

**THE LITURGY: A PERENNIAL *PAIDEIA* OF FESTIVE AND  
SACRED BEAUTY**

**MONICA ERIN MACDONALD**

**PONTIFICAL BOLIVARIAN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY AND HUMANITIES  
FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY  
CANONICAL DOCTORATE IN PHILOSOPHY  
MEDELLÍN  
2016**

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SACRED BEAUTY**

**MONICA ERIN MACDONALD**

**Thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Canonical  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**Director  
CARLOS ÁNGEL ARBOLEDA MORA  
Doctor in Philosophy**

**PONTIFICAL BOLIVARIAN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY AND HUMANITIES  
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CANONICAL DOCTORATE IN PHILOSOPHY  
MEDELLÍN  
2016**

Medellín, 30 de noviembre de 2016

Yo, **MONICA ERIN MACDONALD**

“Declaro que esta tesis (o trabajo de grado) no ha sido presentada para optar a un título, ya sea en igual forma o con variaciones, en ésta o cualquier otra universidad” Art. 82 Régimen Discente de Formación Avanzada.



Firma

I dedicate this study to my venerable Father and Founder Msgr. João Scognamiglio Clá Dias, who, through his heroic confidence and brilliant virtue, has continually inspired and guided us as a living example of sanctity. I also dedicate this work, with much devotion, to Mater Boni Consilii and the Holy Angels.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Msgr. João Scognamiglio Clá Dias, founder and General President of the Heralds of the Gospel, whose ardent zeal for the beauty and perfection of all aspects of the Liturgical Celebration has opened new perspectives within the realm of Liturgy, attracting people of all ages and walks of life toward a living experience of *pulchrum* and sacrality, inspiring hope and elevation of spirit.

I wish to extend a heartfelt acknowledgement to the director of this work, P. Dr. Carlos Ángel Arboleda Mora. There really are no words to thank him for his unfailing patience, encouragement and support throughout this investigation, as well as his profound and insightful suggestions, fruit of his prolific academic knowledge and experience in so many diverse fields of investigation. His keen sense of observation and appreciation for diverse thinkers and writers demonstrates a vast culture and experience within many ambits of the academic world, which he willingly shares with others. It is clearly an honour to have him as the director of this work.

I would also like to mention the philosophy professors and the administration of the UPB, for their outstanding academic performance, and the dedication and concern they have consistently demonstrated toward us all throughout our academic journey over the past few years. I particularly call to mind the excellent classes offered and the unfailing availability and selfless interest of the professors toward the students. All of this has made our experience at the UPB a fruitful and stimulating experience, which we cherish with fond memories.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Building upon anthropological considerations regarding man and his universal tendency for festive and symbolic manifestation, this investigation attempts to identify relevant aspects of the human role within the liturgical celebration, where elements such as gesture and word, together with spatial and temporal concepts, develop into distinct forms of experience, channelling the highest human capacities toward exteriorization and realization. The sacred beauty evolving from this mode of human actuation in liturgy is analysed especially for its didactic value in face of the needs of contemporary society. The liturgy thus emerges as a *paideia* of sacred and festive beauty within the human experience as a whole.

**Key words:** Festivity, Liturgy, Symbol, Gesture, Space, Time, Beauty.

## RESUMEN

Enfocada en consideraciones antropológicas referentes al hombre y a su tendencia universal de manifestación festiva y simbólica, esta investigación procura identificar aspectos relevantes del papel humano en la celebración litúrgica, donde elementos tales como gestos y palabras, juntamente con conceptos espaciales y temporales, se desdoblán para distintas formas de experiencia, direccionando las más altas capacidades humanas a la exteriorización y realización. La belleza sagrada decurrente de este modo de actuación humana en la liturgia es analizada sobre todo por su valor didáctico frente a las necesidades de la sociedad contemporánea. La liturgia emerge, así, como una *paideia* de belleza sagrada y festiva de la experiencia humana en su todo.

**Palabras clave:** Festividad, Liturgia, Símbolo, Gesto, Palabra, Espacio, Tiempo, Belleza.

## RESUMO

Assentada em considerações antropológicas referentes ao homem e à sua tendência universal de manifestação festiva e simbólica, esta investigação procura identificar aspectos relevantes do papel humano na celebração litúrgica, onde elementos tais como gestos e palavras, juntamente com conceitos espaciais e temporais, evoluem para distintas formas de experiência, direcionando as mais altas capacidades humanas à exteriorização e realização. A beleza sagrada decorrente deste modo de atuação humana na liturgia é analisada sobretudo pelo seu valor didático face às necessidades da sociedade contemporânea. A liturgia emerge, assim, como uma *paideia* de beleza sagrada e festiva da experiência humana no seu todo.

**Palavras- chave:** Festividade, Liturgia, Símbolo, Gesto, Espaço, Tempo, Beleza.

## ABBREVIATIONS

Conf.	Confessions, Saint Augustine
LA	Letter to Artists, John Paul II
Myst.	The Church's Mystagogy, Saint Maximus the Confessor
PG	Patrologiae cursus completus, series graeca, J.-P. Migne (Ed.), Paris, 1844-1855.
PL	Patrologiae cursus completus, series latina, J.-P. Migne (Ed.), Paris, 1857-1866.
SC	Sacramentum Caritatis, Benedict XVI
SSC	Sacrosanctum Concilium, Vatican Council II
S. Th.	Summa theologiae, Saint Thomas Aquinas
VP	Post-Plenary Document. The "Via Pulchritudinis", Beauty as a Way for Evangelisation and Dialogue, Pontifical Council of Culture.

## INTRODUCTION

Over the course of the last century and continuing into the new millennium, many aspects of human existence have undergone significant alterations. Contemporary society clearly reflects consequences of an increased emphasis on computerized technology, globalization and virtual communication – factors which have evolved rapidly within the past years, a culmination of consistent advances carried out in various fields of human development. An intensified concentration on mass production and gain, with the simultaneous consumerism which results, has affected many areas of human existence itself, imposing an accelerated pace of life, indispensable in order to accompany the spiral of activity thus produced. A heightened demand for efficiency and instant gratification and has evolved into a mentality avid for the “fast”, the disposable, the instantaneous, seeming to question the relevance of all that which does not satisfy these criteria<sup>1</sup>.

The mentality of contemporary humanity has thus been marked by a gradual though steady process, consequently affecting basic notions regarding key questions of human existence. Already, the rationalization of Descartes, the subjectivism of Kant, and the dawn of industrialization along with the Marxist ideal of *praxis*, contributed toward the transformation of the human outlook in relation to the essence of life and thought, work and leisure, art and aesthetics. An increasingly utilitarian outlook with emphasis on the practical, redounding in the mentality of “*do ut des*” with the possibility of failing to grasp the gratuitous aspects of existence involving symbolic,

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<sup>1</sup> For example, among many others, Mondin (2007) points out the incapacity of present day society to respond to the profound necessities and aspirations of the human being, in its confrontation with what he labels, a cultural crises: “Oggi l’umanità sta attraversando una profonda, gravissima crisi culturale che è allo stesso tempo anche una tremenda crisi di valori. Sul fatto che non solo l’Occidente ma tutto il mondo stia attraversando una crisi culturale senza precedenti tutti gli uomini sono d’accordo. Filosofi, psicologi, sociologi, letterati, politici, teologi affermano unanimemente che la cultura moderna non risponde più alle esigenze attuali dell’umanità, ai suoi gusti, alle sue aspirazione, alle sue attitudini, ai suoi valori, alle sue conoscenze, al suo linguaggio” (p. 9).

transcendent worth<sup>2</sup>. Simultaneously, the escalating manifestation of violence, witnessed at this point on the international scene, seems to rivet the human spirit within the limits of insecurity and doubt, at times seeming to reduce the requirements of the human being within the realm of mere precaution and survival, subsequently limiting human perspectives and vision.

But does this picture fully describe contemporary man, or is human existence simultaneously the playground of less visible aspirations that are no less real; deep-rooted yearnings that signal true needs of the human spirit? Though the authentic modes for experiencing the sacred and opportunities for human cultural and religious experiences seem to evaporate within the perspective of impending doom, man holds, in the very depths of his spirit, a patent aspiration for the Absolute, as St. Augustine had so keenly felt and vividly expressed in his writings, that still echo with their timeless worth in our days. This yearning naturally results in a constant, though often misled, search for the sacred and the beautiful. “Beauty is a key to the mystery and an invitation to transcendence. It is a call to relish life and to dream of the future” (*LA*, 16)<sup>3</sup>.

Consequently, looking beyond the external appearance of many exterior facets of contemporary society, an examination of some of these more enduring dimensions of human existence raises valuable considerations. In this vein, running in an almost contradictory current to the utilitarian and materialistic tendencies noted previously, is precisely the need to rise above the routine and mundane aspects of reality. This persistent and pervasive inclination – which could perhaps be classified as a transcendent instinct – has not escaped the notice of a growing number of authors in

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<sup>2</sup> Undeniably, increased individualism has been one of the consequences of dramatic societal change: “People today generally participate in fewer social ritual practices than did previous generations. People participate in fewer social ritual practices today because they have embraced more vigorously the value of individualism upon which the reality of upward social mobility is based”. (McCallion, 2008, p. 284)

<sup>3</sup>“La bellezza è cifra del mistero e richiamo al trascendente. E invito a gustare la vita e a sognare il future” (Personal translation).

recent decades. As a representative example, in his *Philosophical Act*, Josef Pieper conceives as essential the role of “wonder” within philosophical reflection, “To perceive all that is unusual and exceptional, all that is wonderful, in the midst of the ordinary things of everyday life, is the beginning of philosophy” (2009b, p. 113)<sup>4</sup>. Here, Pieper simply echoes both the Platonic and Aristotelian conjecture as to the origins of philosophical thought – the concept that the very impulse of all philosophical inquiry is an innate desire for knowledge spurred on by admiration and awe<sup>5</sup>.

This *émerveillement*, springing naturally from this upwardly open view of the concrete reality, yields a heightened capacity to perceive latent or hidden facets of splendour and sacrality therein, which have the capacity to transform and enrich. The human being is thus enabled to transcend the quotidian through a fruitful inquest into the more profound significance of human life, which, as Von Balthasar (1982) has observed, emerges as a precious stone from within the “rough block of our existence” (p. 239)<sup>6</sup>. In effect, the human spirit, by fostering this sense of admiration, is readily disposed to a contemplative state of being. Indeed, contemplation is not foreign to, but

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<sup>4</sup> Continuing, Pieper examines the close relationship between wonder and philosophy, strongly emphasizing the import of just how and why the role of wonder would be the very essence of the philosophical initiative: “Wonder and philosophy are related in a far more essential way than might, at first sight, be supposed from the saying ‘wonder is the beginning of philosophy’. Wonder is not just the starting point of philosophy in the sense of *initium*, of a prelude or preface. Wonder is the *principium*, the lasting source, the *fons et origo*, the immanent origin of philosophy” (Pieper, 2009b, p. 116). Von Balthasar (1982) would likewise point to the fundamental import of awe within the perception of human existence: “One must possess a spiritual eye capable of perceiving (*wahrnehmen*) the forms of existence with awe” (p. 24).

<sup>5</sup> Plato, *Theaetetus*, 155 d. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, I, 2;982 b.

<sup>6</sup> “The level of experience is, even in ordinary life, the realm where all life’s irreconcilable aspects become integrated. The recalcitrance and drudgery of everyday existence induce us to flee into a sphere of illusion where we think we are going to come face to face with the beautiful in distilled form. And yet we know that it is only the overcoming of workaday rigours and perseverance in them that will hew out the precious stone which has to emerge from the rough block of our existence. The really beautiful shines from the place where the real has acquired form”.

part of human nature<sup>7</sup>, a close associate of the reasoning faculty itself, and an activity of inherent beauty, according to Aquinas: “Since the contemplative life consists in an act of the reason, there is beauty in it by its very nature and essence; wherefore it is written (Wis. Viii. 2) of the contemplation of wisdom: I became a lover of her beauty” (*S. Th.* II-II, q.180, a. 2)<sup>8</sup>.

It is through this philosophical prism that the present study undertakes to examine key dimensions of human existence and actuation, considered especially from within the social ambit, and evolving from the very roots of human culture in every place and time. Organic forms of human behaviour in response to the sacred are observed, in the form of festivity and ceremony. These evince a universal recourse to symbolic language, and to the creation of ritual forms that develop as authentic forms of praise, surpassing quotidian modes of being. Thus, the timeless capacity of the human spirit to transcend earthly existence through forms of sacred celebration which appear as unique venues of beauty, capture our attention within this study.

The investigation progresses specifically toward an analysis of the sacred beauty which shines forth from the diverse forms of art flourishing around the liturgical celebration, fruit of abiding modes of human comportment in relation to the divine. Therefore, it is particularly within the realm of liturgical experience that the present investigation seeks to focus. By promoting an awareness of liturgy as it relates to certain fundamental needs of humanity, the present study intends to uncover and emphasise aesthetic and experiential aspects of liturgy which constitute a timeless

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<sup>7</sup> This concept is emphasized by Pieper, who points toward the element of an integral rather than a divisional approach to the full reality within normal daily existence: “The deeper aspects of reality are apprehended in the ordinary things of everyday life and not in a sphere cut off and segregated from it, the sphere of the ‘essential’ or whatever it may be called; it is in the things we come across in the experience of everyday life that the unusual emerges, and we no longer take them for granted – and that situation corresponds with the inner experience which has always been regarded as the beginning of philosophy: the act of ‘marvelling’” (Pieper, 2009b).

<sup>8</sup> “Et ideo in vita contemplative, quae consistit in actu rationis, per se et essentialiter invenitur pulchritudo. Unde Sap 8,2 de contemplatione sapientiae dicitur: Amator factus sumformae illius” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).



reservoir of transcendent beauty, and the possibilities it offers for the human experience. As a philosophical reflection, it seeks to broaden the often-limited perspective of the anthropological import and impact of apparently simple dimensions within liturgy such as gesture, word, space, and time, as they combine in a unique form of festivity. The investigation in turn explores the possibilities of liturgical experience in face of the challenges of the contemporary ambience, promoting an awareness of the value of liturgical beauty in light of the needs of humanity today. In brief, the present work strives to situate the human being within the concept of liturgical praise. The human being, rational and social by nature, is, by the same token, *homo liturgicus*, and *homo festivus*.

It must also be noted that, though this study focuses on the context of liturgical celebrations in relation to contemporary man, it does not stray from the philosophical ambit. This is not a study on liturgy *per se*, nor a theological analysis of the celebrative aspects of any particular religious experience. Rather it explores the philosophical basis that underlines liturgical celebrations in general, using the Catholic liturgy as the focal point of the study<sup>9</sup>. In short, we move primordially in what could be referred to as ‘philosophical theology’, that is, a philosophical exploration into the fundamental notions that underlie the theological exercise – here in particular, the anthropological and temporal-spatial basis of liturgical festivity with a view to establish the utility of the concept of beauty for such celebrative moments. Consequently, the present study does not undertake an in-depth investigation of liturgy as an object in itself, from the liturgist’s point of view, but tends to concentrate, rather, upon anthropological and philosophical questions arising from it. Thus, while the first chapter delves into the anthropological basis of liturgical celebrations, the second and third analyze in successive moments the relevance of liturgical symbols such as gestures and words,

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<sup>9</sup> Although the term *Liturgy* encompasses a wide range of sacred activities, from the recitation to the Liturgy of the Hours to the administration of Sacraments, this study concentrates solely upon limited aspects of the Liturgical Celebration of the Eucharist, within the Roman Rite. Therefore, the generic term *Liturgy*, within the context of this study, denotes specifically that supreme form of festivity which is the Eucharistic Celebration.

followed by the spatial and chronological milieu in which the liturgical celebration is carried out. Finally the study concludes with a chapter that analyses the concept of *pulchrum* within the celebrative aspect of human existence to explore what can be learnt from the inclusion of beauty in to the sacred liturgical ambience and the consequences for contemporary human beings of such an inclusion.

In order to initiate these considerations, the first chapter delineates enduring human and cultural characteristics, highlighting pertinent aspects of the constitution of the human person, from an essentially Aristotelian-Thomistic perspective. The philosophical concept of man as a micro-cosmos, in his corporal and spiritual dimensions, sheds light on his social and cultural comportment. The notion of celebrative and ceremonial activity is brought to light as inherent to the human experience and of timeless import within any civilization. From an anthropological and cultural perspective, the significance of symbolic and ritual customs that humans have historically cultivated through festivity is examined, in light of the diverse contributions of authors such as Pieper, Huizinga, Gadamer, Caillois and Durkheim. Given the wide-spread and timeless presence of festivity and ceremony in all cultures, the transcendent and aesthetic impact of festivity is considered as an imperative element in the evolvment of human life. A brief treatment of ceremonies of the Old Testament, commented upon by St. Thomas Aquinas, Daniélou, and Maertens, concludes the chapter, illustrating their relevance as a basis for future Christian feasts and liturgy.

The second chapter develops the perspective of human involvement within the liturgical celebration through verbal and non-verbal forms of expression. Consequently, the profoundly symbolic and spiritual connotation of liturgical gestures and movements – the *ars celebrandi* - is examined, with emphasis on its transcendent role within the liturgy. The function of the liturgical word within the evolvment of the Celebration, enunciated in diverse genre, gives rise to a unique form of communication which transcends toward the highest forms of dialogue that exist in earthly life. “In this

sense, the Christian liturgy is in the category of *urgias*; it is poietic, and it is ritual action” (Maggiani, 1998, p. 273).

Through the unfolding of its ritual form in gesture and word, the liturgical celebration is closely united with the concepts of space and time. Accordingly, the third chapter focuses principally on the implication of temporal and spatial dimensions, particularly within the scope of the sacred and the profane, examining their impact on human life, in order to effectively apply these notions to the liturgical celebration. A brief historical analysis of the concept of time brings to light its constant and controversial presence in philosophical thought. The notion of “sacred” time arises as a transcendent corollary of ritual festivity. Finally, Liturgical time emerges as the transcendent time *par excellence*, condensing within itself both eschatological and sacred dimensions. Aquinas, and in a more contemporary perspective, Jean-Yves LaCoste and Catherine Pickstock contribute enlightening observations on the significance of liturgical time. Subsequently, “sacred” space, which holds significant philosophical and anthropological meaning in human life, is considered. As the theme of liturgical space is approached, its striking import in the human experience of liturgy comes to light. The mystagogic aspects of space, articulated by St. Maximus the Confessor in his renowned *Mystagogy* also serve to illuminate the discussion. In sum, the transcendent dimension of the experience of sacred space over profane space is borne out.

In the manner of a culmination to the previous analyses, the fourth chapter seeks to demonstrate that these combined dimensions of the liturgical experience represent a significant response to the multiple necessities of contemporary man, on account of their ritual, symbolic, aesthetic and communitarian elements, of which contemporary society feels such a deficit. Thus, the concept of the liturgy as a form of *paideia*, through its didactic capacity of making an impact on the human being, promoting modes of comportment and mentalities that extend to life experience in general, is of key importance. Philosophical perspectives of the concept of beauty are

presented, with emphasis on the exceptional form of aesthetic beauty present in the contemplative and transcendent appeal of the liturgy, involving festive and ceremonial expression, replete with symbology. Indeed, here, the entire spectrum of the senses function as gateways to the spiritual realm: “In maternal fashion, the Church can enhance this correspondence adding fire and wax, the fragrance of incense and the gesture of kneeling, the colour of her vestments as a sensory and spiritual indication of mood, sounds to represent the all-penetrating harmony of the confession of faith” (Von Balthasar, 1982, p. 423)<sup>10</sup>.

