* contributed a great deal to the eventual promulgation of the Constitution on the sacred liturgy.²⁰ The Constitution on the liturgy could be seen and understood as the perpetuation of *Mediator Dei*.²¹

2. THE CONSTITUTION ON THE SACRED LITURGY

2.1. A Brief Introduction on *Sacrosanctum Concilium*

The Constitution on the Liturgy of the Church, *Sacrosanctum concilium*, was approved on 4th December 1963 by an astounding vote of 2,147 in favour and 4 opposed.²² It was the first pronouncement of the Second Vatican Council. It was the first time that a Church Council ever dealt with liturgy in a systematic way and in a separate document, with special attention to the liturgy's theological dimensions. *Sacrosanctum concilium* was a new blue print for the liturgical life of the Church. Of all the sixteen documents produced by Vatican II, this Constitution has the most immediate impact on the daily life of the Church. The document itself was the product of long and intense discussions that reflected many different perspectives with sound theological foundation.²³

Sacrosanctum concilium is structured in seven chapters preceded by a general introduction and ending with an appendix. In all, this Constitution has 130 Articles. The articles are divided as follows: Introduction²⁴; Chapter 1: General Principles for the Restoration and Promotion of the Sacred Liturgy²⁵; Chapter 2: The Most Sacred

²⁰ Cf. J. Pierce, Pope Pius XII and Preconciliar Liturgical Reforms, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 273-283, here 275. *Mediator Dei* is seen today as the “Magna Carta” that prepared for the general reform called for in *Sacrosanctum concilium*. Cf. A. Reid, *The Organic Development of the Liturgy*, 139.

²¹ Cf. R. Kaczynski, *Theologischer Kommentar zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, 11-227, here 61. The study of the document *Mediator Dei* is a pre-requisite for the study of *Sacrosanctum concilium*.

²² Cf. K. Rahner and H. Vorgrimler, *Kleines Konzilskompendium*, 37; cf. R. Ferrone, *Liturgy*, 17; cf. P. E. J. Jackson, *Theology of Liturgy*, in: *Vatican II: Renewal within Tradition*, eds., M. L. Lamb and M. Levering, New York 2008, 101-128, here 101. The year 2013 marks the golden jubilee (50 years) of this document.

²³ Cf. P. E. J. Jackson, *Theology of Liturgy*, in: *Vatican II*, 101-128, here 118-119; cf. R. Ferrone, *Liturgy*, 13; cf. *Hirtenschreiben der deutschsprachigen Bischöfe an ihren Klerus*, in: *LJ 14* (1964), 85-90, here 88.

²⁴ Cf. SC 1-4.

²⁵ Cf. SC 5-46.

Mystery of the Eucharist²⁶; Chapter 3: The Other Sacrament and the Sacramentals²⁷; Chapter 4: The Divine Office²⁸; Chapter 5: The Liturgical Year²⁹; Chapter 6: Sacred Music³⁰; Chapter 7: Sacred Art and Sacred Furnishings³¹. The introduction expresses the aim of the Council in deepening, renewing and uniting the Christian life and also the renewal and fostering of what belongs to the liturgy.³² They speak also in the style of the Constitution of the Church from the point view of its sacramental character. This Council document contains not only doctrinal principles of great importance and fundamental themes of the liturgical renewal, but also concrete indications concerning the ritual celebration.³³

The liturgical Constitution recovered the importance of liturgical theology and spirituality with special emphasis on the Christological centre of all Christian worship.³⁴ Sacred Scripture was likewise restored as the source for all liturgical renewal with patristic theology and practice as its guide and inspiration. The rites were to be restored to their pristine beauty and be celebrated with “noble simplicity”. Consequently, they should be clear so that they don’t need much explanation and remain free of useless repetitions.³⁵ Most importantly, since liturgy is to be “the source and summit” of the Church’s life, the assembly’s “full, conscious, and active participation” within the liturgy will be an essential goal of all liturgical formation.³⁶

It is also significant that the principle of collegiality is clearly operative in the Constitution. There is an underlying sense that liturgical matters pertaining to the local church are best dealt with by episcopal conferences or even diocesan bishops themselves.³⁷ This is a far cry from the Tridentine emphasis on liturgical centralization located in what was then called the Congregation for Sacred Rites. Theological justification for such liturgical de-centralization lies in the fact that the

²⁶ Cf. SC 47-58.

²⁷ Cf. SC 59-82.

²⁸ Cf. SC 83-101.

²⁹ Cf. SC 102-111.

³⁰ Cf. SC 112-121.

³¹ Cf. SC 122-130.

³² Cf. SC 1-4.

³³ Cf. P. E. J. Jackson, *Theology of Liturgy*, in: *Vatican II*, 101-128, here 101.

³⁴ Cf. SC 7.

³⁵ Cf. SC 34.

³⁶ Cf. SC 10 and SC 48.

³⁷ Cf. SC 22.

diocesan bishop is empowered to shepherd that local church and not merely serve as a sort of district representative or middle-manager; thus, the bishop or Episcopal conference should have the authority to make appropriate liturgical decisions.³⁸ *Sacrosanctum concilium* lays down the fundamental principles to guide the liturgical practice of the Church in her renewal, as required by the very purpose of the sacred liturgy: to give glory to God and to further the sanctification and salvation of each person.³⁹ This Constitution stands at the head of all the work of the Council, not only chronologically, but also as sign and symbol of the values and priorities of the Council.⁴⁰

2.2. The Source of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*'s Theology of the Liturgy

The theological sections of *Sacrosanctum concilium* make extensive use of scriptural texts, both direct quotations noted within the body of the constitution, and references to ideas found in scripture, which are identified in the footnotes. In addition, *Sacrosanctum concilium* draws on material from the fathers of the Church, liturgical texts, and the Council of Trent, as seen in the notes, as well as on other traditional theological material and Church documents, which are not explicitly mentioned in the notes.⁴¹ The very first sentence of *Sacrosanctum concilium*'s treatment of the theology of the liturgy⁴² quotes the prayer of the Roman Missal that describes the liturgy “through which the work of our redemption is accomplished”, and this becomes the foundation for the theological exposition that follows. The prayer had also been cited in the discussion of the nature of the Eucharist sacrifice in *Mediator Dei*, the first encyclical ever dedicated entirely to the liturgy; from the very beginning, *Sacrosanctum concilium* is signalling its continuity with both venerable liturgical tradition of the Church and the magisterial documents that were the fruit of

³⁸ Cf. SC 41.

³⁹ Cf. P. E. J. Jackson, *Theology of Liturgy*, in: Vatican II, 101-128, here 101.

⁴⁰ Cf. R. Ferrone, *Liturgy*, 18.

⁴¹ Cf. P. E. J. Jackson, *Theology of Liturgy*, in: Vatican II, 101-128, here 106. The Constitution's theology of the liturgy also reflects more than a century's work of the Liturgical Movement, which was itself informed by the renewal in biblical scholarship and the study of the writings of the fathers by the ressourcement theologians. It is to be kept in mind that the scholars of the Liturgical Movement were inspired by the faith of the early Church, and wanted to recover its awareness of the Paschal character of the Christian cult and the importance of the whole Mystical Body of Christ in the celebration of the liturgy. Many years of international scholarly meetings (such as the Assisi Congress in 1956) had prepared those who worked on to the text of the constitution, so that the *Sacrosanctum concilium* could be described as a blessed rich harvest. Cf. P. E. J. Jackson, *Theology of Liturgy*, in: Vatican II, 101-128, here 113. Many of the ideas of the Liturgical Movement were articulated in *Mediator Dei*.

⁴² SC 2.

the scholarly work of the liturgical movement.⁴³ Its treatment of the nature of the liturgy as best understood from the perspective of salvation history.⁴⁴

2.3. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: A Compromise Document for both Conservative and Progressive

Sacrosanctum concilium could be considered and treated as a compromise document, attempting to appropriate both conservative and progressive camps. Fundamentally, it represented a balance between “sound tradition” and “legitimate progress”.⁴⁵ We see this, for example, in its treatment of the use of Latin. While Latin is to be retained in the Latin rites, Episcopal conferences are given permission to decide “whether and to what extent” the vernacular can be used in the liturgy.⁴⁶ Other examples of compromise include discussion on receiving the chalice and the use of Gregorian chant. Regarding the chalice, it states that while the discipline of Trent is to be retained, bishops may be able to permit clergy, religious, and laity to receive from the chalice according to specifications made by the Holy See. “Communion under both kinds may be granted when the bishops think fit, not only to clerics and religious but also to the laity, in cases to be determined by the Apostolic See.”⁴⁷

It also must be noted, however, that the document is much more than a *via media*. In some cases the Council calls for a radical adaptation and revision of liturgical books and not a mere superficial editing of what was present in the Tridentine liturgy.⁴⁸ In revising the liturgical books, it acknowledges the need to allow for “legitimate variations and adaptations to different groups, regions, and peoples, especially in mission lands.”⁴⁹

2.4. The Major Concepts of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*

The first major concept is the Paschal Mystery, which returned the Church to the thinking of not only of the passion and death of Christ but also the resurrection,

⁴³ Cf. P. E. J. Jackson, *Theology of Liturgy*, in: *Vatican II*, 101-128, here 106; cf. J. Pierce, *Pope Pius XII and Preconciliar Liturgical Reforms*, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 273-283, here 275.

⁴⁴ Cf. P. E. J. Jackson, *Theology of Liturgy*, in: *Vatican II*, 101-128, here 107.

⁴⁵ Cf. SC 23.

⁴⁶ SC 36.

⁴⁷ SC 55.

⁴⁸ Cf. SC 40.

⁴⁹ SC 38.

which had been de-emphasized prior to the Second Vatican Council.⁵⁰ The next concept is that of the liturgy as the “summit and source” of the Church’s life, helping believers go out into the world to live the Christian life and providing a time to praise God and be in his presence in Word and Sacrament.⁵¹ According to the third concept, all Christians are to participate fully and actively and not like they had done before.⁵² The next concept says that all should carry out their proper roles during the liturgy. That means the ordained act in their particular roles as bishop, priest, or deacon. The non-ordained are to perform their roles as cantors, organists, servers, readers and other ministries, and to actively participate during the liturgy even if they do not have a ministry to perform.⁵³ The fifth concept talks about inculturation, which recognizes that the Church is made up of different people from various places with different cultures.⁵⁴

The next concept is the renewal of the books, music, art, of the liturgy, involving the creation of a new order of the Mass in the vernacular, receiving communion under both kinds (bread and wine), to use the idea of “noble simplicity” in regard to music and art works like vestments, statues, and other items.⁵⁵ The final concept deals with education and formation, which encourages seminaries to have classes on the liturgy and for classes and conferences to be available for the laity.⁵⁶ These concepts are important since the document to which they are connected holds the high rank of permanent law.

⁵⁰ Cf. SC 2, 5 and 6.

⁵¹ Cf. SC 10.

⁵² Cf. SC 14. Before the Second Vatican Council, people did not exactly know what was going on at Mass since it was in Latin. Many did their own devotions, and most could not hear what the priest was saying. Sometimes a choir performed songs that the congregation did not participate in.

⁵³ Cf. SC 29.

⁵⁴ Articles 37 to 40 voice commitment to inculturation and the adaptation of the liturgy to the genius of diverse people throughout the world. The council opted for “substantial unity” rather than formal unity or uniformity in how the Church worships. Further implication of these articles can be found in the sections on initiation (SC 65), marriage (SC 77), Christian burial (SC 81), the liturgical year (SC 107), penitential practices (SC 110), music (SC 119), and art (SC 123). This commitment to inculturation of the liturgy is outstanding, and new. Cf. R. Ferrone, *Liturgy*, 52.

⁵⁵ Cf. SC 39 and 44. A complete overhaul of the Church’s liturgical books was commanded by the Constitution. The Mass, the sacraments and sacramental, the Divine Office, and the liturgical year would all be reformed. The renewal of Church music, architecture, and all the artifacts of the liturgy was set in motion by the Constitution. The Council did not do the work of reform, but rather set the norm by which the work would be done and gave some specific instructions. Cf. R. Ferrone, *Liturgy*, 38.

⁵⁶ Cf. SC 16.

3. PIUS PARSCH IN THE CONTEXT OF 20TH CENTURY LITURGICAL MOVEMENT

3.1. Pius Parsch as an Important Forerunner of Second Vatican Council

Pius Parsch was a notable representative of the 20th century Liturgical Movement and considered as an important forerunner of the liturgical renewal of the Second Vatican Council.⁵⁷ Under the leadership of this Augustinian Canon, the Austrian Liturgical Movement registered a pastoral concern.⁵⁸ Greatly influenced by the developments at Maria Laach, Parsch gave German liturgical scholarship a pastoral expression, using the liturgical community of St. Gertrude as testing ground. Taking the best of the biblical, catechetical, liturgical, and patristic movements, he brought about an integration on the pastoral level that was largely unmatched elsewhere in Europe.⁵⁹ In 1923 he initiated “Das Jahr des Heiles”, a pastoral commentary on the Eucharist and liturgy of the Hours for the entire liturgical year. An even more significant publication was “Bibel und Liturgie”, founded in 1926, as an attempt to encourage wider readership of the Bible among Catholics, and to promote the relationship between liturgy and Scripture. He preached that the Eucharist is a sacrifice offered by the entire parish community and a sacrificial meal eaten in common; he also insisted on a proper and expanded use of Sacred Scripture within the liturgy.⁶⁰

Parsch repeatedly emphasized his fundamental goal both before and behind every renewal of the form of liturgical celebration: The spirit of the liturgy must be grasped.⁶¹ The spirit of the liturgy is essentially the spirit of the early Church, and therefore the biblical and genuine Christian spirit. It is from the liturgy that the Church drew and still draws its life ever anew and the Christians awake in it to a new Christian existence.⁶² His work will remain totally misunderstood as long as one fails to share his concern to grasp the depth of meaning, the liturgical spirit of the liturgy and the form of liturgical celebration, which truly grows out of that meaning. His

⁵⁷ Cf. E. Kapellari, *Liturgie 50 Jahre nach Pius Parsch und 40 Jahre nach Sacrosanctum Councilium: Worauf es heute ankommt*, in: *HID* 58 (2004), 104-112, here 104.

⁵⁸ Cf. K. F. Pecklers, *Liturgical Movement, I: Catholic*, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 8, 670-676, here 673.

⁵⁹ Cf. K. F. Pecklers, *Liturgical Movement, I: Catholic*, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 8, 670-676, here 673; cf. M. Pfliegler, *Bedeutung der Lebensarbeit des Chorherrn Pius Parsch für die Seelsorge der Gegenwart*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 21 (1953/54), 225-229, here 227.

⁶⁰ Cf. K. F. Pecklers, *Liturgical Movement, I: Catholic*, in: *NCE*, 2nd ed., vol. 8, 670-676, here 673.

⁶¹ Cf. A. Redtenbacher, *Immer noch Zukunftsvision: „Volksliturgie“ nach Pius Parsch*, in: *HID* 52 (1998), 118-122, here 118. Parsch must therefore never (as has often been done) be pigeon-holed as an ordinary practitioner; he must be seriously evaluated.

