Reflections on Liturgy



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REFLECTIONS ON LITURGY

Fr. Placid J. Podipara C.M.I.



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By

Placid J. Podipara C.M.I.

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PREFACE

This book contains some of my reflections on the liturgy with particular reference to the ancient liturgy of the St. Thomas Christians. Liturgy is the sublime expression of the life of the Church.

This ancient liturgy which is deeply rooted in the Bible and the earliest traditions of the Church is indeed a great treasure of the Catholic Church. The apostolic heritage and divine traditions are enshrined in the different liturgical traditions. Hence the liturgy should be a real source of spiritual inspiration and ecclesial experience. The St. Thomas Christians of India can have legitimate pride in having a liturgy which is the unique heritage of all the Churches which have the same apostle St. Thomas as their common Father.

Here I am thankful to the Oriental Institute of Religious Studies of the St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathur, especially to Rev. Drs. Xavier Koodapuzha, Geevarghese Chediath and Br. James Kurianal and the seminarians who have helped me in various ways in the publication of this book.

S.H. Monastery
Chethipuzha
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Fr. Placid J. Podipara CMI

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INTRODUCTION

Matters liturgical have received a new life and orientation from the Vatican Council II. In addition to doctrines which are universal, the Council has given us principles and norms that are applicable to all the liturgies. It is in this context that this book is given shape. Particular reference is made to the East Syrian Liturgy which is the common heritage of the Churches founded by the Apostle St. Thomas. This is a modest attempt to present them with a background for the studies of the liturgy: an initiation, so to say, into the school of prayer which their liturgy ought to be for them, as the Church wants it.

Speaking of the liturgical reforms started by the Vatican II, His Holiness Pope Paul VI, on January 13th 1965, among other things, gave expression to the following words:

"It is necessary to take into account that a new spiritual paedagogy is born with the Council, and that is its great novelty; we should hesitate to make ourselves first of all the disciples, and then the supporters of the school of prayer which has already started".

(*L'Osservatore Romano*, Jan. 14, 1965.)

CHAPTER I

Liturgy: What it is

A

In the Christian sense, liturgy means "the Public Worship of the Church". The public worship of the Church is worship of God through actions, words and gestures that are instituted by Christ, or by the Church, performed in the name of the Church, by ministers legitimately constituted for the purpose, in the manner legitimately prescribed. Its aim is the public and official exercising of the virtue of Religion (i. e. the fulfilling of our duties towards God), and the procuring of the sanctification and salvation of souls, by a lively expression of the faith of the Church with everything that is included in that faith.

The items of public worship instituted by Christ are the Eucharistic Sacrifice and the Sacraments. Those instituted by the Church are the Sacramentals, under which come the Divine Office, various other kinds of prayers, blessings, exorcism, fasts, feasts and so on. Among these there are some that are also connected with the Eucharistic Sacrifice and Sacraments.

The (human) ministers might be sometimes performing the items of public worship secretly and in private. Nevertheless, they are public or liturgical, since they are, by their very nature, meant to be performed in the name of the Church, by ministers legitimately constituted for the purpose, in the manner legitimately prescribed.

Among the Byzantines, the word "liturgy", especially if it is written with capital L, signifies the Eucharistic Sacrifice, since the Eucharistic Sacrifice is Public Worship par excellence. We, however, take the word as it is generally taken in English, i. e. as signifying the complexus of all the items of public worship.

It is the whole Church, Christ, the Eternal Priest, the Head of the Church, together with the faithful, the body of the Church, that performs the liturgy: Christ invisibly, and we on earth, visibly. Each of the faithful, in his or her own way, joins with the human minister specifically constituted for the purpose, and performs the liturgical functions, according to the nature of each function. Liturgy, therfore, is the corporate or congregational worship of the terrestrial Church, headed by Christ. The heavenly hosts, too, are present at it.

The Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council says:

"The Liturgy is rightly considered as the exercise of Jesus Christ's priestly office, in which through sensible signs, are signified and, in a way proper to each, is effected the sanctification of man, and by the mystical Body of Christ, by the Head namely, and by the members, the whole public worship is exercised". (n. 7)

Again,

"We take part in the terrestrial Liturgy with a foretaste of the celestial one that is celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem to which, as pilgrims, we are moving on, where Christ is at the right of God, sitting as the minister of holies and of the true tabernacle; with all the hosts of the

celestial army we sing to the Lord the hymn of glory; venerating the memory of saints, we cherish the hope to have part and association with them; we wait for our Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, until He will appear as our life, and we shall appear with Him in glory". (n. 8).

Pope Pius XII :

Liturgy is "the public worship which our Redeemer, the head of the Church, offers to the heavenly Father and which the community of the Church's faithful pays to its Founder and through Him to the Eternal Father; briefly, it is the whole public worship of the Mystical Body of Christ, Head and members"

Ency. Mediator Dei

(Cfr. the offertory prayer of the East Syrian Mass: Christ is asked to aceept the sacrifice)

Although the liturgy is chiefly the worship of the Divine Majesty, it contains also much erudition for the faithful. Says the same Constitution:

"In the Liturgy God speaks to His people: Christ still announces the Gospel: the People respond to God in songs and prayers". (n. 33)

B

Pious practices of the faithful, such as devotions like the Rosary, Way of the Cross etc., even though they have ecclesiastical approbation and are sometimes performed publicly and with solemnity, are not "liturgical", since they are not instituted as such by the Church. Such pious practices are not universal. If one

is proper to one particular Church, another is proper to another particular Church. Some of them have *de facto* become common to several particular Churches. About pious practices

> "which are performed by order of bishops, according to custom, or in conformity with approved books",

the Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council has the following:

> "Taking into account the nature of the liturgical periods, the same exercises are to be regulated in such a way that they may agree with the Sacred Liturgy, may in some way be derived from it, and may lead the people to the same, since it (the Liturgy) by its very nature far excels them". (n. 13).

This would mean that a liturgical colour has to be given to them, and that they are to be coordinated to the liturgy. Unfortunately, these pious exercises have, in some places, assumed such proportions as to eclipse the liturgy. But we have to remember that the liturgy is *the* prayer and *the* devotion of the Church, whereas the others are prayers and devotions of the Church.

The Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council says:

> ".... The Liturgy is the summit towards which the action of the Church is tending, and at the same time, it is the source from which all her strength flows out. For, the works of the apostolate are ordained to this end that all (men), being made the children of God through faith and Baptism, may come together into one, may

praise God in the Church, may participate in the Sacrifice and eat the Lord's Supper. The Liturgy, again, impels the faithful "that they may become united in piety" being fed ',with the paschal sacraments" prays that "by their life they may hold fast to what they perceive by faith'... From the Liturgy, therefore, specially from the Eucharist, as from its source, grace is poured out into us, and with the greatest efficacy is obtained that sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God, to which, as to their end, all other works of the Church are tending". (n. 10). "... every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the priest, and of His body, the Church, is a sacred action surpassing all others; no other action of the Church can equal its efficacy by the same title and to the same degree". (n. 7).

CHAPTER II

Rite: What It Means

A

The word "rite" signifies "ceremony", "custom", "usage etc. It can be taken as a mode of performing something. In this sense there are "social rites", "canonical rites" and several other rites. The mode of perfo-rming a liturgical item or function is the "liturgical rite" of that item or function. The complexus of modes

of performing all the liturgical items or functions is often called "rite". In this sense "liturgy" and "rite" may be taken as synonyms. The Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council seems to take the word "rite" as synonymous with "liturgy" when it says in n. 36 I

> "Particular law remaining in force, the use of the Latin language should be retained in the Latin Rites".

The exception seems to have in mind the Glagolithic liturgy which is the same as the Roman, used in the Glagolithic language in certain dioceses of Jugoslavia. The term "Latin Rites", therefore, includes the Ambrosian, Mozarabic and other liturgies that are celebrated in Latin.

B

In the canonical sense "rite" sometimes denotes a particular Church juridically constituted as a separate unit. The Decree On The Catholic Oriental Churches of the II Vatican Council deals with "The Particular Churches or (seu) Rites" (n. 2) and it also says (ibid) that

> "The Catholic Church has this intention, namely that the traditions of each of the particular Churches or (seu) Rites should remain whole and intact".

In this sense the word "rite" includes the liturgy, ecclesiastical discipline and spiritual patrimony of particular Churches. For, the same Decree (ibid) speaks of the equality of particular Churches

> "In what are called the rite, namely, the liturgy, ecclesiastical discipline and spiritual patrimony".

There could be, and there are, particular Churches or Rites that have the same liturgy with different ecclesiastical discipline and different spiritual patrimony. To cite an example. The different particular Byzantine Churches or Rites, such as the Bulgarian, Georgian, Hungarian, Greek, Melkite, Rumenian, Russian, Ukrainian etc., have the same liturgy (often celebrated in different languages), but different ecclesiastical discipline and different spiritual patrimony. It follows, therefore, that it is not a particular liturgy in itself that *specifically* constitutes different Communities into different particular Churches or Rites (Hierarchies) in the canonical sense. In other words, liturgy could be the same for different particular Rites. The recognition therefore, of a Community as a particular Church or Rite (Hierarchy) in the canonical sense, may have nothing specific in itself regarding its lituagy, even though mention might be made of the liturgy. To cite another example. The Syro-Malankara Church or Hierarchy of the Syro-Antiochene liturgy has the same West Syrian liturgy as the Syro-Antiochene Patriarchate; but it is not in any way part of that Patriarchate. A modification, therefore, of the liturgy, or even its change, may not by itself destroy the "autonomous" state of a particular Church or Rite in the canonical sense. In the canonical sense rite is not liturgy; if it includes in it liturgy, it includes it not as its specific constitutive note; a particular Rite must have a liturgy, but it is not necessary that liturgy should be different from the liturgy of a different particular Rite.

C

When there is question of Orientals, "rite" has a still wider sense, and it includes also the history, genius

and temperament of a people. H. H. Pope Pius XII, in his Encyclical *Orientalis Ecclesiae* says:

> ..."It is likewise important to hold in due esteem all that constitutes for the Oriental peoples their own special patrimony, as it were handed down to them by their forefathers; and this whether it regards the sacred Liturgy and the Hierarchical Orders, or the other elements of the Christian life, provided only that all is in full conformity with genuine religious faith and with the right rules of moral conduct. For a lawful freedom must be allowed to each and every people of Oriental Rite in all that depends on the history, genius and temperament of each single people, so long as it is not in contrast with the true and integral doctrine of Jesus Christ. And let all know this and reflect, whether they be born in the bosom of the catholic Church or are hastening towards it on the wings of desire; let them all be persuaded and hold for certain that they will never be compelled to exchange their own legitimate rites and ancient institutions for the Latin rites and institutions; both are to be regarded with equal esteem and veneration, for they surround our Common mother the Church with, as it were, a regal more, such a diversity of rites and institutions, while conserving intact and inviolable all that is ancient and precious in each confession, does not put the least obstacle in the way of true and genuine unity". (AAS XXXVI (1944) pp. 137–138).

Dom Polycarp Sherwood, OSB, in comment says:

> "Pius XII has expressed with greater juridical

clarity that the rights of all the rites are the same in the one Church, and that *rite* includes the whole historical, liturgical, institutional complex; only that is excluded which is contrary to right faith or morals. *Theological traditions* are the summation and the soul of such a complex; they therefore have perfect and equal right in the Church wherever they are not in discord with right faith and morals. I would say more: they are an integral part of the Catholic patrimony from which Catholic theologians should draw, as Byzantine theologians also from Western sources". (*Eastern Churches Quarterly*, Ramsgate, England, Vol. XII, p. 322.)

CHAPTER III

Liturgy: Origin: Development into Types

A

Liturgy, as we said, consists of items instituted by Christ and by the Church. The latter may, in number and contents, vary from place to place. The former remains unchangeable in substance as the Apostles received them from Christ in Whom liturgy has its origin.

B

The liturgy is one, and, at the same time, multiplex: one in its unchangeable substance, multiplex in the way or manner of its performance.

The Apostles in dealing with the unchangeable items which they had received from Christ, admitted a way or manner or mode of performing them. This mode was fluid as it could and did admit of differences in details, since each Apostle had his own individual tastes, and since there existed no definite rules regarding details. The successors of the Apostles, especially, the Fathers of the Church, also acted as the Apostles had done, always keeping the substance of what Christ had instituted. In this way, from their fluid state, the items of Public Worship, whether connected or not with what Christ had instituted, gradually assumed their definite shape in different ways, in different places. The items instituted by the Church had their origin and development in this way. The cultural environments and needs of different places also contributed towards this development through a kind of uniform growth under the watchful eyes of the authorities of the Church. This is how the liturgy which is one in substance, became multiplex in the way of its performance, and gave rise to the development of liturgical types, each different from the others in shape and structure, i. e. in individuality or physiognomy. The physiognomy of a liturgy, the physiognomy of a man, is difficult to define in words; it is best known and understood through acquaintance and intimacy.

In this development, the Jewish elements exercised a great influence from the time of the Apostles themselves. The use of the Sacred Scriptures, especially of the Old Testament, in all the liturgies may be said to be largely of Jewish influence.

It took centuries before each liturgy acquired its own individuality, or genuine characteristic shape, or rstuctural physiognomy which embodies its spirit – here

and elsewhere we take all these terms to mean the same thing. The end of the patristic age may be regarded as the final stage in this development.

The Fathers of the Church, as said above, had a great part to play in the development of liturgies; so much so, that it is often said that each liturgy is a patristic synthesis on the basis of Sacred Scriptures and tradition. Liturgy cannot be understood unless one is *familiar with the Holy Scripture*, that is, with Sacred History; the historical context and content of the single books; great themes of the Bible; the 'typi', metaphors and symbols of the biblical world; the understanding of biblical ethics which is based on the love of God and the all of man. The Bible contains the patterns according to which mankind is educated and formed into a holy people, the way in which God sanctifies His own. Hence biblical training must begin early with special courses, in bible vigil in a biblical orientation, of ascetical instruction, in homilies and points for meditation. The Scripture cources in theology presupposes an already vast knowledge biblical material learned in earlier stages". The Clergy Monthly Supplement to Vol. XXIX. Sept. 1965, p. 270. Hence, a liturgy is a "theology" or a 'theological tradition" having immense importance in the Church.

Though the liturgies attained their full typical characteristics only by the end of the patristic age, still, centuries before that, each liturgy had already manifested in germ its genius and prospective growth towards a given goal. Such a growth took place, not always in accordance with the relentless logic of the schoolmen, but rather in accordance with the style of the Fathers.