It cannot be denied that, in the rising tide of materialism, consumerism, and pragmatism<sup>11</sup> of post-modern society, the upholding of the perennial experience of liturgical beauty constitutes a challenge. It is hoped that the present study will serve to elucidate how much this very culture stands to benefit from meeting this challenge. Indeed, can human culture of any age be said to have survived without ceremony, without the sacred, without festivity and some form of liturgical ritual? In like manner, could not the human culture in the post-modern era be said to depend, in a real way, on

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<sup>10</sup> The diverse aesthetic language within Liturgical symbology is a key element within the complex of human experience evolving within the celebration. The communicating capacity of such forms of art – unique sources of beauty - transcend toward a higher sphere of communication leading to transcendent experience. It is noteworthy that Schwery (2009) explains how the contemplation of art ultimately evolves into a transcendent and spiritual journey, as the aesthetic impact of the work of art easily touches on the spiritual dimension of the human being. It is significant that he points to the transforming power of such factors and their capacity to direct the human being toward the good: “Si la contemplation d’un [...] chef-d’œuvre peut encourager des hommes à haïr le mal, à cheminer vers le bien, vers le mieux, donc vers le Bon et le Beau, alors il ne fait aucun doute que la beauté relative de tout art est un adjuvant puissant pour que, à partir de nos sens, nous sachions gravir les escaliers de l’esprit dont le plus transcendent, le seul qui soit illimité en sa fin, est la prière” (p. 188-189).

<sup>11</sup> It is illustrative that authors such as Lukken (1994) have identified how this pragmatic mentality ultimately affects the human sensitivity to symbology due to a blind adherence to consumerism and pragmatism: “Our culture has difficulty with perceiving symbols. We are inclined, rather, to look at the sober facts and to take things literally. Our world has become, before all else a field for research. (...) Our way of approaching the world is also strongly influenced by our behaviour as consumers. We look to the utility and the profitability of all things” (p. 91). The Spanish author, Bernal Llorente (2000) goes even further by identifying the inevitable effects of a technologically based civilization in relation to symbology which he insinuates as a crisis in our days. Here we note the import of the symbolic within human existence. “Algunos antropólogos han llamado a esta fenómeno quiebra del mundo de los símbolos y somos precisamente nosotros, los que vivimos inmersos en el seno de la civilización científico-técnica, quienes de manera más directa estamos sufriendo los efectos desastrosos de esta quiebra” (p. 68-69).

the cultivation of the liturgy and the beauty it holds, for its very subsistence? The desire to explore the possibilities that the transcendent liturgical experience – an experience of sacred beauty – holds for man, and especially for contemporary man is, then, the spark that sets the present investigation in motion. Accordingly, the pages that follow present this unique sacred beauty which arises from the human involvement within liturgy as a synthesis of the highest forms of human expression, which have as their source the richness of the human religious sentiment, made fruitful in festive celebration.

## **1. ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES OF FESTIVITY**

The present chapter seeks to identify the basic implications of festive and ceremonial dimensions within human life. The innate human necessity to promote symbolic, ritual and aesthetic manifestation through collective forms of celebration is examined, based on man's constitution as a spiritual, corporal and social being. A succinct description of basic human characteristics initiates the investigation.

Man's complex constitution as a micro-cosmos with corporal and spiritual realities is presented in light of Thomistic-Aristotelian teachings. With particular emphasis, man is considered as an inherently social being, which is linked to his cultural evolvement. The contemporary cultural scenario is briefly presented, stressing the decline of festive and ceremonial activity and its ramifications for modern man. Chief characteristics of festive activity in human life are briefly examined, underlining the universal and aesthetic character of such events and their inherent place in the human experience. The investigation progresses in light of festivity's social, transcendent, symbolic, artistic and ritual components, which emerge as essential factors within the ambit of authentic celebration. By way of example in preparation for an examination of liturgy, the richly celebrated Jewish festivities of the Old Testament are briefly considered, especially in their elaborated ritual, sacred and spiritual content.

### **1.1 Pertinent human characteristics**

The complexity and inherent splendour of the human person has intrigued philosophers and thinkers of all times — not only due to the rich diversity of physical characteristics that man possesses, but also because of the manifold cultural manifestations evident throughout diverse civilizations and epochs. Even after

profound analysis of these diverse human elements in his celebrated works, Saint Augustine ultimately admitted that man is a great mystery (*Conf.*, 4, 14).

Combining both corporal and spiritual dimensions, serving as a point of harmonious though multifaceted convergence for “all of the biological, psychological and moral sciences [...], all of the material and spiritual values of the universe”<sup>12</sup> (Philipon, 1964, p. 13-20). In the diversity of his complex nature, the human being has more recently been labeled as *faber, ciens, loquens, culturalis, ludens, festivus* and *religiosos*<sup>13</sup>. As a basis for the exploration of the themes that will arise over the course of this investigation, it is opportune to briefly focus on some of these perennial characteristics, which constitute an organic cause of man’s exterior comportment and which explain certain inherent human needs.

According to a Thomistic vision of the human constitution, strongly rooted in the Aristotelian hylomorphic principle, man is a complex substance composed of soul (form) and body (matter). Individually, these elements constitute incomplete substances, and it is only in union that they compose the complete human substance. Beyond the Platonic ideal of an accidental union of soul and body, which he regarded as two complete and distinct substances, in which the soul fell as prisoner of the body,

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<sup>12</sup> “O homem é um ser extraordinariamente complexo: corpo e alma; submetido a todas as leis dá matéria e tendendo também a um ideal pelas mais altas aspirações do espírito, ponto de convergência de todas as ciências biológicas, psicológicas e morais, reunindo em si todos os valores materiais e espirituais do universo, mas sem dissonância, sem choques, numa unidade maravilhosa”.

<sup>13</sup> In accordance with the Aristotelian line of thought, it is of interest that man has been considered primarily as a *micro-cosmos*, a junction of the animal, vegetable, mineral and spiritual spheres This idea was echoed by Von Balthasar (2008) who reaffirmed the idea of the human micro-cosmos, describing it as a “the synthesis and image of the cosmos”, a place of junction for the spiritual and physical. “El hombre reconoce en sí mismo la síntesis y la imagen del cosmos. En él convergen los distintos reinos y formas de la vida [...] La embriología escolástica vio ya que el hombre recapitula en su ontogénesis el camino de la naturaleza, algo que confirman la paleontología y la biología modernas. Desde esta perspectiva el hombre de hoy no está ni más ni menos ligado a la naturaleza y al cosmos que el de la antigua era mítica y la Antigüedad clásica, en la medida en que se reconocía en Ella como ‘microcosmos’ (p. 59). Along the same line, Edith Stein (2003) also identifies man as a microcosm, uniting contrasting dimensions from the universe — as such, he is material, a living being, and spiritual person (p. 592-593).

the Angelic Doctor saw the union of soul and body as an essentially substantial union – that of matter with a substantial form.

More specifically in this metaphysical perspective, the soul does not unite immediately with the body, but rather with prime matter, and in this way the body comes into being (Garcia Cuadrado, 2003, p. 131). Consequently, Aquinas clearly considered the soul as truly the form of the body in the metaphysical sense, thus giving foundation to the reciprocal influence of the soul over the body. “For the soul is the primary principle of our nourishment, sensation, and local movement; and likewise of our understanding. Therefore, this principle by which we primarily understand, whether it be called the intellect or the intellectual soul, is the form of the body. This is the demonstration used by Aristotle (*De Anima* ii. 2)” (*S Th* I, q. 76, a. 1)<sup>14</sup>. Aquinas, in turn, identified particular characteristics of the human soul as immortal, and gifted with its own act of being<sup>15</sup> (*De Anima*, 1, lect. 2, 20).

Interestingly for our investigation, this Thomistic vision of the relationship between soul and body sheds light on some of the chief characteristics of human activity that will be explored. Much of Aquinas’s explanations regarding this point insist upon how corporal activity is fruit of the soul’s dispositions. “A spiritual substance which is united to a body as its motor only, is united thereto by power or virtue. But the intellectual soul is united by its very being to the body as a form; and

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<sup>14</sup> “Anima enim est primum quo nutrimur, et sentimus, et movemur secundum locum; et similiter quo primo intelligimus. Hoc ergo principium quo primo intelligimus, sive dicatur intellectus sive anima intellectiva, est forma corporis. Et haec est demonstratio Aristotelis in II *de Anima*”. (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

<sup>15</sup> Gilson (1994) clarifies Aquinas’s position on the soul in relation to the body, demonstrating particularly the role of the soul as a fundamental dimension for the very existence of the body. “For St. Thomas, following Aristotle, the soul does not first make a body move, it first makes it a body. (...) The soul makes it exist as a body. It is the soul which assembles and organizes what we call today the bio-chemical elements (organic, or even inorganic, elements, but never *informes*) in order to make a living body from them. In this complete sense, the soul is its first act; that is, is what makes it to be. Thanks to this first act, the living thing can exercise all its second acts, the vital functions which are its operations” (p. 187).



yet it guides and moves the body by its power and virtue”<sup>16</sup> (*S. Th.* I, q.76, a.6). It may be observed that in our predominantly pragmatic and materialistic society, the real pre-eminence of the spiritual aspect of the human being is lost in the over-valuing of the physical dimension<sup>17</sup>.

Weighing the role of the soul in corporal activities lends more a balanced and profound understanding of how the body receives its impetus and manner of operating and acting from the soul, as Stein (2004) affirms: “Man is a spiritual person, because he stands in a free position, not only before his body, but also before his soul, and in the measure in which he holds power over his soul, he also holds power over his body”<sup>18</sup> (p. 442).

This union of soul and body in Thomistic thought is of a distinctly positive nature, whereby, as Gilson (1994) points out, the soul is not considered as the prisoner of the body, nor does the bond of this union denote some punishment. Rather, “association to the body is, on the contrary, essential to the soul and characteristic of its nature. ... The union of soul and body is no chastisement of the soul, but a salutary bond through which the human soul will reach its full perfection” (p. 189-190). As a consequence, the value of human corporality is more readily seen as a means of expression for the soul, and human activity regarded in light of man’s interior

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<sup>16</sup> “Dicendum quod substantia spiritualis quae unitur corpori solum ut motor, unitur ei per potentiam vel virtutem. Sed anima intellectiva corpori unitur ut forma per suum esse. Administrat tamen ipsum et movet persuum potentiam et virtutem” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

<sup>17</sup> The equilibrium of the spiritual and corporal dimensions is reflected in this passage of the Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*: “Si vero solus spiritus homo esse studet cupitque carnem reicere veluti hereditatem ut ita dicamus tantum animalis propriam, tunc dignitatem suam tam spiritus quam corpus amittunt. At si altera ex parte ille spiritum repudiat iudicatque materiam, nempe corpus, tamquam unicam veritatem, aequabiliter suam perdit magnitudinem” (*Deus caritas est*, n.5).

<sup>18</sup> “El hombre es una persona espiritual, porque está en una libre posición no sólo frente a frente de su cuerpo, sino también frente a frente de su alma, y es en la medida en que tiene poder sobre su alma como tiene poder también sobre su cuerpo” (Personal translation). Pieper, (2009b) pointed out how the soul truly forms human activity “It is one of the characteristics of man, a corporeal and spiritual being, that it should be his spiritual soul which informs the physical and sensitive realms — to such a degree that taking food in man and animal are two utterly different things (quite apart from the fact that in the human sphere a “meal” may have a spiritual or even a religious character)” (p. 109).

dispositions and needs<sup>19</sup>. At this point, an affirmation of LaCoste (2004) serves as a reminder that, conversely, man's corporal condition is omnipresent even in spiritual activity.

No experience of the self can bracket the body, and thus bracket the relations of proximity to which the body binds us; the experience of the self is the experience of place as much as of time. Interiority can certainly be transformed by an ascetic desire; it can wish to erase from itself all that is not conscious. But this desire is irrational. My body is thus inescapable for me: both as a condition of consciousness and as perpetually present to consciousness. My place is thus inescapable for me as well. To "mental life" [*vie intérieure*] therefore belongs neither to incorporeality nor atonism (p. 7)<sup>20</sup>.

The complexity of man's composition is at the root of distinctively human behavioural and cultural traits. For a deeper understanding of this dynamic, our attention is now focused upon the manner in which man, due to his unique nature, acquires and retains knowledge — a process which is also inseparably united to the notion of man's simultaneously spiritual and corporal reality. Aristotle (*De Anima* III, II, 434a 7) identified man as a rational animal, distinguishing his rational ability from that of other living creatures. Aquinas echoed Aristotle (*S. Th.* I, q.29, a.4)<sup>21</sup> and

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<sup>19</sup> García Cuadrado (2003) offers a pertinent and balanced insight into the role and importance of man's corporal condition, particularly within the scope of cultural and religious aspects of life. "La persona no puede vivir y expresarse al margen de su cuerpo. La vida terrena es vivir 'según el cuerpo' y no fuera de él. Por eso los gestos y palabras exteriores manifiestan a la persona, sus sentimientos y su querer. Las expresiones corporales son "formas" de expresar lo que uno lleva dentro. De ahí la importancia de las reglas de educación y de urbanidad. Estas son convenciones sociales que pueden variar (y varían de hecho con el tiempo y las culturas) pero, no por ello son despreciables. [...] en este contexto se deben situar el lenguaje propio de la liturgia que posee un significado bien preciso que conviene conocer para que nuestra actuación externa sea realmente expresión de una convicción interna" (p. 134-135).

<sup>20</sup> See also Lacoste (2004) "The problem of the body is that it is an I [un je]: not some "thing" that we may or may not possess, but something we are: and, more rigorously, something that defines us as man: a someone" (p. 7). Of interest as well is Terrin's (1999) commentary, "O homem é, antes de tudo, a sua corporeidade, com todas as ligações com a terra, as sensações, as percepções, a que está conectada a necessidade imprescindível de satisfazer as necessidades primárias e as exigências comunicativas que o tornam capaz de se proteger e de ter um primeiro *habitat*" (p. 164).

<sup>21</sup> "Quid est homo?...Animal rationale mortale" (*S. Th.* I, q.29, a.4, ad. 2).

*Summa contra Gentiles*, III, a. 39) further elaborating these principles in other parts of his works. “Now the human soul is the highest and noblest of forms. Wherefore it excels corporeal matter in its power by the fact that it has an operation and a power in which corporeal matter has no share whatever. This power is called the intellect”<sup>22</sup> (*S. Th. I, q.76, a.1*).

St. Thomas emphasized the human ability to grasp the intelligible through the tangible, for our knowledge begins through the senses, as Aristotle affirmed — *nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu* — in order to subsequently reach abstract knowledge. “Signs are given to men, to whom it is proper to discover the unknown by means of the known” (*S. Th. III, q.60, a.2*)<sup>23</sup>. Accordingly, as Pseudo-Dionysius reflected, “we are led by sensible figures to the Divine contemplations, as is possible to us” (*Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* 1, 2; PG 3, 373)<sup>24</sup>. Therefore, the exterior senses play an essential role in the human process of acquiring knowledge, for it is through them that man is able to form ideas of the world, and reach a universal and collective concept of particular and material objects. St. Thomas writes: “Though the intellect is superior to the senses, nevertheless in a manner it receives from the senses, and its first and principal objects are founded in sensible things. And therefore suspension of the senses necessarily involves a hindrance to the judgement of the intellect”<sup>25</sup> (*S. Th. I, q.84, a.8, ad. 1*).

A brief overview of the complex though harmonious functioning of the external and internal senses in relation to human knowledge is of relevance at this point. The

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<sup>22</sup> “Anima autem humana est ultima in nobilitate formarum. Unde intantum sua virtute excedit materiam corporalem, quod habet aliquam operationem et virtutem in qua nullo modo communicat materia corporalis. Et haec virtus dicitur intellectus” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

<sup>23</sup> “Signa dantur hominibus, quorum est per nota ad ignota pervenire” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

<sup>24</sup> θεμιτόν, ἡμεῖς δὲ αἰσθηταῖς εἰκόσιν ἐπὶ τὰς θείας ὡς δυνατόν ἀναγόμεθα θεωρίας. (Translation by C. Luibheid)

<sup>25</sup> “Quamvis intellectus sit superior sensu, accipit tamen aliquo modo a sensu, et eius obiecta prima et principalia in sensibilibus fundantur. Et ideo necesse est quod impeditur iudicium intellectus ex ligament sensus” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

external senses are easily identified as five: vision, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. The internal senses are not immediately obvious and function more discreetly than the external senses, though they are of paramount importance in compiling and retaining the information received through the latter. Aquinas enumerates four internal senses: the common sense which receives, distinguishes and organizes the forms of sensible things; secondly, the imagination which is capable of conserving and reproducing the sensations received from the external senses and common sense, without the presence of the object perceived<sup>26</sup> (*S. Th.* I, q.78, a.4); thirdly, the estimative power which is employed “for the apprehension of intentions which are not perceived through the senses [...] and for the preservation thereof, the memorative power”<sup>27</sup> (*S. Th.* I, q. 8, a.4).

The complex information gathered through the various internal senses results in the sensible perception<sup>28</sup>. However, besides this merely sensible knowledge, gleaned directly through the senses and which therefore has as its object the sensible, particular and concrete, there exists another form of understanding known as intellectual knowledge, which captures the abstract, universal notion of things. Though this topic has been widely disputed among philosophers, in the Aristotelian scholastic vision, the source of this intellectual knowledge is found within man himself; through a complex operation, the person is able to extract universal and abstract ideas from merely

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<sup>26</sup> “Sic ergo ad receptionem formarum sensibilium ordinatur sensus proprius et communis: de quorum distinctione post dicetur. — Ad harum autem formarum retentionem aut conservationem ordinatur phantasia, sive imaginatio, quae idem sunt: est enim phantasia sive imaginatio quasi thesaurus quidam formarum per sensum acceptarum. Ad apprehendendum autem intentiones quae per sensum non accipiuntur, ordinatur vis aestimativa” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province)

<sup>27</sup> “Ad apprehendendum autem intentiones quae per sensum non accipiuntur, ordinatur vis aestimativa. Ad conservandum autem eas, vis memorativa, quae est thesaurus quidam huiusmodi intentionum” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province)

<sup>28</sup> “La percepción es la resultante de la suma de imágenes, sensaciones e impresiones afectivas y la fuerza asociativa que las mantiene unidas aquí y ahora” (García Cuadrado, 2003, p. 60).

practical realities through the operations of the agent intellect and possible intellect<sup>29</sup>.

### 1.1.1 Animal sociale, homo culturalis

This corporal and spiritual constitution organically influences, and, to a great extent, determines, human comportment in society. Not surprisingly, the phenomenon of sociability — with its varied implications — emerges as a key factor in the realm of behaviour and activity. Wide-ranging capacities of the human being, including intellectual, religious and cultural tendencies, predispose him toward a consistent interaction and communication with others of his kind. This organic tendency is evident in the origins of any civilization, where even in the most primitive leave traces of an acute sense of communal life<sup>30</sup>. It thus becomes clear that humans develop their capacities and fulfil their multiple needs mainly in contact with the world surrounding them. The innately social character of human existence is also maintained by Arendt (1998), who asserts that the broad range of activities undertaken by humanity are all influenced by this communal inclination (p. 22). The sense of sociability inherent to humans of all races and epochs could also be considered as a basis premise for cultural development.