⁶² Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1952, 651.

purpose was always to demand a serious effort of comprehension in those who take part in worship or are responsible for it.⁶³

Although Parsch himself constantly maintained that he was a practitioner, never a theoretician or systematician, his practice related principally to the origin and development of the specific content of liturgy from its own theological core, to the consequent implications of the meaning and spirit of this liturgy and to the opening up of the content of worship as the grace-bestowing presence of Christ, as sharing in “life in its fullness”, to which the concept, which he so dearly loved, of “active participation”, truly corresponds theologically.⁶⁴

The derivation and development of the form of liturgy from its true theological core was for Parsch the way to the understanding of a form of celebration which had developed historically, but which in the later familiar rigid form could no longer be entered into or comprehended according to the purpose of its origin. What is celebrated must be understood. What is understood must be translated into action. For him, this step was made possible by his being able to appeal to the data provided by the then vigorously developing science of liturgical research, above all in the area of history. It is for this reason that he always explains a piece of history in order to open up the content of liturgy, wherever this content, retaining its ancient form, had survived into the present.⁶⁵ What interested him was this core as it was still present after being celebrated through the ages, developed and finally misunderstood and covered with encrustations though it might be. The “fossil form” had to be awoken to life, so that its very soul might be awoken to life.⁶⁶ It is not the letter, but the spirit, that gives life. Particular forms of words or acts do not give life either. The form is only the body; the soul is the liturgical spirit.⁶⁷ Without the soul the liturgical form is like a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. Parsch’s great achievement was to summon up and then to reinsert into the church’s action the soul, the liturgical spirit,

⁶³ Cf. A. Redtenbacher, Immer noch Zukunftsvision: „Volksliturgie“ nach Pius Parsch, in: HID 52 (1998), 118-122, here 120.

⁶⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, Volksliturgie 1940, 5; cf. A. Redtenbacher, Immer noch Zukunftsvision, in: HID 52 (1998), 118-122, here 120.

⁶⁵ Cf. A. Redtenbacher, Immer noch Zukunftsvision, in: HID 52 (1998), 118-122, here 120-121.

⁶⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, Volksliturgie 1952, 167; cf. A. Redtenbacher, Immer noch Zukunftsvision, in: HID 52 (1998), 118-122, here 121.

⁶⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, Volksliturgie 1952, 215.

in its total power: “Wir suchen zuerst den Geist, die Seele uns und den Christen einzuflößen, dann wird sich der Geist selbst den Körper schaffen.”⁶⁸

According to Pius Parsch, liturgy demands a radical change in pastoral approach and bound up with that, a new style in the care of souls, with radical implications both for the shaping of the life of the Church and for that of the individual Christian.⁶⁹ He was convinced of the core of Christianity: “Aktive Teilnahme, die Kenntnis und Teilnahme an der Messe, die Heilige Schrift, die Sakramente, das Gnadenleben sind Wesensbestandteile unserer Religion, ohne die es kein gesundes Christentum geben kann.”⁷⁰

The bishops of Austria distinctly highlighted the contributions of Pius Parsch to the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy in their ‘pastoral letter’ issued on the occasion of the ratification of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy: “Die Schriften von Pius Parsch in Klosterneuburg hatten zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen das liturgische Ackerfeld aufgebrochen. Das Verlangen, die heiligen Texte und liturgischen Handlungen zu verstehen, wurde dadurch geweckt.”⁷¹ They also acknowledged specially the significance of the Catholic Congress in Vienna, in which Parsch was a part: “Der große österreichische Katholikentag 1933 hat die erste große Phase der Maßgestaltung mit Meßlied und Verkündigung der Perikopen durch Vorbeter nach außen demonstriert. Viele aus dem heutigen Klerus waren damals als Theologen oder junge Priester Zeugen dieses gottesdienstlichen Aufbruches.”⁷² From that time on the demand for the vernacular and the desire for participation in the liturgy became greater, so much so that, in the year 1942 the German bishops’ conference⁷³ requested the Holy Father to approve the already existing Betsingmesse in its different forms and to allow the *Missa cantata* in combination with the people’s

⁶⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1952, 61.

⁶⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1952, 345 and 361; cf. A. Redtenbacher, *Immer noch Zukunftsvision*, in: *HID* 52 (1998), 118-122, here 118.

⁷⁰ P. Parsch, *Die neue Zeitschrift „Bibel und Liturgie“*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 16 (1949), 1-2, here 2.

⁷¹ Pastoral Schreiben der Erzbischöfe und Bischöfe Österreichs an den Klerus über die *Constitutio de Sacra Liturgia* (Rom, 4. Dezember 1963), in: *Verordnungsblatt der Erzdiözese Salzburg* (Dezember 1963), 397-404, here 397-398.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 398. It is from that time on the “Betsingmesse” became popular. For a comprehensive idea of “Betsingmesse” confer the subtitle 3.2.12.2. in the chapter “The Sacrament of Eucharist”.

⁷³ It is to be noted that at that time the Austrian bishops were part of the German bishops’ conference.

singing.⁷⁴ Thus, Parsch ranks among the great inspirers of the Liturgical Movement of the 20th century.⁷⁵ Through his life work he became one of the important forerunners of the renewal in the Catholic Church and thereby the Second Vatican Council.⁷⁶

3.2. Norm of Reform of the Sacred Liturgy

Parsch was well aware that the liturgy had developed over time, and believed that it ought to continue to do so. His desire for reform respected the principle of the organic development of the liturgy; indeed he enunciated this principle articulately:

Our Eucharistic rite may be compared to an ancient and magnificent cathedral. It is a structure of prayers and ceremonies that has been nineteen hundred years in building. Clearly, therefore, every age and every style will have made its contribution, and it would be a grave mistake to ignore the later elements in its contribution, and it would be a grave mistake to ignore the later elements in its construction and to seek to reduce the Mass to its ancient classic style. We must accept the Mass as it has developed through the ages. We may indeed prefer the ancient style – such an attitude is understandable –but to condemn outright everything that is of later origin would be petty and unworthy.⁷⁷

In his explanation of the Mass Parsch clearly stated that the Eucharistic rite has both divine and human elements.⁷⁸ The kernel and essentials of the Eucharist are divine and immutable, ordained and instituted by Christ; its garment or vesture is of human origin, woven by the Church in the course of time and as such may “grow old and be changed” (cf. Ps. 102), its style altered, its beauty enhanced.⁷⁹ Parsch posits that the Church also comprised a divine and a human element. The soul of the Church, Christ’s Mystical Body, is divine and holy; her body, or dress, is human and subject to infirmities. Because of the human elements of the Church, in her progress through the centuries the hem of her garment was soiled at times by the dust and mire of the

⁷⁴ Cf. Pastoral Schreiben der Erzbischöfe und Bischöfe Österreichs an den Klerus über die *Constitutio de Sacra Liturgia*, in: *Verordnungsblatt der Erzdiözese Salzburg* (Dezember 1963), 397-404, here 397-398.

⁷⁵ Cf. F. Kolbe, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 52-53.

⁷⁶ Cf. R. Pacik, Parsch, Pius, in: *NDB*, vol. 20, 74-75, here 75.

⁷⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 325.

⁷⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Menschliches in der Meßfeier*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 245-248, here 245-246; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 67. Taking this idea from *Mediator Dei* Parsch believed that the divine element always remain unchanged and unaltered. The change is wished only in the human elements. See also footnote no. 15 of this chapter.

⁷⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 67.

world.⁸⁰ He observes also the divine elements in matters of faith and morals. In these matters the Church is infallible, and so guided by the Holy Spirit that there is no possibility of her making a mistake. Yet in many other particulars, according to him, she is guided by men, who are subject to human weakness. Her customs and usages may admit degrees of perfection. They can grow obsolete and require reform.⁸¹ “It must not then be a source of scandal to us to discover that the dress of the Eucharist may likewise admit of improvement.”⁸² It is the human elements in the liturgy, according to Parsch, that require reform and change. Had they been perfect, no change would have been necessary.⁸³ It is basing on this principle that Parsch wished reforms in the liturgy of the Church.

In the introduction of *Sacrosanctum concilium* we notice a similar idea. The Council emphasizes that the reform of the liturgy is not designed to detract from her divine mission, but in fact is subordinate to this mission: “It is of the essence of the Church that she be both human and divine, visible and yet invisibly equipped, eager to act and yet intent on contemplation, present in this world and yet not at home in it; and she is all these things in such wise that in her the human is directed and subordinated to the divine, the visible likewise to the invisible, action to contemplation, and this present world to that city yet to come, which we seek.”⁸⁴ The council fathers wished and desired reformation of the elements that are subject to change: “In order that the Christian people may more certainly derive an abundance of graces from the sacred liturgy, holy Mother Church desires to undertake with great care a general restoration of the liturgy itself. For the liturgy is made up of immutable elements divinely instituted, and of elements subject to change. These not only may but ought to be changed with the passage of time if they have suffered from the intrusion of anything

⁸⁰ P. Parsch, *Menschliches in der Meßfeier*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 17* (1949/50), 245-248, here 245; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 67.

⁸¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Menschliches in der Meßfeier*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 17* (1949/50), 245-248, here 245-246; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 67. In this context Parsch also briefs the changes that have taken place in the liturgy in the course of the centuries. Cf. P. Parsch, *Menschliches in der Meßfeier*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 17* (1949/50), 245-248; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 68-71.

⁸² P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 67.

⁸³ Parsch then here enumerates some important changes that have taken place down through the centuries. For example: The “meal-rite” of apostolic times later proved unsatisfactory and another form was introduced. In Rome up to the fourth century Greek was the language of the Church. But this was proved unsatisfactory and as a result Latin has taken its place. Then he observes that during the Middle Ages and in more recent times the faithful communicated only at very infrequent intervals. Pope Pius X, through the decree on frequent Communion remedied this state of affairs. Parsch wishes these kinds of positive reforms by the ecclesiastical authority. Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 68.

⁸⁴ SC 2.

out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy or have become unsuited to it.”⁸⁵ In this restoration, both texts and rites should be drawn up so that they express more clearly the holy things which they signify; the Christian people, so far as possible, should be enabled to understand them with ease and to take part in them fully, actively, and as befits a community.⁸⁶ For this, the Council sets some directives and norms.

The purpose of these norms is to ensure that the divinely instituted elements of liturgy remain unchanged, while the changeable elements are modified so that there is better “harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy.” The general norms for the reformation suggested in *Sacrosanctum concilium* are: 1. Regulation of the sacred liturgy depends solely on the authority of the Church, that is, on the Apostolic See and, as laws may determine, on the bishop. 2. In virtue of power conceded by the law, the regulation of the liturgy within certain defined limits belongs also to various kinds of competent territorial bodies of bishops legitimately established. 3. Therefore no other person, even if he be a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority.⁸⁷ Keeping these principles in mind let us now discuss some common concepts that we find both in Pius Parsch and *Sacrosanctum concilium*.

4. PARALLELISM IN SACROSANCTUM CONCILIIUM AND IN THE WRITINGS OF PIUS PARSCH

4.1. The Importance of the Sacred Scripture

As mentioned, the liturgy Constitution of the Second Vatican Council is completely shaped by its biblical and patristic sources. In *Sacrosanctum concilium* sacred Scripture is taken as the norm and criterion for understanding the liturgy and reforming its praxis. It is clearly expressed in the article 24: “In order to achieve the restoration, progress, and adaptation of sacred liturgy it is essential to promote that

⁸⁵ SC 21. This idea is originally from *Mediator Dei*. *Mediator Dei* clearly stated that the liturgy include both divine and human elements. The divine elements, instituted as they have been seen by God, cannot be changed in any way by men. But the human components admit of various modifications, as the need of the age, circumstance and the good of souls may require, and as the ecclesiastical hierarchy, under guidance of the Holy Spirit, may have authorized. Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595, here 541-542. See also footnote nos. 15 and 74 of this chapter.

⁸⁶ SC 21.

⁸⁷ SC 22. The changes that Parsch wished were never for personal interest rather for the community in accordance with the ecclesiastical authority.

sweet and living love for sacred Scripture to which the venerable tradition of Eastern and Western rites give testimony.”⁸⁸ This article thus attributes great importance to Scripture in the celebration of the liturgy and wishes an intimate, close, living attraction to the Scripture. The Scripture sounds as an important theme in the Council. An increased knowledge of Scripture and the liturgical reform are thus closely linked.

The relationship between Scripture and the liturgy finds clear expression in the Constitution: “Sacred Scripture is of the greatest importance in the celebration of the liturgy. For it is from it that lessons are read and explained in the homily, and psalms are sung. It is from the scripture that the prayers, collects, and hymns draw their inspiration and their force, and that the actions and signs derive their meaning.”⁸⁹ It stressed the importance of the Sacred Scriptures in all liturgical rites of the Church. And thereby the faithful get more opportunity to hear the Word of God than ever before: “the treasures of the Bible are to be opened up more lavishly so that a richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God’s word. In this way a more representative part of the Sacred Scriptures will be read to the people in the course of a prescribed number of years.”⁹⁰

Like other great pioneers of the Liturgical Movement, Parsch insisted on the essential and intimate connection between liturgy and Scripture.⁹¹ He believed that people could be brought to an understanding of the liturgy only by the knowledge of Scripture and he identified the parish as the centre of liturgical renewal. “Parsch’s liturgical work stemmed from his promotion of the scriptures but eventually overshadowed it. Yet, for him, liturgy remained the necessary and best commentary

⁸⁸ SC 24.

⁸⁹ SC 24.

⁹⁰ SC 51. The Constitution’s emphasis on the important role of the Word of God in the liturgy and its call for more scripture lesson and preaching rooted in scriptural sources are more than ecumenical good-will gestures. The Liturgical Movement had been inspired by the importance of the Word in the patristic Church and the way the Word proclaimed in the liturgy had formed the spiritual life of the early Christians, and it wanted to recover this; in the decades preceding the Council there were various proposals for more scripture lessons at Mass to be taken from a wider representation of biblical books. The call of article 51 for an expanded lectionary was thus intended to give nourishment to a biblically based and deepened piety by means of a more richly covered table of the Word. Cf. P. E. J. Jackson, *Theology of Liturgy*, in: *Vatican II*, 118-119, here 116. The later introduction of the of the three year cycle of biblical readings for Sundays and the two year cycle for weekdays gave the people ample opportunity to hear the word of God.

⁹¹ Cf. M. Kwatera, *Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy*, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 32.

on scripture and scripture the very heart of the liturgy.”⁹² He is even seen as a paradigm for the close relationship between liturgical renewal and the biblical movement.⁹³ His journal “Bible and Liturgy” bear witness to this fact. Parsch realized that the Scripture lived and sparkled in the liturgy and he began his great liturgical work so that the bible might speak more clearly in the parishes. This life-giving union of Scripture and liturgy is Parsch’s challenging legacy to all who love the word of God proclaimed and enfleshed in the Eucharist.⁹⁴

The article 56 of the Constitution depicts the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the Eucharist as a single act of worship: “The two parts which, in a certain sense, go to make up the Mass, namely, the liturgy of the word and the eucharistic liturgy, are so closely connected with each other that they form but one single act of worship.”⁹⁵ For Parsch, too, the Word and sacrament (Bible and Liturgy) belong together, and they complement each other.⁹⁶ A twofold communion in the liturgy, the communion of the Word and communion of the Eucharist make the liturgy more valuable and beautiful celebration of the people.⁹⁷ Parsch sees the basis of a new Christian piety in the adherence of Bible and liturgy:⁹⁸ “Mit Bibel oder Liturgie treten die Menschen in den Bannkreis unserer großen Erneuerungsbewegung ein, die zurückfinden will zu jener Gemeinschaftshaltung der alten Kirche. Wer sich recht in der Bibel vertieft, nimmt allmählich Abschied von dem subjektiven und individualistischen Geist der Neuzeit, und kann auf die Dauer nicht lange fern von der liturgischen Bewegung stehen.”⁹⁹

A specific of Parsch was his high appreciation for the Holy Scripture. His realisation that he knew little about the life Christ was a great impetus and starting point of his

⁹² M. Kwatera, Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 34.