In the process of development of liturgies towards their final goal, there was mutual borrowing on a large scale; but things borrowed were assimilated, rather than were juxtaposed. Assimilation was easy in the absence of a definite individuality or physiognomy *in facto esse.*

In the development of liturgies into different types, we have to include not only the liturgical texts, calendar, actions and gestures, but also such externals as ecclesiastical music, architecture, art, vestments, which all are in some way conditioned by the physiognomy of a liturgy. The language, however, in which a liturgy developed, does not, as is clear, contribute greatly to its physiognomy, and could be changed with no great harm done to the latter. The other externals such as music architecture, art, vestments, and to some extent actions and gestures, in so far as they do not condition, but are conditioned by the physiognomy of a liturgy, could be adapted to new circumstances, in accordance with the spirit of the liturgy. Adaptation, we shall see, should not destroy the individually or physiognomy that embodies the spirit of the liturgy, since the individuality of a liturgy is one of the different providential means in which faith is expressed and tradition safeguarded.

C

Not all Christian centres were centres of liturgical development also. Liturgies developed in important Christian centres. Since, as we shall see, a liturgy is a tradition of the Church, local Churches that did not develop liturgies of their own, gladly accepted their liturgy from centres that were related to them geographically or politically, racially or hierarchically, traditionally or linguistically, or in some other way. Nationalismi

as it is understood today in its bad sense, was absent among the early Christians, as a whole. We may see a parallel in the different spiritualities of the Church. Spirituality, like liturgy, is one and multiplex. The Jesuit spirituality, v. g., is different from the Franciscan spirituality. The Jesuit spirituality had its origin in Spain. Nevertheless, other nationalities accept and practise it in all its integrity, not of course as a Spanish spirituality, but as a spirituality of the Church. Similar is the case with liturgies each of which is a tradition, not of this or that place, but of the Church (Cf. Section VI).

> Non-Catholic Christians too had a part in the development of liturgies. They did not, however, tamper with, but only contributed towards, the formation of the physiognomy of liturgies. Some of them changed certain ancient liturgical texts, or inserted new ones into the liturgy, in accordance with their doctrines. The Catholic Church rejects all these unsound innovations, and considers all the other contributions as her own. Such contributions were inspired by faith contained in the Sacred Scriptures and in tradition, in so far as the contributors had not denied it, and were on lines already traced out before the appearance of their doctrines. "Whoever is a good and true Christian", says St. Augustine, "let him recognise that truth, wherever found, belongs to his Lord" (*De Doctrina Christiana*, II, 18)

CHAPTER IV

Different Types of Liturgies

The different types of liturgies are classified as Occidental and Oriental. Opinions are divided regarding the specific origin of several liturgies, and about their mutual affinity.

A

The occidental liturgies are:

African : now obsolete: was it an independent one, or a variant of the Roman or Gallican or of some other?

Ambrosian : used in Milan: is it an independent one or a variant of the Roman, or Gallican, or of some Oriental liturgy? It has had Roman influence.

Bragan : used in the diocese of Braga in Portugal: variant of the Roman with Gallican touches (?).

Celtic : now obsolete: was used in Brittany, Scotland and other places till the IX century: was a mixture of the Roman and Gallican?

Gallican : now obsolete: was widely used in N. W. Europe and Spain till the IX century: was replaced by the Roman: was it an independent one, or a variant of the Roman? There were Orietal traits in it: some would say it was in origin rather Oriental.

Lyonsian : used in Lyons: Roman with Gallican remnants?

Mozarabic : used in Toledo: probably a remnant of the Gallican (?) like the remnants now found in Braga and Lyons: or, as some hold, is Roman with Gallican, Ambrosian and Byzantine touches.

Roman : the most widely used liturgy in Christendom: has undergone some Gallican influence: has it had some early Alexandrian influence also?

To these may be added the liturgies of religious Orders, such as the (Calced) Carmelite, Carthusian, Cistercian Dominican, Premonstratensian. These are variants of the Roman or more probably of the Gallican with touches of the other.

The influence which other liturgies had on an occidental liturgy, was not such that it did away with the individuality of the latter. It took place before the end of patristic age.

The Roman liturgy was used in Greek in the beginning; in the 3rd or 4th century it adopted Latin in which language it also developed. As we said above, the Roman liturgy is used in the Glagalothic language in some dioceses of Jugoslavia from the IX century. All the others, like the present Roman, had and have Latin as the fundamental language. All of them therefore, go by the name of "Latin liturgies". In almost all vernacular languages are now used in a large measure. The imposition of usages of these Latin liturgies – de facto of the Roman – on oriental liturgies is called "latinisation".

B

The oriental liturgies are.

Alexandrian : a) Coptic: used by Catholic and non-Catholic Copts in Egypt and elsewhere in old Coptic and Arabic.

b) Ethiopian: used by Catholic and non-Catholic Ethiopians in Ethiopia, Asmara and elsewhere in old Ethiopian: was latinised among the Catholics.

Antiochene : has come down in West Syriac in various forms as :

a) Malankara (same as) : used by Catholic Malankarians, Jacobites, Anjoorians and Marthomites, in Malabar and elsewhere in West Syriac and Malayalam. The Marthomites have mutilated it.

b) Maronite: used by Maronites (all Catholics) in Libanon and elsewhere in West Syriac and Arabic (a little latinised).

c) "Syrian": used by Catholic Syrians and Jacobites in the Middle East and elsewhere in West Syriac and Arabic.

Armneian : used by Catholic and non - Catholic Armenians in Armenia from the V century: is derived from the Caesarean use of the Antiochene liturgy with Latin touches that go back to the time of the Crusades. The Armenian Mechitarists of Venice have restored it to purity.

Byzantine : derived from the ancient Antiochene based on the Caesarean and Constantinopolitan usages: is the second most largely used

liturgy in Christendom: is used in several languages such as, Bulgarian, Georgian, Hungarian, Greek, Rumenian, Russian, Ukrainian etc. by the corresponding Catholic and non-Catholic Churches in Europe and elsewhere, and in Arabic by Catholic and non-Catholic Melkites in the Middle East and elsewhere: among the Catholic Ukrainians it was a little latinised.

East Syrian : used by

a) Catholic Chaldeans in the Middle East and elsewhere in East Syriac, Surath and Arabic (a little latinised).

b) Catholic Malabarians in Malabar and elsewhere in East Syriac and Malayalam (highly latinised).

c) Mellusians (the "Nestorians" of Trichur) in Malabar and elsewhere in East Syriac and Malayalam.

d) "Nestorians" in the Middle East and elsewhere in East Syriac, Surath (and Arabic).

Ephesian : now obsolete, if ever such a liturgy existed.

The language of the Coptic liturgy was originally Greek. The Chalcedonian Melkites of the Alexandrian Patriarchate were using the Greek until they succumbed to the Greek schism and adopted the Byzantine liturgy (now in Arabic). It does not seem probable that the Alexandrian liturgy depended on the Antiochene.

The ancient Antiochene liturgy was in Greek and Syriac. The Chalcedonian Melkites of the Antiochene and

Jerusalemite Patriarchates were using both (with modifications) until they succumbed to the Greek schism and adopted the Byzantine liturgy (now in Arabic).

As a rule oriental liturgies often adopt languages other than those mentioned above for the benefit of those who assist at them.

C

The central item in every liturgy is the Eucharistic Sacrifice. The important part of the Eucharistic Sacrifice in occidental liturgies in "Canon", and in all the oriental liturgies "Anaphora". As a rule there are several anaphoras in each oriental liturgy; the Armenian has only one. If the canon is the same always, the anaphora changes where there are several. The anaphoras are attributed to important personages though in most cases the attribution is false. There is great controversy regarding the origin and mutual dependence of several of the anaphoras.

CHAPTAR V

Growth of Types of Liturgies

A

When it is said that the different types of liturgies assumed their final shape and individuality by the end of the patristic age, it does not mean that they cannot grow any more through further developments. Before they

attained their full individuality, liturgies grew through development tending towards their goal or full individuality. Their growth through further development has to take place by the preservation of the individuality they have already attained; otherwise, there will not be growth, but change: change from the ancient traditions. The different types of liturgies, therefore, can and must grow like a living organism assimilating new elements and discarding outmoded forms and items, that are not instituted by Christ. Just as the growth of an organism is not its change, mutilation, or juxtaposition of foreign elements, but an unfolding of its innate vigour to assimilate outside elements eschewing all foreign or dead matter, so also types of liturgies in their further growth have to preserve their individuality, and have to assimilate to it appropriate new elements. Only in this manner can the Church profit by liturgical traditions, and by the liturgical spirit contained in different liturgies, as expressed by their individuality. This kind of growth is a necessity since liturgies function among men who are growing in their outlook.

B

The growth in question could take place by an unfolding of appropriate elements that lie latent in a liturgy, or by adaptation to the environments (cultural, social etc.) in which a liturgy functions, or by borrowing from other liturgies. If there are appropriate elements lying latent in a liturgy, then there is no place for adaptation or borrowing: the thing that lies latent has to be unfolded according to the spirit of the liturgy, to suit the circumstances, in conformity with its individuality.

If adaptation or borrowing takes place, the things adapted or borrowed, are not to be juxtaposed, but

digested and assimilated to the spirit of the liturgy that adapts or is adapted.

The Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council' dealing with adaptation, allows the cultural elements of peoples to be taken

> "into the liturgy itself, so long as they harmonise with the aspects of true and authentic liturgical spirit" (n. 37).

But adaptation is not something that is to be achieved overnight. It requires study and trial to see if the thing to be adapted is really adaptable and agreesable with the spirit of the liturgy that adapts (Cf. ibid. n. 40). Before finalising the adaptation, the consent of the Holy See is required in the case of the Latin liturgy (ibid. I). Often it happens that what seems good to some may seem awkward to others especially in places where there is intermingling of cultures, customs, languages, races etc. The same is to be said of borrowing also.

The important thing is that adaptation, as well as borrowing, should not be a mere juxtaposition, but should be something made harmonious with the spirit of the liturgy as expressed by its individuality. This harmony can be had only through assimilation.

Juxtaposition will destroy the very individuality of the liturgy, and consequently also its vitality for growth. The capacity for growth (by adaptation or borrowing) of a liturgy really depends on its individuality which supposes homogeneity and power of assimilation. Individuality is the state of being individual. An individual is something that is undivided in itself and is divided from everything else (indivisum in se et divisum a quolibet

alio). Juxtaposition makes a thing divided in itself, or heterogeneous, and impedes its growth which ought to be homogeneous and harmonious. Assimilation, on the contrary, supposes homogeneity, and preserves a thing undivided in itself and divided from everything else, i.e. preserves its individuality, enhances its strength for further growth through further assimilation

A liturgy, therefore, which is a congeries of juxtaposed heterogeneous elements cannot have any real growth through a genuine development from within. It is only by keeping the liturgies in their individuality that the Church, as said above, can profit by their further growth. The first thing, therefore, that is to be done before allowing a liturgy to grow in its environments, is to restore it to its genuine physiognomy if it has been deformed.

C

The Church while promoting the growth of liturgies, insists on the preservation of their individuality or physiognomy. His Holiness Pope Paul VI, in his address (29/ X/ 1964) to the members of the liturgical Commission he instituted for the revision of the Roman liturgy, said:

> "In the liturgical field there must not be a real contradiction between the past and the present, but everything must come about harmoniously, so that whatever the changes, they may be in perfect agreement with healthy tradition, and the new liturgical form sprout spontaneously from those already existing.
>
> "In truth, the liturgy is like a strong tree, the beauty of which comes from the continual

renewal of its foliage, but the vigour of which is attested to by the antiquity of its trunk which puts strong and deep roots down into the earth".

(*L'Osservatore Romano*, Oct. 31, 1964)

The same idea is seen in the Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council, which, dealing with revision of parts of the Roman Liturgy says:

"In order to safeguard healthy tradition, and yet to open the way for legitimate progress, there should always precede (the revision) an accurate theological, *historical* and pastoral investigation into each part of the liturgy that is to be revised. The general laws that govern the *structure* and *meaning* of the liturgy must be taken into consideration along with the experience derived from recent liturgical reform and from indults granted to various places. Finally innovations are not to be made, unless a real and unerring utility of the Church demands it, and they should be made with care so that *the new forms may in some way sprout organically* from the already existing forms" (n.23).

D

To give a liturgical colour to non-liturgical pious practices is to admit a kind of liturgical growth. We have seen that the Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council requires this in the case of certain non-liturgical pious practices. How much more the same ought to be done in the case of services such as the

Benediction of the Most Bl. Sacrament, Eucharistic procession, 40 hours adoration etc. which some liturgies have borrowed from other liturgies. The same has to be said of liturgical dress and so on.

Says Donald Attwater:

> "...the ancient Christian liturgies are works of art, the supreme works of art, manifestations of the religious, social and cultural life of Christian Communities over long centuries, and to tinker with them, to spoil their integrity by borrowing from alien cultures, is unworthy of the Catholic Church: it is not in accordance with that variety, inclusiveness and local perfection and fittingness which are marks of the Church, as the Universal ark of salvation"
>
> (*The Catholic Eastern Churches*, Milwaukee, 1935, pp. 31–32)

Accepting a whole liturgical tradition in place af another, is one thing, and accepting fragments of liturgical texts or services without assimilation, is another thing. The first has nothing wrong about it if it is done for a real necessity; the second may be termed liturgical "heresy". It is this kind of borrowing that Attwater inveighs against.

CHAPTER VI

Importance of Different Types of Liturgies

A

The different types of liturgies in their development took care to express, each in its own way, the faith of the Church contained in the Sacred Scriptures and in tradition. In this way each liturgy has become an asset to the Church, each supplementing the others in the depth of expressions and symbolism proper to it. This was required since the faith of the Church is too deep to be expressed in one way alone. The spirituality of one liturgy is different from that of another; one expresses certain shades of the faith in one way, another in another way; the theology of one is spiral, while that of another is vertical; the symbolisms of one are not those of another; if one is rigid, another is elaborate in its expressions; if one is more ascetical, another is more mystical; if one is more scientific, another is more popular. All taken together manifest in some detail several of the infinite facets of the one faith and of the one Christian life. Liturgy, therefore, is a school where the Christian people learn to live their faith. In his address to the members of the liturgical Commission (see above) His Holines Pope Paul VI clarified that

> "The liturgical cult has to become the school of the Christian people, a school, namely, of piety where the people learn to have intimate dealings with God; a school of truth where through

> visible signs the soul is led to the knowledge and love of invisible things; a school, lastly; of Christian charity where each one feels himself more and more united in the bond of fraternal union with the other members of the Church." (1. cit.)

All these ends are attained in different ways by different liturgies, each functioning and developing in a different traditional milieu. Professing the same faith we ascend to God through different ways marked out by different liturgies. For, liturgy is not a thing to be gone through in a perfunctory manner; it is a thing to be lived. The living of different liturgies will produce different types of saints, who are like different gems set in the diadem of the Church. How important, then, it is to keep the liturgies intact in their physiognomy, and to allow them to grow harmoniously in their different environments!