Human sociability is by no means a recent point of reflection, for Greek philosophers, notably Plato and Aristotle, expounded upon it, though their notion of

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<sup>29</sup> “For the operation to be realizable, one condition is required — a metaphysical condition based upon the exigencies of order — and it is this: the action of the agent intellect which makes phantasms intelligible must precede the reception of this intelligible into the possible intellect: *Actio intellectus agentis in phantasmatis praecedit receptionem intellectus possibilis*. The sensible as such cannot penetrate the intelligible as such; and so it is our intellect which, aspiring to receive determination from the sensible, begins by rendering its action possible in raising it up to its own dignity” (Gilson, 1994, p. 220).

<sup>30</sup> In her anthropological and pedagogical studies, Stein (2003) stresses the sociability of the human person, insisting that the human individual truly lives only as a social being “El individuo humano aislado, es una abstracción. Su existencia es existencia en un mundo, su vida es vida en común. Y estas no son relaciones externas, que se añadan a un ser que ya existe en sí mismo y por sí mismo, sino que su inclusión en un todo mayor pertenece a la estructura misma del hombre” (p. 713). With respect to this quality of sociability, Arendt (1998) demonstrates the innate necessity of basic human interaction: “No human life, not even the life of the hermit in nature’s wilderness, is possible without a world which directly or indirectly testifies to the presence of other human beings” (p. 22).

sociability tends to focus more on a biological need, as in the gregarious instinct of animals, who seek the company of their own species for survival<sup>31</sup>. Aristotle, in particular, declares man's inherent necessity to participate in the state, for he is not self-sufficient. Indeed, he affirms that one who has no need for this mutual support could only be less than a man — a “lower” animal — or more than a man; that is, a god<sup>32</sup> (*Politics*. 1253a, 25-30). In this way, Aristotle traced the organic development of the city-state as essential to man's wellbeing, denominating him as a “political animal”. “From these things therefore it is clear that the city-state is a natural growth, and that man is by nature a political animal, and a man that is by nature and not merely by fortune citiless is either low in the scale of humanity or above it”<sup>33</sup> (*Politics*. 1253a, 1-4). However, in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle seems to express a broader comprehension of sociability, as he concedes that man's necessarily social condition is linked with his personal fulfilment and happiness as a social being.

Also perhaps it would be strange to represent the supremely happy man as a recluse. Nobody would choose to have all possible good things on the condition that he must enjoy them alone; for man is a social being, and designed by nature to live with others; accordingly the happy man must have society, for he has everything that is naturally good<sup>34</sup> (*Nicomachean Ethics*. 1169b, 16-22).

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<sup>31</sup> Hannah Arendt (1998) clarified the Greek philosophers' concept of sociability, in her renowned work *The Human Condition*. She identified the more limited scope of their concept of sociability, which was based on the biological necessity of human life: “It is not that Plato or Aristotle were ignorant of, or unconcerned with, the fact that man cannot live outside the company of men, but they did not count this condition among the specifically human characteristics; on the contrary, it was something human life had in common with animal life, and for this reason alone it could not be fundamentally human. The natural, merely social companionship of the human species was considered to be a limitation imposed upon us by the needs of biological life, which are the same for the human animal as for other forms of animal life” (p. 23-24).

<sup>32</sup> ὅτι μὲν οὖν ἡ πόλις καὶ φύσει πρότερον ἢ ἕκαστος, δῆλον: εἰ γὰρ μὴ αὐτάρκης ἕκαστος χωρισθείς, ὁμοίως τοῖς ἄλλοις μέρεσιν ἔξει πρὸς τὸ ὅλον, ὁ δὲ μὴ δυνάμενος κοινωνεῖν ἢ μηδὲν δεόμενος δι' αὐτάρκειαν οὐθὲν μέρος πόλεως, ὥστε ἢ θηρίον ἢ θεός.

<sup>33</sup> ἐκ τούτων οὖν φανερόν ὅτι τῶν φύσει ἡ πόλις ἐστὶ, καὶ ὅτι ὁ ἄνθρωπος φύσει πολιτικὸν ζῷον, καὶ ὁ ἄπολις διὰ φύσιν καὶ οὐ διὰ τύχην ἤτοι φαῦλός ἐστιν, ἢ κρεῖττων ἢ ἄνθρωπος. (Translation by C. Lord)

<sup>34</sup> ἄτοπον δ' ἴσως καὶ τὸ μονώτην ποιεῖν τὸν μακάριον: οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἔλοιτ' ἂν καθ' αὐτὸν τὰ πάντ' ἔχειν ἀγαθὰ: πολιτικὸν γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος καὶ συζῆν πεφυκός. καὶ τῷ εὐδαίμονι δὴ τοῦθ' ὑπάρχει: τὰ γὰρ τῆ φύσει ἀγαθὰ ἔχει, δῆλον δ' ὡς μετὰ φίλων καὶ ἐπιεικῶν κρεῖττον ἢ μετ' ὀθνείων καὶ τῶν τυχόντων συνημερεῦειν. δεῖ ἄρα τῷ εὐδαίμονι φίλων. (Translation by R. Crisp)

In turn, the Thomistic vision of the human as a naturally social being has much in common with Aristotle's own conclusions in this respect, Aquinas<sup>35</sup> having adopted Aristotle's principle that humans are naturally political, social beings: "*homo est naturaliter animal politicum et sociale*"<sup>36</sup>. Referring to the human individual as a social being, Aquinas states that the human being is not sufficient in and of himself in order to guarantee his survival; he has necessities which are only fully attended through integration with others. In contrast with Aquinas's adhesion to Aristotelian principles, philosophers of the modern epoch, such as Spinoza, Hobbes, Locke, Leibnitz, Vico e Rousseau, adhered to a platonic interpretation of the sociability of man. Despite the fact that their opinions diverge on certain points regarding the civil and natural state, they all unite in the opinion that the phenomenon of sociability in human nature tends to be secondary or accidental (Mondin, 2008, p. 165).

The emergence of Christianity introduced an innovative level to the theme of sociability, based on both an organic and supernatural model for human relationships. The early Christian Communities were distinctive for their internal organization, as they employed an organic notion of a *corpus*, in which each member was related to the others like members of a family. This notion was most adequately manifested in the liturgical activity of the early Church, which emphasised a markedly familial structure

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<sup>35</sup> "Sed quia homo est naturaliter animal politicum et sociale, ut probatur in I Polit., ideo necesse est quod sit tertius ordo, quo homo ordinetur ad alios homines, quibus convivere debet" (*S. Th.* I-II, q.72, a.4). "Homo naturaliter est animal sociale" (*S. Th.* I, q.96, a.4).

<sup>36</sup> Arendt (1998) discusses the origins and etymological explanation of the terms "social" and "political", which sheds some light upon the concepts presented. "This special relationship between action and being together seems fully to justify the early translation of Aristotle's *zoonpolitikon* by *animal socialis*, already found in Seneca, which then became the standard translation through Thomas Aquinas: *homo est naturaliter politicus, id est, socialis* ("man is by nature political, that is, social") More than any elaborate theory, this unconscious substitution of the social for the political betrays the extent to which the original Greek understanding of politics had been lost. For this, it is significant but not decisive that the word "social" is Roman in origin and has no equivalent in Greek language or thought. Yet the Latin usage of the word *societas* also originally had a clear, though limited, political meaning; it indicated an alliance between people for a specific purpose, as when men organize in order to rule others or to commit a crime. It is only with the later concept of a *societas generis humani*, a 'society of man-kind', that the term 'social' begins to acquire the general meaning of a fundamental human condition" (p. 23-24).

and ambience. The recognition of each person as a valued member of the “mystical body of Christ” illuminated the way for a more profound sociability based on charity. This deeply influenced the social and even political structure of human life, and ultimately helped to abolish such institutions as slavery and unjust inequalities.

The fact that the human individual relates with others not only for personal survival and subsistence, but also as a “dynamic, historic, social and creative being” (Mondin, 2008, p. 196) who thinks, reasons, produces and interacts<sup>37</sup>, brings to light certain human characteristics, closely related to social life. For example, the human capacity for verbal communication emerges in consequence of a complex series of human traits, not the least of which is a corollary of this inherent sociability which demands a higher form of communication, as Aristotle observed in his *Politica*: “Man alone of the animals possesses speech”<sup>38</sup>. Centuries later, St. Augustine would observe the supremacy and importance of the word as a natural expression of human thought, further recognizing the social function of spoken language in human interaction<sup>39</sup>. *Homo loquens* thus exercises this distinctly rational activity, which clearly constitutes an inalienable aspect of culture and social life in general, as the chief means of human communication.

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<sup>37</sup> Duvignaud (1970) illustrated the multiple social roles that man inevitably takes on within society, which implicate the participation in various forms of ceremonial: “Que chaque individu puisse ainsi jouer plusieurs rôles sociaux [...] montre que les vies particulières sont prises dans plusieurs trames de rôles et participent à diverses cérémonies qui impliquent, chaque fois différemment, une action collective déterminée: au cours de ces cérémonies qui incarnent la pratique sociale dans son intensité la plus grande les membres d’une communauté assument des types, des individualités fixées par une tradition, figurées le plus souvent par des masques” (p. 20).

<sup>38</sup> “λόγον δὲ μόνον ἄνθρωπος ἔχει τῶν ζώων” (Book 1, 1253a, 10; translation by C. Lord) In the perspective of sociability and the evolution of cultural elements, it is noteworthy that García Cuadrado (2003) points out that language takes on certain functions and characteristics in accordance with its use. In communicating objective knowledge regarding the world, language has a “logical or representative function”, while in expressing interior emotions and affections it can be termed as “expressive function”. In the expression of desires and commands it assumes an “directive function”, while language that creates beauty through metaphors and rhyme would be termed as a “poetic function” (p. 86). (Personal translation).

<sup>39</sup>“Verba enim prorsus inter homines obtinuerunt principatum significandi quaecumque animo concipiuntur, si ea quisque prodere velit. innumerabilis multitudo signorum quibus suas cogitationes homines exserunt in verbis constitutata” (St. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, 2,5,6-7).



Given that man's highest spiritual expressions, such as poetry, philosophy, art, music and religion, naturally take on sensible structures in human life, man organically elaborates these activities together with other individuals, contributing to and sustaining, in this way, a determined culture. Human existence and culture thus constitute inseparable dimensions, one indicating the presence of the other<sup>40</sup>. Therefore, culture may be viewed as the result of sociability brought to its highest forms of interaction and manifestation, whereby the human being has the possibility of disclosing and advancing his diverse attributes. The etymology of the term culture, originating from the Latin verb *colere*, that is, "cultivate" (hence the terms agriculture and so on), underscores this richness of its meaning. It is noteworthy that the Latin *colere* also holds the meaning of veneration and honour, which in turn gives rise to the term *cult* which has a religious meaning of ritual worship.

Within the last centuries, however, it cannot be denied that advances in the fields of industrialization, technology, and globalization have naturally produced far-reaching changes in society. Many of these advances apparently facilitate certain aspects of human life, such as instant means of communication and transportation which are constantly improving in efficiency and speed. In the wake of these transformations, however, rampant consumerism and pragmatism have concentrated man's efforts chiefly on production and labour; international conflicts, violence and

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<sup>40</sup> This intertwining of human life with culture was observed in a particular manner by Edith Stein (2003) who delineated how each aspect is distinctly modelled and formed by the other, for human life is naturally a cultural life. "Vivir entre obras del hombre quiere decir verlas aparecer y desaparecer, ser formado por ellas y ayudar a que otros se formen por ellas: la vida del hombre es vida cultural. El mundo del hombre es un mundo espiritual plumiforme, constituido por personas individuales y por comunidades, por formas sociales y por obras del espíritu. En él está el hombre, en él vive, dentro de él mira, en él le salen al encuentro la existencia y la condición humanas" (p. 593-594).

crime abound, while the use of drugs, depression and isolation are on the increase<sup>41</sup>. These elements signal a profound human crisis, making it clear that contemporary culture does not adequately respond to the inherent needs of humanity.

In effect, contemporary man often runs a vicious circle in trying to keep up with the demands of a technologically centred and computerized world, which stipulates and often times imposes an inhuman condition, stifling essential aspirations which human nature — including psycho-somatic rational, social, and cultural dimensions — naturally solicits<sup>42</sup>.

Consequently, if one merely concentrates on the dramatic changes that have so affected human life and culture particularly in the postmodern era, it is difficult at times to perceive the perennial character of human nature, with its unchanging constitution and demands. With his corporal and spiritual attributes and innate sociability, which progresses and expands in a cultural venue, the human being has consistently revealed profound necessities and expectations, which can be summed up

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<sup>41</sup> Diverse authors have expounded on the impact of this increasingly pragmatic outlook, highlighting the limited vision and that this avid materialistic consumerism produces, dramatically affecting the human mentality. In an insightful passage, Bernal Llorente (2000) recognizes the repercussions this focus has on the human world-view, particularly with respect to the lack of transcendental horizons: “Como un ingrediente propio de la modernidad el pragmatismo incontrolado que privilegia lo útil, lo práctico, lo que sirve para algo, lo que se somete a nuestra capacidad de manipulación e instrumentalización al servicio de otros fines e intereses. La mentalidad pragmatista conduce a una visión chata de la vida, sin relieve y sin horizontes, y provoca un comportamiento que solo actúa a la vista de posibles intereses prácticos a conseguir, lejos de cualquier referente a una visión gratuita de la existencia” (p. 43).

<sup>42</sup> The undeniable challenge brought on by the simultaneous onslaught of technology and pragmatism, which undermines this human sensitivity to transcendence, depriving man of essential modes of experience has opened discussion as to what extent the human being is capable of resisting or overcoming such influences. In a timely article Garcia Prado (2011) delineates that these negative aspects of contemporary life, “Creemos que en una sociedad virtual como la nuestra, una sociedad de teleservos, dominando por la imagen — o, mejor, por simulacros — de la realidad, no ofrece condiciones de crecimiento favorables a la delicada planta de la experiencia religiosa y sus símbolos.[...] El hombre virtual, que vive alejado de la realidad y consumiendo todo el día imágenes o simulacros de realidad, empobrece tanto su experiencia personal como su imaginación” (p. 672-673). On the other hand, Ruiz Díaz (2003) strongly argues in favour of contemporary man’s capacity to overcome this onslaught of technology with a deep-rooted and timeless appreciation for the symbolic, which tends to override the pragmatic: “El hombre de nuestro tiempo, a pesar de los racionalismos y las abstracciones ideológicas, a pesar de tantos aparatos y artilugios, etc., no ha perdido su capacidad y su sensibilidad simbólica. Los hombres y las mujeres modernos, a pesar del positivismo generalizado, siguen teniendo ‘antenas’ para el lenguaje simbólico como las gentes de otros tiempos” (p. 279).

as an instinctive thirst for beauty, transcendence and an experience of the sacred. It is noteworthy that, historically, human life has typically assumed unique forms of collective expression through celebrative and ritual action, art and symbology, in order to transmit and affirm cultural and religious values. Festivity and ceremonial action “concerns the heart of life, and perhaps constitutes it”, Pieper (1999, p. 14) proposes.

Thus, the diversity of celebrations within the ambit of cultural and religious practices brings to light fundamental aspects of man himself and his manner of expressing his deepest beliefs, hopes, and affectivities in a social ambit. The involvement of factors such as the ritual, the symbolic, and the artistic, evince the aesthetic and transcendent dimensions which such occasions contribute to human life. The importance of acknowledging and appreciating the value of these aspects in human existence becomes more relevant and urgent, as humanity tends to fulfil its need for transcendence and the sacred with inadequate and unsatisfying substitutes. With the contemporary scenario in mind, it is significant at this point of the investigation to explore certain universal traits of the innately human instinct toward festivity, and its role and importance in the human experience as a whole.

### **1.1.2 Homo festivus**

The omnipresence of diverse festive and ceremonial manifestation in every epoch and society attests to their consistent integration in human life, emerging as a natural concurrence of any civilization, holding both cultural and religious

characteristics and manifestation<sup>43</sup>. The etymology of the English term *festival* derives from *festum*, the original Latin term, which additionally held the term *feria* to distinguish festive events. As a common denominator, festivities organically evolve in relation to key moments related to moments of cosmic, historic, cultural, or religious weight in human existence<sup>44</sup>: “At the great seasonal festivals, the community celebrates the grand happenings in the life of nature by staging sacred performances, which represent the change of seasons, the rising and setting of the constellations, the growth and ripening of crops, birth, life and death in man and beast” (Huizinga, 1955, p. 15).

The collective revitalization of past events with historic, religious, or cultural import, through isolated or recurring celebrations, preserves their significance for the future, while providing symbolic ritual action and transcendence for the present<sup>45</sup>. Moreover, the festive activity of a particular culture is a multiform outlet for the

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<sup>43</sup> Often holding ludic, cultural and religious overtones, such exhibition has concentrated the traditional and nationalistic symbology through significant ritual forms of manifestation, thus demonstrating more intensely the chief characteristics of a nation or people. Among others, Vaca Lorenzo (2003) points to distinctly cultural characteristics of such happenings: “La fiesta, el juego y el ocio, en sus distintas expresiones poliédricas (apariencia, exhibición, competencia, placer, ostentación, reclamo, música, canto, danza, comida, bebida, jubileo, alegría, simbología, rito, etc.), constituyen hechos culturales de primera magnitud”. He further offers evidence of such undertakings within a historical perspective, which he affirms were strongly rooted in the traces of early civilizations: “En los primeros tiempos, las pinturas y grabados prehistóricos nos ponen ya ante la contemplación de unas formas festivas [...] que, paralelamente a los progresos en la lucha por la conquista del medio y por la supervivencia, irán adquiriendo una mayor riqueza y complejidad en sus manifestaciones, al tiempo que ocupando un mayor espacio en la vida humana” (p. 9-10).

<sup>44</sup> With deep insight, Pieper (1999) observes this universal integration of festivity within the broad range of spiritual and social aspects of human life; thus, it is not limited to merely one venue of human life, but rather, “it seizes and permeates all dimensions of existence” (p. 33). He further insinuates the capacity of festivity to permeate diverse areas of human life: “Wherever festivity can freely vent itself in all its possible forms, an event is produced that leaves no zone life, worldly or spiritual, untouched” (p. 34). In a similar vein of thought, López Quintas (1998) illustrates festivity as a culminating moment in the life of particular people, as it assimilates and projects its chief characteristics: “Todo pueblo, todo país vive en plenitud su vida de tal en los días de fiesta, ya que en ellos es más fácil captar la mutua interacción de los elementos que integran la vida de tal país o pueblo, y penetrar así en el sentido más hondo de sus modos de existencia” (p. 304).

<sup>45</sup> This temporal delineation of festive activity was emphasized in a particular manner by Holman (2001), who recognized its broader significance within the concept of the evolvement of the festivity itself: “A feast synthesizes past, present and future. From the present, a feast looks commemoratively to the past, and at the same time it is oriented towards the immediate future as a delimitation of the festivity. This marking out is necessary in order both to underscore the exceptional, social character of the celebration and to intensify the pleasure it brings” (p. 169).

expression of its individual and unique mentality, while simultaneously enriching and contributing to it, given the “power of the festival to stimulate cultural activity” (Hufford, 1994, p. 169). Indeed, this reciprocal exchange between festivity and culture, in which the latter stimulates festivity, and festive activity is seen as a basis for cultural growth, denotes a sort of channel for the transmission and assimilation of essential values of civilization.

Festivals are, in a sense, constructed around particular performances and rituals that facilitate the diffusion of “truths” to new audiences of inheriting generations, and increasingly interested observers/outsideers. Through performances, traditions as practices informed by rules and rituals of a symbolic nature can be maintained, and histories, whatever their accuracy, can be told and re-told with the regularity of festivity so instilling their values into social life (Picard & Robinson, 2006, p. 12).