⁹³ Cf. R. Kaczynski, *Theologischer Kommentar zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, 11-227, here 30; cf. M. Kwatera, Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 34.

⁹⁴ Cf. M. Kwatera, Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 31. The Journal “Bible and Liturgy” witness this truth, that is, his interest for the Word of God and Eucharist.

⁹⁵ SC 56.

⁹⁶ N. Höslinger, Was würde Pius Parsch dazu sagen?: Eine Betrachtung anlässlich seines 20. Todestages (11. März 1974), in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 47 (1974) 1-4, here 1.

⁹⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Sonntagsidee, Sonntagsnot, Sonntagsideal*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 3-12, here 12; cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here, 337.

⁹⁸ Cf. Th. Maas-Ewerd, *Liturgie und Pfarrei*, 99. According to Parsch, the Bible leads a person to liturgy and on the other way around, liturgy leads one to Bible.

⁹⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1952, 570.

love for Scripture.¹⁰⁰ His goal was to make the Bible as the book of life for the people and through it bring the life of Jesus closer to the people.¹⁰¹ Many statements of the Second Vatican Council demand the great value and importance of the word of God. Parsch himself wished a new lectionary for advent season for which he was often criticised.¹⁰² His emphasis on the fundamental relationship between Sacred Scripture and the Church's liturgy was itself a significant development in liturgical theology.¹⁰³ As Norbert Höslinger rightly observes, through Parsch many people have come to the realization that Bible and liturgy must be the centre of their spiritual life.¹⁰⁴

4.2. The Liturgy as the Summit and Source

The place of the liturgy in the life of the Church was a topic of great interest to those who wrote the Constitution. Article 10 of *Sacrosanctum concilium* could be treated and seen as the best known passage of this Constitution. This passage expresses the centrality of the liturgy in the life and activity of the Church. This has become, so to say, a genuine theological axiom: "The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows."¹⁰⁵ In other words, for *Sacrosanctum concilium* the essential purpose of the Church is to make believers sharers in the paschal mystery, a mystery which is

¹⁰⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Wie halte ich Bibelstunde*, 8; cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here 333-334; cf. *Die Methode der Bibelstunde*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 257-261, here 258; cf. R. Pacik, *Pius Parsch (1884-1954)*, in: *LQF* 98, vol. 2, 886-900, here 893.

¹⁰¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Wie halte ich Bibelstunde*, *Klosterneuburg* 1951, 6-7; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Klosterneuburger Bibelapostolat*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 73-76, here 73; cf. F. Kolbe, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 53. Parsch himself claimed to have conducted 1000 bible classes and he also worked as a professor of New Testament theology in the academy of Klosterneuburg. Cf. N. Höslinger, *Was würde Pius Parsch dazu sagen?*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 47 (1974) 1-4, here 1.

¹⁰² Cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 118-119; cf. N. Höslinger, *Nur Erinnerungen?* in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 297-304, here 301; cf. N. Höslinger, *Was würde Pius Parsch dazu sagen?*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 47 (1974) 1-4, here 2. "So hat er sich immer wieder darüber beklagt, daß es keine Liturgie für die Wochentage des Advent gäbe, wie dies in der Quadragesime der Fall war. Daher stellte er eine eigene Leseordnung zusammen und bot eine Adventpräfatation an." N. Höslinger, *Was würde Pius Parsch dazu sagen?*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 47 (1974) 1-4, here 2.

¹⁰³ Cf. A. Reid, *The Organic Development of the Liturgy*, 103.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. N. Höslinger, *Pius Parsch – heute*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 32 (1958/59), 1-3, here 1.

¹⁰⁵ SC 10. There were number of objections to this idea raised in discussion at the Council. Some of the fathers were uncomfortable with assigning such a central role to the liturgy. They argued that the purpose of the Church is to save souls and glorify God; the liturgy is a means to an end, not a goal in itself. The source of the Church's life is Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, not the liturgy. However, through discussions these misgivings were put to rest. It was clarified that the very reason for the liturgy being the summit and source is the action of Christ and the Holy Spirit within it, sanctifying humans and giving glory to God. Cf. R. Ferrone, *Liturgy*, 25-26.

manifested and fully accomplished when the Church is gathered in the liturgical assembly, especially for the Eucharistic celebration.¹⁰⁶ “From the liturgy, therefore, and especially from the Eucharist, as from a font, grace is poured forth upon us; and the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God, to which all other activities of the Church are directed as toward their end, is achieved in the most efficacious possible way.”¹⁰⁷ The primary elements of the ecclesiology of Vatican II, set forth later in *Lumen gentium*, are found in several fundamental texts of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy regarding the relationship between liturgical celebration and the Church. In those celebrations “there is an outstanding manifestation of the Church” and “in some way they make present the visible Church constituted throughout the world.”¹⁰⁸

Parsch portrays the Holy Eucharist as the centre of the Church from which all other sacraments are enlivened and renewed.¹⁰⁹ It is the source of grace and it nourishes our life of grace. It is the overriding conviction of Parsch that the most important element in every Christian’s life is sanctifying grace, which God offers to us through the Church’s holy liturgy.¹¹⁰ The Holy Eucharist is the pledge of our salvation and future glory.¹¹¹ He gave the liturgy such an importance that he even compares it to the lung and heart of the human organism.¹¹² By doing so Parsch places the liturgy as the centre of the Christian religion, worship and cult.¹¹³ According to him, the Mass and very specially the Sunday Mass, is the most important event in the life of the Church and of the individual Christian. It is the very heart beat of the Christian, as it stands at the centre of Christian life. For all strength, grace and blessing proceed from the Eucharist.¹¹⁴ For those who seek to shape their parish into a “community”, he provides the key: “To rebuild the parish truly into a unified family of God, with

¹⁰⁶ The theme of liturgy as sharing in paschal mystery of Christ stood out in *Mediator Dei* too. Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595.

¹⁰⁷ SC 10.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. SC 41-42 and SC 2, 5-7.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 384.

¹¹⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here 335; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 273. The theme “grace” occupies an important place in his writing and preaching. For more details refer the section on “Pius Parsch’s understanding of Grace” in “Pius Parsch and Sacraments in General”.

¹¹¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here 333; cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 273.

¹¹² Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 69 and 285. To see more about this comparison refer the subtitle “Liturgy as Lung and Heart” in the chapter on “The Sacrament of Eucharist”.

¹¹³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 178.

¹¹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 373; cf. P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish?*, 23.

but one heart and soul, the Eucharistic celebration must be the starting point.”¹¹⁵ The Holy Eucharist as a source of grace is a key concept in the teaching of Parsch. We get a glimpse of this key concept in the statement of the Constitution: “The Christian people derive an abundance of graces from the sacred liturgy.”¹¹⁶

4.3. The Nature of the Liturgy

We notice that *Sacrosanctum concilium* does not begin by setting forth and defining a concept of liturgy, but by indicating what occurs in the liturgy. The introduction of the Constitution clearly expresses it: It is through the liturgy, especially in the divine sacrifice of the Eucharist, that the work of our redemption is accomplished, and it is through liturgy, especially, that the faithful are enabled to express in their lives and manifest to others the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church.¹¹⁷ By means of the liturgy, then, believers come to experience the paschal mystery of Christ in its entirety.¹¹⁸ The Constitution then points to the effects of the liturgy: “While the liturgy daily builds up those who are within into a holy temple of the Lord, into a dwelling place for God in the Spirit, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ, at the same time it marvellously strengthens their power to preach Christ, and thus shows forth the Church to those who are outside as a sign lifted up among the nations under which the scattered children of God may be gathered together, until there is one sheepfold and one shepherd.”¹¹⁹

Along with the fundamental idea of the liturgy as the accomplishment of our redemption in the perspective of the great patristic tradition, the Constitution presents some underlying observations, partly innovative, aimed at a better understanding of the theology and the unfolding of liturgical celebrations. Among these the indissoluble unity between the descending movement of sanctification and the ascending movement of worship should be noted,¹²⁰ the centrality of the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ – his life, death and resurrection, by which we are

¹¹⁵ P. Parsch, *Is This My Parish?*, 37.

¹¹⁶ SC 21.

¹¹⁷ Cf. SC 2; cf. R. Kaczynski, *Theologischer Kommentar zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, 11-227, here 54; cf. *Hirtenschreiben der deutschsprachigen Bischöfe an ihren Klerus*, in: LJ 14 (1964), 85-90, here 88.

¹¹⁸ Cf. R. Kaczynski, *Theologischer Kommentar zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, 11-227, here 55.

¹¹⁹ SC 2; cf. R. Kaczynski, *Theologischer Kommentar zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, 11-227, here 54-55.

¹²⁰ Cf. SC 5-7.

redeemed,¹²¹ the importance of Christ's presence in the Church and in a special way in the liturgy: "to accomplish his work Christ is always present in his Church, especially in her liturgical celebration."¹²² The article 5 in particular speaks of the redemptive history of the salvific work of Christ, which originates from the saving will of God. It is fulfilled, as the Council rightly says in the "Paschal Mystery" of the suffering, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ. The concept "Paschal Mystery" is the key term in the liturgical concept of the Second Vatican Council.¹²³ In this article the Church is depicted as the "wondrous sacrament" (*admirabile sacramentum*).¹²⁴ Article 8 of the Constitution brings the narration of salvation history to its eschatological culmination:

In the earthly liturgy we take part in a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy which is celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem toward which we journey as pilgrims, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, a minister of the holies and of the true tabernacle; we sing a hymn to the Lord's glory with all the warriors of the heavenly army; venerating the memory of the saints, we hope for some part and fellowship with them; we eagerly await the Saviour, Our Lord Jesus Christ, until He, our life, shall appear and we too will appear with Him in glory.¹²⁵

For Pius Parsch the expression "Paschal Mystery" was of paramount importance. He very emphatically stressed that in the Mass Christ renders present the whole of his

¹²¹ Cf. SC 5-6.

¹²² SC 7.

¹²³ Although the term "Paschal Mystery" dates from the patristic period, it gained new prominence in liturgical discussions during the first half of the 20th century. Odo Casel, one of the pioneers of the Liturgical Movement, wrote extensively about the idea of the Christian Mystery. The theology he developed was a way to answer the question of how the redemption won by Christ at a particular moment in history could become available to people in every historical epoch. Casel's approach was not so much to ask how the mystery gets to us, but how we get to it. The liturgy, he argued, is how we enter the mystery. Cf. O. Casel, *Das Weihnachtsmysterium*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 123-135; cf. A. A. Häußling, Odo Casel OSB (1886-1948), in: *LQF*, vol. 1, 236-241. While the Church has always taught the resurrection as a truth of the faith, Catholics prior to Vatican II were accustomed to thinking exclusively of Christ's death on the cross as the saving event celebrated in the liturgy. When the resurrection was included in the document, therefore, some of the fathers at the Council protested at first. Misunderstandings were dispelled, however, when references from the Roman Missal were incorporated into the text. Cf. J. A. Jungmann, *Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie: Einleitung und Kommentar*, in: *LThK*, 2nd ed: *Das zweite vatikanische Konzil*, vol. 1, 10-109, here 19.

¹²⁴ SC 5. The paschal mystery of Christ is very clearly depicted in the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist. The sacrament of Baptism is portrayed as a dying, burying and rising with Christ (cf. Rom. 6: 3f). And in the Eucharist the paschal event is specially portrayed when we partake in the Communion. "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor. 11: 26). In the proclamation of the faith after the consecration of the Mass we say: "We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your resurrection, until you come again." Cf. R. Kaczynski, *Theologischer Kommentar zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, 11-227, here 64.

¹²⁵ SC 8.

redemptive work in every generation, at every moment and in every place.¹²⁶ Through the Eucharist Our Lord pursues his work of our redemption and brings it to fruition in those who believe.¹²⁷ According to him, the Holy Mass makes present the whole life of Christ¹²⁸, a similar idea portrayed by *Sacrosanctum concilium*. Parsch refers to the Holy Mass as a mystical action in which the salvific act of Christ is envisioned.¹²⁹ He also depicts the sacramental character of the Church in his writings. The Church is the mystical Body of Christ: Christ lives on in the Church as its head. The Church is the meeting point of God and the world, and therefore it is a sacrament.¹³⁰ The Constitution clearly impersonates the sacramental character of the Church by designating it as “wondrous sacrament” and “sacrament of unity”.¹³¹

Sacrosanctum concilium evidently portrays that the Holy Mass is a memorial of Christ’s death and resurrection, at the same time the Eucharistic sacrifice is there “in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross through the centuries until He should come again.”¹³² These both concepts of the Mass, that is, Mass as a memorial and a sacrifice that perpetuates the sacrifice of the cross, is the essence of Parsch’s theology of the Eucharist. For him, the Holy Mass is there to make present the sacrifice of Christ.¹³³ He was of the profound conviction that only from the Eucharist a parish community can be built up and nourished.¹³⁴

¹²⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 19-20.

¹²⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, 20.

¹²⁸ That is, His birth, his miracles, his death, his resurrection and glorious ascension. Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 20. The Mass is seen as the transmission of Christ’s earthly life and deeds in a conceived and mystical manner. Cf. P. Parsch, *Ein vergessenes Königsfest*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 1* (1926/27), 84-86, here 84; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 228.

¹²⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 12-13; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 227. *Mediator Dei* too designates Mass as a mystery. In it we recall to our minds the mysteries of Jesus Christ. Cf. *AAS* 39 (1947), 521-595.

¹³⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Priester und Liturgie*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 11* (1936/37), 161-165, 185-190, here 163; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 202. See also the sub-title “The Church as Sacrament” in “Pius Parsch and Sacrament in General”.

¹³¹ Cf. *SC* 5 and 26.

¹³² *SC* 47. The theme of Mass as a sacrifice is elaborately dealt in *Mediator Dei*. Cf. *AAS* 39 (1947), 521-595.

¹³³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 204; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1952*, 486; cf. P. Parsch, *Das heilige Meßopfer*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 2* (1927/28), 4-9, 21-25, 38-41, 72-76, 98-102, 116-121, 133-137, 148-154, 195-200, 239-243, 283-287, here 7; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 13; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 237-238. Refer also the subtitles “The Holy Eucharist as a memorial of our Lord” and “The Holy Eucharist as a Sacrifice” in the chapter on “The Sacrament of Holy Eucharist”.

¹³⁴ P. Parsch, *Der Seelsorger als Liturge*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 6* (1931/32), 185-196, here 190; cf. Th. Maas-Ewerd, *Liturgie und Pfarrei*, 172.