> Dom Bernard Botte, O.S.B. says:
>
> "Liturgy is the expression of the faith of the Church, and a means of safeguarding tradition. It must not be subject to individual opinions and personal devotions. It does not express the religious sentiments of some social or national group. It is a rule from which one cannot depart without running the risk of diparting at the same time from the rule of faith".
>
> (The Problem of Liturgical Adaptation, *The Clergy Monthly*, June–July, 1964, p. 213).

The axiom "The rule of prayer is the rule of faith" (Lex orandi, Lex credendi) is to be primarily understood of the liturgy, if prayer determines the faith of those

who pray, but not if their faith determines the sense of the prayer.

Yes, the liturgies are not something racial to national, as Dom Botte says, though they might exhibit in their accidentals certain racial or national traits. They are primarily the traditional expressions of the faith of the Church. Here we see the importance of liturgical traditions which the Church so jealously safeguards. The Church has always had recourse to liturgies as to inestimable treasures in order to come to the knowledge of the depth and extension of her faith, in order to draw out of them "things old and new". The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, v.g. of the II Vatican Council says:

> "Those who under the direction of the Magisterium cultivate the study of the Sacred Scriptures, of the holy Fathers and Doctors. and of the liturgies of the Church will rightly illustrate the offices and the privileges of the Blessed Virgin Mary". (n. 67).

B

Divine revelation is contained in Scripture and Tradition. What Tradition contains, it also unfolds, in the Liturgy it is celebrated.

The loss of a liturgy, or of its essential parts, or the impeding of the growth of a liturgy in a new milieu, is a great loss to the Church, though, absolutely speaking, the Church can go on without any of the actual forms of liturgies. The study of different types of liturgies helps the development of dogmas and spirituality in no small measure.

This is why it is felt that Biblical, Patristic and Liturgical theologies have yet to find their due place in the curriculum of studies in seminaries. All these three go together to a certain extent. For, through the Fathers, liturgical texts and sacramental practices, tradition finds its written expression, and often gives a certain interpretation or trend of interpretation to the Sacred Scriptures.

CHAPTER VII

Restoration of Types of Liturgies

A

From what we have said above, it has become clear that liturgies that have been deformed in their physiognomy, are to be restored to their genuine form.

The Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council may be taken as including liturgy also when it says:

> "It is desired that when it is necessary, they (all rites legitimately recognised), be revised with care according to the spirit of *healthy tradition*, and be given a new vigour in view of the circumstances and needs of the present day". (N. 4).

Again (on the Eucharistic Sacrifice),

> "Wherefore the rites, their substance being well preserved, should be made simpler; all things which in course of time have been multiplied, or uselessly added, should be left out; certain

> things which by the outrage of time have fallen off, should be restored in accordance with the *ancient norm* of the Fathers, as they seem opportune or necessary". (n. 50).

The Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council requires that the rites of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, Pontificals, other Sacraments and Sacramentals including funeral services, of the Roman liturgy, are to be revised (nn. 47–82). The revision, as we have seen above, has to take place "in the spirit of healthy tradition", and "in accordance with the ancient norm of the Fathers".

The Decree On the Catholic Oriental Churches of the II Vatican Council lays down:

> "Let all the Orientals know and hold for certain, that they can and they ought to keep always their legitimate liturgical rites and their discipline, and that innovations are not to be introduced except in accordance with a sense of their *organic* progress. All these, therefore, are to be preserved with the greatest fidelity, by the Orientals themselves; they should acquire daily a greater knowledge of these things, and the perfect way of practising them; and if they have unduly fallen away from them owing to the circumstances of times and persons, *they should endeavour to return to the ancestral traditions* (ad avitas traditiones redire satagant)." (n 6)

Note the words "ad avitas traditiones". This is not to foster archaeological tastes, but to preserve and profit by the tradition of the Church so very well expressed in various ways in various liturgies. Has not the Roman

liturgy gone back to the XIII century in its recent restoration of the Holy Week ceremonies?

B

In this restoration and revision of the liturgy we have to go to the sources and find out the genuine physiognomy of the liturgy that has to be restored or revised. Some people might be content with anything, or with the minimum that is required for the validity of the liturgical rites. But the Church wants something more, and that too in thc most perfect manner possible. Because it is question of the public and official cult the Church renders to God, the all-perfect Being.

6) "To go back in mind and heart to the sources of the Sacred Liturgy is wise and praiseworthy. The study of liturgical origins enables us to understand better the significance of festivals and the meaning of liturgical formulas and ceremonies. But the desire to restore everything indiscrimately to its ancient condition is neither wise nor praiseworthy".

(Mediator Dei, Pius XII)

"... To render the liturgy more pure, more genuine, nearer to its sources of truth and of grace, more apt to make of it the spiritual patrimony of the people"

Pope Paul VI, Discourse, Dec. 4, 1963
L'Osservatore Romano, 2-3 March 1964.

His Holiness Pope Paul VI to the "congresso dei traduttori dei libri liturgici, indetto dal consilium ad exequendam contitutionem de sacra liturgia" on Wednesday 10, 1965; "ad fontem estis reversi unde aquas limpidas et salubres hauriretis"

L'Osservatore Romano, Venerdi 12,1965.

A deformed liturgy may seem devotional to some. But a feeling of devotion is not in itself a reason for justifying a thing that causes that feeling. Otherwise, even false worship could be justified, since it may excite in some feelings of devotion. Speaking of the reforms that are being introduced into the Roman liturgy, His Holiness Pope Paul VI, on January 13, 1965, directed the following words to all the faithful:

> "It could be that the reform touches habits that are dear and perhaps, also respectable: it could be that the reform requires some unpleasant force to be exerted at the outset; but we ought to be docile, and ought to have confidence ....; it is the authority of the Church which teaches in this manner .... You will once again have the experience and fruits and happiness which obedience carries with it: obedience, We say, to the Church, and to him who has in it the function to educate the believers to the adoration of the Father "in spirit and truth" (Joh. IV, 23)".
>
> (*L'Osservatore Romano*, Jan, 14, 1965)

There can be no liturgical reform or restoration apart from the authority of the Church. Apart from the authority of the Church, says the Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council.

> "no one, even though he be a priest, shall, of his own accord, do anything to the Liturgy, or take away anything from it, or change anything in it". (n. 22).

CHAPTER VIII

Liturgies and the Holy See

A

In the Occident, due to the tendency to change the accidents of things, almost each diocese began to have a particular way of performing even the same liturgy. Because of this abuse, it was enacted that all liturgies or rites that were not, at the time of the Council of Trent, 200 years old, or were not approved by the Holy See at their very start, were to be suppressed, unless the bishop of a diocese and the whole (cathedral) chapter wanted to retain them.

(St. Pius V, Constitution, *Quod a nobis,* 7 idus Julii, 1568; and Constitution, *Quod primum,* pridie idus Julii, 1570)

Matters liturgical were also reserved to the Holy See. The Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council, however, has given some kind of freedom in liturgical adaptation, to the Conference of local (Latin) bishops, but not without the approbation of the Holy See for its final stage (n. 40)

B

The Orient is tenacious of all things handed down from the past. But Catholic Oriental clerics who got their training in the Occident began to feel an inferiority complex in front of the Roman liturgy which alone they

used to witness during the period of their ecclesiastical studies and training. Latin missionaries who worked in the Orient also contributed their share towards the change of outlook of the oriental clergy, and, to some extent, of the laity also. The Roman liturgy was taken as *the* liturgy of the Catholic Church, and the oriental liturgies were thought to be as only tolerated. There was a time when the Roman litury was given precedence over the other liturgies. Orientals were also barred from becoming bishops of Latin dioceses, or of dioceses in which there were Latins. We have an example in the Malabarian Mar Joseph Cariattil. In 1782 when he was nominated archbishop of Cranganore, over Latins and Orientals, he was *de jure* made Latin in rite (*Vatican Archiv.* Acta Camerari Sacri Collegii S.R.E. Cardinalium, 39, f. 238). The result of all these was latinisation (romanisation) of Catholic oriental liturgies, both by the Orientals and by the Latins, To witness, therefore, the oriental liturgies in their purity, one has to go to the non-Catholic Orientals. Hence, the Holy See had to reserve to itself matters liturgical of the Orientals also.

The Holy See has time and again solemnly declared that latinisation of oriental liturgies is against its mind and considered policy. From among several such declarations, we give below one of His Holiness Pope Pius XI's: of March, 25, 1938:

> "....If some, led by their too great love for unity and concord, without sufficiently understanding the things of the Orientals, and the genius thereof, have been bent on corrupting their sacred rites, or on reducing the same to the latin rites, the Roman Pontiffs, Our Predecessors. on the other hand, with all force, have stood against such attempts, without sparing any effort".
> (*Sancta Dei Ecclesia*, AAS, XXX, 1938, p. 154.)

The Holy See has even set its hand to restore to their genuine forms, some oriental liturgies, such as the Ukrainian, Ethiopian, Malabarian. The Maronites do it with the approbation of the Holy See.

C

The Decree On the Catholic Churches of the II Vatican Council has declared that all particular Churches.

> "both Occidental and Oriental, though they mostly differ among themselves in what are said to be rites, namely, in liturgy, ecclesiastical discipline and spiritual patrimony ··· are of equal dignity". (n. 2)

There are now Oriental Prelates set over Latin faithful. Canon 106/4 of the Code of Latin Canon Law, and canon 37/4 of the Oriental Canon Law regarding Persons, have laid it down that in the question of precedence, diversity of rites is not to be attended to.

CHAPTER IX

New Liturgies: Liturgical Languages

Absolutely speaking, a new liturgy, or new liturgies, could be created around the items instituted by Christ. But this new liturgy would not be able to glory in traditional contents that are so much prized by the Church in the case of ancient liturgies. An ancient liturgy is primarily a tradition of the Church.

The easiest thing would be to formulate, in a liturgical spirit, rites for new sacramentals, by christianising the cultural or even religious rites of the people among whom a given liturgy functions. Adaptation in music, architecture etc. are also to be encouraged.

To put an ancient liturgy in a living language is not to create a new liturgy; it is a means to make full use of the vigour of that liturgy. The Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council allows the conference of local bishops to moderate the use of the vernacular in the Latin liturgies with the approbation or confirmation of the Holy See (n. 363). But the use of the Latin language has to be kept up (ibid. I) in the Latin rites. Regarding Oriental liturgies, the Decree on the Catholic Oriental Churches, of the II Vatican Council says that to the Patriarch in synod, or to the Supreme authority of a particular Church in the conference (Consilio) of the hierarchs, pertains the right of moderating the use of languages in liturgy, and, after having referred the matter to the Holy See, of approving the vernacular versions of liturgical texts (n. 23). As a rule, the oriental liturgies adapt themselves to the language of the place where they function.

It goes without saying that priests ought to know and understand the languages in which their liturgies are performed, even if they are dead languages.

A cultured priest is supposed to know well the language in which his liturgy developed, even if that language has given place to a modern one. This knowledge must extend itself to the literature (including the version of the Sacred Scriptures) of the language in question. It is only through the language in which a liturgy developed

that one can experience fully the spirit of that liturgy. This is something like reading the Sacred Scriptures in the original languages. Regarding versions of the S. Scripture used in different liturgies we note that they have a traditional value (like the Latin Vulgate) in case of texts whose agreement with the original is controverted.

CHAPTER X

Active Participation in the Liturgy

Those who assist at the celebration of the liturgy, including the laity, are not to behave themselves as though they were strangers or mute spectators. The Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council enjoins:

> "The holy pastors should be vigilant that in the liturgical action not only the rules regarding validity and liceity are to be observed, but also that the faithful are to participate in it knowingly, actively and fruitfully". (n. 11)

Regarding the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the same Constitution says:

> "Hence, the solicitous care of the Church intends that the faithful should assist at this mystery of the faith, not as strangers or mute spectators, but should participate in the sacred action knowingly, piously and actively, understanding it well by means of the rites and prayers, should be instructed in the word of God, should be fed at

the table of the Body of Christ, should give thanks to God and should learn to offer themselves while offering the immaculate host through and with the hand of the priest..." (n. 48)

This knowing, active and fruitful participation will be doubly enhanced, if the faithful pray with the minister, not only mentally, but vocally also, by reciting the liturgical prayers understanding their meaning and signification. Because it is the whole Church that prays the liturgy.

All liturgies, as their structure indicates, are to be performed by the priest with the full active participation of the laity led by the deacon. According to the testimony of Nun Etheria from France 4th century (who was in Jerusalem), "the lessons are read in Greek, but there is one who translates them into Aramaic, in order that the people of (Palestine) may understand them".

(The New Leader, Madras, Sept. 19, 1965.)

But in the Occident liturgies happened to lose this aspect of active participation of the laity. In consequence, the deacon's part in the liturgy was reduced to a few responses to the prayers of the priest. The laity then began to have recourse to private devotions during the liturgy, and to adopt postures that seemed devotional to them – a cleavage of the body from the head. The Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council insists on active participation as said above. The Constitution devotes section II (nn. 14–20) for this end. It is in order that the faithful my live the liturgy through full active participation in it, that the Council sanctioned the use of the vernacular in the Latin liturgy. The faithful cannot be asked to learn Latin now, though the decline of the knowledge of Latin was one of the reasons why they had left off active participation.

In the Orient (except in the East Syrian liturgy of Malabar before 1962) the faithful have always taken an active part in all the liturgical functions. They had not the language problem as the Latins had. They easily adopted the language of the people into the liturgy. In Malabar also this salutary practice has begun since 1962 with the use of the vernacular. It was left off after the XVI century. Before the XVII century the Malabarian laity knew East Syriac, the language of their liturgy, sufficiently enough to enable them to participate actively in liturgical functions.

In the Roman liturgy "the priest did *not* face the people in the Mass of the sixth century as is clear from Ordo Romanus I; the silent Canon was *not* introduced in the High Middle Ages because the people no longer Latin, but came in much earlier – probably in the sixth century – and is probably due to the tendency of the priest to continue silently while the congregations were fininshing the Sanctus".

(Note: Cfr. Archdale A. King, *The Liturgy of the Roman Church*, Longmans, London, 1957 Appendix VII, pp. 429–432).

G.H. Duggan S.M. *Hans Küng And Reunion*, The Mercier Press, 4 Bridge street, Cork, 1964, p. 83

Printed in the Neterlands by N. V. Drukkerij Bosch–Utrecht.

CHAPTER XI

Liturgies and Dissensions

It happens, not seldom, that there arise dissensions among the faithful who use different liturgies in the same place. But this is not a reason to suppress all the other liturgies in favour of one, or to create a new liturgy in the place of all. Liturgies are a means, if used in the proper way, to foster charity among the faithful. Dissensions ultimately rest on the ill-will of those who use them.