Besides its clearly anthropological connotation, festivity can additionally be analysed from the perspective of the sacred and profane<sup>46</sup>. Accordingly, authors have commented upon aspects of festivity as a part of a broader study of the phenomenon of religion, as festivity often arises from within a religious context – an activity of *homo religious*, who is at the same time *homo festivus*<sup>47</sup>. That is, the religious instinct finds a perfect outlet for expression in public commemoration and celebration, and in the

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<sup>46</sup> In his work “Le sacré et le profane” Eliade (1959) sets forth this concept of sacred and profane within the realm of human experience. Caillois (1970) further emphasises the dynamic of the sacred within the realm of festivity, and additionally sees it as a return to the origins of the universe: “La fête se présente en effet comme une actualisation des premiers temps de l’univers, de l’Urzeit, de l’ère originelle éminemment créatrice qui a vu toutes les choses, tous les êtres, toutes les institutions se fixer dans leur forme traditionnelle et définitive. Cette époque n’est autre que celle où vivaient et agissaient les ancêtres divins dont les mythes rapportent l’histoire” (p. 130-131).

<sup>47</sup> The concept of the imaginative and artistic aspect of the human being, transcending the drudgery of daily existence within the venue of festive celebration, has opened the idea of the multifaceted capacity of the human being, who complements his interior knowledge and aspirations with symbolic manifestation. “Man is by his very nature a creature who not only works and thinks but who sings, dances, prays, tells stories and celebrates. He is *homo festivus*. Notice the universal character of festivity in human life. No culture is without it” (Cox, 1970, p. 10).

manifestation of profound ideologies and convictions through exterior symbolism and action. The d

## **1.2. Festivity in the human experience**

The undeniable presence of the festive dimension in human life suggests a reality of universal import, essential to any society. Consequently, as the present study is channelled toward recognizing the human capacity and necessity for external and communal manifestations through festive and ceremonial acts, a perusal of some of the chief characteristics of festivity — namely, aesthetic and symbolic qualities, ritual content, social manifestation and transcendent capacity — would seem fundamental to the subsequent development of the investigation.

### **1.2.1 Aesthetic and cultural aspects of festivity**

The development of symbolic elements and artistic expression within ceremonial and festive celebration is an integral part of its aesthetic and communitarian manifestation<sup>48</sup>. The symbols employed often hold cultural and historic significance which are brought to life during celebrative action. Diverse forms of art thus become synonymous with the celebratory action.

The aesthetic level of experience comes to light in art forms that are not only perceived by the participant, but also in a personal manner. Pieper (1999) has observed the role of arts in heightening the celebratory experience through aesthetic perception

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<sup>48</sup> It is of interest that Ocampo (1985) points out the all-encompassing capacity of symbolism within the ambit of festivity, showing its far-reaching impact, not only in the aesthetic experience but also as a strong uniting factor among individuals, bringing social relationships to a new level: “Desde el punto de vista estético, la fiesta es la ocasión de la expansión dramática, de la explosión de la imaginación y de lo simbólico, del despliegue de las capacidades sensitivas y perceptivas. [...] Los vestidos de los participantes, los adornos de las imágenes y del pueblo mismo hablan de meses de trabajo previo, realizado comunitariamente. La actividad estética tiende al fortalecimiento de los lazos entre los miembros del grupo y tanto los preparativos previos, como la música y la danza en el momento de la fiesta, no buscan sino fortalecer relaciones interpersonales” (p. 63).

in festivity: “The invisible aspect of festivity, the praise of the world which lies at a festival’s innermost core, can attain a physical form, can be made perceptible to the senses, only through the medium of the arts. Also, the effect of festivity, the stepping out of time and the refreshment that penetrates to the depths of the soul, reaches the celebrant in the form of a message couched in the language of the arts” (p. 52)<sup>49</sup>. The forms of art and symbols pertaining to celebration also incorporate human action, and therefore rely upon human involvement for their full disclosure and significance.

The integration of art forms within celebration is, then, a unique mode of promoting cultural heritage and fostering religious beliefs, as their symbolism is revitalized in festive activity<sup>50</sup>. Most particularly in the communitarian dimension of festivity, the symbol emerges as an element of union among the participants, for symbolism traditionally serves as a way of bringing together by defining the common objectives and sentiments of those participating, thus preserving the group’s true identity and reason for being<sup>51</sup>. Holding elements of common interest and goals, the character and meaning of a particular group is gradually formed through this symbolic manifestation, which expresses its ideology. In like manner, just as Chauvet (1995) posits the use of symbolism in a group as a distinguishing factor, a key element which facilitates the internal bonding and mutual recognition of its members (p. 112), Richter further clarifies this defining characteristic of the symbol, affirming that according to

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<sup>49</sup> However, Pieper carefully distinguishes the authentic role of the arts, relegating them to a secondary plane in festivity, as they themselves are not the essence or core of festive action: “On the other hand, the very overestimation of the arts can also obscure this knowledge. The fact that the arts have their natural place within festivals indicates that they are not themselves the festivals. Rather, the arts, like pleasure itself, are derivative and secondary; they are a contribution, the adornment and medium of the festival, but not its substance” (Pieper, 1999, p. 52).

<sup>50</sup> For example, the cultural or religious beliefs of a people celebrated through festive activity continue as living aspects of their lives — festivity allows one to truly “live” one’s culture, one’s religion, one’s convictions and beliefs in an enduring way, for these convictions are projected through festivity into the lives of all. As Van Tillo (2001) asserts, “Festive occasions where people express their feelings in a collective way, say a lot about the time and place in which they occur. They not only reflect the religion of a community but also say something about the way of thinking, about the roles played in daily life and about customs and choices” (p. 25).

<sup>51</sup> The communicating and uniting factor of symbols holds a unique place within forms of human language: “La fiesta constituye, por último, un sistema de comunicación peculiar y diferente de las lenguas naturales y de otros sistemas, especialmente por la importancia del contexto como referente de los símbolos” (Montes del Castillo, 1989, p. 330).

sociological research, when a large group is joined by a new member, the newcomer instinctively learns about the group through observing the “meaning the group attaches to its symbols”<sup>52</sup>.

Due to their aesthetic impact, festive and ceremonial occasions thus hold the unique capacity of touching intellectual, emotive, and psychological dimensions of the individual, often opening new perspectives of existence and experience. Their capacity for incorporating art forms and symbols for transmitting and expressing abstract ideologies and beliefs, also corroborates with unique forms of gesture and diverse forms of human involvement for a full integration of participation. Along this line, Corrêa de Oliveira (2010) underscored the role of ceremonies in giving form and expression to internal principles and ideals: “Ceremonies give man the conviction of the truths and abstract principles it encompasses (...) as a corporal being, man needs symbols to complete in his spirit the effect of principles and doctrine”<sup>53</sup>. With their often complex and diverse scope, such occasions thus provide an ideal venue for expression and manifestation both on a cultural and personal level.

However, though the exterior forms of celebration attract and move the human spirit, true forms of festive experience hold elements which may not be obvious at first sight. There are clearly other factors at stake which determine the substance and authenticity of such occasions, such as the objectives and purpose of the event, the interior spirit of the participants, the sentiments and results which are derived, the ideological and cultural roots of its origins, and the impact that the experience holds for the individual beyond the actual moment of celebration. In other words, festivity

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<sup>52</sup> The individual is thus defined as a member or non-member of the group through the acceptance or rejection of the symbols and their conformation “to the behavioural demands that they pose”. For Richter, the symbol is a necessary element for defining the members from those who do not make part of the group. “If the symbols disappear, the contours of the group are blurred, and it enters into a stage of dissolution” (Richter, 1990, p. 25).

<sup>53</sup> “O cerimonial dá ao homem a compenetração das verdades e dos princípios abstratos nele contidos. (...) tendo o homem corpo, ele necessita de símbolos para completarem no seu espírito a ação dos princípios e da doutrina. De tal maneira que o homem fica uma espécie de esqueleto se ele só tem doutrina e não símbolos” (Personal translation). Thus, ceremonies and festivities would be an essential complement toward a holistic approach of human assimilation and knowledge.



may hold a spiritual or transcendent dimension which is not entirely attributable to or dependent upon its exterior components. The concept of authentic as opposed to false forms of festivity comes up, then, in the act of examining the level of interior, abstract, and enduring qualities as opposed to more external, concrete, and momentary content.

### **1.2.2 Homo socialis and the dynamic of festivity**

Celebrations and ceremonies, by their nature, involve a distinctly social characteristic, for they develop principally within the setting of communities and particular groups, often uniting diverse social classes and individuals in a common objective of cultural, patriotic, religious, historical or ideological commemoration<sup>54</sup>.

In this sense, festive activity emerges as a uniting factor in human existence, with a capacity for establishing vertical communication by fostering profound cultural roots, as well as horizontal contact by promoting a social ambit in which the individual fulfils his aspirations as an inherently social being. The outward expression of latent cultural and religious beliefs, the prominent use of symbols, culinary and national forms of vesture, all hinge upon the sociability of celebration, while preparatory labour strengthens interpersonal bonds, as it deepens individual adherence to the essence of the celebration. Gadamer (1986) goes so far as to identify festivity as the most perfect

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<sup>54</sup>The communal facet of the festive occurrence implicates a significant impact within the realm of human sociability and interaction, for its capacity of uniting and integrating individuals holds diverse levels, which may be perceived in different modes. For one, Durkheim (1995) considered festivity an element that overcomes individual differences, affirming that it is effectively a bonding factor among individuals, and is consequently an element that stimulates “the masses into motion” (p. 386-387). Caillois (1970) in turn, points to the purifying and renovating capacity of festivity, as it creates opportunities for interaction between diverse social classes: “Dans sa forme pleine, en effet, la fête doit être définie comme le paroxysme de la société, qu’elle purifie qu’elle renouvelle à la fois. (...) Elle apparaît comme le phénomène total qui manifeste la gloire de la collectivité et la retrempe dans son être: le groupe se réjouit alors des naissances survenues qui prouvent sa prospérité et assurent son avenir. Il reçoit dans son sein ses nouveaux membres par l’initiation qui fonde leur vigueur. Il prend congé des ses morts et leur affirme solennellement sa fidélité. C’est en même temps l’occasion où, dans les sociétés hiérarchisées, se rapprochent et fraternisent les différentes classes sociales et où, dans les sociétés à phratries, les groupes complémentaires et antagonistes se confondent, attestent leur solidarité et font collaborer à l’œuvre de création les principes mystiques qu’ils incarnent et qu’on prend soin à l’ordinaire de ne pas mêler” (p. 160).

form of community, due to the common objective which unites and solidifies the group, thereby curbing individualistic behaviour (p. 39). He further specifies that festivity is “an intentional activity”; that is, all are gathered not only physically in the same place, but also with the same purpose.

Festivity or ceremonies thus channel the sentiments and ideals of a determined group, uniting their manifestation in defined exterior forms. Once again, we see the unifying potential of symbolic language, whether gestural or through external art forms, which solidify the cultural or religious identity of groups. This unmistakably social dimension confirms the permanence and remembrance of such occasions, lending them weight and significance among the members of the participating community, deepened through repetition on an annual or other intervallic basis<sup>55</sup>.

While defining the differences and characteristics of particular cultures, festivity also has a unique capacity for breaking down barriers between cultures. In her studies regarding the phenomenon of festivity, particularly from the Brazilian perspective, Amaral (1998), recognizes the role that the Brazilian festivity played as a means of bonding between cultures during the colonial period. She proposes that it was festivity that succeeded in establishing a “language” capable of creating a line of communication between the different cultural factions existing among the colonizers and colonized — diverse races converging upon Brazilian territory: “To establish communication between cultures was the principle task of the festival during the colonial period”. As a result of this communication, Amaral continues, the Brazilian model of sociability took form and acquired stability; namely, the search for

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<sup>55</sup> The observance of cultural enrichment through festive manifestation delineates the very identity and soul of a people, as celebrations tend to capture and manifest the key distinguishing features of a given cultura. López Quintas (1998) illustrates: “Todo pueblo, todo país vive en plenitud su vida de tal en los días de fiesta, ya que en ellos es más fácil captar la mutua interacción de los elementos que integran la vida de tal país o pueblo, y penetrar así en el sentido más hondo de sus modos de existencia” (p. 304).

“similarity within diversity”<sup>56</sup>. Examples like this one accentuate the capacity of the festival to create forms of communication which are eminently accessible and easily assimilated, and by which diverse cultures can attain a certain unity and understanding.

The configuration of a cultural identity can thus be traced, in part, to celebratory activity, for besides the more sensibly perceptible products of a culture — the edifices, art forms, language — Corrêa de Oliveira (2003) observed that the most magnificent creation of a determined culture is the formation of a “human type”. Each people, with its own particular vision and characteristics, tends to organically form its individual members into living reflections of all of the highest qualities of that particular civilization. Consequently, the body becomes a kind of symbol of the soul, in which the gaze; voice, gestures, and way of being reflect the aspirations of a soul that is intimately connected with a determined culture. In effect, the individual himself becomes a transmitter of the aspirations, gifts and characteristics of this culture<sup>57</sup>. Here, festivity and ceremony bring into focus the social dynamic of human representation, with symbolic modes of comportment.

### **1.2.3 The role of ritual action in celebrations**

However, the inherently social element of celebrations naturally evokes other relevant questions as to the evolvment and purpose of its practice. How is this sociability channelled toward a fruitful experience within celebrations? In general

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<sup>56</sup> “Estabelecer a comunicação entre as culturas foi a tarefa principal da festa no período colonial, ao mesmo tempo em que, através desta comunicação, exercitou e estabeleceu o contrato social brasileiro e nosso modelo de sociabilidade, que é a de buscar a semelhança dentro da diversidade”(Amaral, 1998, p. 18).

<sup>57</sup> “A expansão das tendências nacionais causa ao povo um grande bem-estar físico. A mentalidade nacional inspira a formação de símbolos, costumes, artes, nos quais ela se exprime, se define e se afirma, se contempla a si mesma e se solidifica. Esses símbolos são um patrimônio nacional, uma condição essencial para a sobrevivência e progresso espiritual da nação. Eles têm uma consonância indefinível e profunda com a mentalidade nacional, uma consonância que é natural e verídica, e não puramente fictícia e convencional. Por isto, em via de regra, cada povo elabora uma só arte, uma só cultura e nela caminha enquanto existe. O maior tesouro natural de um povo é a posse de sua própria cultura, isto é, quase a posse de sua própria mentalidade” (Corrêa de Oliveira, 1945, p. 18).

terms, it can be observed that the outward features of festivities constitute flexible but established forms of comportment with a particular goal or purpose<sup>58</sup>.

In this vein, it is noteworthy that while certain authors, such as Duvignaud (1983), regard festivity as an often chaotic transgression of established social norms and defiance of regulated codes of behaviour<sup>59</sup>, others contend that *true* festivity naturally includes diverse rites within its evolvment, as well as a fixed time and duration, which serve to orient the participants with respect to the objective of the festivity. In other words, as Di Santi (2004) affirms, although festive activity organically eradicates “constituted order,” it does so by reason of a higher goal as it approximates more fully to the “divine order” (p. 211-214)<sup>60</sup>. In like manner, Ocampo (1985) insists upon the inclusion of ritual within the celebration, which favours order and allows for a smooth transition between festive and non-festive time. While admitting that festivities are commonly considered as occasions of unruly comportment, she strongly asserts the existence of rites in its practice, arguing that such ritual content prepares participants for fruitful and purposeful festivity, namely, communication with the sacred, which subsequently allows for a natural reintegration

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<sup>58</sup> Underling the inherent capacity of festive occasions in the ritualization of social relations, Montes del Castillo (1989) points out its emerging as a natural consequence of its communitarian dimension enriched with specific behavioural patterns and symbolism, (p. 330) while Dupré (2000) clarifies the distinct role of the essentially ritual dimension of a given festivity, which assures a profound and lasting impact upon the participants allowing for full participation, which he expressed as “not so much spontaneous expressions of joy as well-planned rites which help us realize the temporality of existence” (p. 20).

<sup>59</sup> This concept, emphasized by Duvignaud (1983), delineates the festive celebration as a moment when “Os grupos humanos de se libertarem de si mesmos e de enfrentarem uma diferença radical no encontro com o universo sem leis e nem forma” (p. 212), perhaps holding an echo in the words of Caillois (1970) “Elle implique une grand concours de peuple agité et bruyant. Ces rassemblements massifs favorisent éminemment la naissance et la contagion d’une exaltation qui se dépense en cris et en gestes, qui incite à s’abandonner sans contrôle aux impulsions les plus irréflechies” (p. 124). And Durkheim (1995), in turn, is of the same persuasion: “It has often been observed that popular festivals lead to excesses, causing people to lose sight of the boundary between the licit and the illicit” (p. 386-387).

<sup>60</sup> “A festa é realmente abolição da ordem constituída (lembremo-nos das transgressões das normas típicas em cada festa) não em razão de extravagâncias e do caos, mas em obediência a uma ordem superior, mais próxima e mais fiel à ordem divina. A festa é o avesso do mundo, a sua recriação de acordo como o modelo divino” (Di Sante, 2004, p. 214).

into daily routine. She further points out the regulated form of celebrations, which include fixed patterns of behaviour and time boundaries that are followed<sup>61</sup>.

Indeed, identifying the ritual component within festive celebrations may be equivalent to identifying the essence and driving force of its dynamism. The regulated and ritualistic essence, often involving symbolic, cultural and historic/religious significance, is key to its value as an authentic font of human experience<sup>62</sup>. It is relevant, then, to ponder some of the characteristics of ritual activity itself in human life and culture – a theme that has awakened contrasting opinions and still persists as an enigma among recent thinkers<sup>63</sup>. Bell (p. 19) underscores the ability of ritual to realize an externalization of interior ideals, which is key to our understanding of its involvement within the context of festivity. “Theoretical descriptions of ritual generally regard it as action and thus automatically distinguish it from the conceptual aspects of religion, such as beliefs, symbols, and myths. [...] Likewise, beliefs, creeds, symbols, and myths emerge as forms of mental content or conceptual blueprints: they direct, inspire, or promote activity, but they themselves are not activities. Ritual, like action, will act out, express, or perform these conceptual orientations”<sup>64</sup>.

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<sup>61</sup> “Sin embargo, y contrariamente a la idea que suele tenerse habitualmente, la fiesta no es un desborde incontrolado. [...] Y, más organizadamente, existen en la fiesta una serie de ritos que tienen por función preparar a los participantes para el tipo de experiencia que van a realizar, para lograr el cometido de la fiesta que es esa comunicación con lo sagrado, a la vez que para posibilitar una vuelta al tiempo cotidiano cuando esta prescrito. Es por ello que las fiestas tienen una duración estipulada y fija, reglada por el calendario mítico, y ciertos pasos que deben cumplirse en su desarrollo” (Ocampo, p. 61).

<sup>62</sup> “Tutti gli autoriche hanno tentato di interpretare la festa, appartenenti a correnti e scuole diverse, pur differenziandosi a volte radicalmente, non tralasciando mai di osservare che il tempo della festa è caratterizzato da una component rituale e da una component ludica, di festività se non di piacere” (Sartore, Triacca, & Cibien, 2001, p. 813). Bernal Llorente (2000) also sees the necessity of ritual as a fundamental factor of festivity. “En el corazón mismo de la fiesta hay que situar la celebración del ritual, de forma que aquella, sin el rito, dejaría de ser fiesta” (p. 82).

<sup>63</sup> For example, Douglas (2003) alerts us to a universal “revolt against ritualism” (p. 1) which seems to stem from a limited or distorted notion of what ritual really signifies within society.