The article 7 of *Sacrosanctum concilium* should be seen as very important as it speaks of the presence of Christ in the liturgical action of his Church:

To accomplish so great a work, Christ is always present in His Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations. He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, not only in the person of His minister, “the same now offering, through the ministry of priests, who formerly offered himself on the cross”, but especially under the Eucharistic species. By His power He is present in the sacraments, so that when a man baptizes it is really Christ Himself who baptizes. He is present in His word, since it is He Himself who speaks when the holy scriptures are read in the Church. He is present, lastly, when the Church prays and sings, for He promised: “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matt. 18: 20).¹³⁵

With it, it is stated that the liturgy is at the same time an action of Christ and his Church and it should be seen as the execution of Christ’s ministry of priesthood. It is in the liturgy the sanctification of man and the whole of cult is consummated form head and members.¹³⁶ So the Council says that there is no action that has the equal rank with that of the liturgy. Christ’s presence in the celebrating community is certainly seen as one of the main themes of the Constitution.¹³⁷ A similarity could be seen in the writings of Parsch too. He speaks of the presence of Christ in various eventualities: For example, Christ is present at the altar; he is present at the proclamation of the gospel; and further Parsch speaks of the transformed and glorified presence of Christ in the sacrifice of the Holy Mass and in the Holy

¹³⁵ SC 7. A fivefold presence of Christ is portrayed here: a) Christ is present in the person of the priest, b) he is present in the Eucharistic species, c) he is present in the sacraments, d) he is present in his Word and e) he is present in the prayer and singing of the Church. Article 7’s reflection on how Christ is present in the liturgy draws heavily on *Mediator Dei*. For the most part they are identical to those outlined by pope Pius XII. Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595, here 528. There is one item here, however, that stands out as new: Christ’s presence in his Word. According to Jungmann, this explicit recognition of Christ’s presence in the Word was made to advance an ecumenical spirit. Cf. J. A. Jungmann, *Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, in: LThK, 2nd ed., vol. 1, 10-109, here 21. To *Mediator Dei*’s affirmation that Christ is present in the Mass through his minister, *Sacrosanctum concilium* adds the declaration of Trent, “the same now offering through the ministry of priest, who formerly offered himself on the cross.” P. E. J. Jackson, *Theology of Liturgy*, in: Vatican II, 101-128, here 107-108.

¹³⁶ Cf. SC 7. This idea is borrowed from Pope Pius XI’s encyclical *Divini cultus sanctitatem*. See the introduction of the encyclical in: AAS 21 (1929), 33-41, here 33. The liturgy is an exercise of Christ’s priestly office, where by means of signs perceptible to the senses, human sanctification is signified and brought about in ways proper to each of these signs, and whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, head and members. Therefore, “every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the priest and his Body which is the Church, is a sacred action surpassing all others,” compared to which no other action is as efficacious for human sanctification and the glorification of God. Cf. P. E. J. Jackson, *Theology of Liturgy*, in: Vatican II, 101-128, here 103.

¹³⁷ Cf. SC 7.

Communion.¹³⁸ He designates the liturgy as a sacrament in which Christ comes closely to the Church. In and through the liturgy Christ continues and accomplishes the work of his redemption on earth, because every liturgical act is an act of Christ.¹³⁹

4.4. Participation in the Liturgy

A leitmotiv that runs through *Sacrosanctum concilium* is active participation in liturgical celebrations: “Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy.”¹⁴⁰ Through this article the Constitution expresses the earnest desire of the Church. The desire for an active participation of the faithful in the liturgy is one of the major themes of this document. The Council goes on to say that this is the consideration to be given priority in the liturgical renewal. The article 48 speaks of the main concern of this Constitution: “The Church, therefore, earnestly desires that Christ’s faithful, when present at this mystery of faith, should not be there as strangers or silent spectators.¹⁴¹ On the contrary, through a good understanding of the rites and prayers they should take part in the sacred action, conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full collaboration. They should be instructed by God’s word, and be

¹³⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, Die objektive und subjektive Frömmigkeit, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 233-236, 257-261, 283-289, here 259; cf. R. Stafin, Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch, 238. For details see the subtitle “The Changes in the Image of Christ” in the chapter on “Sacrament in General”.

¹³⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, Priester und Liturgie, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 161-165, 185-190, here 164, 186 and 188. For example; Christ is the one who baptises at a baptism, Christ is the one who celebrates the Eucharist, Christ is prayed in the breviary and present in the liturgical year. Cf. P. Parsch, Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 2 (1927/28) 433-450, here 444; cf. P. Parsch, Volksliturgie und Kirchenmusik, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 9 (1934/35) 369-374, here 370. The idea that every liturgical action is an act of Christ himself was found as early as in St. Augustine. *Sacrosanctum concilium* takes over this idea of St. Augustine (*Tractatus in Ioannem*, VI, n. 7) in its article 7. Parsch being a Canon of the order of St. Augustine would have been definitely influenced by Augustine’s thought.

¹⁴⁰ SC 14. No value is voiced with greater frequency in the constitution than the “full, active, and conscious participation”. As we have already discussed the concept of “active participation” is originated from Pope Pius X. Ever since Pope Pius X lauded “active participation” in 1903, it has been synonymous with the renewal sought by the Liturgical Movement. Many of the champions of Liturgical Movement of the 20th century were inspired by this concept and added this theme as the goal of their lives (for example; Lambert Beauduin, Pius Parsch etc.). Cf. R. Kaczynski, Theologischer Kommentar zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie, 11-227, here 79-80.

¹⁴¹ Silent spectator is the concept used by Pope Pius XI in his apostolic constitution *Divini cultus sanctitatem*. Cf. AAS 21 (1929), 33-41, here 40. The word “participation” or words derived from it appear in sixteen articles of *Sacrosanctum concilium*. Cf. SC 11, 14, 19, 21, 26, 27, 30, 41, 48, 50, 53, 55, 79, 114, 121, and 124.

nourished at the Lord's body."¹⁴² This article further describes how the faithful should participate in the sacrifice of the Mass: "They should give thanks to God. Offering the immaculate victim, not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him they should learn to offer themselves."¹⁴³

By insisting on the quality of participation in the liturgical celebration, the Constitution forcefully reaffirms that in the liturgy of the New Covenant every Christian is fully a liturgist, inasmuch as the offering of his life, in communion with the sacrifice of Christ, which took place once for all, is the spiritual worship pleasing to God. The existential offering thus calls for conscious, full, active, interior and exterior participation in the sacramental offering. Consequently the Christian who celebrates his faith must give primacy to interiorization, that is, to a personal appropriation of what he hears and does in the liturgy. Only authentic interiorization will ensure an exteriorization capable of expressing what is most deeply experienced. This is the fully active way of experiencing the liturgy desired by *Sacrosanctum concilium*.¹⁴⁴

The watchword and programme of Pius Parsch and Popular Liturgical Movement was "the active participation of the whole community". All his works and writings are oriented towards accomplishing this principle. He began his journey of achieving this goal immediately after the First World War. As the main agenda of his movement "active participation" was the matter close at his heart and he tried to achieve at the fulfilment of the same remaining within the norms of the liturgy (but

¹⁴² SC 48.

¹⁴³ SC 48. A parallel of the same is found in *Mediator Dei*. Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595, here 552. It is to be kept in mind, and as we have already discussed before the Council, there was an effective disconnect between the liturgy as practiced by the priest and as experienced by the laity in attendance. The laity were engaged in various private devotions during the Mass. Only relatively just before the Council there were bilingual missals that permitted the laity to follow in the vernacular, though even then the priest was generally inaudible, making the laity more like passive witnesses than participants. As members of the Body of Christ, the laity ought to be participating in Christ's priestly action. Liturgical participation need not always mean speaking aloud or performing gestures; what is essential is interior disposition. Yet the externals of the liturgy help direct this interior disposition. This emphasis on the Eucharist does not mean that the popular or local devotions are to be disdained. On the contrary, the Council recommends popular devotions that are in accord with Church norms, and acknowledges a "special dignity" to lawfully approved local devotions, provided they harmonize with liturgical seasons and the sacred liturgy. Cf. SC 13.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. SC 14 and 48. While active participation is prominent theme of *Sacrosanctum concilium*, the council fathers intended that this should be understood above all as an interior participation, that is, as Jungmann opines a conscious participation elevating the heart and soul, which also expresses itself in exterior rite. Cf. J. A. Jungmann, *Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, in: LThK, 2nd ed., vol. 1, 10-109, here 52.

not in a perfect way). Parsch aimed at the active participation of the people in the liturgy in general and in particular the active participation of the people in the Holy Mass. As in the Constitution, he opines that the faithful should not sit inactively during the celebration of the Holy Mass; on the contrary, they should participate in it actively by taking part in the prayer, singing, offering and receiving the Holy Communion.¹⁴⁵ It was Parsch's main concern to make the people conscious of their common priesthood, to show them, that liturgy is the celebration of every one and not only of the priests and religious or a particular group of people. In his call for active participation, as we have already discussed, he was greatly inspired and influenced by Pope Pius X.¹⁴⁶

4.4.1. Common Priesthood of the Faithful as the Basis of Active Participation

Since the Eucharist is the means by which Christ expresses his love for the Church and the unity with the Church, it is fitting that the faithful "take part in the sacred action, conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full collaboration." Most strikingly, the Council says the faithful should offer the Eucharistic sacrifice "not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him" and they should also "offer themselves."¹⁴⁷ This effectively assigns a sacerdotal role to all of the faithful. People's participation in liturgy is not merely desirable, but rather is a right and duty of the faithful in virtue of baptism.¹⁴⁸ For this reason, the Council places strong pastoral emphasis on this goal: "pastors of souls must zealously strive to achieve it [...] in all their pastoral work."¹⁴⁹ The Council urges priests not to be content with purely juridical criteria for lay participation in the Mass. Full participation entails awareness of what they are doing and active engagement.¹⁵⁰ It was the primary

¹⁴⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Messe, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 5 (1930/31) 76-79, 106-110, 162-166, here 76.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, In den neuen Jahrgang, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 6 (1931/32), 1-2; cf. In den neuen Jahrgang, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 8 (1933/34), 1; cf. Zum neuen Jahrgang, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 13 (1938/39), 1-2, here 1; cf. N. Höslinger, Ein Leben für die „Liturgische Erneuerung“ (Gedanken zum fünften Todestag von Pius Parsch), in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 26 (1958/59), 97-98, here 97.

¹⁴⁷ SC 48. This idea is explicitly expressed in *Mediator Dei*. Stressing the sacramental character of the Mass and speaking about the people's participation in it *Mediator Dei* states that the faithful participate in the oblation in a twofold manner, namely they not only offer the sacrifice by the hands of the priest, but also, to a certain extent, in union with him. Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595. When Parsch speaks of the purpose of the offertory, he stresses the need of the faithful making a self-surrender along with the gifts at the offertory. Such a disposition of self-surrender is very much necessary. Cf. P. Parsch, *Study the Mass*, 8; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 11.

¹⁴⁸ A similar idea could be traced in *Mediator Dei*. Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595.

¹⁴⁹ SC 14.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. SC 14.

concern of Pius Parsch too. He always questioned the knowledge of the priest; what they know about the liturgy, whether they themselves are aware of their vocation to lead the people into the real participation of the liturgy. Here he emphasised the importance of a liturgically trained priest. Parsch entrusts the responsibility of the active participation in a parish to the priest, who is the head of the parish community.

Article 14 of the Constitution clearly expresses that our vocation to the common priesthood demands all the faithful for a full, conscious and active participation in the liturgy.¹⁵¹ This invitation expresses the Church's concern that the faithful "take part in the sacred action consciously, devoutly and actively."¹⁵² Baptism is the major basis for the active participation of all the faithful of Christ in liturgical celebrations. By this fundamental sacrament of Christian initiation the Christian people are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people" (1 Pet. 2:9).¹⁵³ By their share in the common priesthood all the baptized are empowered to take part in Christian worship. At Holy Mass, for example, while the ordained priest, acting in the person of Christ, brings about the Eucharistic Sacrifice and offers to God in the name all the people, the faithful for their part join in the offering the Eucharist by virtue of their royal priesthood.¹⁵⁴ Therefore active participation by all the faithful is not a concession but a right founded on Baptism.¹⁵⁵

For Pius Parsch, too, the basis of the active participation of the people in the liturgy lies in the common priesthood of the faithful. Through the sacraments of baptism and confirmation the faithful are invited to take part in the priesthood of Christ, who is the eternal High Priest.¹⁵⁶ According to him, the kingly priesthood of the people is not only a mere dignified title, but it is also an ontological reality of all the Christians, which initiates them to the active participation in the liturgy.¹⁵⁷ Parsch

¹⁵¹ SC 14.

¹⁵² SC 48.

¹⁵³ In speaking about the common priesthood of the faithful in the liturgy Parsch quoted this scriptural passage amply.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. LG 10.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. F. Arinze, *Active Participation in the Sacred Liturgy*, in: *Cardinal Reflections*, 15-25, here 16.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die aktive Teilnahme des Volkes an der Liturgie – Grundlegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 2* (1927/28) 433-450, here 445; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 106; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 239.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 384. According to Parsch every Christian is a king and a priest. This mandate is given by Christ himself. Ever since the institution of priesthood by Christ at the Last Supper, the Church ordains and sanctifies her members through the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist: that is, she appoints people to become co-priests in the only

differentiated between the ministerial priesthood and the common priesthood of the faithful and showed the importance of faithful participating in the Mass under the ministerial priesthood of the priests.¹⁵⁸ Thus we see both Pius Parsch and the *Sacrosanctum concilium* base the invitation to active participation of the people in the common priesthood of the faithful.

4.4.2. Different Roles in the Liturgy

The Constitution also stressed the importance of every one carrying out their proper roles during the liturgy. That means the ordained act in their particular roles as bishop, priest, or deacon. The non-ordained are to perform their roles as cantors, organists, servers, readers and other ministries, and to actively participate during the liturgy even if they do not have a ministry to perform.¹⁵⁹ There is a difference in what way people take part in the liturgy. It is true that all liturgical celebrations pertain to the whole of the Church, manifest it and have effects on it. But the Council reminds that these celebrations “concern individual members of the Church in different ways, according to the diversity of Holy Orders, functions and degrees of participation”¹⁶⁰ In the Church not all the members have the same function (cf. Rom. 12: 4). Ordained priests are called by God, in and through the Church to a special service of the Christian community. They are consecrated by the sacrament of Holy Orders by which the Holy Spirit enables them to act in the person of Christ the head, for the service of all the members of the Church. The ministerial priest is at the height of his service at the Eucharistic celebration. The bishop is the Chief Priest in his diocese. And deacons are assigned special ministries close to the bishop and the priest.¹⁶¹

priesthood of Jesus Christ. Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 384. See more on common priesthood of the faithful in the Chapter on “The Sacrament of Baptism”.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Mitarbeit der Frau in der liturgischen Bewegung*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 7 (1932/33), 436-444, here 439; cf. B. Krawczyk, *Der Laie in Liturgie und Theologie bei Pius Parsch*, 89-90.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. SC 29. The constitution clearly stresses that the liturgical actions are not private function, but they are celebrations of the Church. Therefore every baptized Christian has a definite role to play in the liturgy. Cf. SC 26. It is a renewed understanding of the Church. It is not only the priest alone who is the bearer of the liturgy, but the whole Mystical Body of Christ. Cf. J. A. Jungmann, *Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, in: *LThK*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, 10-109, here 35-36. In Parsch’s term the liturgy is not the “monopoly” of the priest.

¹⁶⁰ SC 26.

¹⁶¹ Cf. F. Arinze, *Active Participation in the Sacred Liturgy*, in: *Cardinal Reflections*, 15-25, here 17.

This aspect of the participation was the great wish of Parsch even many years before the opening of the Second Vatican Council. He speaks of the dramatic aspect of the liturgy and thereby, he compares the liturgy to a drama, in which all are called to participate. Parsch believes that in playing the expected role given to them, the people participate actively in the priesthood of Christ and thereby in the liturgy of the Church.¹⁶² He warned the people of exaggerated participation and presumed that sometime the people will take for granted that they have the same role as that of a priest. He emphasised that the community has its definite role, and they should abide by it, without encroaching into the role of the ordained priest.¹⁶³ Parsch highlighted the special role of the ordained priest in the celebration of the Holy Mass and enunciated it by using the simile of the prima donna in an opera: The role of the prima donna in an opera is special and unique and is not allowed to be touched by the other members of the choir, and so is the role of the priest in a Mass.¹⁶⁴ For him, each role is unique and worthy and therefore he considers it as the responsibility of the priest to educate the people to play their roles accurately and worthily.¹⁶⁵ Parsch opined that a true and complete fostering of the liturgy demands active participation of the people in it, without which the liturgy only suffers.¹⁶⁶

4.5. Holy Communion

Sacrosanctum concilium strongly recommends that Holy Communion should be offered to the laity at all Masses after the priest's communion.¹⁶⁷ The Council commends this practice in view of its objective of encouraging more perfect participation by the laity: "That more perfect form of participation in the Mass whereby the faithful, after the priest's communion, receive the Lord's body from the

¹⁶² Cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here 337; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 292.