> "For sin taking occasion by commandment, seduced me; and by it killed (me). Wherefore the law indeed is holy; and the commandment holy and good. Was that then which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin that it may appear sin, by that which is good, wrought death in me, that sin by the commandment, might become sinful above measure". (Rom. VII, 11-13).

The dissensions in question are like those among persons of different religious Institutes working in the same place. That they quarrel among themselves is no reason to have none or only one of their Institutes. Those who are prone to quarrel will invent some other title to quarrel, if there is not found among them diversity of liturgies. Do not communities that use the same liturgy quarrel among themselves? Such quarrels are

sometimes more accute than the quarrels among those who use different liturgies.

To cut the head off is not the remady for headache.

On Dec. 4, 1965, in Bombay, His Holiness Pope Paul VI, in the homily he preached during the Syro-Malankara qurbana, spoke as follow, about the liturgical traditions of India.

> "The plurality of these traditions is a living witness to the Catholicity of the Church of Christ which is at the same time for all men, embracing all cultures, and also can express in a particular way the truth and beauty which exist in each culture". Then His Holiness quoted the words of the II Vatican Council as "The Church fosters and takes to itself, in so far as they are good the ability, riches and customs in which the genius of each people expresses itself. Taking them to itself, it purifies, strengthens, elevates and cosecrates them". Then His Holiness continues: "In recognising this truth, we acknowledge the obligations it places upon us. The first of these is the necessity for a deep, fraternal cooperation among those who share different liturgical traditions.. Perhaps in the past the idea of legitimate plurality joined with mutual cooperation may have been obscured at times. But today there must be a new dedication to this idea. The Constitution on the Church clearly states: "In virtue of the catholicity, each individual part contributes through its special gifts to the good of the other parts and of the whole Church. Through the common sharing of gifts and through the common efforts to attain fulness in

unity, the whole and each of the parts receive increase". Oh, that these words may be engraved on your hearts and be realised in your individual and corporate life!..There is another obligation which stems from this realisation of the catholicity of the Church. That is the obligation to remain faithful to your traditions, at the same time as you strive to adapt yourselves to the needs of the present age, and to become more fully a part of the life and culture of your native land. Fidelity to your traditions will help maintains so many ties with what is good and genuine in the past, and also preserve or reestablish bonds with those who share these traditions, but who are not in full communian with the Catholic Church. In a spirit of fidelity and charity, through mutual cooperation devoid of any spirit of contention, you can contribute greatly to the building up of Unity among Christians who live and work together, side by side. But this fidelity is not to be a dead veneration of the past. It must be joined to a living adaptation to the needs of your people, as they continue to make a positive contribution to the spiritual and cultural life of their country. In this happy union of fidelity and adaptation, entered into by all the different hierarchies and their faithful together in a spirit of fraternal cooperation, lies the promise of a genuine witness to Christ and to His Gospel in this beloved land of India, so rich in religious life and spiritual striving..."

(*L'Osservatore Romano* December, 5, 1965)

Here we close our observations on liturgies in general. The following sections deal in particular with the East Syrian liturgy.

CHAPTER XII

The East Syrian Liturgy

A

The name "East Syrian" refers to the language of the liturgy we are now dealing with. Edessan, Chaldean, Assyrian and Persian are some of the other names of this liturgy. To all probability it had its origin in Edessa. The language of its origin was (East) Syriac in which language it also attained its full development. Its development took place in the Church of Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Persia (Iran), known as the Church of the Persian Empire, or the Church of the East, or, from its first headquarters, the Church of Seleucia-Ctesiphon, or the Church of Babylon from a wrong identification, it seems, of Babylon with Baghdad to which latter city its headquarters were transferred from Seleucia–Ctesiphon. The origin of this Church is shrouded in mystery, though its members attribute it to the labours af Mari, a disciple, they say, of Addai who is believed to have been a disciple of the Apostle St. Thomas. In the V century this Church organised itself into provinces with the Prelate of Seleucia–Ctesiphon as its head – called the Great Metropolitan. In 424 it gave up its nominal dependence on the Churches of Edessa, Nisibis and Antioch, Its head gradually came to be called Catholicos or Patriarch or Catholicos–Patriarch. It also came to be called "Nestorian", since it venerated Nestorius, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodore of Tarsus, holding fast to the Christological

terms and explanations of Theodore of Mopsuestia and condemning the Council of Ephesus as the work of "the politically minded" "Egyptian Pharao" (St. Cyril of Alexandria). These ideas were also introduced into its liturgy. Its liturgy as well as the East Syrian language of its liturgy were even nicknamed "Nestorian"! But its dogma regarding Incarnation could not be said to have been Nestorian, since it accepted, in its liturgical texts also, *communicatio idiomatum*, and venerated the Blessed Virgin Mary as "Mother of our God", "Mother of God the Son" Who is eternally born from the Father and was also born from Mary in time. Again, it believed in, and was also officially expressing in clear terms the divinely instituted Primacy of jurisdiction of St. Peter and his successors, the Roman Pontiffs, ever the whole Church of Christ. The Divine Office, v. g. sings:

> "Rome says, forever is the Church built, and she shall not be conquered by kings and powers."
> (Third Sunday of Qudas 'edtha)

See how Matthew XVI, 18 is connected with Rome!

Due to geographical and political reasons the Church in question had no contacts with Rome till the time of the crusades. The contacts it began to make, were not in its mind, rapprochements for reunion, since it always had believed in Roman Primacy.

A section of this Church, in 1552/3, had one Sulaqa installed in Rome, as Patriarch with his jurisdiction in India confirmed by the Pope. The other section then stood alloof in a spirit of opposition without, however, denying Roman Primacy. But after the XVI century, the former gave up contacts and communion with Rome, while the latter took them up. The former are the Nesto-

rians of today who, against their tradition, deny Roman Primacy, influenced by the Protestants. The latter are the Catholic Chaldeans under the Patriarch of Babylon.

B

The most ancient anaphora of the East Syrian liturgy is attributed to Addai and Mari. Since Mari is believed to have been a disciple of Addai, and since Addai is believed to have been sent to Edessa by the Apostle St. Thomas, the East Syrian liturgy, it is said, is indirectly connected with the Apostle St. Thomas. Twice a day in the closing prayers of the Divine Office, the Apostle St. Thomas is specially invoked after the invocation of the Apostles in general; and St. Thomas here tops the list of special patrons.

Since the East Syrian liturgy developed outside the *limes romanus,* it has a great apologetic value. Several Patriarchs, synods, theologians and monks of the ancient Church of Seleucia-Ctesiphon have had their contribution towards the development of the East Syrian liturgy. The compositions of St. Ephrem have largely entered into it. The spirit of the Deacon of Edessa, and of Apraat, the Persian sage, pervades this liturgy. The original compositions in verse found in the Divine Office and other services are based on the Ephremite tradition.

C

Among the characteristics of this liturgy we may mention that it is semitic in its expressions which agree with the diction of the Sacred Scriptures; that it is little touched by Greco-Roman currents of thought, and, for that matter, is simple and popular, and is not

overlaid by elements derived from secular ceremonies as the liturgies of the European countries; that it gives great importance to repentence and conversion, to resurrection and new life, to the last judgement and parousia; that its prayers and odes and hymns abound in Scriptural allusions and Scriptural expressions from the Old and New Testaments. Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Sara, Issac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses and Aaron, Elias and the other prophts, the Machabees, all have found a place in this liturgy along with the New Testament saints. All these are remembered generally in odes (*onitha*) which from the bulk of the prayers of this liturgy. Each strophe of the odes is based on a versicle, or on versicles of the Sacred Scriptures, especially of the Psalms. Prayers addressed to God (theologically or christologically), commemoration of the Blessed Virgin Mary, John the Baptist, Saints Peter and Paul, the Apostles, the Evangelists, Doctors, Martyrs, especially St. Stephen and George and other saints, the patron of the church, and of the dead, references to the Cross and to the Church, are the matter of these odes, and of several other prayers, recited every day more than twice in the Divine Office. The movable feasts of saints of the *temporal* of the calendar follow this order, more or less, after Christmas and Epiphany; and they are arranged in the spirit of the communion of saints and of the relation of saints to the mysteries of Christ to which their feasts are coordinated and subordinated. Saints are generally commemorated on Fridays to remind us of their victory in Christ who conquered death on a Friday. On all ferial days (except during lent) twice a day martyrs are commemorated in a special way through special odes. Those in authority, the sick, the weak, the oppressed, the needy, the widows, the poor, are all remembered every day, and every day prayers are

offered for peace in the whole world and for concord between the Church and the civil authorities. The liturgical year, as we shall see, commemorates the life of Christ, and the vicissitudes of the Church and her children with their final glory in heaven. In the company of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of the other saints, we make our approach to God, which approach we ourselves make apart from their company also.

The *Syriac Pscita* is the version of the Sacred Scriptures that is used in this liturgy. The vespertine psalms (*maria qrethak* etc. of *ramsa*) and the morning psalms (of *sapra*) said every day in the Divine Office, are those coming down from the synagogue.

Says Cardinal Tisserant:

> "The antiquity, the wealth and the admirable elegance of the East Syrian liturgy do not require proof or confirmation; these stand out to the wonder and admiration of every one. All scholars in the science of ecclesiastic liturgies testify with one accord that this liturgy has preserved and faithfully transmitted the ancient tradition of the public prayer of the Christian Church."
>
> (Preface to the Chaldean Breviary, Rome 1958).

CHAPTER XIII

The East Syrian Liturgy: Its Different Items

The Caleandar

Before coming to the different items of the East Syrian liturgy we will give here a brief description of its calendar. The calendar consists of the *temporal sanctoral* and *ferial* days.

A

The *temporal* (*hudra*: cycle) of the calendar deals with the division of the ecclesiastical year into several peroids or seasons of unequal length, called weeks (*sabo'e*) which begin and end with Sundays. They are:

1) Annunciation (*subara*: four Sundays before Christians and the period within: remind us of creation, fall, promise of the Redeemer, annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary). 2) Nativity (*yalda*: birth of Christ. adoration of the shepherds and of the Magii). 3) Ephiphany (*denha*: baptism of Christ, His manifestation to the world, the calling of the Apostles). 4) Lent (*souma raba:* 7 weeks; omitting Sundays, there are 42 days, of which the last Friday and Saturday respectively commemorate the Passion and death of Christ: thus there are 40 days of lent in memory of our Lord's fast). 5) Resurretion (*gyamtha*: the commemoration of the apparitions of Christi also). 6) Ascension (*sulaqa*). 7) Apostles (*slihe*: descent of the Holy Ghost, preaching of the Apostles). 8) Summer

(*qaita:* the growth of the Church, persecution). 9) Cross (*sliba:* the second coming of Christ). 10) Elias (*elia*) precedes the Cross – and 11) Moses (*muse*) follows the Cross (to remind us of Elias and Moses who were with Christ on Mount Thabor at His transfiguration which also points to His second glorious coming). 12) Dedication of the Church (*qudas 'edtha:* the final glory of the Church and its dedication to the Father by the son).

Taking Annunciation and Nativity together, Resurrection and Ascension together, Elias, Cross and Moses together, we have eight periods or seasons, each of which has a special signification and spirit. It is within the cycles of the periods of the *temporal* that the feasts of the mysteries of our Lord, and of the mysteries of our salvation are celebrated. Movable feasts of the saints, and the commemoration of the dead which generally fall on Fridays (the commemoration of the dead falls on the Friday before the beginning of lent) go along with the seasons of the *temporal* and form a part of the *temporal* as the different seasons of fasts do. In the *temporal* are indicated days on which the Eucharisitic Sacrifice is offered or not. This perfectly agrees with the custom of the ancient Church, though Catholics today celebrate the Eucharistic Sacrifice almost every day. As we hinted in the preceding section, the feasts of saints that form part of the *temporal* are focussed to the feasts of the mysteries of our Lord. This East Syrian *temporal* brought almost to prefection in the VII century, is considered by many as more perfect and more significant than the *temporals* of certain other liturgies.

B

The *sanctoral* (*gaza:* treasure) consists of immovable feasts. The *sanctoral,* even if the movable feasts of the

temporal also are added to it, is not very elaborate like the *sanctoral* of the Roman liturgy. But the tendency now is to reduce the Roman *sanctoral.* The Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council says:

> "The mind of the faithful must be directed above all to the feasts of our Lord in which the mysteries of salvation are celebrated through out the year. Hence the Proprium of the *temporal* should obtain its proper place over the feasts of the saints, so that the whole cycle of the mysteries of salvation be observed in the proper way". (n. 108)

Certainly the East Syrian *sancotral* was drawn up on the idea contained in the words of the Council, since it had given importance to the *temporal.* Here we see how faithfully the East Syrian liturgy has kept up the tradition of the Church in this important point. Catholics have added certain feasts to the sanctoral.

C

Days of the calendar that are not Sundays, or feasts day, or days of important fasts (of the *temporal*), are *ferial* (*shim*: ordinary). They also follow the spirit of the seasons of the *temporal* which, as we said, insists on the mysteries of our salvation. This can be seen from the *propria* of the Divine Office for the *ferials.*

If no feast falls on them, Wednesday is the day of "the blessed Mother of our God", on Friday are commemorated the dead, and on Saturday the Cross and the Church. The last two however, follow the spirit of the season of the *temporal,* and have for that purpose *propria* in the Divine Office, as said above. The Wednesday in

question has no such *propria*, except during the important fasts of the *temporal*; then also it retains its Marian aspect. (Here and elsewhere, by "propria" we mean "propria" strictly so called, namely propria a of seasons.

> Calendar is an important factor in all liturgies. it is on it, especially on its *temporal*, that all liturgical celebrations are pivoted.

> We will now give a brief description of the various items of the East Syrian liturgy. It is beyond our scope to enter into the structure, history, contents, spirit and so on, of these items taken individually or collectively. All these should from the subject matter for further studies for which we herein prepare the back-ground.

The Eucharistic Sacrifice: Qurbana

The Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council has the following about the Eucharistic Sacrifice:

> "Our Saviour at the last Supper, in the night in which He was betrayed, instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice of His Body and Blood, so that by the same He might perpetuate through centuries, until His coming, the Sacrifice of the Cross, and might confide to the Church, His beloved Spouse, the memorial of His Death and Resurrection: the Sacrament of piety; sign of unity; bond of charity; the paschal repast in which Christ is received, and the mind is filled with grace; the pledge of future glory". (n. 47)

Euchologion of Serapion:

> Complete this sacrifice with Thy Power and with Thy participation for it is to Thee we have offered

> up this living sacrifice, this unbloody Gift. To Thee we have offered this Bread, the oblation of the Body of the only-begotten".