<sup>64</sup> In comparing ritual with the “complex obscurity of a work of art” Sanmartín (1988) notes an underlying message contained in the ritual act, which is not necessarily revealed with full clarity, but rather holds a somewhat mysterious note: “En un rito nunca se expresa de manera directa las intenciones y creencias de los actores que lo ejecutan. Se acerca más el ritual a la compleja oscuridad de una obra de arte que a la precisa claridad de un acta notarial”. He further underlines the creative mode of expression revealed through ritual which includes group interaction. “A semejanza del arte, lo que proporciona el ritual es una experiencia de una creación colectiva, valiosa para el grupo en el que se genera” (p. 154).

Ritual is thus primarily action, an action which bears profound significance, a measured and cadenced externalization of interior sentiments and beliefs<sup>65</sup>. Indeed, all of human life revolves around diverse realities, and ritual practice is one of the chief ways that man may both express and be reminded of truths<sup>66</sup>. The thought of Huizinga (1955) is of relevance at this point, as he draws a connection between the ludic phenomenon of human existence, and that of ritual and festive activity, alluding to their common origin and characteristics. Considering culture and other dimensions of human life *sub specie ludi*, he broadly affirms that “the great archetypal activities of human society are all permeated with play from the start” (p. 4). With respect to ritual, this author sees it as intrinsically linked with play, for ritual activity evolved from forms of sacred play (p. 173). Huizinga emphasizes ritual as a “*dromenon*”, that is, “something acted out, an action”. He posits that the ritual action goes beyond a mere representation of something, for “the rite produces the effect which is then not so much shown figuratively as actually reproduced in the action”. Huizinga insists, then, that the ritual act is not a mere imitation; rather, it “causes the worshipers to participate in the sacred happening itself” (p. 14).

Not without hesitation I venture to suggest to classical scholars that a semantic link between ritual, art and play may possibly be hidden in the Greek word *ἄγαλμα*. *Agalma* is derived from a verbal root with a complex of meanings, central to which is the idea of exultation and jubilation, comparable to the German *frohlocken*, often used in a religious sense. On the periphery stand such meanings as “to celebrate”, “to make resplendent”, “to make a show of”, “to rejoice”, “to adorn”. The primary meaning of the substantive is held to be an

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<sup>65</sup> The anthropologist Terrin (1999) demonstrates the organizitive power of ritual activity which he claims allows contemporary man to live more fully. What is striking is his insistence that ritual is a mode of existence that capacitates the human being to transcend chaos and violence, through its inherent order and hierarchical essence: “O rito coloca ordem, classifica, estabelece as prioridades, dá o sentido do que é importante e do que é secundário. O rito nos permite viver num mundo organizado e não caótico, permite-nos sentir em casa, num mundo que, do contrário, apresentar-se-ia a nos como hóstil, violento, impossível” (p. 19).

<sup>66</sup> Rappaport (1999) affirms that he considers the expression ritual “to denote the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers” (p. 24).

ornament, a show-piece, a precious object – in short, the thing of beauty that is a joy for ever. [...] we come quite close to that mood of sacred play which is so characteristic of archaic ritual (Huizinga, 1955, p. 167-168).

For Huizinga, there is no formal difference between play and ritual, (p. 18) in the same way, “sacred space” cannot be formally distinguished from the field of play. With his typical originality, he further gives various examples of places set aside in human life, such as the arena, stage, and temple, declaring them to function as places of play activity, places that are isolated, closed off, prohibited, and that incur determined rules and regulation – “temporary worlds” within the normal world, dedicated to the practice of a special activity (p. 10). He states that the demarcation of space and its isolation from the daily ambience is one of the most important characteristics of play, and equally, an integral characteristic of every ritual act. This requirement of a sacred space, a place set apart and isolated from all the rest, is present in all ritual activity, for the sacrament and mystery imply the use of a sanctified place (p. 20). Besides the designated, “sacred space” appointed for play, Huizinga presents other characteristics that distinguish ludic activity, which are similar to those of ritual activity. He identifies a specific and absolute order within the play element. For him, play not only creates order, but it is order, introducing into the confusion and imperfection of life and the world a temporary limited perfection, linking it with an world of aesthetics with its tendency toward beauty, portraying rhythm and harmony, the two most noble qualities that we are capable of perceiving. Huizinga thus compares ludic and festive activities that occur in human life, disclosing striking similarities between the two concepts, concluding that they share the same principal structure. In short, they both demonstrate a predominant ambience of joyful expression, and create a distinct disparity with daily life. He further points out that distinctly ritual events are delineated by particular time and place and uniting a regulated content with authentic forms of freedom (p. 23).

In a similar vein to Huizinga's propositions, it is significant that Durkheim (1995) confirms this strong relationship between these two elements. "The idea of a religious ceremony of any importance naturally elicits the idea of a festival. Inversely, every festival has certain characteristics of a religious ceremony, even if it is of purely secular origin" (p. 386-387). Pieper also asserts that both secular and religious festivity share the same origins, both having evolved from religious ritual (Pieper, 1999, p. 35). However, he goes further in insisting upon the specific facet of rituality, deeming that a festivity without the "visible form and structure of ritual" is unconceivable (Pieper, 1990, p. 68). For this philosopher, ritual praise is basically another venue of the similar characteristic of "affirmation" that is the essence of festivity. (Pieper, 1999, p. 37). Consequently, without this ritual content, true festivity is not able to develop productively, as ritual naturally creates an experience of transcendence and profundity with its organizing and classifying capacity. Pieper puts forward that the only one way to "respond to such a gift is: by praise of God in ritual worship". Here, Pieper reflects that it is "the withholding of public worship that makes festivity wither at the root" (Pieper, 1999, p. 71).

The core and source of festivity itself remains inviolably present in the midst of society. This is as true today as it was a thousand years ago. It remains in the form of the praise given in ritual worship, which is literally performed at every hour of the day. By its nature that praise is a public act, a festival celebrated before the face of Creation, whether its site is a catacomb or a prisoner's cell. And because the festive occasion pure and simple, the divine guarantee of the world and of human salvation, exists and remains true continuously, we may say that in essence one single everlasting festival is being celebrated – so that the distinction between holiday and workday appears to be quite erased (Pieper, 1999, p. 86).



#### 1.2.4 Transcendence and festivity

The concept of festivity as inherently linked to ritual and ludic traits of human comportment and religious sentiments, has often arisen within the scope of sacred and profane time patterns, for festive time is distinct from ordinary chronological time. Festive and celebratory “time” has been considered as an emergence into a “sacred” non-chronological time, which hearkens back to a mythical past, re-lived through festival action<sup>67</sup>. While identifying similar characteristics between religious ceremonies and festivals, Durkheim (1995) emphasized that both activities hold a strong tendency to break from ordinary existence. “Man is carried outside himself, pulled away from his ordinary occupations and preoccupations” (p. 386-387). Consequently, through their manifold significance, symbolism and ritual content, festive or ceremonial occasions clearly surpass quotidian experience, producing the fruits of “renewal, transformation, re-birth” (Pieper, 1999, p. 41)<sup>68</sup>.

The renovating and extraordinary elements of festive and ceremonial occasions capacitate entire groups of participants to pass from their daily obligations and the more mundane preoccupations they bring, into a realm of transcendence — another pace of life and experience. Particularly for Caillois (1970), festivity denotes a distinct rupture from the ordinary obligation of work, wherein the festival serves as a type of release from the constraints of the human condition, transporting man to another world, an emergence into the sacred (p. 126). He views the day of festivity, even Sunday for example, as a day in which daily work is interrupted, a day consecrated to

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<sup>67</sup>Although the concept of time in the ambit of festivity is explored with more detail in the third chapter of this investigation, it is worthwhile at present to consider the commentary of López Martín (1994) who lays the ground work for its more profound implication in human life: “La Fenomenología señala que la fiesta no es sino una forma de vivir el tiempo, una manifestación del tiempo; por supuesto que del tiempo como realidad simbólica y sacral, religiosa. En la fiesta se condensa el tiempo sagrado abriendo al hombre la dimensión trascendente del tiempo divino” (p. 283).

<sup>68</sup>The Brazilian anthropologist Amaral (1998) offers a profound reflection regarding the possibilities that the transcendence of festivity brings, as a form of mediation, delineating a seemingly unreachable, utopian goal: “Ao se apresentarem como mediações privilegiadas, não apenas no sentido estrutural, mas também em diversos outros, entre dimensões e estruturas várias, as festas constituem um evento transcendente, um mundo ideal, sem tempo nem espaço, onde a imaginação tudo pode engendrar, transformar, refazer” (p. 20).

Divine praise. In some cases, festivities are celebrated over an entire season, a period of the “pre-eminence of the sacred”<sup>69</sup>.

Within the realm of authentic forms of festivity, the outstanding aesthetic appeal which combines with the deeper meaning of the commemoration, whether religious, historic, or merely a cultural event, is a natural incentive for strong emotions and sentiments among the participants. One author would describe festivity as “a moment of the greatest emotional tension in which man and supernatural forces share the same space and time” (Ocampo, 1985, p. 60)<sup>70</sup>. These lively sentiments produced in the festive scenario vary in accordance with the type of festivity celebrated, but most authors concur as to the common denominator of joy, peace, and order<sup>71</sup> they bring to humans, a form of transcendence that has its roots in the most profound aspirations of the human spirit, collectively expressed.

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<sup>69</sup>“Aussi différentes qu’on les imagine et qu’elles apparaissent, réunies en une seule saison ou disséminées dans le cours de l’année, les fêtes semblent partout remplir une fonction analogue. Elles constituent une rupture dans l’obligation du travail, une délivrance des limitations et des servitudes de la condition d’homme: c’est le moment où l’on vit le mythe, le rêve” (p. 161). “En réalité, la fête est souvent tenue pour le règne même du sacré. Le jour de fête, le simple dimanche est d’abord un temps consacré au divin, ou le travail est interdit, ou l’on doit se reposer, se réjouir, et louer Dieu. Dans les sociétés où les fêtes ne sont pas disséminées dans l’ensemble de la vie laborieuse, mais groupées en une véritable saison de fêtes, on voit mieux encore à quel point celle-ci constitue réellement la période de la prééminence du sacré” (p. 126).

<sup>70</sup>“Es el momento de mayor tensión emocional en el que hombres y fuerzas sobrenaturales comparten el mismo espacio y el mismo tiempo”.

<sup>71</sup>Corrêa de Oliveira (2011a) highlights the break in time that the celebration of certain feasts brings about, while also underlining the sentiments of consolation and serenity that accompany them: “As festas do Santo Natal, bem como as da Páscoa, a meu ver, tem a característica de interromperem o tempo. E ainda que se esteja na situação mais aflitiva, o Natal ergue uma muralha, deixando de um lado as desgraças e as lágrimas, e, do outro, os sinos que anunciam as alegrias natalinas. Não se trata de uma alegria vulgar, mas de uma alegria muito mais profunda e leve, que parece ser feita de luz. Feita de luz que é o *Lumen Christi*, a qual passou a brilhar sobre a Terra na noite de Natal, e que a cada ano de alguma forma volta a brilhar, trazendo com ela a verdadeira alegria e a verdadeira paz de alma até para os mais atormentados” (p. 7-8). Mateos (1981) emphasizes the true meaning of happiness within the perspective of festive activity, which he sees as the capacity to effectively confront and overcome, rather than to ignore, the sorrows and difficulties of life in the joyful exuberance and energy that festivity produces. “Felicidad, sin embargo, no es la beata ausencia de prueba y dolor, sino la vitalidad exaltada capaz de arrostrar lo difícil, el vigor que puede cargar con responsabilidades y durezas. Eso es lo que celebra la fiesta: no se desentiende del dolor de la vida, pero afirma la fuerte alegría que lo integra y lo supera. [...] La fiesta expresa y obtiene ánimo y aliento, salud y libertad; lo dulce nace también de lo amargo y lo áspero, integrado en la energía y el vigor de la vida” (p. 255).

### 1.2.5 Homo festivus and the spirit of authentic festivities

Having explored the human involvement in festivity, within the sphere of its aesthetic, cultural, communitarian and ritual aspects, is it possible to identify the essence and true spirit characteristic of authentic feasts — a celebration which transcend the quotidian while offering respite and true cultural enrichment? What are the essential components that render festivity truly essential to human existence and the sustentation of any civilization, rather than a false masquerade of artificial elements? Pieper (1999), among others, makes some noteworthy observations with respect to the essence and definition of true festivity, pointing toward the significance of celebration as “man’s affirmation of the universe and his experiencing the world in an aspect other than its everyday one” (Pieper, 2009, p. 65). For this author, the essential element of the festive joy in the celebration of any event is exactly this sense of affirmation, which goes beyond the scope of merely exterior forms.

*A festival becomes true festivity only when man affirms the goodness of his existence by offering the response of joy. [...] Strictly speaking, however, it is insufficient to call affirmation of the world a mere prerequisite and premise for festivity. In fact it is far more; it is the substance of festivity. Festivity, in its essential core, is nothing but the living out of this affirmation. To celebrate a festival means: to live out, for some special occasion and in an uncommon manner, the universal assent to the world as a whole (p. 29-30).*

Pieper (1999) shows that the attitude and intention with which the celebration of festivity is approached is of prime importance, for certain attitudes render true festivity impossible – namely that of self-sufficiency and the refusal to accept the gift of the “goodness of the reality taken as a whole” (p. 71). Festivity, then, should be celebrated with a simplicity of gratitude stemming from an openness toward the more profound questions of existence.

It is enlightening that in another work, Pieper (2009a) also discusses the relationship that exists between true leisure — a concept often misunderstood in today’s society — and festivity<sup>72</sup>. Surprisingly, he declares that the essence of leisure is found in the ambit of celebration, where three important points have their place: “relaxation, effortlessness, and superiority of active leisure to all functions” (p. 65). However, the transcendence from the everyday which festivity affords is not only the result of the contrast between different types of activity. Rather, according to Pieper, it is an essential component of contemplation within festivity that allows for this transcendence (p. 17). The presence of contemplation in festivity promotes a preparation of the spirit for the transcendent, necessary for an authentic celebration of festivity<sup>73</sup>.

This does not mean that a festival is simply contemplation and recollection of self; any such claim is clearly belied by experience. Nevertheless, we cling to the feeling that a special spice, essential to the right celebration of a festival, is a kind of expectant alertness. One must be able to look through and, as it were, beyond the immediate matter of the festival, including the festal gifts; one must

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<sup>72</sup> True leisure, in Pieper’s (2009a) description, distinguishes itself by its contrast with work and its contemplative dimension, going beyond a merely superficial consideration. For Pieper, leisure is essentially a “a mental and spiritual attitude” which is inherently “a condition of the soul”, and therefore not the commonly held notion of it being merely a natural consequence of holidays or time off: “It is, in the first place, an attitude of mind, and a condition of the soul, and as such utterly contrary to the ideal of ‘worker’ in each and every one of the three aspects under which it was analyzed: work as activity, as toil, as a social function. Compared with the exclusive ideal of work as activity, leisure implies (in the first place) an attitude of non-activity, of inward calm, of silence; it means not being ‘busy’, but letting things happen” (p. 46).

<sup>73</sup> Interestingly, Di Sante (2004) sees festivity as the font wealth for all peoples, and echoes Pieper’s idea that festivity is an affirmation of the “goodness of the world” and, consequently, a negation of negativity and death. She mentions how various authors agree that the root of the word *Festa*, is from the Greek term *phainomai*, denoting its manifesting character, as festivity opens “a new horizon of values and meanings, without which it would be impossible to live and nurture hopes” (p. 211).

engage in a listening, and therefore necessarily silent, meditation upon the fundament of existence (Pieper, 1999, p. 17)<sup>74</sup>.

Cox (1970) further opines that this festive impulse “arises from man’s peculiar power to incorporate into his own life the joys of other people and the experience of previous generations” (p. 7). He identifies three main points as integral to festivity: that of excess, celebrative affirmation involving a marked sense of joy, and juxtaposition — the contrast between festivities with everyday life. He not only sees the festive dimension as important, but, in line with Pieper’s observation, he even states that “man’s very survival as a species has been placed in grave jeopardy by our repression of the human celebrative and imaginative faculties” (p. 10).

Returning to Pieper, it is significant that he does not consider decadence in festivity as merely a contemporary dilemma, rather he points out that any place or era can suffer from this deficiency if the elements of true festivity have disappeared, which he labels as a “a typical phenomenon of a declining society”<sup>75</sup> (p. 60). Even in his day, Pieper had already identified a growing propensity for the celebration of false holidays

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<sup>74</sup> In addition, one of the unique points of Pieper’s (1999) study on festivity is his belief in the strong link between celebration and work, which he believes share a common root; instead of considering them as mutually exclusive dimensions, he perceives a strong, natural and collateral support between these two orders of human activity. For Pieper, festivity arises only when life is founded on the ordinary day of work. However, he alerts as to the concept of “pseudo-work”, pointing out that only truly “meaningful” work sets the tone for the development of festivity (p. 4). The meaningful work that Pieper identifies is the result of certain attitudes and states of spirit that must accompany the action of work itself: “The implication is that man understands the work and accepts it for what it really is, namely, the ‘tilling of the field’ which always includes both happiness and toil, satisfaction as well as sweat of the brow, joy as well as the consumption of vital energy” (p. 3-4). Pieper insists that if all of these factors are not present in man’s work, festivity becomes simply impossible, though he also affirms that the true character of festivity is not to be interpreted merely as a “contrast to labor” (p. 7), for, as he observes, many authors have interpreted the “essence” of the festival as merely this divergence with work.

<sup>75</sup> Many times, as a result of the increased pragmatism and self sufficiency affecting western man, there is an undermining of the transcendental and symbolic: “Festal celebrations result in the opposite of what they intend to perform” (Nauta, 2001, p. 111). It is also true that festivity is often not celebrated for its inherent worth, but is rather “used” merely as a lucrative opportunity in a consumerist society. As Aldazábal (1991) comments, “Lástima que a veces la fiesta misma caiga también en la espiral consumista, entendiéndola como mera válvula de escape para poder luego rendir más” (p. 4).

of superficial human creation, describing the critical situation that ensues when such festivities subtly take the place of true festivities (Pieper, 1999, p. 83-84)<sup>76</sup>.

In fact, this philosopher makes an important point regarding the limitations of human creation in light of the true spirit of festivities, for though he concedes that it is man who makes the external trappings of the festive occasion, the essence and true flavour of the celebration are not to be found only in these external aspects: “He cannot make what is to be celebrated, cannot make the festive occasion and the cause for celebrating. The happiness of being created, the existential goodness of things, the participation in the life of God, the overcoming of death — all these occasions of the great traditional festivals are pure gift. But because no one can confer a gift on himself, something that is entirely a human institution cannot be a real festival” (1999, p. 71). In other words, this interior openness to receiving the gift of another — namely, the Creator — is indispensable for a truly festive celebration. From these considerations, it becomes clear that the practice of fruitful festivity involves a spiritual attitude which goes beyond exterior, merely aesthetic, and, above all, man-made factors<sup>77</sup>.

It is natural that many aspects of the celebrative, ceremonial and festive dimension of human existence has suffered in recent years and decades, due in some part to exterior factors that have eliminated altogether or attempted to “replace” true forms of festivity and ceremony and their internal components with celebrations that

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<sup>76</sup> Pieper recognizes that, in the current crisis, the detrimental elements creating conditions for false festivals can even be worse than a complete silencing of true festivity (p. 58). Pieper outlines the traits of these false festivities acknowledging that true festivity is the only way to ensure that man’s intrinsic longing for transcendence is fulfilled (p. 58-59). “The sham is inherent in the fact that the affirmation and assent compatible only with true reality is falsified into a smug yea-saying, whose basic element is a desire to fend off reality, so as not to be disturbed, at any price” (p. 58).