¹⁶³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here 337; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 292. Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 103.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Christliche Renaissance*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 329-340, here 337.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 104.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, 104-105.

¹⁶⁷ By the time of the Council, it was already customary in many places for the laity to receive communion weekly, even daily. It was Pope Pius X, who encouraged the frequent and daily Holy Communion. However he did not specify whether it is to be distributed within the Mass or outside of it. Cf. *ASS* 38 (1905/06), 400-405.

same sacrifice is strongly commended.”¹⁶⁸ This article also makes provision for the reception of communion under both kinds:

The dogmatic principles which were laid down by the Council of Trent remaining intact communion under both kinds may be granted when the bishops think fit, not only to clerics and religious, but also to the laity, in cases to be determined by the Apostolic See, as, for instance, to the newly ordained in the Mass of their sacred ordination, to the newly professed in the Mass of their religious profession, and to the newly baptized in the Mass which follows their baptism.¹⁶⁹

Parsch was undoubtedly an ardent champion of the frequent Holy Communion.¹⁷⁰ He advocated that the Holy Communion is a constitutive element of the Holy Mass and based his argument by logically concluding that since the Mass is essentially a sacrifice; a sacrificial meal is an integral part of it. The Holy Communion is the fruit of the Holy Mass.¹⁷¹ For him the Holy Communion is crucial for the preservation of the life of grace.¹⁷² Even before *Sacrosanctum concilium* Parsch emphasised that it is not before or after Mass that the people should receive the Holy Communion but within the Mass after the priest’s reception of the same. According to him, Holy Communion outside Mass should be only an exception, which could be justified only

¹⁶⁸ SC 55. We should note that people’s communion is explicitly prescribed to be distinct from and posterior to the priest’s communion.

¹⁶⁹ SC 55. Communion under both forms corresponds to the Lord’s command, and is tradition from apostolic times. It had been standard practice in the history of the Church up to the Middle Ages, when taking of Communion became more infrequent. A gradual decline in sharing of the chalice ultimately led to Communion under one form being the general practice. Finally, from the thirteenth century onward, the chalice was restricted to the priest alone. Cf. R. Kaczynski, *Theologischer Kommentar zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, 11-227, here 132-135; cf. R. Ferrone, *Liturgy*, 47. The limiting of Communion to one form was defended at the Council of Trent on the grounds that Christ is fully present in Communion under either the form of bread and wine. Cf. Council of Trent: Decree on the Sacrament of the Eucharist, in: Denzinger, 1641. Both forms always had to be present in the Mass for validity, but the cup was not shared. The possibility of communion under both forms accomplished, at least in principle, two goals. First, it invigorated the Church’s experience of Holy Communion by reviving the fullness of sign. Second, the sharing of communion under both forms removed barrier to ecumenism. It is a step in the direction of unity with Christians of both the East and the West. Cf. R. Ferrone, *Liturgy*, 47-48.

¹⁷⁰ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 13; cf. R. Pacik, „Aktive Teilnahme“ – zentraler Begriff in Pius Parschs Werk, in: Pius Parsch in der liturgiewissenschaftlichen Rezeption, 31. As we have already seen, the decree *Sacra Tridentina Synodus* encouraged the frequent and daily reception of the Holy Communion. See footnote no. 163. The encyclical *Mediator Dei* too recommended the faithful to participate in Holy Communion. Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595. For the details refer to the subtitle “The Role of Holy Communion in the Promotion of Active Participation” in the chapter “The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist”.

¹⁷¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 258-259.

¹⁷² Cf. P. Parsch, *Seasons of Grace*, 276.

with sound pastoral reasons.¹⁷³ „Das Volk werde aber dazu erzogen, die Kommunion als wichtigen Bestandteil, ja als eigentliche Teilnahme an der Messe anzusehen.“¹⁷⁴

Parsch prized the reception of the Holy Communion within the Mass as significant to enhance the active participation of the people in the liturgy.¹⁷⁵ He strongly criticised the attitude of some people who received the Holy Communion before the Holy Mass to spend the time in thanksgiving and the people who went to confession every day and did not receive the Communion at all.¹⁷⁶ Here Parsch made a comparison of the Christians of the early Church and the Middle Ages. The Christians of the early Church often communicated in the Mass, but seldom went to the confession, because they held their life of grace as significant. There was a shift in this practice in the Middle Ages. Here the Christians often went to confessions and seldom communicated in the Mass. As their piety was based on observing the commandments as a result they were very guilty of their sins. So they often made confessions and did not receive the Holy Communion.¹⁷⁷ He esteems the principle: “No Holy Mass without the Holy Communion”.¹⁷⁸ Mass without Communion is like a ring without its precious jewel. He sees the example of the early Church as the model for this.¹⁷⁹

In his days Parsch stressed the reintroduction of Holy Communion under both kinds, which too was a theme in the Constitution on the liturgy and Communion from hosts consecrated at each Mass.¹⁸⁰ Norbert Höslinger observed that Parsch even postulated the introduction of the reception of Holy Communion in the hand. Almost every year at “Whitsunday” he mentioned it by saying that at earlier times the Christians used to receive the Eucharistic bread in the hand.¹⁸¹ The Holy Communion in the hand

¹⁷³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 59; cf. P. Parsch, *Das heilige Meßopfer*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 4 (1929/30), 25-28, 48-53, 70-74, 95-100, 113-118, here 73.

¹⁷⁴ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 59.

¹⁷⁵ P. Parsch, *Das heilige Meßopfer*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 4 (1929/30), 25-28, 48-53, 70-74, 95-100, 113-118, here 73.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 6, 412.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 9, 34.

¹⁷⁹ P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 260.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 311; cf. M. Kwatera, *Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy*, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 31. *Mediator Dei* strongly recommended receiving hosts consecrated at the same Mass. Thereby it quotes from the canon of the Roman missal: “that as many of us, as, at this altar, shall partake of and receive the most holy body and blood of thy Son, may be filled with every heavenly blessing and grace.” Cf. *AAS* 39 (1947), 521-595.

¹⁸¹ Cf. N. Höslinger, *Was würde Pius Parsch dazu sagen?*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 47 (1974) 1-4, here 2.

would have been seen by many as profanation, even today many think so in spite of the many instruction from the bishops. According to Höslinger, Parsch did not introduce this practice in his time thinking of the scandal that could have been caused by it those days.¹⁸²

4.6. Divine Office

Parsch did not minimize the importance of the Divine Office. As a student he had a special affinity and inclination to the Divine Office.¹⁸³ He encouraged the people to pray the breviary together because it is the prayer of the Church and he explained the breviary to the people. He prepared an introduction to the daily prayer of the church for clergy and laypersons in which he declared that “all Christian have the duty, or rather right, to pray together as a community. In this matter the priest has not the slightest advantage over the layperson. Our confident expectation is that the time will soon come when not a few Christians, entire families and parishes, will join in and maintain the church’s prayer.”¹⁸⁴ Pius Parsch’s wish found expression after many years in the Constitution on the Liturgy:

Christ Jesus, high priest of the new and eternal covenant, taking human nature, introduced into this earthly exile that hymn which is sung throughout all ages in the halls of heaven. He joins the entire community of mankind to Himself, associating it with His own singing of this canticle of divine praise. For he continues His priestly work through the agency of His Church, which is ceaselessly engaged in praising the Lord and interceding for the salvation of the whole world. She does this, not only by celebrating the eucharist, but also in other ways, especially by praying the divine office.¹⁸⁵

The Council chose to emphasize that the Divine Office is a public prayer, “the voice of the Church, that is, of the whole mystical body publicly praising God.”¹⁸⁶ Only priests and religious are obligated to pray the Divine Office, but laity are also allowed and encouraged to do so, as had been the custom for various parts of this liturgy over the centuries. Furthermore, priests are encouraged to say at least some

¹⁸² Cf. N. Höslinger, Was würde Pius Parsch dazu sagen?, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 47 (1974) 1-4, here 2.

¹⁸³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 12.

¹⁸⁴ P. Parsch, *The Breviary Explained*, 6. *Mediator Dei* too invited the people to pray the Divine Office. Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595, here 573.

¹⁸⁵ SC 83. Here the Constitution presents the “Divine Office” as being a continuation of the priestly work of Christ. The theology of the Liturgy of the Hours at the beginning of chapter 4 in *Sacrosanctum concilium* draws substantially on the teaching on the Divine Office in *Mediator Dei*. Most of its first article, 83, is in fact a verbatim quotation from the encyclical. Cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595, here 573.

¹⁸⁶ SC 99.

part of the divine office in common, even if they are not obligated to choral office.¹⁸⁷ Parsch urged his parishioners to assemble morning and evening and to “pray the office in the name of the whole community, the pastor will, and should participate in this prayer in the vernacular tongue.”¹⁸⁸ “You may think these ideas utopian,” Parsch observed, “but I can assure you that all this is quite possible,” and he offered the example of the liturgical community of St. Gertrude in Klosterneuburg. The custom of daily Lauds before the morning community Mass “has become so entrenched in the parish that it is an essential part of our worship.”¹⁸⁹

4.7. Liturgical Year

Parsch believed that celebrating the seasons of the liturgical year was a practice for everyone, not only for those who are priests and religious, or people living under a rule, or with privileged information and highly developed liturgical tastes.¹⁹⁰ He explained that “the church year is a very definite segment in the life of mystical Christ. Our Saviour lived an earthly life of some 33 years, but the mystical Christ will live, I know not how many millennia. He will live as the life of my soul, I know not how many decades.”¹⁹¹ Every liturgical year is “a term in the school of God.”¹⁹² Parsch considered it vital the celebration of the liturgical feasts and seasons to be necessary nourishment for the Christian people. He was fascinated by the Church year and his love for the liturgical year found its permanent expression in the form a book: *Das Jahr des Heiles*.¹⁹³

Regarding the liturgical year in general the Council says: “The liturgical year is to be revised so that the traditional customs and discipline of the sacred seasons shall be preserved or restored to suit the conditions of modern times; their specific character is to be retained, so that they duly nourish the piety of the faithful who celebrate the

¹⁸⁷ SC 99.

¹⁸⁸ P. Parsch, *The Breviary Explained*, 448. Parsch’s hope for the daily morning and evening prayer in every parish community is yet to be realized even after many decades.

¹⁸⁹ P. Parsch, *The Breviary Explained*, 449.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. M. Kwatera, Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 31.

¹⁹¹ P. Parsch, *The Church’s Year of Grace*, vol. 5, 135.

¹⁹² Cf. *ibid.*, 136.

¹⁹³ Cf. M. Kwatera, Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 31-32. It was translated into many languages, even in English known as “The Church’s Year of Grace”.

mysteries of Christian redemption, and above all the paschal mystery.”¹⁹⁴ Thereby the Constitution stresses the aim of the liturgical year, namely, it is for the enhancement and nourishment of the piety of the people.

4.8. The Use of Vernacular

The exclusive use of the Latin language in liturgy posed an obstruction to the active participation of the faithful. Masses often became occasions for private devotion, so that there was a gulf between the nominally public liturgy of the Church and the prayer experience of the laity. Even when prayers were translated into the vernacular, they included terms and concepts that were scarcely intelligible to most modern people, so that prayer effectively was little more than rote recitation. There was a felt need, therefore, to make the Church’s treasury of prayer more accessible and approachable to the modern mind, without compromising the revealed truths and mysteries to which prayer directs the soul. Regarding the language of the Mass, the Council declares: “Particular law remaining in force, the use of the Latin language is to be preserved in the Latin rites.”¹⁹⁵ Nonetheless, “the use of the mother tongue” in the Mass and the sacraments “may be of great advantage to the people,” so “the limits of its employment may be extended.” The use of the vernacular is granted “in the first place to the readings and directives, and to some of the prayers and chants”.¹⁹⁶ The only language that is explicitly mandated is Latin, not the vernacular, yet this constitution has been interpreted as though the opposite were the case.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ SC 107. The Council gives only general guidelines for the reform of the liturgical calendar in line with schema. Cf. J. A. Jungmann, *Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie: Einleitung und Kommentar*, in: *LThK*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, 10-109, here 91. This is in keeping with the idea of the council fathers that only general or fundamental principles of reform should be defined by the Council, with specifics to be worked out by post-conciliar commissions.

¹⁹⁵ SC 36. One of the difficult subject matters that was discussed for many decades even before the Council, was the problem of the language in the liturgy: the issue of Latin and the vernacular. There were strong feelings at the Council on both sides of the question whether vernacular language should be permitted in the liturgy, and the document reflects both points of view. A cautious, limited possibility was held out for some use of the mother tongue, but the use of Latin as the language of the liturgy for the Latin rite churches was affirmed. Article 36 is a compromise, because the fathers of the Council were not in agreement. Those who favoured Latin saw in it a crucial expression the unity of the Latin rite church (as seen in *Mediator Dei*) and a guarantee of orthodoxy. Those who favoured the vernacular believed it to be essential to the expression and cultivation of the living faith of the people, for whom Latin was no longer a living language. Cf. J. A. Jungmann, *Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, in: *LThK*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, 10-109, here 36; cf. R. Ferrone, *Liturgy*, 46.

¹⁹⁶ SC 36. There is no contemplation of a wholesale translation of the entire Mass into the vernacular. Each territorial ecclesiastical authority (i.e. bishop’s conferences) shall determine “whether, and to what extent, the vernacular language is to be used,” subject to approval by the Holy See. The Council does not require the bishops to permit the vernacular at all if they so decide. On this article there were a lot of heated discussions and debates regarding the right of the bishop’s conference. The main issue

Parsch could be seen as an advocator of vernacular language in the liturgy before the Second Vatican Council. According to him the use of Latin was an obstacle for many people, since they do not follow and understand it. Therefore, he estimated the use of the vernacular as an advantage for the people and for their participation in the liturgy. Since the language of the liturgy was strange to the people Parsch used translated texts in all the spheres of liturgical life.¹⁹⁸ His very early campaign for use of the vernacular achieved some success in his life time before the Council.¹⁹⁹ As mentioned, Parsch's association with soldiers in the First World War was a significant turning point in his life as a liturgist. It was then he realised the fact that many people are not able to participate in the liturgy because of the lack of understanding the language of the Mass. It is precisely for this reason that Parsch employed a prayer leader to read the prayers in German, during which he recited the prayers in Latin. Therefore, he even prepared a bilingual text (Latin and German) for the Mass, so that the people may understand in their own native language, what is prayed and recited.²⁰⁰ Significantly, Parsch does not envisage the vernacularisation of the Mass, and from calling for any reform of the Roman canon, he underlines the value of its silent recitation.²⁰¹ Here we can conclude that Parsch would never have imagined the Eucharistic Prayers in the vernacular.²⁰²

4.9. The Promotion of Liturgical Education

The Constitution on the liturgy of the Church has laid sufficient stress on the liturgical education of the Christians at various levels. Training the faithful to understand the liturgy means enabling them to come into contact with the very heart

was whether this right of the bishop conference is a statutory or proponent. What was important here was to give the legislative power to the bishops' conference, which should be eventually approved by the Holy See. Cf. J. A. Jungmann, *Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, in: *LThK*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, 10-109, here 41-43.