All these ideas are more than once expressed in telling terms through out the East Syrian qurbana. The East Syrian qurbana consists of the enarxis, the qurbana of the catechumens, the qurbana of the faithful. In the qurbana of the faithful are the "pre-anaphoral", and "post-anaphoral".

The parts other than the anaphoral consist of the Common and the Propria; the latter are assigned for Sundays, for feast days, for certain fast days, and for certain other days (of the *temporal*). Of these, the Propria, widely so called (a few orations, hymns and final seals) are marked for all Sundays and feast days in general for the whole year. The Propria in the strict sense, on the other hand, are special for each Sunday of the *temporal*, and for each feast day of the *temporal* and *sanctoral* (movable and immovable feasts), and for certain fast days and certain other days (of the *temporal*).

The quarbana of the catechumens has normally four Scriptural readings: Law and the Prophets, the Epistle and the Gospel, which are generally in separate books – one book for the first two, a book for each of the other two. As the Propria strictly so called, so also the Scriptural readings, are arranged for each Sunday of the *temporal*, for each feast day of the *temporal* and *sanctoral* (movable and immovable feasts), and for certain fast days and certain other days (of the *temporal*).

The anaphoral part of the qurbana changes with seasons or days. Several anaphoras were in use before the VII century. Now there are only three, attributed (falsely) to Addai and Mari, to Thodore and to

Nestorius. The Chaldeans call the latter two "the Second" and the "Third", the "First" being the one of Addai and Mari. We do not enter into the question of the absence of the account of the last Supper and the words of Institution in the existing pre-XVI century mass of the anaphora of Addai and Mari. The Chaldeans have inserted them in the text (a bit latinised). The Nestorians of the Middle East, we have known from inquiry, generally recite them from memory, or from writings they take with them when they celebrate this anaphora; some keep them written in hand in the text of the qurbana itself. The Urmia edition of this anaphora prepared by the Anglicans in 1890, for the use of the Nestorians, has inserted the passage in question, in the text of the anaphora. In Malabar it was inserted in the text, in the XVI century, and then it underwent certain changes by way of latinisation. The omission of the passage in the mass could have been made out of respect for the holy words (in accordance with the early Judaic traits of the anapora) and so could not have implied an omission in celebration (Cf. I.H. Dalmais, *The Eastern Liturgies*, London, 1960, p. 90). The Maronite recension of this anaphora contains the passage in question.

The bread used is leavened. The Chaldeans have given up the ancient form and designs of the bread, and make it like the Latin water. They have not also the *malka* the Nestorians mix with the dough. The ceremonies for kneading and baking are also omitted by the Chaldeans.

The Divine Office

The Divine Office follows the *temporal* (*hudra*), *sancotoral* (*gaza*) and the *ferial* (*shim*) of the calendar, and its parts also are known by the same names as *Hudra, Gaza* and

Shim. Hudra contains offices for all Sundays, movable feasts, movable fast days and certain ferial days;[1] *Gaza* contains offices for immovable feasts; *Shim* contains offices for ferial days.

Each day's office consists of three "hours", *ramsa, lelya* and *sapra* which may be translated as evening, night and morning hours. On lenten days there are also other hours as *suba'a, quta'a, edana,* (*suyaka ?*). *Ramsa. lelya* and *sapra* have each (except the *sapra* of *shim*) the common and the propria. The propria of Sundays, fast days and certain other days of the *hudra,* and those of the *shim* refer to the spirit of the season as seen in the calendar; the propria of *gaza* (immovable feasts to which we may add the movable feasts of the *hudra*) refer to the feasts. We have already spoken about the speciality of ordinary (*shim*) Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Each day of the week is *qadmaya* (first), or *ahraya* (second). Friday is also *mes'aitha* (middle). Parts of *ramsas* of *shim* and fast days, as well as parts of *lelya* of Sundays (of the *hudra*) are changed according to this distinction; parts of *lelya* of Wedneday of the *shim* also keep this distinction.

We have treated the Divine Office immediately after the qurbana since both go together. At the close of *sapra* are indicated the *propria* of the day's qurbana, if there is qurbana according to the ancient custom. On certain days qurbana is celebrated immediately after *ramsa.* The *propria*

1) "Movable fast days and certain ferial days": some may include these in *shim* or erial days; since they have certain specialities proper to them we have put them in *hudra.*

of these days are indicated after *ramsa*. Among these days there were also days of qurbana of the presanctified.

In olden days the Offices were found dispersed in different ms codices with no order. There were collection called: 1) *qdam wbathar* – before and after – which were parts of the *ramsa* that were recited before and after the vespertine psalms, 2) *kaskol* or propria of *ramsas* of fast days and ferial days: they were recited as "ode of *ramsa*" or *baseliqe*, 3) *qale* or odes that enter mostly into *lelya*, 4) *sahde* or odes in honour of martyrs, 5) *mawthba* or odes composed chiefly of *qale*, and it formed an important part of the monastic office, 6) *qala dsahara* or the cathedral office of *lelya* of the *hudra* and *gaza*, 7) *david* or psalmody divided into several sections with a few canticles from the other parts of the Sacred Scriptures, 8) *karozutha* or proclamatory prayers of the deacon, 9) several kinds of hymns said during the different hours. All these have been put together in the proper order for the Chaldeans, and are printed in three volumes as "Breviarium Chaldaicum" which has gone through two editions. The first (*qdam wbathar*) was separately printed by the Chaldeans by the Nestorians of the Middle East and Trichur. The Nestorians of Trichur have printed the *hudra* also. The title of these publications is baffling since the contents often go beyond what is signified by the title.

The Divine Office is so rich that whenever there is need of formulating a new ceremony for something new, appopriate preyers can be selected from it. There is a special office at the beginning of months inorder to ask for blessings during the month. Psalms play a very important part through out the Office. All the aspects of

prayer are beautifully brought out in the odes, hymns, orations etc. The ode or *ramsa* (*baseliqe)*, of *lelya* (*qala dsahara*), and of *sapra* of Sunday's Office and the "ode of the mysteries" of Sunday's qurbana, are respectively said at the beginning of *mawthbas* (*res mawthbas)* of *lelyas* of the following ferial Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. In this manner the spirit of Sunday is kept up throughout the week.

The Pontificals

The Pontificals contain rites for consecrating churches and portable altars (*dapa*) with oil blessed during the rite, for reconciling desecrated churches (without oil), for ordinations of *qaroya* (orders below that of *qaroya* are absolete), subdeacon, deacon, priest, corepiscopus, (periodotus), archdeacon, (economus) archdeacon of the Patriarch, bishop, metropolitan. Patriarch. There are also rituals for the translation of a bishop from one see to another, and for the perfecting of a bishop after his ordination. Some of these are not in use now. Still, they have great value in the study of the ancient tradition of the Church. Bishops and metropolitans were ordained for a see or for region.

The vestition and tonsure of monks and nuns, blessing of Abbots, Abesses and Deaconesses, and several other blessings were reserved to the bishops. Many of them are obsolete now.

Fr. J.M. Vostè, O.P., President of the Commission for the restoration of the ancient East Syrian Pontifical for the Malabar Church says:

"Any one who reads the whole text of the Pontificals of the East Syrians will realise and praise their

primitive biblical, and especially, evangelical style, and their highly pious and christian sense. Even after abstracting our mind from the properly biblical texts and from the innumerable citations of the psalms, it can be said that there exists in them almost no prayer, no hymn or qanona which does not contain or present a biblical, and in specie an evangelical expression or figure regarding the christian cult, its history, sign of antiquity and genuine purity".

Pontificale Juxta Ritum Syrorum Orientalium (Latin translation) 4 parts, Vatican, 1937–1938, p. 285.

The prayers and invocations of Pontifical services are largely grouped around selected psalms appropriate for the rite.

According to the ancient practice, there was no anointing with chrism in the administration of Confirmation. Confirmation was administered along with Baptism by priests with the imposition of hand and a prayer. The Chaldeans have introduced the rite of consecrating chrism by the Patriarch (bishop); priests use this carism for Confirmation. The rite of consecrating chrism is new, but is East Syrian in its prayers and structure.

In the East Syrian liturgy there is only consecration of churches with oil; there is no blessing of churches as in the Roman liturgy. In churches not consecrated with oil, qurbana can be celebrated on *dapa* (portable altar).

The Other Sacraments

1. Baptism and Confirmation go together. The Chaldean priests, after reciting the prayer with the impo-

sition of hands (see above) anoint the baptised as it is done in the Roman lirurgy, using the chrism consecrated by the Patriarch (bishop), and reciting the form of confirmation translated form Latin into East Syriac. They should not have made this translation. According to the ancient rite there is an anointing at this stage with the oil blessed during the rite. But this pertains to the declaration of Baptism and Confirmation already conferred, though some took it as Confirmation. The Latin 'active' for of baptism too is used.

2. In former times there were formulas for absolving penitents, in some cases anointing them with oil also. For the rite of administering the sacrament of Penance the Chaldeans have translated into East Syriac the corresponding rite of the Roman liturgy. They should not have made this translation, but could have taken the old formulas, or could have composed a new one in the spirit of the old.

3. In ancient days sick people were given to drink water in which was dissolved earth taken from the sepulchre of saints and blessed with oil (*hnana*). This might have been the Sacrament of the sick. In fact in the Roman liturgy, in the V century, there were three ways for administering the Sacrament of the sick: through anointing, through aspersion and through drink. In the last case, the sick were given to drink oil which was blessed and to which was added water (*L'Osservatore Romano*, article by E. Testa, p. 5 of Jan. 31, 1963). The Chaldeans have translated into East Syriac the rite of anointing of the sick and the prayers that go along with it, from the Roman liturgy. They could have formulated a rite in the spirit of the East Syrian liturgy instead of making this translation. There are several formulas in

the East Syrian liturgy that could be adopted for the purpose.

4. For marriage there are elaborate services which are ancient, though the Chaldeans have given up the rite in which the spouses are made to drink from a chalice wine or water mixed with earth taken from the sepulchre of saints. Betrothal, Coronation, shutting and opening of the bride chamber are the three parts of the rite of matrimony.

The order of the rites for administering the Sacraments are similar to those of the Qurbana and Divine Office in form and structure. Thus harmony is kept up in all these according to the physiognomy of the liturgy. It is hoped that the Chaldeans will give up the translations and in their place will formulate rites in conformity with the spirit of the East Syrian liturgy. They set their hand to the translation because of some who doubted about the validity of certain ancient practices. Because of such doubts they had translated from Latin even the Pontificals. But this translation has been given up.

Sacramentals

We have already spoken about the ecclesiastical calendar and the Divine Office. We will now speak about some of the other more important Sacramentals.

1. Funeral services

There are funeral services for laymen (*'anida:* for children and adults) and for ecclesiastics (*kahanaitha:* for clerics, priests, bishops, metropolitans, Patriarchs). There

are special services on fixed days after the burial. On the whole, all the services are modelled on the structure of the Divine Office.

2. Blessings

There are several blessings for houses, fields etc. and also exorcisms. The Chaldeans have adopted from the Roman liturgy the Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament with ancient East Syrian hymns. They have also composed from ancient hymns and orations the rite of washing of the feet on Holy Thursday. A few blessings they have taken from the Rituale Romanum.

3. Fasts and Abstinence

The fasts are: 24 days' before Christmas, 3 days' or Jonas's that ends 18 days before the beginning of lent, 49 days' of lent as said above, 40 (49) days' after Pentecost, (not important), 14 days' before the feast of the Assumption of our Lady (Aug. 15), and the fasts of Virgins and of Elias or Cross, now absolete Days of fast are also days of abstinence. Abstinence permits only vegetable food. All Sundays and feast days during seasons of fasts, all Wednesdays and Fridays outside the same seasons are days of abstinence (fast?) as said above. It would seem that Fridays after Christmas were days of fast. The Chaldeans have mitigated all these, while the fasts of Virgins and Elias seem to have disappeared even among the Nestorians. Wine and tobacco were forbidden on fast days. We have left out the fasts kept on the vigils of certain feasts, or as preparation for them.

4. Churches

Churches are rectangular halls facing the west; had a platform (*bema*) in the centre of the nave. The qurbana of the Catechumens was to be celebrated on the bema.

The altar was near the eastern wall. The sanctuary, choir (*qestroma*) and the nave were the parts of the church. The sanctuary (*madbaha* or *qanke*) was a little raised and was separated from the choir (*qestroma*) by a veil that was opened and closed during services. There were niches (*beth gaza*) on the sides of the altar to place the chalice and bread before they were taken to the altar at the offertory. The sexes were separated in the nave (*haikla*). Baptistry was usually on the south and the place for the relics of martyrs (*beth dahde*) on the north, both outside the sanctuary.

5. Feasts

We do not think it necessary to add anything more to what we have already said about feasts. The Chaldeans have added Corpus Christi, Sacred Heart...to the *temporal*, St. Barbara, St. Nicholas, Immaculate Conception, Annunciation...to the *sanctoral*.

6. Music

The East Syrian liturgy has its own music which has been a little touched by Arabic tunes. The Chaldeans have put some parts into notes.

7. Dress

For liturgical functions priests and bishops use the ancient vestments. Both the Chaldeans and the Nestorians have lost all ideas about the ancient liturgical head dress (*birona*) and mantle (*ma'apra*) of bishops. The Chaldeans use the Latin mitre. But they could have designed something proper to the spirit of the liturgy, or something of their own. Since there was no rule regarding the bishop's crozier, the Chaldeans may not be found fault with for using croziers similar to those of Latin bishops. But why can't they have something of their own? The Chaldean

clergy often use the Western soutane; but they have the Oriental over coat, and the turban peculiar to them. Chaldean bishops, outside and in the liturgy, put on Latin soutane with red sash skull cap, ring. Since these are not liturgical, they could conveniently give them up in favour of substitutes of their own, if necessary.

CHAPTER XIV

The East Syrian Liturgy in the Malabar Church

A

By the Malabar Church is meant the Church in India which today is known as the Syro-Malabar, or, the Chaldeo- Malabar Church. Often it is termed the Malabar Church.

The Malabar Church hails the Apostle St. Thomas as its Apostle and Founder. From time immemorial, the Malabar Church has been using the East Syrian liturgy, though after the XVI century this liturgy has undergone several changes. Till the end of the XVI century the Prelates who ruled over the Malabar Church were East Syrians, sent directly, or indirectly by the East Syrian Patriarch of Seleucia-Ctesiphon.

We do not know when exactly the Malabar Church got the East Syrian liturgy, or when exactly it came under the East Syrian Patriarch.

Even before the dawn of Christianity, India, chiefly South India, had cultural and commercial contacts with the middle East. Excavations in ancient Babylon and in the Ur of the Chaldeans have brought to light remnants of teak wood. *Thulasi*, a sacred plant of the non-Christians of India, is known by the same name in the Middle East also, and its meaning there is "purifier". That two edicts of Asoka were executed in Aramaic, speaks of Jewish influence in N. W. India, during the pre-Christian era.