<sup>77</sup>The effect of festivity on human emotions has far reaching consequences. Interestingly, an American author, Picard (2006) recognized the capacity of festivity to diminish the effects of social disasters within a given culture, even identifying their capacity for curing profound traumas. “Festivals form privileged arenas of cultural creativity whereby communities can innovate as a means of coping with moments of social disasters [...] The psychological difficulties expressed in relation to crisis are articulated in particular through feelings of ‘insecurity’, ‘senselessness’ and ‘placelessness’. Festivals seem an important part of the response that acts to reproduce and reinstall normative social order amongst people, organizations, objects and ideas”.

are lacking in traditional ritual and symbolic elements<sup>78</sup>. Moreover, even the ceremonies and festivities that still do exist are often tainted with merely lucrative or consumerist aims, which inevitably diminish their traditional symbolic content.

### **1.3 Festive origins of Christian liturgy**

The ceremonial festivities of the Jewish people recounted in the Old Testament are of particular interest at this point, not only due to their external ritual and symbolic elements, illustrating in an authentic manner the festive sense naturally existing within the human spirit, but also for the fundamental role that Jewish cult played in the evolution of present-day Christian festivities and liturgy<sup>79</sup>. Daniélou (1958) corroborates this idea, evincing that Christian festivities do not annul, but rather condense and radicalize the Hebrew festivities, fulfilling their deeper meaning as prefigures<sup>80</sup>. Here we observe characteristics of genuine forms of celebration, with historic/religious overtones, broad ritual content and prophetic symbolism.

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<sup>78</sup> In a timely passage, Benedict XVI (1986) focused on the contemporary dilemma with respect to false forms of festivity. He posits the ability for authentic celebration within the realm of personal freedom and a true cause for celebration, otherwise, “it is tragic self-delusion”. He identifies the common conception of party, a weak attempt to reproduce festivity, as “a tragic masquerade”. The search for liberating experiences at such events, proportioned by the use of drugs etc., is a mere facade that attempts to hide the difficulties encountered in life. “But in the background there is the number one question concerning the power of suffering and death which no freedom can resist. To avoid these questions is to inhabit a dream world, artificial and insubstantial. It takes more than emotional declamations about suffering of oppressed peoples — which have become the stock in trade of so many of these homemade ‘liturgies’ to conceal their fundamental lack of grip” (p. 63-64).

<sup>79</sup> The concept of the enduring worth of commemorations that hold profound meaning, was illustrated by Von Balthasar (1982) who stressed the import and role of such festivities within the perspective of religious experience of diverse peoples; namely, their vivifying power in bringing back the memory of past figures. Their role was above all recognized and promulgated within the ambit of Christianity: “The power of any human community as it celebrates the memory of a great dead person, already has about it a certain power to call them back to life. Many religions, and even large portions of the Old Testament itself, know of no other kind of immortality. And we should not underestimate the community-building power of such remembering: it is one of the human realities that carry a general power of conviction and which Jesus in a wonderful way fulfils and more than fulfills” (p. 573).

<sup>80</sup> “Le Nouveau Testament n’est pas la destruction, mais l’accomplissement de l’Ancien. Il n’y a pas de plus remarquable exemple de ce principe que celui des fêtes liturgiques. Les grandes solennités du judaïsme, Pâques e la Pentecôte, sont restées celles du christianisme en se chargeant seulement d’un contenu nouveau” (Daniélou, 1958, p. 450).

These ceremonies and festivities of the Old Testament are abundantly recorded in great detail, with accounts of the spontaneous festivities occurring in commemoration of particular events, as well as annually recurring festivities<sup>81</sup>. Their divine origin as the fulfilment of specific commands of the Lord lent a deep meaningfulness to these diversely figurative ceremonies, which, at the same time, held common traits such as communitarian ritual, sacrificial offerings, specific times free from labour, marked sentiments of joy or sorrow.

However, there is reason to believe that the first Jewish feasts did not arise *ex nihil*; some authors suggest that they organically incorporated elements of pre-existing feasts of pagan and human origin, which were purified with a new spiritual significance<sup>82</sup>. In contrast with merely pagan festivities, which featured chiefly astronomic or agricultural focal points, with emphasis on man's relationship with the natural world, the Jewish festivities heralded an original manner of celebration through the fact that they also brought man into relation with an historic event which marked an important step in their journey of faith, and their relationship with the Divine (Maertens, 1961, p. 248-249). In this way, the Jewish people were not only encouraged in their synchronization with nature's cycles, but also with history and specifically, their own particular history, in a spirit of gratitude and restitution in relation to the Creator (Di Santi, 2004). In effect, the festivities assumed a more spiritual resonance.

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<sup>81</sup> "Nous pouvons observer...que si Pâques, Pentecôte, Tentés, les *trois grandes fêtes annuelles de pèlerinage* (Dt 16: Ex 23, 13-19), ont été retenues dans la Bible, c'est en raison de la *reconversion historique* dont, par le mémorial liturgique, elles ont été l'objet. Issues en effet de rites païens de fertilité, pastoraux ou agraires, elles ont été réinterprétées, parfois jusque dans le détail, en fonction des événements fondateurs. [...] Cette relecture historique ne fut évidemment pas le fruit d'une opération intellectuelle, mais d'une expérience vive, celle de la confession de foi, ou le mémorial liturgique a joué un rôle essentiel" (Chauvet, 1987, p. 197).

<sup>82</sup> The organic development of festivities, evolving from previous cultural experiences and ambiances, marked the striking characteristics of the divinely inspired commemorations of the Old Testament. The distinct contributions gleaned from profane feasts obviously created basis for the future religious festivities. Maertens (1961) enlightens as to this gradual process of the implantation and renovation of ritual, that marked the existence of the Jewish people: "Los judíos no inventaron de la noche a la mañana unos ritos radicalmente distintos, sino que se limitaron, al menos en un principio, a celebrar 'en honor de Iahvé' las fiestas que hasta entonces celebraban en honor de su dios. Sólo después, progresivamente, se fue traduciendo en tales ritos una espiritualización que los convertiría en lo que han llegado a ser en manos de la Iglesia. Por tanto, las primeras fiestas judías nacieron en un contexto indiscutiblemente humano de ritos y fiestas" (p. 21-22).



Maertens points out how the Jewish feasts were much more than just a simple celebration of remembrance — their role was to create a re-actualization of the past event, whereby the participants relived the occurrence, benefiting from its “soteriological dynamism”<sup>83</sup>. Aquinas corroborate this view, while he includes the fact that these feasts commemorated not only past, but also future events: “All the solemnities of the Old Law were instituted in celebration of some Divine favour, either in memory of past favours, or in sign of some favour to come: in like manner all the sacrifices were offered up with the same purpose”<sup>84</sup> (*S. Th.* I-II, q.100, a.5, ad.2).

For her part, Prata Ferreira (2005) looks to the repetition of ritual action within the Jewish Feasts, whereby the participant could benefit in the present by truly reliving the events of the past in a significant way. She underlines how these memorial occasions led beyond a doctrinal or intellectual level of attaining knowledge. Immersed in ritual form and symbolic language, they opened — on a level of personal experience — a manner of living out the original event in a fruitful way for the present, obtaining an understanding of its significance for personal growth in the journey of faith. Timely repetition of these festivities opened possibilities of continuous exposure to enduring facets of faith and culture (p. 22)<sup>85</sup>. In addition, the ritual of the festivity thus imbued the participants with a fundamental “attitude of the heart” (Maertens, 1961, p. 254-255) that linked them closely with the experience of their predecessors.

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<sup>83</sup> As an example of this re-actualization, the author recalls the established fasts that accompanied certain festivities, whereby “through fasting on a certain occasion, the Jew really took upon himself the disastrous happening of the past; assimilated them and presenting himself before God in order to obtain pardon and liberation” (Maertens, 1961, p. 253) (Personal translation).

<sup>84</sup> “...dicendum quod omnes solemnitates legis veteris sunt institutae in commemorationem alicuius divini beneficii vel praeteriti comemorati, vel futuri praefigurati. Et similiter propter hoc omnia sacrificia oferebantur” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

<sup>85</sup> “A memória judaica ganha sentido e realidade somente quando, através da repetição do ritual, o tempo histórico e destruído e podemos experienciar de novo o tempo verdadeiro das origens, o tempo originário. O relato dessa saída e vivencial e se destina a todos, não se pretende que as pessoas tenham uma aquisição intelectual do fato, ao contrario, o objetivo e a repetição simbólica da experiência original, que auxilia a compreensão de um fato passado e simultaneamente de um fato presente na vida de cada um que revive essa experiência” (Prata Ferreira, 2005, p. 22).

The predominant tone of the Jewish feast was its communitarian dimension, often highlighted by overtones of pilgrimage<sup>86</sup>, with sacrificial and processional activity, arousing contrasting sentiments of joy and gratitude, or sorrow and contrition. Festivity lent a strong consciousness of the role and impact of the nation, particularly pronounced in the union of the diverse tribes for particular festivities, in which the Jewish people vividly recall their mission as a nation (Maertens, 1961, p. 257).

Of particular interest are the commentaries of St. Thomas as he expounds on certain aspects of the festivities and ceremonies of the Old Testament in the section on “Ceremonial Precepts” in his *Summa Theologica*. (*S. Th.* I-II, q.101-103) The Angelic Doctor<sup>87</sup> presents a precise summary of the major festivities of the Old Testament, ascribing to them a central role in addressing the necessities of the Jewish people at that particular time, making special note of the ceremonies as a means of formation of the population in their phase of transition and spiritual growth.

In the first place, he assigns the necessity of multiple festivities as a method in forestalling idolatry, since they offered rich forms of worship and vividly called the people to true cult. The multiplicity of ceremonies thus aided the people in focusing

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<sup>86</sup> The concept of journeying and pilgrimage to obtain a spiritual goal had marked the very essence of certain commemorative and festive events, even widespread today in Christianity. In an interesting passage, Sodi (2010) makes a contrast of this journeying aspect of the biblical experience, within the perspective of the ludic activity, so widespread within the human experience: “L’uomo della Bibbia è perennemente in cammino; in un atteggiamento cioè che denota una costante ricerca non tanto de un luogo quanto di una situazione di incontro con el Dio della vita. Dalla situazione di Abramo che si muove da Ur dei Caldei, dalla situazione di movimento verso la Terra promessa, dall’impegno dei discepoli del Signore a percorrere tutte le vie del mondo...la Bibbia indica nel cammino il simbolo dell’uomo in costante ricerca, pur nella consaevolezza della realta del traguardo che lo attende. Un’attualizzazione — Nes *contesto sportivo* il movimento tipico del cammino, della corsa, del tendere verso una meta e costantemente presente in ogni gara, in qualunque forma o con qualunque mezzo essa sia disputata. Ma e da tale situazione che scaturisce la tensione verso il conseguimento del premio. E la certezza del traguardo che da senso a tutto lo sforzo, e sostegno nell’attuazione dell’impegno fisico” (p. 75-76).

<sup>87</sup> For an illustrative example, see: “Dicendum quod in veteri lege errant septem solemnitates temporales, et una continua, ut potest coliigi Nm 28 et 29. Erat enim quasi continuum festum, quia quotidie mane et vespere immolabatur agnus. Et per illud continuum festum *iugis sacrificii* repraesentabatur perpetuitas divinae beatitudinis. Festorum autem temporalium primum erat quod iterabatur qualibet septimana. Et haec erat solemnitas *Sabbati*” (*S. Th.* I-II, q.102, a.4).

their attention on God “in many ways, and more continually”, and additionally prefigured the beneficial coming of Christ to the world (*S. Th.* I-II, q.101, a.3, resp.)<sup>88</sup>. “The figurative reason for these feasts was that the continual sacrifice of the lamb foreshadowed the perpetuity of Christ, Who is the *Lamb of God*, according to Heb. Xiii.8: Jesus Christ yesterday and today, and the same for ever” (*S. Th.* I-II, q.102, a.4)<sup>89</sup>.

Thus, though the Old Testament festivities and ceremonies held a strongly memorial tone, the Angelic Doctor proffers in-depth considerations of their prefigurative nature, or interprets them as temporal symbols of eternal reality. Within the characteristics of each feast, he seems to find elements that indicate something more profound that was to unfold. For example, the feast of Trumpets was a precursor of the preaching of the Apostles, the feast of Tabernacles signified the Christian journey of the present life and progress in virtue, while the “*Neomenia*, which is the beginning of the new moon, signified the enlightening of the primitive Church by Christ’s preaching and miracles”. The feast of Assembly or Congregation was

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<sup>88</sup> “Ex parte vero eorum qui erant prompti ad bonum, etiam necessaria fuit multiplicatio caeremonialium praeceptorum. Tum quia per hoc diversimode mens eorum referebatur in Deum, et magis assidue. Tum etiam quia mysterium Christi, quod per huiusmodi caeremonialia figurabatur, multiplices utilitates attulit mundo, et multa circa ipsum consideranda erant, quae oportuit per diversa caeremonialia figurari”. (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

<sup>89</sup> “Figuralis autem ratio horum festorum est quia per luge sacrificium agnifiguratur perpetuitas Christi, qui est *Agnus Dei*; secundum illud Hb ult., 8, *Jesus Christus heri et hodie, ipse et in saecula*” (*S. Th.* I-II, q.102, a.4, ad.10). Daniélou (1958) corroborates Aquinas’ affirmation regarding the Christological prefigures contained in the cadence of Jewish Feasts, underlining that the great events of Christ’s life were represented in some manner within the Jewish feasts. “C’est un fait remarquable que les grands événements de la vie du Christ s’inscrivent dans le cadre des grandes fêtes du judaïsme, la Résurrection dans le cadre pascal, l’envoi de l’Esprit-Saint dans celui de la Pentecôte. Il est bien clair que ceci est destiné à montrer dans Le Christ l’accomplissement des figures de l’Ancien Testament, dont ces fêtes étaient des mémoriels” (p. 457).

considered by the Angelic Doctor as a symbolic sign of the future congregation of the kingdom of heaven (*S. Th.* I-II, q.102, a.4)<sup>90</sup>.

The Old Testament also included innumerable recounts of meals as a symbolic reaffirmation of human relations, or as an expression of veneration towards certain personages or angels. David's transportation of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem amidst processional and sacrificial activity is remarkable for its manifestation of festivity, with emphasis on the dimension of assembly. Before the dispersion of the participants, we note what can be considered as a liturgical action on David's part, with a blessing and distribution of food, prefiguring another blessing and distribution<sup>91</sup>. It appears that a form of ratification or affirmation of the act performed is constituted in the partaking of a meal. Indeed, the Eucharistic liturgical celebration itself arose from within the organic scenario of the breaking of bread and drinking from the cup. Significantly, Christ Himself chose the setting of the Passover meal, the chief Jewish festivity, to institute the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass<sup>92</sup>.

The perspective of festive celebration in human life, so clearly reflected in the experience of the Jewish people along their spiritual journey, demonstrates, in a vivid way, how the gradual progression of forms in celebration and ceremony takes place. The emergence of new symbolism and ritual forms grow in meaning and significance

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<sup>90</sup> "Per Sabbatum autem significatur spiritualis requies nobis data per Christum: ut habetur Hb 4. — Per Neomeniam autem, quae est incoemptio novae lunae, significatur illuminatio primitivae ecclesiae per Christum, eo praedicante et miracula faciente. — Per festum autem Pentecostes significatur descensus Spiritus Santi in Apostolos. — Per festum autem Tubarum significatur praedicatio Apostolorum. — Per festum autem Expiationis significatur emundatio a peccatis populi Christiani. Per festum autem Tabernaculorum, peregrinatio eorum in hoc mundo, in quo ambulant in virtutibus proficiendo. Per festum autem Coetus atque Collectae significatur congregatio fidelium in regno caelorum: et ideo istud festum dicebatur sanctissimum esse. Et haec tria festa erant continua ad invicem: quia oportet expiatis a vitiis proficere in virtute, quousque perveniant ad Dei visionem, ut dicitur in Os 83, 8" (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

<sup>91</sup> "When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts, and distributed food among the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, to each a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins" (2 Samuel 6: 18-19).

<sup>92</sup> For an insightful article highlighting the ritual historical dimension of the rite of Communion, see: Taylor, Justin. *The Breaking of the Bread*. In: *Ephemerides Liturgicae*. 113 (1999) 332-346. Rome.

in accordance with moments of collective transition, while other elements remain untouched with their timeless meaning. In the specific case of the chosen people, the varied and multiple festivities assisted in channelling their concentration toward the true God and His message for them, whether it was through commemorative feast that recounted significant facts, or figurative ceremonies heralding a new era.

What is beyond doubt is the fact that the festivities of this historic era played a key role in captivating and moving the multitudes in both spiritual and corporal dimensions, contributing categorically to the formation of their religious and cultural identity. Observing the organic evolution these Old Testament rituals and festivities is fundamental, from a Christian perspective, to gaining an appreciation for the considerable elements which Christianity has gleaned from them in the institution of their new rites and festivities.

De Zan (1998) brings this relationship into focus, particularly in relation to the Passover. “The Passover meal began as a family celebration (Egyptian Pasch) and became a feast of the people, taking on a national character (feast of the temple). By the time of Jesus, the feast had assumed an ambivalent character: the lamb was slaughtered in the temple but consumed liturgically during the family meal (late Jewish feast). The Passover meal is another biblical element that becomes a structure for the Christian Celebration” (p. 40). Significantly, the presence of Christ marked this smooth transition, for He himself participated in the Jewish festivities and made use of the songs and canticles of the Old Testament<sup>93</sup>, while instituting an entirely new mode of commemoration and celebration. The roots of Christian worship, then, are planted firmly in the “domestic tradition of Jewish worship” (Chupungco, 1998, p. 101).

The concept of the progressive capacity of festivities, their ability to evolve and expand over time in human history, is central to understanding the emergence of

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<sup>93</sup>“Ipse Dominus in verbis doctor, in factis consummator, ut hymnorum ministerium gratissimum comprobaret, cum discipulis hymno dicto exivit in montem Oliveti”. Niceta of Remesiana. *Opusculum de psalmodiae bono*. Opusc. 2, 1. PL 68, 371 Ibid., 3, col. 373. (Translation by Gerald G. Walsh)

Christian liturgy from within the realm of Jewish celebration. The experienced richness of liturgical ritual is heightened through an appreciation of their far-reaching origins, which have proved to be capable of transmitting valuable elements to future generations. However, beyond a mere notion of festivity as a mode of passing on former traditions and symbolism, Pieper opines that this sense of tradition in the ambit of festivity requires something more, namely, a creativity that is always renewing itself.

Festivals are it would seem, traditional in a very special sense, a *traditum* in the strictest meaning of that concept: received from a superhuman source, to be handed on undiminished, received and handed on again. It has been said that the living force of tradition is nowhere manifested so dearly as in the history of festivals. That is true. Nevertheless, we must quickly add that the subject entails a whole complex of problems. Real handing down, the living process of transmission from one generation to another is deterred rather than abetted by the kind of traditionalism that clings to external appearances. For what really matters is not mere preservation and conservation, but a constant succession of new, creative reshapings which give contemporaneity to the content of festivals (Pieper, 1999, p. 35)<sup>94</sup>.