¹⁹⁷ It should be clearly noted that the Council never abolished the use of Latin, it simply permitted the use of the vernacular. In reality the Council articulates that Latin should be retained as it is still the official language of the Church. Cf. SC 36.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. Th. Maas-Ewerd, *Liturgie und Pfarrei*, 99.

¹⁹⁹ A vernacular Ritual was granted to Germany in 1950. Cf. M. Kwatera, *Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy*, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 31. Some of the dioceses of Austria (e.g. Vienna, Salzburg, St. Pölten) were using diocesan rituals which were partly bilingual.

²⁰⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 15.

²⁰¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 67-71, 145, 178-179, 226, 257, 311-313. For Parsch the ideal would have been a loud recitation of the canon. He found the model of active participation in the early Church and there he observes that even the canon was recited or sung loudly. See the subtitle 3.2.2. in the chapter on "The Holy Sacrament of Eucharist".

²⁰² The reform he wished was remaining in the framework of the rubrics of the Church, remaining faithful to its tradition.

of the Christian mystery; hence the statement that “the liturgy is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit.”²⁰³ To define the liturgy as the first source and the necessary source from which Christians can derive the spirit of their faith is to reaffirm the essential bond which exists between Christian life and the liturgy. The liturgy is not first and foremost a doctrine to be learned, but an inexhaustible source of life and light for understanding and experiencing the Christian mystery. For the Constitution, the Church must provide all Christians with an authentic liturgical life, since the quality of their faith life demands a profound harmony between what the liturgy hands on and the reality by which they live, in accordance with the liturgical formula cited by the Constitution: “that they may hold fast in their lives to what they have received by faith.”²⁰⁴

These words reveal one of the Council’s prime aims: “to impart an ever-increasing vigour to the Christian life of the faithful; to adapt more closely to the needs of our age those institutions which are subject to change; to foster whatever can promote union among all who believe in Christ; to strengthen whatever can help to call all mankind into the Church’s fold.”²⁰⁵ Hence, greater attention is asked for, especially on the part of those responsible for the formation of the People of God (bishops, priests, deacons, catechists, pastoral workers), in order that the faithful may be initiated into a more conscious, active and fruitful participation in the divine mysteries contained in the celebration. Article 15 of the Constitution speaks about the importance of trained liturgical professors: “Professors who are appointed to teach liturgy in seminaries, religious houses of study, and theological faculties must be properly trained for their work in institutes which specialize in this subject.”²⁰⁶

The Constitution emphasises the inclusion of the study of liturgy among the compulsory and major courses of study in seminaries.²⁰⁷ It also asks that other

²⁰³ SC 14. A similar expression is found in Pope Pius X’s motu proprio *Tra le Sollicitudini*. Cf. ASS 36 (1903/04), 329-339.

²⁰⁴ SC 10.

²⁰⁵ SC 1.

²⁰⁶ SC 15.

²⁰⁷ Cf. SC 16. This article emphasises the importance of the liturgy in theological studies. Before the Council the study of liturgy was side lined. Other subjects were given priorities. With the suggestion of the council fathers to make the liturgy as the basic subject in the theological faculties, it gained a boom. The Council also specified that it “is to be taught under its theological, historical, spiritual, pastoral, and juridical aspects”. SC 16.

disciplines, such as theology and scripture, support and complement the study of liturgy.²⁰⁸ Article 17 stresses the importance of liturgical formation in the seminaries and religious congregation: “In seminaries and houses of religious, clerics shall be given a liturgical formation in their spiritual life. For this they will need proper direction, so that they may be able to understand the sacred rites and take part in them wholeheartedly; and they will also need personally to celebrate the sacred mysteries, as well as popular devotions which are imbued with the spirit of the liturgy. In addition they must learn how to observe the liturgical laws, so that life in seminaries and houses of religious may be thoroughly influenced by the spirit of the liturgy.”²⁰⁹ Article 18 highlights the needs of the pastors having advanced training: “Priests, both secular and religious, who are already working in the Lord’s vineyard are to be helped by every suitable means to understand ever more fully what it is that they are doing when they perform sacred rites; they are to be aided to live the liturgical life and to share it with the faithful entrusted to their care.”²¹⁰

Article 19 of the Constitution speaks very clearly about the role priest should play in promoting liturgical education for the active participation of the people. “With zeal and patience, pastors of souls must promote the liturgical instruction of the faithful, and also their active participation in the liturgy both internally and externally, taking into account their age and condition, their way of life, and standard of religious culture. By so doing, pastors will be fulfilling one of the chief duties of a faithful dispenser of the mysteries of God; and in this matter they must lead their flock not only in word but also by example.”²¹¹

Thus we have seen that for the realization of the active participation the council fathers demanded a basic liturgical formation of the faithful, on which Pius Parsch lifelong engaged. According to him this formation should be very comprehensive and should deepen the faith of the faithful to the realisation of the mystery of salvation.²¹² He lays immense stress on the liturgical education and formation. In his opinion an active participation is possible only when the people are well educated and instructed to take part in the Mass. According to him the lack of understanding

²⁰⁸ Cf. SC 16. It speaks about the unity other subjects of learning should have to the liturgy, especially dogmatic, spiritual, pastoral and scriptural theology. Cf. SC 16.

²⁰⁹ SC 17.

²¹⁰ SC 18.

²¹¹ SC 19.

²¹² Cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 117.

leads to non-participation.²¹³ As a practitioner he himself took the step of explaining the Mass to the people, keeping in mind the principle: no explanation, no understanding; no understanding, no “active participation”; no “active participation” in the liturgy, no being a Christian, no “life in its fullness”.²¹⁴ On this basis, liturgical education combined with a well-ordered mode of celebration, could become a new approach to, a new ordering of pastoral care in its entirety, which would then provide criteria for the evaluation of congregational life in its entirety. For Parsch, pastoral care is first and foremost introduction to liturgy, then celebration in its fullness, and finally, springing from worship, a leading into life.²¹⁵ As we have already discussed in the chapter on “The Sacrament of Eucharist” he even proposes two methods for the training and formation in the liturgy.²¹⁶

4.10. Retrieval to Original Meaning

4.10.1. Simplification of Rites

The Council stressed the need of the liturgy to return to its original simplicity: “the rites should be distinguished by a noble simplicity. They should be short, clear, and free from useless repetitions. They should be within the people’s powers of comprehension, and normally should not require much explanation.”²¹⁷ Again: “the rites are to be simplified, due care being taken to preserve their substance. Parts which with the passage of time came to be duplicated, or were added with little advantage, are to be omitted. Other parts which suffered loss through accidents of history are to be restored to the vigour they had in the day of the holy Fathers, as may seem useful or necessary.”²¹⁸

Stressing the need of the simplification in the liturgy Parsch advocated for the reformation in the liturgy and especially liberating it from many repetition that

²¹³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 12; cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 133.

²¹⁴ A. Redtenbacher, *Immer noch Zukunftsvision*, in: *HID* 52 (1998), 118-122, here 121.

²¹⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Messerklärung 1935*, 345; cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 72; cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 329-330; cf. R. Stafin, *Eucharistie als Quelle der Gnade bei Pius Parsch*, 68.

²¹⁶ See: 3.2.6.2. Education and Schooling in the Liturgy of the Mass.

²¹⁷ SC 34.

²¹⁸ SC 50. Not everything inherited from the past constitutes “sound tradition”. Some liturgical practices are moribund and deserve to be buried. They arose in response to circumstances and need that no longer exist, for example, the maniple worn by the priest or the reading of “Last Gospel” (the prologue of St. John). Some good traditions which lost their importance are to be restored, for example, the Easter Vigil, Holy Thursday, etc. Cf. R. Ferrone, *Liturgy*, 40-42.

existed in the Holy Mass of his time. For example; the omission of the people's Confiteor (confession of sins) before the Communion, which, according to him, was only a mere duplication.²¹⁹ Parsch was also against the existing practices of celebrating Masses with exposed Blessed Sacrament; the so called benediction Masses.²²⁰ It is, according to him, a contradiction in itself and it contradicts the very spirit of liturgy.²²¹ He totally opposed other unwanted elements in the Mass, such as, the private devotions during the Mass, people reciting prayers which do not belong to the Mass, the recitation of rosary etc.²²² His other area of priority was to free the faithful from the false notions of subjective and individual piety and lead them to an objective, communal, theocentric and Christocentric piety.²²³

4.10.2. Renewal of Easter Vigil

Parsch always looked for the aptness of liturgical text and the precision of ceremonies. One of the examples for this was the reform of Easter Vigil. In Parsch's day, the Easter Vigil was celebrated on Holy Saturday morning, even though its texts referred to night and darkness. Therefore he demanded and wished the reform of Easter liturgy and its restoration as a night service.²²⁴ He was very ardent in his demand for the reform: „Solange ich lebe, werde ich meine Klage nicht verstummen lassen über die Verschiebung der Osternachtszeremonien.“²²⁵ Those days Parsch was convinced that the Holy Saturday Mass was the old Easter Mass, one of the beautiful celebrations of the year, but he was sure it belonged to midnight. He foresees a situation, how gorgeous it would be to hear the Easter “Alleluia” sung in the morning hours, and the Easter bells proclaiming the good news of the resurrection. For he rightly estimated the Easter celebration as the feast of all feasts and the Sunday of all

²¹⁹ Cf. M. Kwatara, Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 34. See also: the subtitle “The Role of Holy Communion in the Promotion of Active Participation” in the chapter on “The Sacrament of Eucharist”. The confession of sins before the Holy Communion is historically testified in the rite of the communion of the sick. In the late Middle Ages this practice was integrated even in the Mass before the Communion. So this according to Parsch is only a mere repetition since it is already said at the foot of the altar in those days. According to the new order of Mass there is only one penitential rite. This is at the very beginning of the Mass after the liturgical greeting by the priest.

²²⁰ This was practiced especially in Austria and South Germany. It was called the Segenmesse. In Parsch's opinion people should be rightly taught to overcome these kinds of false notions and piety. Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 59-60.

²²¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 59.

²²² Cf. *ibid.*, 60.

²²³ See the section 1.2.5. in “Pius Parsch and Sacraments in General”.

²²⁴ Cf. M. Kwatara, Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 31; cf. A. Reid, *The Organic Development of the Liturgy*, 103.

²²⁵ P. Parsch, *Ostern und Volk!*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926/27), 193-196, here 193.

Sundays.²²⁶ Parsch is indisputably one of the first liturgists who called for a renewal in the Easter liturgy.²²⁷ He spoke about it at a time, in which hardly anyone else had spoken about it.²²⁸ “At that date the notion was widely opposed as a shocking novelty, but increasing numbers of priests came to see its intrinsic reasonableness. It became a ‘live issue’ in the periodicals of Austria and Germany, and then spread to France, Belgium and Holland.”²²⁹ As early as in 1927 he even predicted the reform of the Easter liturgy:

Ob es unser gegenwärtiges Geschlecht noch erleben wird, das weiß ich nicht; doch es wird sicher kommen, daß wieder eine wahre Osternachtsfeier am Abend des Karsamstages wie in alter Zeit gehalten wird. Der Samstag wird der stillste Tag des Kirchenjahres sein, ein Ruhetag des Herrn im Grabesschlummer nach seinem sterblichen Erdenleben und peinvollen Erlösungsleiden. Abends, bei eintretender Dämmerung, werden sich die Kirchen füllen. Dann wird der Klerus vor das Tor ziehen, aus dem Stein Feuer schlagen. Dann wird er in die dunkle Kirche eintreten: das „Lumen Christi – Das Licht Christi!“ erschallt, da wird die Kirche immer heller, dann nach dem feierlichen Ostergesang und der Weihe der Osterkerze, brennen Hunderte von Lichtern in der Kirche. Das ist die feirliche Ankündigung des Osterfestes!²³⁰

Parsch, however, did not wait for the official reform of the Holy Week, but he practiced it in a fitting manner in his liturgical community of St. Gertrude.²³¹ In 1937 Parsch wrote: “Der Karsamstag ist für uns ein liturgieloser Tag; [...]. Die Osterfeier beginnen wir schon zeitlich früh um 3 Uhr. Wie wir die Osternacht begehen, bleibe mit dem Schleier der Nacht verhüllt. Soviel darf ich verraten, daß die Ostermorgenfeier wohl die schönste des ganzen Jahres ist.”²³² In an article in 1950 Parsch wrote his wishes on the Holy See; in it he speaks about the rescheduling of the Holy Week: “Am Gründonnerstag die Abendmesse als Abendmahlsfeier;

²²⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Ostern und Volk!*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926/27), 193-196; cf. Th. Maas-Ewerd, *Pius Parsch und die Erneuerung der Osterfeier*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 215-239, here 217.

²²⁷ Cf. Th. Maas-Ewerd, *Pius Parsch und die Erneuerung der Osterfeier*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 215-239, here 215. Parsch’s concern for the renewal of Easter Vigil has caused certain amount of division. Cf. *ibid.*, 216.

²²⁸ Cf. Th. Maas-Ewerd, *Pius Parsch und die Erneuerung der Osterfeier*, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 215-239, here 216.

²²⁹ M. Kwatera, *Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy*, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 31.

²³⁰ P. Parsch, *Ostern und Volk!*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926/27), 193-196, here 193. He briefed about Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday in his article about the Holy Week and people. Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Karwoche und unser Volk*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 1 (1926/27), 181-186.

²³¹ Parsch was well aware that he had no right to reform the liturgy without the exclusive permission of the ecclesiastical authority: “Wir sind uns wohl bewußt, daß wir kein Recht haben, in liturgischen Dingen Entscheidungen und eingreifende Änderungen zu treffen.” P. Parsch, *Karsamstagsliturgie und Osternacht*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 10 (1935/36), 25-31, here 25.

²³² P. Parsch, *Das Kirchenjahr in der Pfarre*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 11 (1936/37), 497-506, here 505.

Karfreitag die Todesfeier Christi am Abend. Aber ganz wichtig und vordringlich die Osternacht- oder Osterabendfeier. An dem Text der Liturgie brauchte nichts geändert werden.”²³³ He also wished the use of the vernacular in the readings (Epistles, Gospel, passion, etc.) of the Holy Week, which in his opinion would enhance a better chance of participation for the people in the liturgy.²³⁴

Parsch’s prognosis about the reform of Easter Vigil found its expression in 1951 when the permission was granted by pope Pius XII as *ad experimentum*.²³⁵ It was made the centrepiece of the revised Holy Week liturgy in 1955; in November of the same year, a revision of all Holy Week services was promulgated in the document *Maxima redemptionis nostrae mysteria*²³⁶ (with clarifications issued in 1956).²³⁷ Thus we see Pius Parsch as visionary with a sound intuition for the future.

4.10.3. Reform of the Sacraments

For most Catholics, the Council’s changes to the Mass are the most noticeable reform of public worship; this same Constitution prescribes no less exhaustive

²³³ P. Parsch, Die volksliturgische Karwoche, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 142-153, here 147.

²³⁴ Cf. *ibid.* Parsch gives a detailed description on how the Holy Week could be conducted in a liturgical way, appealing to the people. His aim for the renewal of the Holy Week was to enhance active participation of the people. Cf. P. Parsch, Die volksliturgische Karwoche, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 17 (1949/50), 142-153, here 148-153. In an article titled “Die heurige Osternachtfeier” Parsch narrated in detail how he celebrated the feast of Easter in the community of St. Gertrude. Cf. P. Parsch, Die heurige Osternachtfeier, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 225-226.