> Cf. Burnet, Aramaic Inscriptions from Taxila, *Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 1915, pp. 340–342; Cowley, First Asokan Inscription from India, *Ibid.* pp. 342–347; Herezfeld, New Asokan Inscription from Taxila, *Epigraphia Indica*, XIX, pp. 251-252; Marshal, *Guide to Taxila*, pp. 78, 79, and XIII a.

Aramaic whose classical form is Syriac, was the commercial language of the East till the rise of Islam. There was Jewish influence in Malabar also. The existence of the "White Jews" in Cochin who migrated thither from Cranganore (Muziris = Musiri-kod) and their copper-plate-grant that goes back to a very early century of the Christian era, are proof for the Jewish influence in Malabar during the early centuries. Cranganore, known as Muziris in Latin and Tamil literatures, was a great emporium of trade where different cultures met in ancient days. St Ambrose refers to it as "Muzirim totius Indiae citra Gangem emporium" (M.L. 17, 1133).

The early contacts Malabar had with the Middle East must have helped the Christians of both the places to come into mutual relations in the very early centuries of the Christian era. There were also Christian immigrations into Malabar from the Middle East.

The East Syrian liturgy, therefore, which had its origin and development in (East) Syriac, the classical form of Aramaic, could have been known in Malabar from the very beginning. It was a liturgy that in the early centuries developed outside the *limes romanus*. The Malabar Church does not seem to have developed a liturgy of its own, whatever might have been the way in which the fluid liturgy of the Apostolic period was performed there. Hence, the only *developed* liturgy (i.e. liturgy as we know today) the Malabar Church has had must be said to be the East Syrian. The Malabarians loved it as their own. It seems that by what they wanted to preserve as "The law of Thomas", which the Portuguese misunderstood as heresy, was this liturgy in a special manner. Vatican Syriac Codex, 22, which is an Epistolarium, written in Cranganore, in 1301, is perhaps the oldest ms of the East Syrian liturgy of Malabar we posses today.

> "Three representatives Malabar lay leaders wrote to the Pope in 1578 saying "Our prayers are in the Syriac or the Chaldean language which was handed on to us by Our Lord St. Thomas. We and our predecessors have been taught this language" (S. Giamil, Genuinae relationes ..... Rome, 1902, Doc. XX.

B

In the XVI century the Portuguese made all possible efforts to suppress the liturgy of the Malabar Church in favour of the Roman Latin. These efforts had their culmination in the so called synod of Diamper celebrated by Dom Menezes, the Portuguese Latin archbishop of Goa in 1599, after the death of Mar Abraham, the

last East Syrian Prelate of Malabar. By the end of 1599 "Portuguese" Latin Prelates of the "Padroado" jurisdiction began to rule over the Malabarians, Roz SJ being the first of these series, to which series was added another of Prelates of the "Propaganda" jurisdiction since 1655. With the exception of Mar Alexander Parampil (Propaganda: 1662–1687/91), Archdeacon Mathew (Padroado: 1694–1701/6), Mar Joseph Cariattil (Padroado: 1782–1786), Administrators Thomas Paremmakal (Padroado: 1786–1799) and George Sankurikal (Padroado: 1800–1801), all the Prelates who ruled over the Malabar Church from 1599 to 1896, whether of the Padroado or of the Propaganda series, were Latins. These Latin Prelates also especially Roz SJ (1599–1624) mutilated the East Syrian liturgy of Malabar, and highly latinised (romanised) it through juxtaposition of parts taken from the Roman liturgy.

They could have stopped with removing the Nestorian formulas found in the liturgical books brought down from the Middle East. We have seen what the nature of these formulas were, and how the East Syrians who kept them in their liturgy, had admitted in the same liturgy "communicatio idiomatum" and the Roman Primacy. The subtleties of the Theodorian terms were of no consequence to the Malabarians. The encomiums directed towards Nestorius, and the maledictions showered on St. Cyril and Ephesus, did not in any way make sectarians of the Malabarians. Otherwise, they would not have, as they did, spontaneously entered into friendly relations in matters religious with the Portuguese as with their brethren in faith. Roz SJ, who in 1585 or 1586 fished out Nestorian passages from East Syrian books found in Malabar, who thought that the East

Syrian Patriarch and the Prelates sent by him to Malabar were Nestorians, and who termed even the Malabarians as Nestorians, in the same breath confessed that the Malabarians "professed the Catholic Roman faith" (De Erroribus Nestorianorum qui in hac India Orientali versantur; *Orientalia Christiana*, Romae, n. 40, 1928). Some 16 years later the same Roz SJ, on Dec. 7, 1601, wrote the following about the Malabarians:

> "These Christians are certainly the oldest in this Orient ... having been converted from idolatry ... to our most holy faith by the Apostle St. Thomas; and although they have lived among heathens, Jews and Maumethans, they have always till this time (semper ... usque ad hac tempus) stood very firm in the faith (in fide constantissimi perstiterunt)".

Jesuit Archives, Rome, Goa, 15, f. 52.

But the fact remains that their liturgy was handled in a way that is really shocking. It is such a liturgy that the Malabar Prelates received from their Latin predecessors in 1896, from which year the present indigeneous Malabar regime begins. The former Malabarian Prelates mentioned above as well as those of the modern period too have had their share in latinising their liturgy. What they did was not much, and they did it in continuation of what was already done. In the case of some there was also real reluctance.

CHAPTER XV

The East Syrian Liturgy In The Malabar Church: Its Items (Post-XVI-Century)

In the last section we have said that the East Syrian liturgy was and is the liturgy of the Malabar Church, though it under went several unhealthy changes. The scope of this section is to give a picture of the same as it exists with the changes it under went. Since it is now in the process of restoration, we will speak also about the items already restored.

References to the ecclesiastical calendar will be made along with the qurbana and the Divine Office.

The Eucharistic Sacrifice: Qurbana

All the anaphoras except the one of Addai and Mari have been given up. The qurbana begins with the sign of the cross as in the Roman Mass. Then follow a dialogue between the celebrant and minister (or choir): the celebrant says *puqdabkon* (= your commandment), and the minister, *puqdaneh damsiha* (= the commandment of Christ), and then *sanctus* similar to the *sanctus* of the Eucharistic prayer of the qurbana. Except a few orations and a few hymns and some final seals (*huthama*) assigned for Sundays and feasts in general (propria widely so called), all the other propria (propria strictly so called) have disappeared. The low, sung, solemn and solemn

Pontifical (the last of a recent composition) forms of celebration have been introduced in imitation of the Roman usage. Except in the most solem form called Raza, the creed (a translation of the Roman form) is said before the dissmissal of the catechumens (a liturgical error), and the *lavabo* takes place after the offertory.

> The Raza has preserved some more ancient things, such as: change of the initial psalmody (2 sets), kissing of the cross and its ode (one set), one reading from tho Old Testament (istead of two) before the Epistle, *Suraya* and *zumara* (2 sets) before and after the Epistle, turgama (one set each) before the Epistle and Gospel, a long *karozutha* after the Gospel, prostrations with their ode (one set) before the accessus ad altare. Some of these are propria strictly so called; but they are used without change. The two sets of *Suraya* and *zumara* are used alternately for requiem Raza and non-requiem Raza, so also are the initial psalmodies.

The account of the last Supper and the words of Institution are seen outside the anaphoral part, and they are translation from the Roman missal fitted into the middle of an ancient prayer in an erroneous grammatical construction. A prayer of oblation taken out of the context from the Maronite qurbana, is put just before the communion service (XVIII century addition). The Communion service, on the whole, is a transiation of the Roman one of the XVI century with *confiteor* etc. The *Agnus Dei* also is taken from the Roman Missal. In the Roman Missal it is part of the ceremony of Pax. But in all the Oriental liturgies, even in this Malabar qurbana, Pax is given before the Sursum dialogue.

The actions, gestures, ceremonies are mostly Roman. The *temporal* and *sanctoral* of the calendar (latter with some exceptions, v. g. the two feasts of St. Thomas Dec. 18, and July 3) are those of the Roman Calendar of the XVI century. There are only to Scriptural readings for the qurbana, and they are the same as those of the Roman Missal. The passages of the *Syriac Pscita* not agreeing with those of the Vulgate, are made to agree with those of the latter. Additions made to the *sanctoral* in the XIX and XX centuries also are Latin. The speciality of feasts consists in the Scriptural readings alone. There is no mention in the missal of the fasts special to the liturgy, simply because such fasts are not in the Roman missal, though some of these fasts are still in force *salva dispensatione*. Scriptural readings, however, for the 3 day's (Jonas's) fast was added in the XIX century. But even here there is difference of pericopes in the local editions of the missal.

The services for blessing candles (with procession) on February 2, and ashes on the first Wednesday of Lent (although the lent begins 2 days earlier!), the nuptial blessing within the qurbana (rearranged in the XIX century), services (other than the Divine Office) for Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday (with the washing of feet), Good Friday (with the Mass of the Presanctified) Holy Saturday (which last was translated in the XIX century) are all translations from the Roman missal. All these except the services of Holy Saturday are put in the missal. In the Mass of the Presanctified the Pater Noster is introduced with the ancient formula, instead of with the *Preceptis salutaribus*.

In 1957 the Holy See restored the qurbana with its accessories, in accordance with ancient usages.

The use of leavened bread has been restored (*facultative*) though no mention is made about its from and designs. The use of unleavened bread was introduced by the East Syrian Prelate Mar Joseph (+1569) due to Portuguese pressure. The text of the restored anaphora of Addai and Mari deviates a little from that used by the Chaldeans and the Nestorians, especially regarding the position of the anamnesis, doxologies, and the passage of the account of the last Super with the words of Institution. There is provision to use the other two anaphoras. The use of the vernacular too is sanctioned. The S. Oriental Congregation has published in East Syriac the text of the restored qurbana with the anaphora of Addai and Mari, and also a guide entitled "Ordo Celebrations Quddasa juxta usum Ecclesiae Syro-Malabarensis" as well as "Supplementum Mystriorum sive Proprium Missarum de tempore et de santisjuxta ritum Ecclesiae Syro-Malabarensis. (Alwaye, 1960, and Romae, 1959 respectively). The Holy Week services are not restored.

The Divine Office

A

The ancient East Syrian *hudra* with several corrections, mutilations and readjustments was made to suit the Roman calendar. It has come down in mass. But the use of these mass was given up by 1876 when a Sunday Office, with *qadmaya* and *ahraya* divisions was printed. This Office is now said for all Sundays (*qadmaya* and *ahraya* alternated) through out the year. This again, is a collection of Offices that were said during lent and the 3 days' (Jonas's) fast.

The propria of its *ramsa* are restricted to the initial Psalmody (the ancient usage), and to the second strophe *'alam* of the ode of *ramsa* (*baseliqa*) with the oration that follows it. The first strophe of this ode is the same now, and so it does not agree in spirit and idea with the 2nd (i.e. *'alam* that changes). What is of interest here is that these *'alams* with the orations that follow, keep the ancient East Syrian *temporal* while the qurbana of the day keeps the Roman *temporal* and *sanctoral.* Hence, in the Divine Office, Epiphany is baptism of our Lord, when in the qurbana it is adoration of the Magii; the first Sunday of lent in qurbana is 2nd Sunday of lent in the Divine Office.. The *Suraya* that comes after the *basiliqe* also has no change.

The propria of *lelya* of the Sunday Office in question consist of one only hymn said at the end of *mawthba* during the periods of annunciation and nativity, according to the ancient East Syrian calender. In place of variable hymns for the other seasons, the one for the Epiphany season is said through out the year. Another proprium, if we may call is so, it the non-existence of the *'alam* of *ramsa* (said above) and of the *'alam* of the ode of *qala dsahara* of *lelya* from the beginning of lent till Pentecost Sunday. This is an ancient custom. In place of the other propria, those of a Sunday of the penitential season are said throughout the year! In the selection of Psalmody for *lelya* there is difference from the old system.

The *sapra* of the Sunday Office in question has no porpria at all. In the place of propria, those for a Sunday of the penitential season are said through out the year.

The only ancient Divine Office of the Holy week that has come down is a part of the *lelya* of Good

Friday. But it is not said everywhere. In place where it is said, it is said with the ceremonies of the Latin *tenebrae.*

The Office of the Resurrection week, which is a part of *hudra,* has come down almost entire. For the Friday within the octave, however, the above mentioned Sunday's Office (*ramsa, qala dsahra* and *sapra*) is inserted, since according to the ancient calendar, this Friday is the Friday of Confessors which the Roman calendar has not.

> The diocesan priests say ramsa, qala d' sahra and sapra of the Sunday office mentiond here throughout the resurrection week. But the Sunday office in question is an office of the penitential season!

The Office for the feast of *Corpus Christi* (the feast was introduced in the XVI century) is composed of translations made in the XVII century (by Roz SJ) from the Roman Breviary and of portions of the ancient *hudra* where it treats of the Blessed Srcrament. But in structure it is East Syrian as all the other Offices.

The service before qurbana on Resurrection Sunday is a mixture of the old with translations from Latin.

B

The *gaza* proper, or the ancient East Syrian Offices for immovable feasts, along with the offices of the *hudra* for certain movable feasts, was greately modified. From ancient texts, from new compositions and from translations, Offices were composed for several feasts in imitation of the Roman Breviary, the structure of the Offices having been kept East Syrian of these offices, those for any feast of the Blessed Virigin Mary, for Apostles, for one Apostle, for Evangelists,

for martyrs, for one martyr, for confessors, for doctors, for confessors who are doctors, for confessors who are doctors and bishops, for virgins, for holy women, are printed. Of special Offices for feasts, only those for Christmas (old with translations), and for the feast of St. Thomas on July 3, are printed. All these printed Offices, with those mentioned above, namely, the Offices for Resurrection week and *Corpus Cristi* feast, are recited in CMI houses according to the Roman calendar followed in the qurbana. The vespers sung on the eve of certain feasts are *ramsa* of feasts found in thc adove mentioned mass of the *gaza* (and *hudra*). Most of them are in the aforesaid printed part that is used in CMI houses. They are also printed separately. In this separate collection are found *ramsas* also for the feasts of holy Angels, of St. Joseph and of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the last two being those found in the Chaldean Breviary; some of the orations, however, that come after the ode of *baseliqe* are translations from Latin. This collection contains several other services such as those of feasts of Confraternities etc. The speciality of solemn feasts, therefore, is that they have the *ramsa* Office, but have no *lelya* nor *sapra*, except in CMI houses. All the diocesan priests who say the *ramsa* in question, say also the *shim* Office of the day (see below), or if the feast falls on a Sunday, the Sunday Office mentioned above.