Over the course of this chapter, it has become increasingly clear that the human being, particularly within the scope of his spiritual and corporal dimensions, finds in festivity and ceremony an answer to inherent needs arising from this dual constitution. In effect, such celebratory activity offers external, physical elements that involve man in his corporal and sensible profile, together with spiritual aspects that have the power to attract and move the human soul. The human necessities owing to man's cultural and social orientation then come into play, as festivity provides elements favourable to

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<sup>94</sup> Along this same line of thought, an American author describes the festival as an encouraging element for artists who promote cultural elements that are sometimes forgotten or put aside in the contemporary scenario. The festival, as such, "provides a kind of training ground for the representation of culture" (Hufford, 1994, p. 169).

these factors of human existence. In this vein, the capacity of festivity to break down barriers with a unique form of symbolic language affirms its mediating role on the level of communication and assimilation.

However, a decrease in significant celebratory and ceremonial activity has been observed in current human history, a phenomenon corroborated by diverse authors and one, moreover, that can be seen both as an effect of the present cultural crises, and, in a real way, a contributing factor to it. The decline in authentic festivity is symptomatic of a declining civilization, or a civilization that will tend to disappear; at the same time, the disappearance of celebration, in itself, inflicts positive damages upon human culture. Acknowledging the relationship between the drop in true ceremonial and festive activity with the depreciation of essential human and cultural values, one author even perceived this deterioration as a threat to human existence itself<sup>95</sup>.

In sum, there is a considerable consensus of opinion that festive element of human existence is far from being a dispensable one. But if saving festivity from extinction is so closely tied in with the wellbeing of human society, the solution is evidently not to be found in entirely man-made — therefore artificial — feasts. Such celebrations, with their lack of meaningful content and transcendent, ceremonial, and ritual qualities, have been seen as a futile attempt to fill the void left by the dearth of true festivity.

Accordingly, the chief characteristics of authentic festivity have been explored, keynotes including the presence of transcendent meaning and an attitude of joyful affirmation of and gratitude for the gift of existence. Such traits are immediately recognizable as being most closely associated with sacred, as opposed to profane, festivity, and, indeed, ritual worship is considered to be the true origin of all festal

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<sup>95</sup> As was noted earlier, Cox went so far as to claim that “man’s very survival as a species has been placed in grave jeopardy by our repression of the human celebrative and imaginative faculties” (Cox, 1970, p. 10).

practices, even those which have since assumed secular forms<sup>96</sup>. All of this leads to the conclusion that the festivity most capable of exercising its rightful role and exerting its most salutary influence in human society is a celebration of divine praise<sup>97</sup>.

Building upon the anthropologically-oriented arguments for the indispensable value of festivity, and particularly sacred festivity, the focus of the study now turns to the Christian liturgy as a proposed response to this human need, especially within the context of post-modernity. The first searching glance, however, is a retrospective one, in the last section of the present chapter, looking to the historic roots of present-day Christian cult in the religious ceremonies of the Jewish people. In this perusal, many important signs came to the fore, notably those which permit us to discern a foreshadowing of rites yet to unfold in the Christian era: the observation of times and seasons; sacred places, communal attitudes of penitence, supplication and thanksgiving in relation to the Creator; sacrificial offerings; the partaking of a meal; the commemoration of a past event in the soteriological history of the people, which, more than a mere remembrance, is seen as a true re-actualization.

Encountering the origins of Christian ritual forms in remote antiquity has served to attest to the stability and enduring quality of religious festivity over the course of millennia, notwithstanding its radical transformations on many levels. Thus, a fundamentum has been laid for the next two chapters, which will take up specific aspects of liturgy that are effectively inseparable from human existence on earth, in virtue of human nature itself, and man's perennial relationship with God, the world, and others.

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<sup>96</sup> "By the same token, even non-religious celebrations typically bear religious overtones" (Durkheim, 1995, p. 386-387).

<sup>97</sup> This line of thought, tracing an indelible link between authentic festivity and the sacred, was drawn gradually throughout parts 1.2.3-1.2.5, involving the opinions of diverse authors, perhaps best summed up by Pieper (1999), who said: "Ritual worship is essentially an expression of the same affirmation that lies at the heart of festivals" (p. 37), and that it is "the withholding of public worship that makes festivity wither at the root" (p. 71).



## 2. HUMAN ACTUATION IN LITURGY

The facets of festive and celebratory manifestation explored in the first chapter have laid the basis for a comprehension of man's instinctive capacity for a consistent materialization of cultural, religious or historic ideals, involving the totality of his faculties. The corporal and spiritual constitution of the human being, redounding in his innate sociability, are clearly prerequisites for this creative and symbolic exteriorization of abstract ideologies and interior sentiments. The human being is thus essentially *festivus* in his mode of facing and assimilating the realities that surround him.

Evolving from this same premise, human involvement in liturgy comes to light within the perspective of the anthropological roots that festive and ceremonial celebration holds. Ritual action — including unified gestures, language and music — materializes the profound doctrinal meaning contained in liturgy in a richly sensorial manner, corporally expressing the impressions of the soul<sup>98</sup>. Along this line, Post (2002) points out that “as ritual, as symbolic acts, liturgy is a product of human mentalities, passions and needs and as such linked to varying cultural contexts. Liturgy and anthropology thus unavoidably and coherently bring in two fundamental dimensions: the human and cultural conditions” (p. 25).

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<sup>98</sup> On the topic of ritual, Chupungco (1998) emphasized the importance of the study of the liturgy in the broad scope of its aesthetic, linguistic and cultural expression in relation to the human experience: “The liturgy, which falls under the category of rite, needs to be studied in the context of human persons, their cultural genius, and their social traits and traditions. Furthermore, rite is expressed and shaped by human language. Here the word ‘language’ includes not only the spoken or written words but also the symbolism of gestures. Hence the liturgy, being a rite, is a linguistic fact”. He further underlines the role of artistic beauty and its significance within the celebration: “Rite also vests itself in arts in order to show the beauty and nobility of its content or message. The liturgy has always sought to clothe its divine message in visual and aural beauty, not only because of God but also out of respect for the assembly. Finally, rite is grafted in the cultural values, patterns and institutions of particular groups” (Introduction vii).

Thus, ceremonial and symbolic elements of liturgy, derived from certain of the divinely inspired ceremonies of the Old Testament, hold profound significance spanning time and space. Through involvement in the Celebration, the individual exceeds his quotidian mode of activity by performing sacred gestures which hold eschatological and mystical significance, elevating and influencing his spirit toward the contemplation of the mysteries celebrated. Verbal formulas vocally condense spiritual truths through a wide range of expression, while narration and proclamation inspires and transforms. The dynamic of verbal and non-verbal forms of expression engage man in his entirety, affecting intellectual, emotional, and physical faculties. Consequently, liturgy inspires a way of being and acting which elevates and transcends the common human experience<sup>99</sup>. “The liturgy in all its different aspects is a symbolic presentation of a hidden reality” (Van Tillo, 2001, p. 125).

It is noteworthy that Sacrosanctum Concilium, deemed the Eucharistic Celebration as *culmen et fons* “the height towards which the action of the Church is focused (...) and the wellspring from which all her influence flows” (SSC, 10)<sup>100</sup>. The great importance of liturgical activity within the life of the Church is also reflected in its role within human life and society; due to its vastly aesthetic and cultural dimension it containing diverse art forms and ritual activity.

Liturgical ritual thus emerges primarily as a mode of human actuation, and such modes of human integration within the celebration are what capture our attention at this point. Certain questions may define the direction our investigation intends to

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<sup>99</sup> In the document *Via Pulchritudinis: Beauty as a Way for Evangelization and Dialogue* (2006), the liturgy is promulgated as the “expression of a mystery”. Far from serving utilitarian ends, it is “an act entirely free from considerations of efficiency”, demanding an attitude of receptiveness which clearly presents a challenge within contemporary culture: “The faithful need to be helped to perceive that the act of worship is not the fruit of activity, a product, a merit, a gain, but is the expression of a mystery, of something that cannot be entirely understood but that needs to be received rather than conceptualised. It is an act entirely free from considerations of efficiency. The attitude of the believer in the liturgy is marked by its capacity to receive [...] This attitude is no longer spontaneous in a culture where rationalism seeks to direct everything, even our most intimate sentiments” (p. 142-143).

<sup>100</sup> “culmen ad quod actio Ecclesiae tendit et simul fons unde omnis eius virtus emanat” (Personal translation).

explore: What is the relevance of the liturgy as a font of festive experience for the human being? Is liturgy rapidly losing its relevance for contemporary man, or does it contain perennial elements that are of indispensable value? Particularly within this chapter, an attempt is made to uncover the scope of human integration within the liturgy through a consideration of the amalgamation of gesture and word, which epitomize the human powers of expression and manifestation. This duality of communication is certainly a key element of human integration with the celebration, as gesture and word form the basis of the evolution of the ritual action.

After laying the foundation through an initial consideration of *homo liturgicus*, the modes of human actuation within liturgy — first through specific gestures, and subsequently through word — are thus identified in conjunction with relevant points presented as essential to liturgical experience.

## 2.1 Homo Liturgicus

The celebration of the Christian mystery organically evolved through the development of ritual action that is congruent with and accessible to the human condition<sup>101</sup>. A brief look at the etymology and use of the word *λειτουργία*<sup>102</sup> enlighten as to its present-day connotation. Of Greek origin, the word combines the

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<sup>101</sup> The contemporary anthropologist Terrin (2004) develops this thought emphasizing the crucial role of ritual and symbolism as a means of transmission of the Eucharistic Celebration: “Mesmo a Eucaristia, a celebração do mistério cristão, passa imprescindivelmente pelo rito e se configura como expressão ritual. Não tem outra possibilidade de ser e de subsistir se não através da força e da mediação ritual. O mistério de Cristo, para ser ritualizado e revivido na história, precisa fazer-se história, tomar a forma de um rito, vestir uma simbólica acessível ao homem. Também a passagem onde Jesus afirma “onde dois ou três estão reunidos em meu nome, aí estou eu” (Mt 18,20) não seria um primeiro movimento rumo a organização ritual? Quem acredita poder viver a fé de Cristo num transcendentalismo puro, encontra-se despojado das prerrogativas essenciais do mistério de Cristo, que estão ligadas ao pão e ao vinho, a palavra e ao gesto, a mimeses e a poiesis histórico-ritual” (p. 212).

<sup>102</sup> “Proveniente dal Greco classic *leitourgía*, in origine il termine indicava l’opera, l’azione o l’iniziativa assunta liberamente in proprio da un privato (individuo o famiglia) in favore del popolo o del quartiere o della città o del lo Stato. Con l’andare del tempo la stessa opera, azione, iniziativa perdette, o per istituzionalizzazione o per imposizione, il suo carattere ‘libero’ e così ‘liturgia’ fu detto qualunque lavoro di ‘servizio’ più o meno obbligatorio reso o allo Stato o alla divinità (‘servizio religioso’) o a un privato” (Sartore, Triacca, & Cibien, 2001, p. 1037-1038).

terms that denominate people (λαός) and work (έργον), indicating a kind of human action, interpreted as “practice, activity, action or praxis” (Borobio, 1983, p. 23). Without a significantly religious connotation, the term first denoted a public work exercised for the common good of all citizens (Righetti, 1945, p. 2).

Gradually, the term took on a more religious tone as it was used to designate chiefly cultic practice. Gaining an increasing religious association, the terms λειτουργεῖν and λειτουργία were introduced into the Old Testament of the Bible to describe the priestly functions undertaken by the priests and Levites in the tabernacle. Garrido Boñano (1961) affirms that the New Testament continued to employ the term λειτουργία, but in a broader sense, as it was used to designate not only the priestly rituals and sacred vessels of the Old Testament services, but also the cultural ministry priesthood of Christ and the ministry of the angels with man, being employed for works of charity as well as ritual actions (p. 4). In general, the Eucharistic services of the New Law, within the Acts of the Apostles were designated as a *Ministrantibus* (λειτουργούντων) (Righetti, 1945, p. 3).

As such, the term evolved into an exclusively sacred term designating sacred acts, closely related to the idea of sacrifice and Christian ritual, rather than merely public non-religious works. This cultic meaning of the term was maintained by early Christian writers (Chupungco, 1997, p. 3-4). Nowadays, the term “liturgy” classically encompasses the entire sacramental life of the Church, that is, the celebration of the seven sacraments, Divine Office and additional prayers and ceremonies of the Church, as it is “the complex of sensible efficacious signs of the sanctification and cult of the

Church” (Vagaggini, p. 45)<sup>103</sup>. Within the scope of the vast concept of “liturgy”, this investigation focuses particularly on the Eucharistic Celebration, which is truly a microcosm of the liturgical life considered as a whole, as it synthesizes diverse dimensions.

As the very etymology of the term insinuates, *λειτουργία*, implies a mode of human action, for, due to his nature and constitution, the human being naturally tends toward a public and corporally expressive form of worship. Aquinas indicates the human intellect as a prerequisite for exterior forms of worship, since “it is connatural to us to proceed from the sensible to the intelligible” (*S. Th.* II-II, q.84, a.2)<sup>104</sup>. And “all our knowledge springs from the senses” (*S. Th.* III, q.60, a.4)<sup>105</sup>. Demonstrating continuity in his consideration of human necessities as a basis for sign, symbols, and gestures<sup>106</sup>, Aquinas pointed out the inability to entirely grasp the abstract and sublime truths of religion, without the aid of “of signs by means of sensible figures” (*S. Th.* I-II,

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<sup>103</sup> “La liturgia, concretamente, è costituita: dai sette sacramenti, con l’eucaristia sacrificio e sacramento nello stesso tempo, dai sacramentali, dalle preghiere e dalle cerimonie con le quale la Chiesa riveste, per così dire, la celebrazione del sacrificio, dei sacramenti e dei sacramentali e dall’ufficio divino delle ore canoniche” (p. 33). “La liturgia è: *il complesso dei segni sensibili, efficaci, della santificazione e del culto della Chiesa*” (Vagaggini, 1965, p. 40). Guerenger (1878) will identify the triad of symbols, chants and actions that make up the ensemble of the liturgical celebration: “La Liturgie, considérée en général, est l’ensemble des symboles, des chants et des actes au moyen desquels l’Église exprime et manifeste sa religion envers Dieu” (p. 1).

<sup>104</sup> “...qui connaturale est nobis ut per sensibilia ad intelligibilia procedemos” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

<sup>105</sup> “...quia omnis nostra cognition a sensu initium habet” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

<sup>106</sup> Within a Thomistic perspective Prétot (2006) expounds upon this thought with respect to the corporal and spiritual dimension of liturgical expression, citing the opinion of Aquinas with respect to sacramental practice: “La liturgie est éminemment corporelle...Pourquoi des gestes et actions corporelles, s’il s’agit de rencontrer Dieu qui est au-delà de tout? En quoi cet agir corporel peut-il conduire à une expérience spirituelle? C’est déjà la question de Thomas d’Aquin à propos des sacrements. Il se demande si le sacrement est (...) La réponse à l’objection est éclairante. Si Dieu touche l’homme dans son corps, si la liturgie est d’ordre corporel, c’est parce que la Sagesse de Dieu s’adapte à l’homme: or ‘il est dans la nature de l’homme de parvenir à la connaissance des choses intelligibles au moyen des choses sensibles.’ S’il est vrai que Dieu n’a pas besoin de nos gestes, de nos cérémonies pour nous donner sa grâce, nous, par contre, nous en avons besoin et Dieu a voulu que les gestes que nous posons, les sacrements que nous recevons, soient les signes de sa grâce. La réflexion sur le corps, en liturgie se situe donc à l’horizon de la sacramentalité par laquelle Dieu vient à la rencontre de l’homme pour lui communiquer ce qu’il est” (Prétot, 2006, p. 7).

q.101, a.2)<sup>107</sup>. With good reason, Gomá y Tomás (1945) identified the liturgy as a “divine-human” work, a splendid consortia of the action of God together with man, a kind of incarnation of the Divine pedagogy, employing the most efficacious Pedagogy of man<sup>108</sup>.

Aquinas further identified divine worship as holding the dual facet of interior and exterior forms, naturally resulting from the corporal and spiritual facets of the human being, both of which he believed should be applied in divine praise, each in its own way. But he specified that since interior worship — that of the soul — is due to the union of the intellect and affections to God, external acts would naturally redound from these sentiments in various manners<sup>109</sup>. Hence, it becomes clear that external forms of manifestation are the effects, the result of an interior sentiment that overflows into ritual action.

The corporal gestures and oral language, as exterior forms, would be necessarily inebriated with the interior sentiments of praise. Consequently, the entire human being takes part in liturgical acts, there being an intrinsic union between interior and exterior praise. “Man is, by his God-given nature, a liturgical being, which

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<sup>107</sup> “...sicut poetica non capiuntur a ratione humana propter defectum veritatis qui est in eis, ita etiam ratio humana perfecte capere non potest divina propter excedentem ipsorum veritatem. Et ideo utrobique opus est repraesentatione per sensibiles figuris” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

<sup>108</sup> “Es la Liturgia un maravilloso consorcio de la acción de Dios y de los hombres ‘para hacer a los hombres conformes a la imagen de su Hijo’. [...] La Liturgia es la fuerza de Dios y la fuerza de los hombres a quien Dios la confió; es, en cierto modo, la encarnación de la pedagogía de Dios en las formas más eficaces de la pedagogía de los hombres. El divino Pedagogo trazó los rasgos fundamentales, sobrios y característicos, de la Liturgia de su Iglesia, pero en ella puso “toda” su eficacia educadora; la Iglesia, continuadora de la obra del Maestro, ha agrupado, a lo largo de los siglos, alrededor de la obra divina Liturgo, todo elemento transmisor de su eficacia, profunda y divina” (p. 306-307).

<sup>109</sup> “Respondeo dicendum quod, sicut iam dictum est, praecepta caeremonialia dicuntur quae ordinantur ad cultum Dei. Esta utem duplex cultus Dei: interior, ex exterior. Cum enim homo sit compositus ex anima et corpore, utrumque debet applicari ad colendum Deum, ut scilicet anima colat interiori cultu, et corpus exteriori: unde dicitur in Ps 83, 3: *Cor meum et caro mea exultaverunt in Deum vivum*. Et sicut corpus ordinatur in Deum per animam, ita cultus exterior ordinatur ad interiorem cultum. Consistit autem interior cultus in hoc quod anima coniungatur Deo per intellectum et affectum. Et ideo secundum quod diversimode intellectus et affectus colentis Deum Deo recte coniungitur, secundum hoc diversimode exteriores actus hominis ad cultum Dei applicantur” (*S. Th.* I-II, q.101, a.2).

means that the liturgy as sensual expression of religion is connatural to man” (Berger, 2005, p. 56)<sup>110</sup>.

Here, then, just as in our consideration of the phenomenon of festivity, the inherent need for symbolic expression as a means of transmitting the abstract or ideological arises. Exterior practice of gestures and ritual are a means of exteriorizing the elevated truths and sentiments of religion —*homo festivus* thus undeniably unfolds his capacities as *homo liturgicus*. The full immersion of the human being in the sequence of the celebration encompasses all of human powers, particularly along the line of gestural and linguistic expression, relating not only in a horizontal direction to liturgical space, objects and other members of the congregation, but also following a vertical course of transcendent praise of the divine. Specifically within the liturgical celebration, religious sentiment takes form through an enriched mode of phraseology, adding “the precision of words to the emotive power of non-verbal signals” (Maggiani, 1998, p. 251)<sup>111</sup>.