²³⁵ Cf. F. Kolbe, Die liturgische Bewegung, 90; cf. R. Kaczynski, Theologischer Kommentar zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie, 11-227, here 40. This was an indication that Parsch was in line with the tradition and teaching of the Church and he did not divert himself from it and it was no aberration what he practiced in the liturgical community of St. Gertrude. On 9th February 1951 the Easter celebration officially took place in the Easter night. To this Parsch reacted: “Wie wir heuer die erste legale Osternachtfeier gehalten haben (21 Jahre lang hielten wir sie illegal), darüber wurde in diesem Heft bereits gehandelt.“ Cf. P. Parsch, Die liturgische Gemeinde St. Gertrud, Klosterneuburg, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 256. The rescheduling of the Easter liturgy to Holy Saturday was promulgated by Pope Pius XII on 9th February 1951 through the decree *Dominicae Resurrectionis vigiliam*. Cf. AAS 43 (1951) 129-137. For Parsch and for his Popular Liturgical Movement it was a great success and encouragement. Because Parsch along with his community have been practicing it in St. Gertrude a couple of decades, even though it was not officially recognized and permitted by Rome. He designated it as illegal. Cf. N. Höslinger, Der Lebenslauf von Pius Johann Parsch, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 13-78, here 68-69.

²³⁶ Cf. AAS 47 (1955) 838-847.

²³⁷ Cf. M. Kwatera, Pius Parsch: Evangelist of the Liturgy, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 29-35, here 31; cf. J. Pierce, Pope Pius XII and Preconciliar Liturgical Reforms, in: *How Firm a Foundation*, 273-283, here 277; cf. Th. Maas-Ewerd, Pius Parsch und die Erneuerung der Osterfeier, in: *Mit sanfter Zähigkeit*, 215-239, here 215; cf. R. Kaczynski, Theologischer Kommentar zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie, 11-227, here 40-41; cf. R. Ferrone, Liturgy, 11. The Easter Vigil provides a good illustration of the liturgical reform. If ever there was a neglected treasure of the liturgical tradition, the Easter Vigil was it. The oldest and originally the Church’s only celebration of Easter, this splendid liturgy marking the paschal mystery, had gone through a gradual decline, making it inaccessible to the faithful. Originally a night service, it had migrated to the early morning hours, even though the prayers continued to speak “this night”. Cf. R. Ferrone, Liturgy, 11.

changes to the administration of sacraments and sacramentals. The Council is fully aware that the sacraments, in addition to administering grace, serve as forms of instruction in the faith. For this reason, it is extremely important “that the faithful should easily understand the sacramental signs.”²³⁸ By the same token, inappropriate changes in the administration of the sacraments may obscure their true meaning or substitute an erroneous meaning in the minds of those hearing the words spoken. Thus any change in the sacramental rites must retain the orthodox meaning of the sacraments and express this clearly, not invent a new meaning in an attempt to change the sacraments.²³⁹ In the matter of sacramentals, however, the Church has considerably more flexibility in altering the rites, since these are not divinely instituted means of administering grace, but rather “sacred signs” that signify (principally spiritual) effects obtained by the Church’s intercession.²⁴⁰

The Council justifies the need to reform the rites of sacraments and sacramentals in the following terms: “With the passage of time, however, there have crept into the rites of the sacraments and sacramentals certain features which have rendered their nature and purpose far from clear to the people of today; hence some changes have become necessary to adapt them to the needs of our own times. For this reason the sacred Council decrees as follows concerning their revision.”²⁴¹ The first aid to intelligibility is the use of the vernacular in the rites of sacraments and sacramentals. This is to be done in accordance with the norms of Article 36, which said that the use of Latin is to be preserved, yet the vernacular may be allowed “in readings, directives, and in some prayers and chants.” New rites with local adaptations may be proposed by bishops’ conference, and are subject to approval by the Holy See. However, such locally adapted rites must include the instructions prefixed to the

²³⁸ SC 59.

²³⁹ The essential meaning and sacramental form was already defined at Trent for baptism (7th session), confirmation (7th session), the Eucharist (13th session), penance (14th session), extreme unction (14th session), holy orders (23rd session), and matrimony (24th session). The Second Vatican Council nowhere presumes to alter this solemn teaching of the Council of Trent.

²⁴⁰ SC 59. The most common sacramental is sprinkling with holy water, which signifies the effect of a priestly blessing upon the faithful. Even here, nonetheless, rites should be consonant with the faith, so that an inappropriate symbol will not lead people into error.

²⁴¹ SC 62. Here we should keep in mind that the Council’s intent is not to alter the nature or purpose of the sacraments and sacramentals, but rather to make these clearer to modern people. The reason for the present state of obscurity is not in any objective deficiency in the traditional rites. Rather, the symbols and language used by the ancient rites, while well suited to the culture in which they arose, are not clearly intelligible to most modern people. The effectiveness of a symbol is determined not by its intrinsic nature alone, but by its intelligibility to those who are to receive it.

rites.²⁴² First of all, the Constitution calls for the restoration of the catechumenate for adults.²⁴³ In accordance with the restoration of an adult catechumenate, the Constitution orders that the rite of baptism be given in a form appropriate to adults,²⁴⁴ while the traditional rite of infant baptism should be revised to take explicit account of the fact that the baptized is an infant, and the roles of parents and godparents, should be brought clearly in the rite itself.²⁴⁵ Article 71 of the Constitution calls for the revision of the rite of confirmation, article 72 speaks about the need of revising the formulas of the sacrament of penance, article 73 demands the revision of the sacrament of “extreme unction”²⁴⁶, article 76 speaks about the importance of revising the rites of ordination and article 77 highlights the importance of the revision of the sacrament of marriage. Rites of religious profession and rites of burial too were subjects of revision.²⁴⁷

Revival of sacraments was part Parsch’s minimal programme of Liturgical Movement. First of all, sacraments being sources of grace, he wanted to bring them in the foreground of Christian life. In the course of the centuries, the sacraments had almost lost their estimation and values through the subjective piety.²⁴⁸ Therefore, he emphasised the revival of the sacraments and making them intelligible to the people. In his opinion, people should be rightly educated and instructed about the sacraments and sacramentals. Parsch stressed very specially the communal character of the sacrament of Baptism and the importance of celebrating it in the church.²⁴⁹ He considered it as essential that the people are taught to value their baptismal

²⁴² SC 63.

²⁴³ Cf. SC 64.

²⁴⁴ Cf. SC 66.

²⁴⁵ Cf. SC 67. Prior to the Council, the godparents took the baptismal vows on behalf of the infant by proxy. Supposing the infant was named Paul, the priest would ask, “Paul, will you be baptized?” and the godfather would answer as if he were Paul. This oddness is a result of the fact that the rite of baptism was originally intended for adults making a profession of faith prior to Christian initiation. Since infants can make no such profession, the introduction of infant baptism required this legalistic proxy.

²⁴⁶ The sacrament of “extreme unction” is renamed as the “anointing of the sick”. There is a change of understanding of its meaning too: It is not only a sacrament for those who are at the point of death, but anyone who is in danger of death from sickness or old age can receive it. Cf. SC 73.

²⁴⁷ Cf. SC 80, 81 and 82.

²⁴⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 60. According to Parsch only the sacrament of reconciliation was administered often and sometimes even too often.

²⁴⁹ Because, it was common that sometimes the baptisms were administered in the sacristy or in the houses. Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 60.

awareness and baptismal grace as a Christian.²⁵⁰ Parsch demanded the decentralization of the sacrament of Confirmation and stressed the spiritual side of this sacrament, that is, the participation in the kingly priesthood of Christ.²⁵¹ He also wished the revival of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. In his opinion the people should be instructed about the importance of the rite and content of this sacrament. Here he recommended the resumption of the *Commendatio animae* (the recommendation of the soul to God).²⁵² As the Constitution clearly expressed Parsch too desired the sacrament of Marriage in the nuptial Mass with nuptial blessing.²⁵³ For both Parsch and the Council the purpose of the revision and revival of the sacraments is for an intelligible, active and easy participation of the people in the liturgy.²⁵⁴

4.11. Sacred Music

In all ages music and song have been used as means of cultic expression. The Second Vatican Council extols the musical tradition of the Church as “a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art,” since it is “a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy.”²⁵⁵ It mentions Pope St. Pius X in particular as one who “explained more precisely the ministerial functions exercised by sacred music.”²⁵⁶ The Second Vatican Council acknowledges that the purpose of sacred music “is the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful.” It is “the more holy, the more closely connected it is with the liturgical action, whether making prayer more pleasing, promoting unity of minds, or conferring greater solemnity upon the sacred rites.”²⁵⁷ According to article 30 singing is an expression of active participation. The Constitution also greatly appreciates and encourages the role of choir. “Choirs must be diligently promoted, especially in cathedral churches; but bishops and other pastors of souls must be at pains to ensure that, whenever the

²⁵⁰ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 60-61; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Mindestprogramm der volksliturgischen Bewegung* (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 13), 3. To get an idea of Parsch’s teaching on the sacrament of Baptism, see the chapter on “The Sacrament of Baptism”.

²⁵¹ For details refer “The Reform of the Sacrament of Confirmation in chapter on “The Sacrament of Confirmation”.

²⁵² Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 61; cf. P. Parsch, *Das Mindestprogramm der volksliturgischen Bewegung* (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 13), 3.

²⁵³ Cf. SC 78; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 61.

²⁵⁴ Cf. SC 79; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 89.

²⁵⁵ SC 112.

²⁵⁶ SC 112.

²⁵⁷ SC 112.

sacred action is to be celebrated with song, the whole body of the faithful may be able to contribute that active participation which is rightly theirs.”²⁵⁸ “The Church recognizes Gregorian chant as being specially suited to the Roman liturgy. Therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services.”²⁵⁹ Other kinds of music, “especially polyphony”, are included as long as they promote active participation pertaining to the norm of the Church.²⁶⁰ Thus the music should not be such that it excludes lay participation, by being overly difficult to sing.

In countries where their musical tradition plays a great part in religious and social life, such music “should be held in proper esteem and a suitable place is to be given to it, not only in forming their religious sense but also in adapting worship to their native genius.”²⁶¹ Texts sung should be in conformity with Catholic doctrine, drawn from Scripture and liturgical sources. While the Council makes a brief nod toward the principle of inculturation in liturgical music²⁶², for the most part its determinate prescriptions appeal to the traditional musical heritage of the Church. The Council did not envision a countercultural suppression of the Church’s musical heritage, and devoted little time to the issue of musical reform. Yet music and other artistic forms can have a tremendous impact on liturgical experience, and even on Catholic identity.

Parsch held the church music as an integral part of the liturgy and also an essential component of active participation. According to him the singing is an important means of fostering congregational participation. He highly prized the church music and included it in the agenda of Popular Liturgical Movement.²⁶³ He considered the music as the yardstick of people’s devotional life.²⁶⁴ Parsch acknowledged the role of a trained choir in congregational singing²⁶⁵ and advocated the choice of proper and

²⁵⁸ SC 114.

²⁵⁹ SC 116.

²⁶⁰ SC 116.

²⁶¹ SC 119.

²⁶² Cf. SC 119.

²⁶³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 64; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 290. The important papal documents that promoted the church music and singing in Parsch’s life time were: 1. *Tra le Sollecitudini* of Pope Pius X, cf. ASS 36 (1903/04), 329-339; 2. *Divini Cultus Sanctitatem* of Pius XI, cf. AAS 21 (1929), 33-41; and 3. *Mediator Dei* of Pius XII, cf. AAS 39 (1947), 521-595.

²⁶⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 290.

²⁶⁵ For Parsch congregational singing was an important medium of active participation.

appropriate songs in the liturgy.²⁶⁶ He respected the Gregorian chant²⁶⁷ as the song proper to the liturgy but looked with sceptical eyes at polyphony, as he thinks it may hinder the active participation of the faithful.²⁶⁸

4.12. Sacred Art and Furnishing

The Second Vatican Council gives due importance to sacred art and furnishings. It stresses the value of beauty. Beauty is an essential value for sacred art, as the Council declares repeatedly: it is “oriented toward the infinite beauty of God;” artistic works “should be truly worthy, becoming, and beautiful, signs and symbols of the supernatural world;” and “sacred furnishings should worthily and beautifully serve the dignity of worship.”²⁶⁹ This does not mean that sacred art is confined to a particular artistic style, for the Church “has admitted styles from every period according to the natural talents and circumstances of peoples.”²⁷⁰ Still, it would be clearly unacceptable to admit those types of modern art that are indifferent or even opposed to beauty as an artistic value. On the one hand, artworks (including vestments and ornaments) “should strive after noble beauty rather than mere sumptuous display.”²⁷¹ At the same time, churches should remove any artworks “repugnant to faith, morals, and Christian piety, and which offend true religious sense either by depraved forms or by lack of artistic worth, mediocrity and pretence.”²⁷²

²⁶⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie und Kirchenmusik*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 9 (1934/35) 369-374; cf. A. Ruff, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform*, 244.

²⁶⁷ Even though he estimated the Gregorian chant, he knew the difficulty of making it as part of the Mass because of its complexity and language. He would not consider it as an essential part of the mass. For Parsch it is like a dessert. Cf. P. Parsch, *Wo steht unsere Bewegung Ende 1937?*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 12 (1937/38), 168-172, here 170. See also footnote no. 268 in the chapter on “The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist”.

²⁶⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die Liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 290-291; cf. E. Daigeler, *Liturgische Bildung als Weg zur tätigen Teilnahme bei Pius Parsch*, 67.

²⁶⁹ SC 122.

²⁷⁰ SC 123.

²⁷¹ SC 124. In the baroque period, ecclesiastical art risked becoming a distraction from Christian spirituality, as it became so splendidly ornate and intricate that it seemed to be a glorification of wealth rather than beauty. Religious art should direct the viewer toward contemplation of the divine, rather than merely delight the senses. Cf. F. Kolbe, *Die liturgische Bewegung*, 9-11. Vatican II was now calling for some moderation in the adornment of churches, in keeping with a proper Christian orientation as well as to avoid giving scandal to modern man, who regards ostentation as morally ignoble.

²⁷² SC 124. Sacred art may make use of the modern SC techniques or styles, but only to the extent that these do not conflict with the aesthetic values of the Catholic faith. It should be taken care that they should not distract the faithful with their kitsch and hurt their religious piety. Cf. R. Kaczynski, *Theologischer Kommentar zur Konstitution über die heilige Liturgie*, 11-227, here 127.

The Council recommends continuing the practice of keeping holy icons in church to be venerated. “Nevertheless their number should be moderate and their relative positions should reflect right order. For otherwise they may create confusion among the Christian people and foster devotion of doubtful orthodoxy.”²⁷³ It is the local ordinary who passes judgment on works of art, after giving a hearing to a diocesan commission on sacred art, other experts, and commissions mentioned in articles 44-46.²⁷⁴ Ordinaries are also responsible for ensuring “that sacred furnishings and works of value are not disposed of or dispersed; for they are the ornaments of the house of God.”²⁷⁵ The Council also calls for a “revision of the canons and ecclesiastical statutes which govern the provision of material things involved in sacred worship.” Such laws pertain to “the worthy and well planned construction of sacred buildings, the shape and construction of altars, the nobility, placing, and safety of the Eucharistic tabernacle, the dignity and suitability of the baptistery, the proper ordering of sacred images, embellishments, and vestments.”²⁷⁶

Parsch had his own liturgical perceptions about art and architecture of the Church. For him, first and foremost the place of worship should enhance and foster active participation of the people in the liturgy. In his opinion the house of God should display the mystical union of Christ with his Church.²⁷⁷ For him, what makes a church is the community of the faithful rooted in Christ and not extravagant decorations.²⁷⁸ He envisaged the centrality of an undecorated and unadorned altar, free from all unnecessary arts and decorations²⁷⁹, with a simple altar cloth on it:

²⁷³ SC 125. For example, putting saints’ altars by the sanctuary.