Before qurbana on Christmas day, there is a service which is a mixture of portions of the ancient *ramsa* of the day with translations from the Latin, to which is added the ancient custom of making procession around fire lit up in front of the church.

C

The *shim* (Office for ferial days) is absolved in two weeks' time (*qadmaya* and *ahraya*) with an Office for each

day of the week. The same Office is said through out the year, even during the lent, no consideration being given to the liturgical seasons whether East Syrian, or Roman. It has no propria according to the *temporal.*

The propria of the ancient *ramsas (baseliqa)* for the first two weeks of the period of annunciation are said through out the whole year. The odes in honour of martyrs are said throught the year, though, according to the ancient custom they are to be left out during lent.

The *lelya,* too, has no propria. Its *mawthbas* which should form propria according to the ancient East Syrian *temporal,* are selections from the old odes (*qale*) said mostly during penitential seasons. Hence, if Christmas falls on a Saturday, the *mawthba* said on that day (by diocesan priests who do not use the *gaza* mentioned above) begins with the crucifixion of our Lord. The passage is taken from the *ramsa* of Holy Saturday, said at sun set on Good Friday, according to the ancient *hudra!* In the selection of the initial Psalmody also there is difference from the old Office.

The *sapra* has no propria, and this agrees with the ancient usage. The odes in honour of martyrs are said during lent also; because the lenten propria have disappared.

The one Office for Sundays mentioned above, and the *shim* just mentioned, are printed together. This has made the impression on many that the Divine Office of the Malabar Church consists only of this printed volume. Everything concerning the ancient Divine Office has been forgotten.

During lent (from Septuagessima Sunday!) the *qanonas* psalms are said for *lelya;* so also during lent (not from

septuagessima) the last two versicles of the psalm *miserere* are added to this psalm in *sapra.* Are these propria?

The *karozutha* that is at the end of *lelya* is, in Malabar, put in the beginning of *sapra.* According to the ancient custom *qadmaya* and *ahraya* days occur in the same week; in Malabar a whole week is *qadmaya* or *ahraya.* In Malabar *ramsa* and *lelya* begin just like the qurbana with the sign of the cross, a dialogue and *sanctus* as said above; the dialogue *"puqdankon"* and *"puqdaneh damsiha"* is seen also before the final seal *(huthama)* at the end of *ramsa* and *sapra,* as well as before the orations of the *madrasa* of *lelya.* The *nemar* at the end of *mawthba* is *alam* for the Chaldeans for whom the *subha* is the first strophe of the order of *mawthba.*

In imitation of the Latin practice, from Septuagessima Sunday till Holy Saturday, instead of "halleloya", "Glory be to God" is said.

The S. Oriental Congregation published the "Breviarium Chaldaicum" in 1958. We have already spoken of this in a previous section. In its preface, His Em. Eugenius Card. Tisserant, the then Secretary of the S. Oriental Congregation, addresses the Chaldeans and the Malabarians, as though the publication were meant for both.

The Pontificals

Till 1960 the Malabar bishops were using the Roman Pontificals in Latin, except for the rites of blessing churches and cemeteries, and of conferring Confirmation which were translations made in the XVII century (or at the end of the XIX century for the use of indigenous Pontifically privileged priests who were Vicars General to Latin Prelates). By order of His Holiness Pope Pius

XI, the ancient Pontificals have been restored. The use of the vernacular too is sanctioned. The S. Oriental Congregation has also published a guide entitled "Ordo Persolvendi Ritus Pontificales Juxta Usum Ecclesiae Syro-Malabarensis" (Romae 1958).

Since the blessing of the oil of the sick, and of the oil for baptism, is to be performed by priests according to the East Syrian usage, and since the Ritual is not restored, the bishops have to bless these oils using the Roman formulas in Latin.

According to the restored Pontificals, there should not be blessing of churches any more as in the Roman liturgy. The bishops administer Confirmation now. The idea and practice till today have been that priests should have special faculty from Rome to administer this sacrament. But the Decree for Catholic Oriental Churches of the II Vatican Council lays down that the ancient custom of priests administering this sacrament ought to be restored among the Orientals (n.13).

Mar Joseph, the East Syrian Prelate of Malabar who died in 1569, translated into East Syriac portions of the Roman Pontificals. Similar translations were made for the use of Roz SJ, and Mar Alexander Parampil (XVII century). Thomas Paremmakal (XVIII century) worked on the translation of Mar Joseph, for the use of Mar Joseph Cariattil, with a request that Mar Joseph Cariattil and his successors should go back to the ancient East Syrian Pontificals. He said he set his hand to the work out of necessity with no intention of changing the liturgy. (Chaldean Library of Mardin, Codex 39: *Catalogue of Mons. A. Scher,* p. 76).

Other Sacraments

For the administration of the sacraments of baptism, penance extreme unction (including prayers for the dying

and the formula for imparting Plenary Indulgence) and matrimony, the Rituale Romanum with Bragan peculiarities, is used in East Syriac. The translation was made in the XVI century.

> In the rite of absolving excommunicated persons is seen that the penitent is to be slightly beaten with a stick. This was an ancient practice in the Malabar Church. For matrimony there is no wedding ring in Malabar according to the ancient usage. Instead the boy ties *thali* (small gold ornament with a cross) on the neck of the girl. This practice is still kept up. The bridal veil (*manthrakodi*) is also given to the girl according to the ancient custom. Since the XVI century (?) the girl is given a rosary also. The *thali, manthrakodi* and the rosary are blessed during the matrimonial ceremonies.

Instead of "ad omni excommunicatione suspensione et interdicto" of the Latin "min kol qanona adthanaya" is used.

Sacramentals

1. Funeral services

Funeral services, for the most part, are East Syrian; but are in disorder with Latin infiltrations and Latin externals. There are burial services for laymen, preists and infants, the last being a translation from the Roman liturgy (XIX century). For the Pope, bishops, religious etc. there are special hymns (*madrasa*), some of which have been recently taken over from the Chaldeans. The service for November 2 (Latin feast of all souls), though old, is adjusted into a Latin frame work with the singing of *miserere* etc. which characteristic could be noted also during the burial procession. The absolution of the

dead (*'anida'*) is a translation from Latin. All the important services (long or shortened) begin and end like the *ramsa* of the Divine Office. The beginning of absolution said generally after qurbana is an exception, since it begins, as a rule, abruptly without the usual initial prayers. Everything is performed in East Syriac.

Services performed in the houses of the dead after the burial is over, or on fixed days (*patinikanji* or *naloth, pula, chatham* etc.) are composed of ancient prayers with a Latin touch. These are christianised Hindu rites that have come down from time immemorial.

2. Blessings

The Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament, 40 hours' adoration etc. are all taken from the Roman rite and put into East Syriac. All other blessings and exorcisms are likewise translations from Latin. To these may be added the ceremonies of the feasts of confraternities, Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary (*ladine*), Novenas etc., all western.

The ceremony of hoisting the flag before the commencement of feasts is a local composition consisting of East Syrian and Latin prayers. The rite of conducting processions also is a similar composition.

Msgr. Bernadine OCD of Verapoly rearranged fasts and abstinences: He referred the question to the Propaganda Fide since Salvador Reis of Cranganore had promulgated the indult.

See archives of the S. Prop. Congr. Rome, Sritti referitti, India Orient. Vol. XV for 1855–56, pp. 1150–51.

Letter of Msgr. Bernardine on 2.5.1856 de fast: Ibid. 1153: attached is indult of Salvador Reis of Nov. 13, 1690

3. Fasts and Abstinences

All the fasts and abstinences of the East Syrians were kept in Malabar also. The Malabarians observed fast also on the Fridays that follow Christmas. In addition, there was a fast of 7 days before the feast of the Nativity of our Lady (Sept. 8: this fast was special to Malabar). Fasts and abstinences were observed as among the East Syrians of the Middle East. In Malabar all bathed before the beginning of fast; the touch of a low caste person was considered a hindrance to fasting. Under Latin Prelates several changes with Latin additions were introduced in the number and manner of keeping fasts and abstinences. Wednesday's abstinence (in honour of our Lady?) was transferred to Saturday. Fasts now in force (salva dispensatione) are: 24 days' before Christmas, 3 days' (Jonas's), 49 days' (lent), 7 days' mentioned above. This last one is optional. During these periods there is abstinence from flesh meat, and regular fasting (modo latino) on the eve of Christmas (anticipated to a previous Friday), on Fridays and on the last Saturday of lent. On these fast days only vegetable food is permitted. Days of abstinence in addition to these are: ember days, vigils of certain feasts, all Friday and Saturdays: on these days only flesh meat is prohibitted. Through dispensation the days of fast at present are: the eve of Christmas (anticipated as said above), and the Fridays of lent: the days of abstinence likewise are: all Fridays of the year, Wednesdays of lent and eve of the Assumption. Fasts and abstinences are now kept *modo latino*, through dispensation. If this dispensation is revoked those in force (see above) will have to be kept as said above. What if the restored calendar is to be followed?

4. Churches

Ancient churches were all built according to the East Syrian architecture regarding the interior; but there was no *bema*. In their exterior they looked like Hindu temples except for the crosses that adorned the roof and the front side. There were open air crosses in front of the churches. Processions used to go round those crosses. This custom is being kept up today also. Churches have permanent or temporary flag staffs. The paraphernalia were (now also are to a great extent) all similar to those of the Hindu temples. Modern churches keep no definite architecture. The Portuguese introduced the facade and reredos in the baroque style. These are out-moded today. Statues are kept in abundance in churches, and those on the altars are veiled during the two weeks that precede Good Friday (a Latin practice). In the nave sexes, are separated; and they have also separate doors to get in and get out.

5. Feasts

We have seen that the Roman calendar of the XVI century was introduced in to Malabar. Now with the restoration of the qurbana, the calendar too has been restored.

> The restored calendar has retained certain Latin feasts that have become dear to Malabar: these, however, in no way come into clash with the spirit of the restored calendar. Certain feasts and practices of the Chaldeans (both of the *hudra* and *gaza*) that have had no hold on the Malabarians have been given up.
>
> Cf. "Supplementum Mysteriorum sive Proprium Missarum de Tempore et de Sanctis Juxta Ritum Ecclesiae Syro-Malabarensis", Romae, 1960.

Feasts of obligation today are: Christmas, ascension, Corpus Christi, assumption and St. Thomas the Apostle (July 3: the commemoration of the Apostle's death).

6. **Music**

Music is fundamentally East Syrian; but Western tunes have invaded it a little. Some parts are put into notes. Instruments began to be used since the XIX century. Indian instruments, it seems, may in course of time take the place of Western, especially Portuguese, instruments.

7. **Dress**

Since 1962 liturgical vestments for the Eucharistic Sacrifice are ancient East Syrian for the newly ordained priests. For the rest, bishops and priests use Roman vestments both in and outside liturgical functions. But the bishops wear the pectoral cross over the chasuble when they use chasuble. Regulations regarding the different colours of the chasuble were introduced in the XIX century. The Roman chasuble was introduced by Mar Joseph (+ 1569) due to Portuguese pressure.

CHAPTER XVI

The East Syrian Liturgy in the Malabar Church: its Restoration

A

From all that we have said in the preceding section it has become clear that the post XVI century East Syrian liturgy of Malabar is a congeries of heterogeneous and

undigested elements largely taken out of their context from elsewhere. These elements sometimes even clash one another, as can be seen, v.g. in the *temporal* of the ecclesiastical calendar– the *temporal* of a liturgy is not a thing of small importance. The East Syrian liturgy of Malabar, therefore, has no identity of its own, and so it clamours for restoration. The Holy See has already started its restoration. It has had no approbation from the Holy See, not that the Holy See cannot revoke an approbation if an approbation was ever given. The Roman liturgy too is being restored, though it has had the approbation of the Holy See. True, the Malabar Missal and the Ritual were twice printed in Rome (1774, 1775 and 1844, 1845). But these editions have only the *Imprimatur* of the Master of the Apostolic Place, an any other book (even books of grammar) printed in Rome had in those days. The erection by H. H. Pope Pius XI, of "the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Rite", in 1923, was not an approbation of its *liturgical* rite. Erection of the Hierarchy for a particular "rite" is *perse* canonical, rather than liturgical. We have seen the various significations of the word "rite" in the beginning of these notes. We have also seen there that a modification or even a change of liturgy need not be a change of "rite" in the canonical sense. The liturgies of the Maronites and the Ukrainians have been delatinised years after the erection or confirmation of their Hierarchies. Now, if the erection of the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy or of the Ecclesiastical Hierarhy of the Syro-Malabar Rite, was an approobation of its liturgy, it must be said that the Roman Pontificals which the Malabar Prelates were using then in Latin, were also approved, by the Holy See. But in 1929, the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy submitted to the Holy See for approbation, an East Syrian translation of

these Pontificals. H. H. Pope Pius XI, the same Pope who erected the Hierarchy, refused approbation on Dec. 1, 1934, in the following memorable words:

> "Latinisation ought not to be encouraged among the Orientals. The Holy See intends not to latinise, but to catholicise. Half measures are neither generous nor fruitful. Let a Commission be nominated with the task of revising the most ancient Pontifical which could be printed part by part".

Thus the restoration of the East Syrian liturgy of Malabar was started. We have seen that the Pontificals, and the Qurbana with its accessories have already been restored. We have also spoken of the "Breviarium Chaldaicum" published by the S. Oriental Congregation, as though it is intended for the Malabarians also. The work of restoration proceeds. The items so far restored have been brought back to their genuine physiognomy denuded of all complicated ceremonies, so that they may easily take root in the soil, and may adapt themselves to the circumstances through a process of assimilation. As we said elsewhere, adaptation is not a thing to be achieved overnight.

B

Devotions such as the Rosary, Scapular etc. that are widely spread in Malabar, not being liturgical, are not to be given up with the restoration of the liturgy. To some of them it is advisable to give a liturgical colour if they are solemnly conducted, in accordance with the principle laid down by the II Vatican Council (n. 13) of which we have already spoken. The Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, 40 hours' adoration etc. could be

kept; but an East Syrian colour will have to be given to them, lest they should appear heterogeneous and juxtaposed. It is an error to think that these Eucharistic devotions from the centre of Christian life: the centre of Christian life is the Eucharistic Sacrifice with the Eucharistic Repast, followed of course by the Eucharistic devotions in question as being referred to the Eucharistic sacrifice and Repast.

It is remarkable that the Liturgical Constitution of the II Vatican Council is silent about the Eucharistic devotions in question, although they originated in the Latin Church and are widely used in the same Latin Church. Nay, the benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament has also been elevated to the status of a proper liturgical action (instruction of the S. Congregation of Rites, Sept. 3, 1958, No. 47).

C

Domenico Biondi writes:

"Now I think the Council has really intended to reconstruct, and that too authoritatively, the order that was disturbed: in the first place, the Mass, the paschal sacrifice of Christ and of the Church, the supreme act of cult both eucharistic and liturgical; then Communion, as the supreme sacramental participation in the spirit and fruits of the Mass, and lastly – and in justice lastly– Adoration, but this too as a deepening and nourishing of the spirit of the sacrifice.... it is only a restatement made on the basis of the Bible, of the most ancient tradition of Patristics and of the perennial liturgy."

Rocca, Roma. Dec. 1, 1964, p. 10.

Malabarians, both clergy and laity, coversant with the history of their Church and with the vicissitudes of their liturgy, have always, also after the erection of the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy, endeavoured to get their liturgy restored to its pristine purity. As we have seen above, the Holy See has set its hand to the work of restoration, and the II Vatican Council also has enacted norms in the same direction. It now remains that all concerned should earnestly cooperate with the efforts of the Church in this highly important matter. Both the clergy and the laity have also to apply themselves to the study of their liturgy. The Decree On the Catholic Oriental Churches of the II Vatican Council lays it down:

> "All clerics, especially those who ascend to sacred Orders, are to be instructed well in their rites, and chiefly in the practical norms concerning matters inter-ritual; nay, even the lay people are to be taught about the rites and about the norms thereof, in the teaching of catechism". (n. 4)

Obviously "rite" here includes liturgy also.

Some interesting things about the Roman editions of the Malabar Missal may be recorded here. They are called "the Chaldean Taksa (Order) of Malabar". As we said, they have only the *Imprimatur* of the Master of the Apostolic Palace. The Missal of the Chaldeans that was printed in Rome in 1767, was "ex decreto S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide". The latinisations that had found a place in it have been given up by the Chaldeans with the publication of their present Missal.

The Roman editions of the Malabar Missal contained the expressions *Catholica Patriarcha* and *Eastern Catholicos*. The nuptial blessing was not printed in them. Now, in

certain, (not in all) copies of the 1844 Roman edition, the papers containing the expressions *Catholica Patriarcha* and *Eastern Catholicos* were removed, and, instead, thin papers were inserted. In these thin papers *Catholica Patriarcha* is left out, while *Roman Catholicos* is substituted for *Eastern Catholicos.* Is the Pope a Catholicos? The nuptial blessing too was printed on thin paper and inserted into these copies. All these were done in Rome. By whom, and with whose authority? The Malabar editions of the same Missal have not accepted these changes except the nuptial blessing.

A Word on Indianization

The fashion of the day is inculturation. But the apostolic Church of India (Indo-Chaldean Church) has given us an admirable example of inculturation. This Church christianized all social and harmless socio-religious practices of the Hindus around them. They did not indulge in anything that was typically Hindu. We have an example in the "Testament of Ephrem". In the Testament of Ephrem he asks his disciples to think of him on the 30th day of his death. Here we have an instance that the 30th day of the death of a person was sacred for the ancient Syrian Church. But the Indo-Chaldean Church did not imitate it. but sanctified the 20th and 41st day.

The expression "OM" may be literally or through interpretation signify something related to God. But in itself as far as its use is concerned it is a purely Hindu symbol. The S. Oriental Congregation has already said that it has a Hindu signification and not in any way Christian. It is absolutely necessary that no inculturation should be against the magisterium of the Church. The expression "OM" is now used by the Hindus to denote their belief as we use the sign of the Cross. If we use it now as Christians here the Hindus will be against it or they will think that we have become Hindus. Indian is not identical with Hindu and indianization is not Hinduization. "OM" is a Hindu-Aryan expression. We are not Aryans. We are Dravidians and have a Dravidian culture.

APPENDIX I

Domenico Bondioli (Liturgista):

"Non nego che il movimento liturgico contemporaneo si è assunta la missione anche di rifare nelle menti dei fedeli la giusta gerarchia fra i tre aspetti della pietà eucaristica. Un pratico deprezzamento della Messa, nei secoli scorsi, ha creato l'impressione nel fedeli che questa gerarchia si fosse cosi cristallizzata: al primo posto la communione; al secondo l'adorazine, al terzo ed ultimo la Messa. Badi infatti a come ancor oggi quasi dappertuto si preparano i ragazzi alla prima communione vi si parla sopratutto e minuziosamente della presenza reale; poi anche della communione nella sua dimensione personale mai sociale; e in fine, solo come una brevi appendice della Messa. In me, per esempio, si era cosi formata l'idea che la Messa fosse una complicata cerimonia destinata a non altro che a darci le Ostie consecrate per la communione e per L'Adorazione; ce ne vollero degli anni per rimettere le cose a posto nella mia mente e nella mia pietá....

Ora il Concilio mi pare abbia proprio voluto rifare autorevolmente la gerarchia turbata: al primo posto la Messa, sacrificio pasquale del Cristo e della Chiesa, atto massimo del culto sia eucharistico che liturgico; poi la Communione come massima partecipazione sacramentale allo spirito e ai frutti della Messa: e infine – e giustamente solo infine – l'Adorazione, anch'essa come un approfondimento e una alimentazione dello spirito di sacrifici. A me non pare che questo porti ad un deprezzamento o ad una svalutazione del culto di Adorazione, ma solo ad uno suo redimensionamento, fatto sui dati della Bibbia, della più antica Tradizione, dei Padri e della Liturgia di sempre".

"(The danger that the faithful may not see the legitimacy, necessity and utility of Adoration should be warded off....")"

ROCCA, Revista quindicinale della pro Civitate Cristiana 1 decembre 1964 A. XXIII No. 22, p. 10.

APPENDIX II

"Primariae enim totius instaurationis pars veluti quae Missam, divinum Officum, Rituale respiciunt ita inter se cohaerent, ut aequata fronte procedant opportet".

Cardinal Lercaro, President of the Liturgical Commission addressed to the Holy Father and Report of the work done till the VII session inclusive (L'Osservatore Romano, Domenica 16th Oct. 1966, p.1.)

"..... peculiarique modo inde a teneris annis assuescant liturgicos ritus actuose participare, cum nihil magis promoveat animos ad pietatem, quam sacrorum mysteriorum consuetudo, cujus virtus efficit ut juvenilis aetas sacro quodam afflatu penitus imbuetur ac desiderio inflammetur Christi Domini vestigia sequendi".

His Holiness Pope Paul VI to the national directors and delegates of the Episcopate of Europe for ecclesiastical vocations assembled in Rome (L'Osservatore Romano 4th Dec. 1966, p. 1.).

In 1827 Dr. Baird, Principal of the University of Edinburgh asked for some new paraphrase of the Psalms for use in the Church of Scotland. The answer was "the sacred writings have a majesty, a beauty, a simplicity, and ardour, a sublimity, that awes and overpowers the spirit of poetry by the inspired men. Indeed Sir, I dare not attempt it". Tablet, Dec. 3, 1966 (Note of Anthony Bertram, Fittleworth, Pulborough).

The Church is an historical community, vivified by the indwelling presence of her Risen Lord, and pressing forward toward the day of His final manifestation, living 'between the time" of Christ's first and final coming.

"The awareness of the Church as the people of God on move is ideally at its peak when the Christian community is at worship....". Daniel J. O'Hanlon, Commonweal, Nov. 1966, p. 202.

Parousia: Take the East Syrian calendar: from Subara to the Dedication of the Church.

APPENDIX III

H.H. Pope Paul VI: On Liturgical Reform: Discourse, March 17, 1965.

"(what about) The liturgical reform? The answers could be grouped into two categories. The first category consists of answers that find a certain confusion and annoyance. They say that everything was tranpuil, each one could have prayed as he liked, everything regarding the performance of the rite was known to all; but now (they say) everything is a novelty, a surprise, a change: even the sound of the bell at the SANCTUS is abolished; and then those prayers! one knows not where to go and find them out! that (Holy) Communion! received standing on foot! that ending of the holy Mass! an abrupt ending with a blessing! all are responding, many movements rites and lessons recited loudly; in short, there is no more peace (they say), and one understands less than, before....

"We will not make a comment on these observations, since (by so doing) we shall have to demonstrate how these observations reveal a scanty penetration into the meaning of religious rites, and how the same observations let us see in them, not any true devotion nor any true sense of the signification of the value of the holy Mass, but rather a kind of spiritual indolence which does not like to exert any personal force in order to understand and more intelligently take part in the most sacred among the religious acts to which we are invited and also are obliged to associate ourselves, by a better performance of the same. We will repeat what in these days are being repeated by all priests who are pastors of souls and by all able teachers of religion. Firstly, that some confusion and

annoyance are created in the beginning is inevitable; it is in the nature of any practical spiritual reform that inveterate religious habits piously kept up should produce a little stir not always pleasing to all; secondly, some explantion, some preparation, some attentive assistance will soon take away the incertitude, and will at once give a sense and taste for the new order; thirdly, it is not to be belived that after some time all will become quiet, devout or idle as before: no, the new order ought to be different. ought to stop and also shake off the passivity of the faithful present at the holy Mass: before it was enough to assist, now participation is necessary: presence was enough before, now attention and action are necessary: some one could sleep and also talk before, now, no, such ones have to attend and pray. Let us hope that the celebrant and faithful will soon have the new liturgical books ... Let the assembly become lively and active; to intervene means to allow the soul to enter into the activity of attention, of colloquy, of music and of action. The harmony of a congregational act performed not only with exterior gesture, but also with the interior movement of the sentiments of faith and piety impresses on the rite a force and a special beauty; it becomes a choir, a concert, a rhythm of an extensive wing that flies up towards the height of the divine mystery and joy···" (The second category of answers, the Pope said, is of enthusiasts. The Pope exhorts them not to let the enthusiasm cool down. He invites the cooperation of all for the attaining of the fruit of the new order)

L'Osservatore Romano, March 17, 1965.

APPENDIX IV

L'Osservatore Romano, Jan. 14, 1965: discourse of the Holy Father, Jan. 15, 1965 "Then the August Pontiff directed the following paternal Exhortation to all the other faithful which he afterwards resumed in different languages:

"Dear sons and daughters,

You often hear now-a-days comments on the sacred Liturgy made by so many different voices, and on different themes, but always derived from the recent Constitution of the Ecumenical Council and from the Instruction that followed it initiating the gradual application of the same. It is good that this be so: this new legislation on the public and official cult of the Church is very important and deserves to be diffused and commented upon, also because one of its characteristic and principal purposes is the participation of the faithful in the rites which the Priest directs and personifies. And it is good to note how it belongs to the authority of the Church to will, to promote and to hasten this new method of prayer, thus giving a greater increase to her spiritual mission: it was and is the primary care of the Church to preserve the orthodoxy of prayer; the next care is to give stability and uniformity to the expressions of the cult - a great work from which the spiritual life of the Church has procured immense benefits: now her solicitude being enlarged, is modifying certain aspects that are not adequate today to the ritual discipline; and she couragiously, but thoughtfully, proceeds to deepen the essential significations, the congregational demand and the supernatural value of the ecclesiastical cult, placing in a better light, above all, the function which the Word of God

exercises among you, whether it be that of the S. Scriptures, or that which is the didactic and allied catechism and homily, and giving to the sacramental ceremonies their clarity together with their mysterious centralisation.

To understand this religious progress and to enjoy its hoped for fruits, we all should modify the habitual mentality formed around the sacred ceremonies and religious practices, specially when we believe that the ceremony is a mere execution of exterior rites and that its exercise does not require anything except a passive and distracted assistence. It is necessary to take into account that a new pedagogy is born with the Council; and that is its great novelty; and we should not hesitate to make ourselves first of all the disciples and then the supporters of the school of prayer that has already started. It could be that the reform touches habits that are dear and, perhaps, also respectable; it could be that the reforms require some unpleasant force to be exerted at the out set; but we ought to be docile and ought to have confidence: the religious and the spiritual field that is opened for us in front of the new Constitution on the Liturgy is stupendous in the depth and authenticity of doctrine, in the reasonableness of Christian logic, in the clarity and in the richness of cultural and artistic elements, in the response to the genius and needs of the modern man. Again, it is the authority of the Church which teaches in this manner, and which backs in this manner the benefits of the reform in the pastoral effort to strengthen in souls faith and love towards Christ, and the sense of religion in the world of ours.

You coming to the Pope, do accept his advice; you will once again have the experience of the fruitfulness and felicity which obedience carries with it: obedience, we say, to the Church and to him who has in it the function to educate the believers to the adoration of the Father "in spirit and truth" (Joh. IV, 23). Behold our recommendation, behold our desire, both of which we would fortify with our Apostolic Blessing".

APPENDIX V

H. H. Pope Paul VI : To the Pastors and lenten Preachers of Rome : Discourse, Monday, I March, 1965.

Well, Our recommendation is this: dedicate the greatest attention, specially during this first year, to the understanding, explanation and application of the new norms by which the Church intends from now on to celebrate the divine cult. It is not an easy thing: it is a delicate thing; it requires direct and methodical attention; it requires your assistence personal, patient. loving and truly pastoral. There is question of changing so many habits which under many aspects are, ofcource, respectable and dear. There is question of disturbing the pious and good faithful by proposing to them new forms of prayer which they will not understand at once; there is question of winning over, for apersonal and collective prayer, so many people who pray in the church, but do not pray as they like; there is question of enriching a school rather of active prayer and of worship, in every assembly of the faithful, namely, of introducing into it aspects, gestures, usages, formulae and new sentiments; a religious activity, we say, still foreign to many; there is question in a word, of associating the people of God with the liturgical priestly action. We repeat: it is a thing difficult and delicate; but we add: necessary, in duty bound, providential and renovating. And we also hope that it be consoling. Perhaps your ministry will not be for you fruitful of external satisfaction and internal consolation, except when you begin to notice the fruits of pedagogical and pastoral effort required of you, and when you in reality will be having experience of the words of the Psalm: Behold, how good and pleasant it is that brethren live

together (Ps. 132,1); the profound, cordial and active unity of your faithful, praying and offering with you, will reveal itself in its ever new and mystical beauty, and will fully compensate for the attention devoted for attaining such a result. But see: perseverence is necessary, since there is question of a great event, since very high ideas are at play, since even divine truths and divine realities come into the scene, since the intention is to approach with this method – the true method, the more authentic, blessed and efficacious method – the heart of the modern man and to reinflame in it the fire of love of God and of neighbour, as well as the capacity, timid and inebrieting, for that authentic, consoling, redeeming religious conversation. And, together with this high concept of the new liturgical fact, it is necessary to have the art of taking into consideration in all their aspects the particularities of time, order, matter, gestures, movements, silence and voice; and above all – what perhaps is more difficult – the music: years will be required for us, but we should begin, begin again, persevere so that we may succeed in giving to the congregation its own serious harmonious, sweet and sublime voice.

L'Osservatore Romano, 1–2 Marzo, 1965.

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