²⁷⁴ Article 44 wishes that the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority set up a liturgical commission, to be assisted by experts in liturgical science, sacred music, art and pastoral practice. It recommends that as far as possible the commission should be aided by some kind of Institute for Pastoral Liturgy, consisting of persons who are eminent in these matters, and including laymen as circumstances suggest. Cf. SC 44. Article 45 speaks about the need of every diocese is to have a commission on the sacred liturgy under the direction of the bishop, for promoting the liturgical apostolate. Cf. SC 45. Article 46 furthers this wish by adding, besides the commission on the sacred liturgy, every diocese, as far as possible, should have commissions for sacred music and sacred art. These three commissions must work in closest collaboration; indeed it will often be best to fuse the three of them into one single commission. Cf. SC 46.

²⁷⁵ SC 126.

²⁷⁶ SC 128.

²⁷⁷ Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 14; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 27.

²⁷⁸ Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 14; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 27.

²⁷⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 30; P. Parsch, *Das Mindestprogramm der volksliturgischen Bewegung* (Seelsorgsbriefe Nr. 13), 4. Here Norbert Höslinger observes that people may even criticise Parsch as enemy of arts,

Die Kirche als Heim der Pfarrfamilie und als heilige Bühne des liturgischen Geschehens soll würdig und wesensgemäß eingerichtet sein. Sie ist nicht ein Museum von Bildern, Statuen und Devotionalien, sondern an erster Stelle Opferstätte in heiliger Gemeinschaft. Möge alles Kitschige, Unechte, alles Flitterwerk aus ihr verschwinden, wie Papierblumen, elektrische Strahlenkränze, Kerzenhekatomben vor Heiligenbildern. Mögen alle Gegenstände, Gewänder und auch beamtete Personen der Würde des Gotteshauses entsprechen. Möge besonders wieder dem Altar als Opfertisch und Mittelpunkt der Opfergemeinschaft die gebührende Stellung und Wertung zuteil werden.²⁸⁰

Parsch wished neat and tidy paraments according to the liturgical year of the Church and as a man of practice, in St. Gertrude, he used the liturgical dresses corresponding to the liturgical seasons. He had liturgical dresses for the ministrants and even for the choir.²⁸¹ As the article 112 of *Sacrosanctum concilium* says all the arts and decorations of the church should have a single aim “turning men’s minds devoutly to God”.²⁸² It was the wish of Parsch, too, that a church should be constructed in such a way that it leads the faithful to activate their common priesthood by active participation in the liturgy. It should not be a matter of distraction with its many decorations and kitsch.²⁸³ In his perception, new churches should be constructed, placing the altar as the centre, as it represents Christ.²⁸⁴

4.13. Homily

In his time, Parsch emphasised the importance of the homily as the integral part of the Holy Mass. As a practitioner he included the homily after the reading of the gospel in the Holy Mass that he celebrated.²⁸⁵ For him a homily should orient towards the liturgy and the liturgical education of the people. He laments the exclusion of the homily from the Holy Masses for many decades.²⁸⁶ *Sacrosanctum concilium* too estimated the homily as the integral part of the Holy Mass: “By means of the homily the mysteries of the faith and the guiding principles of the Christian

overlooking all his creative works. Cf. N. Höslinger, Was würde Pius Parsch dazu sagen?, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 47 (1974) 1-4, here 3.

²⁸⁰ P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 63-64.

²⁸¹ Cf. J. A. Jungmann, *Sankt Gertrud in Klosterneuburg*, in: *GrEnt* 8 (1952/53), 205-206, here 205.

²⁸² Cf. *SC* 122.

²⁸³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 17.

²⁸⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Idee des Gotteshauses und ihre Folgerungen*, in: *Lebendige Liturgie*, 27-36, here 31; cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 15.

²⁸⁵ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 7.

²⁸⁶ Cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie* 1940, 62. Parsch even blames the exclusion of the homily from the Mass for the fact that many Christians do not know about Mass, sacraments and the liturgical year of the Church. Therefore, he felt need of reintroducing the homily in the Mass. Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 17.

life are expounded from the sacred text, during the course of the liturgical year; the homily, therefore, is to be highly esteemed as part of the liturgy itself; in fact, at those Masses which are celebrated with the assistance of the people on Sundays and feasts of obligation, it should not be omitted except for a serious reason.”²⁸⁷ The homily provides further opportunities for the faithful to be nourished by the Word of God. The Constitution also stresses that the preaching should be done with exactitude and should remain loyal to the scriptural and liturgical sources: “The ministry of preaching is to be fulfilled with exactitude and fidelity. The sermon, moreover, should draw its content mainly from scriptural and liturgical sources, and its character should be that of a proclamation of God’s wonderful works in the history of salvation, the mystery of Christ, ever made present and active within us, especially in the celebration of the liturgy.”²⁸⁸

Many of the observations of the Constitution were already seen in the writings and teachings of Pius Parsch. For Parsch the homily should be rooted in the Scripture and it should work as a medium linking the Scripture, Eucharist and life together.²⁸⁹ According to him an ideal homily should have the character of conceptual unity with the Holy Mass. In the homily a priest should interpret and display the Holy Scripture to the people. For this, first of all, he should be convinced of what a homily means: “Sie ist nicht ein hoher, lebensfremder Ästhetizismus, sondern ist die gesunde Kost der Gotteskinder, die gelobt werden an den zwei lebendigen Quellen, Bibel und Liturgie.”²⁹⁰ The Scripture and liturgy should be the sources of preaching.²⁹¹ A liturgical sermon should have the aim of helping Christ in fulfilling his teaching ministry to build up the Kingdom of God here on earth and any diversion from this would mean liturgical atheism.²⁹² Therefore, he stressed the importance of well prepared, precise and short homily within the Holy Mass, without which the Liturgy

²⁸⁷ SC 52. The requirement for a homily on Sunday and holy days cites the precedent of early Roman practice described by Justin Martyr, as well as *Mediator Dei*’s inclusion of the homily in a list of liturgical acts. Cf. P. E. J. Jackson, *Theology of Liturgy*, in: Vatican II, 118-119, here 115.

²⁸⁸ SC 35.

²⁸⁹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 18; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Kurzpredigt*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 10 (1935/36), 161-165, 187-192, here 164. Parsch criticised the transition that took place in the Middle Ages, when the Homily got separated from the Holy Mass. He vehemently opposed the moral homilies of the Middle Ages. He also observed the gap between the Scripture and homily. For details of the same see the subtitle “The Role of Homily in the Promotion of Active Participation” in the chapter “The Sacrament of the Eucharist”.

²⁹⁰ P. Parsch, *Sonntagsidee, Sonntagsnot, Sonntagsideal*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 18 (1950/51), 3-12, here 12.

²⁹¹ Cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 18.

²⁹² Cf. *ibid.*, 7.

of the Word is a contradiction. For him, the listening and hearing the Word of God played a very important role, as they foster a better participation of the people in the liturgy.²⁹³

5. A PERSONAL EVALUATION

The second Vatican Council is unquestionably the most significant event for the Roman Catholic Church and its theology in the twentieth century. The Constitution on the liturgy has given lots of new insights and incentives to the religious life of the people and the liturgical life of the Church. It has brought about lot of changes as wished by the Liturgical Movement over the years. It has highlighted the right and desire of a baptized Christian to “full, conscious and active participation” in the liturgy. It invited the laity to have a better and greater participation in the liturgy of the Church. The Second Vatican Council has opened a new era in the life of the Catholic Church and the Liturgical Constitution has brought about a great renewal in the liturgical life of the Church. The Liturgical Movement paved the way for all these renewal and changes in the realm of the renewal and alterations. The renewal of the liturgical books, the radical ordering of the liturgical year, the new order of readings, and so on, is an obvious fruit, a wonderful result, of the Liturgical Movement and of Vatican II. Many individuals like Pius Parsch contributed lots of inducements for the change and for a better participation in the liturgy. “Active participation” was the slogan of Pius Parsch and his Popular Liturgical Movement. The proposals Parsch made, radical enough in his day, are moderate and are well argued from liturgical history: for example; vernacular readings, the restoration of offertory procession, an increase in the number of prefaces, frequent communion from hosts consecrated at the same Mass, the reception of the Holy Communion under both species etc.²⁹⁴

Some of the questions that still remain even today after 50 years of the Constitution on the sacred liturgy and 59 years of Pius Parsch are: Has the renewed liturgy really renew the faithful and the Church? Have the revised rites and texts led to transformation of people, transformation of minds and hearts of the faithful? Have we reached a real “full, conscious and active participation” as wished by the

²⁹³ Cf. P. Parsch, *Neue Kirchenkunst im Geiste der Liturgie*, 17; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Predigt*, vol. 1, 19; cf. P. Parsch, *Volksliturgie 1940*, 62; cf. P. Parsch, *Die liturgische Kurzpredigt*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie 10* (1935/36), 161-165, 187-192, here 190. Parsch always spoke of liturgical homilies which suit to the liturgy in place and time.

²⁹⁴ Cf. P. Parsch, *The Liturgy of the Mass*, 67-71, 145, 178-179, 226, 257, 311-313.

Constitution and by liturgical figures of the Liturgical Movement? Despite all the revision and reform, there is still a proportion between the intended reality and the experience. There are parish communities and church groups that are still not renewed liturgically. Too often we have changed the rubrics and not the attitude. What is important is also an attitudinal change. A remoulding of one's mentality plays a vital role in every renewal. Therefore, it is important for the Church again to revitalize Vatican II, *Sacrosanctum concilium* and the Liturgical Movement led by Parsch and many other champions of the liturgy. As bishop Kapellari rightly puts it, the work of Pius Parsch could be of help for a re-reading of the Constitution on Liturgy and for the understanding its intentions.²⁹⁵

A Liturgical Movement, in Parsch's sense, would be a continuing task, for the ever-new growth into the depth of the liturgical action happens, if it happens at all, only on a rudimentary level.²⁹⁶ Liturgy, according to him, demands a radical change in pastoral approach and, bound up with that, a new style in the care of souls, with radical implications both for the shaping of the life of the Church and for that of the individual Christian. So it is important to begin the renewal and reform from grassroots. Any reformation in the Church should aim at deepening, renewing and uniting the Christian life and furthering the active participation of the people in the liturgy. In today's perspective we must understand the liturgical renewal in the Church more as an organisational problem. It does not mean to review the ideas of liturgical pioneers and the decisions of the Second Vatican Council. What is important even more is that the Church and with her the liturgy should find a spirit of renewal time and again, in the words of Pope Pius X "to renew everything in Christ".

²⁹⁵ Cf. E. Kapellari, *Liturgie 50 Jahre nach Pius Parsch und 40 Jahre nach Sacrosanctum Councilium*, in: *HID* 58 (2004), 104-112, here 112.

²⁹⁶ Cf. A. Redtenbacher, *Immer noch Zukunftsvision*, in: *HID* 52 (1998), 118-122, here 121.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

1. A Critical Appraisal

Basing on our study, we can conclude that the name Pius Parsch designates an epoch of the Liturgical Movement. *Nomen est omen*. This Latin phrase is very true of Parsch. His name was a sign. It was a programme. He ardently followed and lived the principles upheld by Pope Pius X, who called the people to the active participation in the liturgy, in his religious milieu. As Parsch often speaks of himself, he was not a theorist but a practitioner, who meticulously put into practice his perceptions and ideas of liturgy with the use of the community of St. Gertrude, earning himself an epitaph “an apostle of active participation”. While it is questionable whether Parsch’s adaptations, such as celebrating the Mass *versus populum* or standing to receive the Holy Communion, in fact enhance active participation, and while it is true that liturgical participation is not exclusively verbal, we can see that Parsch was attempting, rather boldly, particularly in the extent of his use of the vernacular, to bring the people to the traditional liturgy. He reformed the liturgy, insofar as he revived the customs that had fallen into disuse though he did not touch the texts or the structure of the rites. Very few, if any, churches offered their people the possibility of participating in praying the Divine Office and of singing those part of the Mass that are properly theirs, particularly the introit, offertory, and communion antiphons.¹ Is this not a revival that opens up the textual treasury of the traditional Liturgy for the people? His revival of processions, distribution of the Holy Communion within the Mass, do these not enhance the participation of mind and heart?

Parsch was a prophet, who went much ahead of his time. He was a man with a special charisma. He himself was fully convinced of his mission and he lived up to that conviction. Many of the things which he prophesied at his time (celebration of baptisms in the parish churches, decentralising the confirmation rite, Holy Communion within the Mass, celebrating Mass *versus populum*, Easter Vigil, etc.) were fulfilled in the later decades. As a prophet he had his supporters and adversaries. There were followers who were not pleased with everything that he said and did. He was not only looking for temporary achievements and gains but looked

¹ Cf. A. Reid, *The Organic Development of the Liturgy*, 112-113.

even beyond at the entirety, and identified the coherences and developments. He was a visionary, a man with farsightedness, who like a prophet had a sense for the present, past and the future.² Some may criticise him even saying that he was not an individual thinker. He was indeed one. At the same time he was adaptable and teachable and therefore he let himself be influenced by some of the prominent theologians of his time, Matthias Joseph Scheeben, Odo Casel, Josef Andreas Jungmann etc. In spite of the many influences he had his own identity and thinking pattern.

2. Relevance of Pius Parsch

One of the questions we may pose is: Is Pius Parsch relevant today? Are his perceptions and notions about the liturgy and the liturgical renewal actual? Or are they already outdated and irrelevant? On many levels of liturgical research and of practical work in pastoral liturgy, the call for a “reform of the reform” is being heard loud and clear. There are diverse grounds and reasons for this call for reform. Taking a closer look at the liturgical situations at the parish communities we realise that the official liturgical reform that was wished and demanded by the Vatican II, with its presupposed liturgical theology is not adequately communicated and implemented. We notice a lack of “liturgical education” in many of the communities. In this context Pius Parsch is relevant and actual. He stands out as a representative and champion of reforms of the Liturgical Movement. His principle, “without explanation, no understanding; and without understanding no active participation and celebration”, is the urgency of the time.

There are many features which we can imbibe and inculcate from Pius Parsch even today. His call for the liturgical renewal in the church and in the personal life is ever topical. His pastoral zeal and enthusiasm, the pastoral praxis in the liturgical community of St. Gertrude, his tireless and ingenious commitment for the liturgy of the Church even today makes him a trailblazer of a new era of liturgical apostolate. Even though his many publications remain relevant and actual, what surpass them even more are his love, spirit and enthusiasm for the liturgy and renewal. Like Pius Parsch, a spirit of reform, a spirit of contravention, and a spirit of experiment, is the

² Cf. N. Höslinger, *Der Prophet ist nicht verstummt: Gedanken anlässlich des 100. Geburtstages von Pius Parsch*, in: *Bibel und Liturgie* 57 (1984), 4-9, here 4-5.

need of the time. The spirit of reform wished by Parsch, as we have already seen, is not something against the Church or Church authorities but quite the contrary. His love for the Scripture should be instilled in the modern time. The necessity of reading and absorption of the Scripture is more actual than ever before. We can imbibe from Parsch courage for the new and an optimism which originates from the Christian hope based on the Word of the living God. The name Pius Parsch encompasses a bit of liturgical history. The liturgical emergences of the recent past seem to be incomprehensible without mentioning Pius Parsch. He is another example of Liturgical Movement's openness to prudent reform that sought to respect objective liturgical tradition according to the principles of liturgical reform. May his work and zeal enable us to deepen and renew our Christian vocation.

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