### **2.1.1 Symbolic human contribution within liturgy**

In the evolvement of the liturgical celebration, human actuation comes to the fore mainly within the realm of symbolic expression, whereby the individual assumes and portrays figurative roles in ritual action. Tillich (1964) alluded to the inherently

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<sup>110</sup> Gomá y Tomás (1945) comments regarding the profound roots of the religious sentiment which need to naturally evolve into the aesthetic representation of the liturgy in order to remain intact: “Lo que tiene de más profundo y fuerte la vida humana es el sentimiento religioso, sea el campo donde en todos los pueblos se ha presentado el arte con la máxima expresión de su poder” (p. 297). “Doctrina religiosa sin culto, es muerta; un culto sin calor de corazón no es capaz de traducir en obras de vida prodigiosa el pensamiento religioso que le informe” (p. 285-286). Guéranger (1879) makes a timeless statement regarding the natural religious expression of man within the liturgy, highlighting the sacred language produced through exterior signs, rites and ceremonies: “Et, comme l’Église est une société, non d’esprits, mais d’hommes, créatures composées d’âme et de corps, qui traduisent toute vérité sous des images et des signes, portent eux-mêmes dans leurs corps une forme ineffable de leur âme; dans l’Église, disons-nous, ce céleste ensemble de confession, de prière et de louange, parlé dans un langage sacré, module sur un rythme surnaturel, se produit aussi par les signes extérieurs, rites et cérémonies, qui sont le corps de la Liturgie” (p. 4-5).

<sup>111</sup> “The alternation of verbal, non-verbal, and musical-sound codes, enables the individual and the community to enter into the depths of the action and to experience it” (Maggiani, 1998b, p. 244).

transcendental function of the symbol when he stated that: “The symbol represents something which is not itself, for which it stands and in the power and meaning of which it participates” (p. 56)<sup>112</sup>.

Deriving its roots from the Greek term *syn-ballô*<sup>113</sup>, the etymology of the term indicates two parts of an object brought together, the ancient custom of breaking a ceramic as a form of contract between two acquaintances, which would be united at a subsequent date, implies also the social function of the symbol. In human life, then, symbolism serves to complete human understanding, for doctrinal or merely intellectual ideas are often effectively revealed through symbolic language, and thus assimilated with greater facility. In like manner, human comportment generally tends toward symbolic forms of exteriorization in order to embody and transmit interior sentiments, ideologies, and desires, that otherwise would remain merely as abstract concepts. The *Animal symbolicum* of Cassirer (1944) attempted to decipher this exclusive capacity and necessity of the human being, diversely from other living creatures, to employ symbolic language (p. 44)<sup>114</sup>.

The human being, then, generally tends toward symbolic modes of comportment, which occupy a level beyond pragmatic or calculating purposes, and are necessarily characterized by richness and abundance. People are natural creators of symbols and symbolic modes of expression, as Pieper (1989), observes:

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<sup>112</sup> Further on, he explains the eminently meaningful quality of the symbol: “So every symbol is two-edged. It opens up reality and it opens up the soul [...] Every symbol has a special function which is just *it* and cannot be replaced” (Tillich, 1964, p. 57).

<sup>113</sup> “Simbolo, ce lo ricorda l’etimo Greco *syn-ballô*, è per definizione il mettere assieme. Da questa unione veniva rinnovata una realtà, era reso possibile un riconoscimento o una identificazione” (Sartore, Triacca, & Cibien, 2001, p. 864).

<sup>114</sup> “By our definition of man as an *animal symbolicum* we have arrived at our first point of departure for further investigation. But it now becomes imperative that we develop this definition somewhat in order to give it greater precision That symbolic thought and symbolic behavior are among the most characteristic features of human life, and that the whole progress of human culture is based on these conditions is undeniable” (Cassirer, 1944, p. 44-45).



It is completely natural for a human being not to act exclusively with a view to achieving certain ends, but also, from time to time, to create a sign, even if this sign consists in nothing more than lighting a candle; lighting it *not* in order to light up a room, but to express the heightened solemnity or festivity of the occasion, to express adoration and thanks, or to commemorate a dead person whom one loved. The deliberately ‘non-utilitarian’ character of such a sign calls to mind another element of symbolic action: the element of excess and superabundance, the absence of calculation, the almost wasteful prodigality (p. 201).

But what forms of symbolism does man implement specifically within the scope of the liturgical celebration, with its inherently transcendent component? Just as Aquinas affirmed, man naturally tends toward the exteriorization of interior religious sentiments, which redounds in celebrative language, the message of which is heightened by other means of human expression. Corporeal gestures and actions shine with symbolism, evoking Christological and eschatological realities, often condensing the significance of past, present and future realities. Gestural and verbal expression coalesce harmoniously to bring the mystery within human reach throughout the sequence of the celebration.

The sacred genre and power of liturgical verbal language is further heightened by the dimension of musical expression, constituting a “mystical dialogue”. In sum, from an anthropological perspective, the human being assumes a symbolic manner of

being in the liturgy, and it is within this ritual action that man most fully exercises the highest faculties of his dual composition, his innate symbolic aptitude<sup>115</sup>.

It is noteworthy, then, that within liturgy, human activity will transcend quotidian forms of comportment and enter the realm of symbolic exteriorization. The *homo liturgicus*, rising above the merely pragmatic utilitarian use of his powers, employs them to figurative ends. Another realm of existence thus emerges, for within the sequence of the celebration, each moment holds profound meaning that goes beyond what is immediately perceptible. Although a myriad of physical elements are brought into play within liturgy, it is primarily within figurative *human* action that the more profound dimensions of the liturgy are revealed. It is the *homo liturgicus*, in a word, who, from within the various levels of participation, brings the latent or underlying significance of the celebration to life.

The unearthly mystery is concretized in a particular place and time, specifically through his mode of actuation, and his religious expression. This ritual potential, channelled into prescribed but ever-renewed forms and modes of practice, is, then, an area of human existence that is most fully realized in liturgical ceremony, when the profane elements of human communication and expression are eclipsed by superior forms. It is a world that escapes scientific scrutiny, according to Crichton, but which is, nonetheless, accessible to reflection:

The world of liturgy is [...] a world of poetry, of symbol, a world where one thing often means another. [...] Is this world closed to modern man? Or need it be? [...]

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<sup>115</sup> The corporal capacity for symbolic interpretation and manifestation is highly revealing within the ambit of ritual celebration, which comports a broad range of actuation and integration. Vergote (1971) comments specifically upon the corporal aspect within ritual, which he affirms holds a distinctly symbolic connotation, reaching cultural significance: “União da natureza no homem e da cultura, o corpo é o lugar mesmo dos mistérios sagrados. Com efeito, segundo os dois aspectos que o constituem, o corpo refere o homem ao além simbólico. Natureza no homem, ele é dimensão da profundidade onde encontramos a fonte da existência. (...) Pela sua própria natureza, o corpo apresenta a abertura a simbolização que se efetua nas artes, no amor e no rito religioso. Essa abertura é, ao mesmo tempo, natural e cultural e, por este motivo, universal e culturalmente diversificada. Daí a permanência e a universalidade dos gestos rituais e de suas formas diversificadas” (p. 173).

With a little reflection we realize that we are not just reasoning beings, that there are values that cannot be scientifically analysed or accounted for and that there is a world beyond the pedestrian necessities of everyday life. We become aware that we have needs that cannot be satisfied by a multiplicity of material goods or economic prosperity or political power (Crichton, 1992, p. 2-3):

## **2.2 The dynamic of symbolic gestural language in liturgy**

Even on a profane level, simple quotidian gestures — when they are not circumscribed by an entirely utilitarian purpose — may carry emblematic connotations as they denote unseen realities or intentions<sup>116</sup>. Gestures naturally enrich the linguistic dimension of communication, as means of transmission and interaction in their own rite. The heard message of the spoken word can be reinforced or confirmed by the visual message, and visual can even supply nuances of meaning that the word alone does not convey. Interestingly, Saint Augustine identifies the myriad of corporal gestures and symbols which affect the sense of sight as “visible words”<sup>117</sup> (St. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, 2, 4).

From a social perspective, the universal appeal of gestures as opposed to strictly verbal language may also be seen as a method of establishing communication between cultures, of non-verbal language uniting all in communal expression. From an anthropological standpoint, the physical gestures which have their place in the liturgy

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<sup>116</sup> Gadamar (1986) affirmed that “the symbolic gesture is not just itself but expresses something else” (p. 126) and that it is “opaque in an enigmatic fashion...a mystery that holds back as much as it reveals” (p. 79).

<sup>117</sup> “Et sunt haec omnia quasi quaedam verba visibilia” (Translated by R. P. H. Green)

are especially demonstrative of the reality and key value of human representation within the liturgy<sup>118</sup>.

The liturgical gesture occurs, in the first place, in the material realm. “A real ability to celebrate presupposes that the body in all its dimensions can participate” (Mattheeuws, 2002, p. 136). However, to understand its effect, it is necessary to look beyond the physical, for it develops as a singular form of symbolism within the celebration, employing the movements and attributes of the human body itself in order to both convey and express spiritual dispositions.

But it would be a somewhat simplistic approach to say that liturgical gestuality is an attempt to translate the word into gestures. Rather, it is a language that possesses its own distinct form of expression, for a gesture can sometimes communicate that which spoken language is unable to express entirely, and it can even help to create an ambience in which the word enjoys greater reception (Boróbio, 1985, p. 229). In fact, although they may be considered independently for discursive purposes, there is no real separation between the physical and the spiritual elements in the liturgical gesture. Gadamer (1986) refers to this dual dimension, identifying the human gesture as “something wholly corporeal and wholly spiritual” (p. 79). During a liturgical festivity, it is the gesture that often strikes us with its unique capacity of conveying a profundity and substance of meaning — a symbolic movement that requires time and thought to be fully understood and disclosed within the liturgical scenario, gaining profundity and

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<sup>118</sup> This representative role is, in fact, largely due to the expressive quality of the gesture which is a highly individual experience involving personal faculties, as Jongerius (1992) points out: “The expressive force of actions and attitudes can only be experienced by ‘doing’ them. At the same time we ought to remind each other of the unique riches of the religious ‘physical training’ which conserves the awareness of the typical power – evocative and expressive – of human attitudes and movements” (p. 86).

meaning through consistent repetition, a constant reliving of the symbolic transcendence<sup>119</sup>.

While commenting the two-fold adoration which man's nature demands, Aquinas emphasized the effects of bodily gestures in influencing certain spiritual attitudes and vice versa, for as we had seen above, he sees bodily gestures as a natural overflowing of the soul's sentiments; adoration is primarily interior, and subsequently overflows into corporal expression. An illustrative example of this principle is found in his observation that "we exhibit signs of humility in our bodies in order to incite our affections to submit to God" (*S. Th.* II-II, q.84, a.2)<sup>120</sup>.

Once again, we see the Thomistic idea of the interior religious sentiment reflected in outward symbolic gesture. "Even bodily adoration is done in spirit, in so far as it proceeds from and is directed to spiritual devotion. [...] Just as prayer is primarily in the mind, and secondarily expressed in words, as stated above (q. 83, a. 12), so too adoration consists chiefly in an interior reverence of God, but secondarily in certain bodily signs of humility" (*S. Th.* II-II, q.84, a.2)<sup>121</sup>.

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<sup>119</sup> The concept of ritual repetition within the perspective of liturgy is inherent to its natural evolvement as a continuous experience within human life: "Were the smell of incense, the sight of the procession, the savour of the elements mere triggers for the recollection of the concepts, they might do their work on a single occasion. But they must be repeated and returned to, and this suggests that they are vehicles for the forward moving of our spiritual desire, which can never be disincarnate and thus separate from these physical lures" (Pickstock, 2010, p. 7). Chauvet (1987) also reiterates the significance of gestural repetition: "Pars ailleurs, sa *répétition* régulière a un effet initiatique d'importance. A force de réitérer les mêmes gestes et les mêmes formules dans des circonstances identiques et selon un rythme périodique relativement rigoureux, il fait passer les valeurs du groupe dans le corps de chacun, jusqu'au point où elles finissent par tellement lui coller à la peau (car, là encore, là surtout, tout est dans la "peau") qu'elles lui semblent toutes 'naturelles'" (p. 348)

<sup>120</sup> "Ut videlicet per signa humilitatis quae corporaliter exhibemus, excitetur noster affectus ad subiiciendum se Deo" (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province)

<sup>121</sup> "...dicendum quod etiam adoratio corporalis in spiritu fit, in quantum ex spirituali devotione procedit, et ad eam ordinatur.(...) dicendum quod sicut oratio primordialiter quidem est in mente, secundario autem verbis exprimitur, ut supra dictum est; ita etiam adoratio principaliter quidem in interiori Dei reverentia consistit, secundario autem in quibusdam corporalibus humilitatis signis" (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province)

It may be concluded, then, that corporal positions that constitute liturgical gestures exercise a double influence, both over the individual who is their agent, and the beholder. That is, the individual is influenced by his own gesture to assume certain interior attitudes such as respect, humility, or contemplation; simultaneously, others are influenced by the outward manifestation of these sentiments. This dynamic gains added strength in a community scenario.

Within this perspective, we shall now consider facets of basic liturgical gesture and explore their significance in light of transcendent, temporo-spatial and communitarian aspects.

### **2.2.1 Communitarian practice of the liturgical gesture**

Human action within liturgy is especially recognizable within the communal dimension of the assembly<sup>122</sup>, which transcends mundane festive gatherings due to its inherently spiritual *raison d'être*. It is an entirely “sacred” community, distinct from any profane or secular gathering of people, due to the exclusively sacred basis for their coming together: their common faith<sup>123</sup>. The communal union of sentiments and action during the liturgy is conducive toward recollection, reflection, humility, forgiveness and rejoicing, discipline and self-control. Interior uprightness and peace are transmitted through communal attitudes and the exterior presentation of the assembly.

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<sup>122</sup> Stein (2003) underlines the inherently social dimension of the individual, who benefits from integration into a community, for he “...sólo encuentra el cumplimiento de su índole esencial en la comunidad; mediante actos en los que ese ser se trasciende a sí mismo y entra en contacto con otros puede llegar a una unión mucho más profunda que la unidad de las partes en un todo” (p. 999).

<sup>123</sup> Interestingly, Guardini (2014) offers a balanced consideration of this “social” dimension of liturgy, which does not emphasise a merely horizontal condition of personal relationships, a mere interaction between individuals, but rather transcends corporal interaction by creating a union principally in spirit, word, gesture, spiritual impulse, supernatural goals: “This is not composed merely of the persons who may be present in church; it is not the assembled congregation. On the contrary, it reaches out beyond the bounds of space to embrace all the faithful on earth. Simultaneously it reaches beyond the bounds of time, to this extent, that the body which is praying upon earth knows itself to be at one with those for whom time no longer exists” (p. 19).

This diverse form of union is heightened by the timeless significance of the assembly as an organic development of the *Qahal Yaweh*<sup>124</sup> of the Old Testament. The liturgical assembly today derives its chief characteristics from these first solemn gatherings which consisted in a dramatic proclamation of the word, collective praise, adoration, and supplication, preceded by community fasting and purification, and concluding with sacrificial offerings. Later, the simple gatherings of the early Christians, characterized by deep internal union and charity, were a driving force for the implantation and preservation of the new religion. Present-day liturgical assemblies transcend time and space through their connection with the previous gatherings from the Old Testament to the New, as well as those to come in the future, producing a unique form of participation<sup>125</sup>.

The joy proper to the sacred festivity is also a communal one: “It is also delight but not simply the ecstatic delight of a private individual but the delight of a community of individuals. As delight, it reveals a marvellous sensible communion, the mysterious touch of God’s *affectus* transfiguring the assembly into the Body of Christ alive through the epiclesis of the Holy Spirit” (García-Rivera, 2007, p. 57).

The gestural dynamic readily lends itself to the social context, with collective forms of expression unfolding in an atmosphere of participative ritual, serving as a

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<sup>124</sup> “Qahal (ou assemblée régulièrement convoquée), considère dans son développement organique, nous a permis de voir, comme dans un germe, tous les éléments constitutifs de la liturgie chrétienne” (Bouyer, 1956, p. 45). Interestingly, Bouyer points out there strict connection between the Hebraic term Qahal, and the Greek term *ἐκκλησία* (p. 39). “Qahal is a term that contained the dual meaning as the call convoking the gathering, as well as the assembly in itself who gathered as a response to the call. For the Israelites, the Qahal had a civic insinuation when it was convoked for the purpose of receiving and responding to communications from the monarch, while the Qahal Yaweh was a solemn gathering of special importance, “a privileged time and place” for the Jews to solidify their relationship with God as his chosen people”(Francis, 1998, p. 129).

<sup>125</sup> For Valenziano (1998a) the significance of each ritual Assembly holds a timeless symbolism, due to its profound cultural bases, as a symbol and epiphany of the Church, aspects which are intertwined with archeological and ecclesiological dimensions, through which it projects its true significance. Without this appreciation, its ritual loses its true meaning, resulting in a lifeless and unfruitful celebration. “Ogni assemblea rituale, infatti, si pone per una significazione polare tra l’origine e la conclusione, della quale polarità essa è epifania e anticipazione insieme; senza questa tendenzialità il suo rito sarebbe amorfo e proiettivo, e la sua celebrazione formalistica e inefficace” (p. 216).

central element of union within the liturgical celebration, which is characterized by “its uniformity of movement and posture” (Levesque, 1993, p. 38)<sup>126</sup>. This collective practice of gestures and movements demonstrates the non-spontaneous tone of these manifestations, for they follow fixed patterns and forms which must be united and repeated in order to be fully effective<sup>127</sup>. Recurring and regulated ritual action reflects an inner discipline founded on eternal truths and reflected in an exterior nobility of bearing, which allows the Celebration to progress in an ordered manner with sacred relevance. The communal facet of the gestures thus occasions a sacred ambience which tends toward a transcendence and elevation from the mundane.

The unifying capacity of combined gestures can be observed in the assembly, which serve to identify the group’s common objectives and goals, a communal intention within the realm of religious sentiment corporally expressed and assimilated<sup>128</sup>. The power of communal gestures creates, moreover, an increased impact due to man’s innately social sense — his needs as a social being redound within gestural expression. The uniting power of the symbolic movement which binds the identity of the group is revealed within the union of the liturgical assembly.

The simple yet highly symbolic gestures of kneeling, standing and sitting, acquire increased strength and significance through communitarian practice. The kneeling posture, genuflection, and prostration for example, are physical attitudes that normally exteriorize an interior disposition of adoration, as well as an suggesting humble and penitential prayer (Garrido Bonaño, 1961, p. 15). St. Thomas proposes

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<sup>126</sup> The communal practice of ritual worship holds a particularly forceful impact, as Pickstock (2010) intuitively points out; the sensory dimension of the liturgy emerges from the activity of the community and as such is not only inactively received on an individual basis: “Together, we pray, sing, process, look forward to, and exchange the pax through mutual touch. The resultant sensorial experience can to some degree be received by an individual worshipper, but it exists more fundamentally for an angelic and a divine gaze” (p. 732).

<sup>127</sup> “Elle s’exprime par les lèvres, elle se traduit par des attitudes corporelles, par des gestes; attitudes et gestes qui ne sont pas laissés à la libre spontanéité de chacun, mais qui sont fixés par des lois constantes” (Martimort, 1983, p. 185).

<sup>128</sup> “Dans la liturgie, le corps se trouve donc en situation de médiation entre la personne, l’assemblée et Dieu” (Prétot, 2006 p. 31).



that “when we genuflect we signify our weakness in comparison with God, and when we prostrate ourselves we profess that we are nothing of ourselves” (*S. Th.* II-II, q.84 a.2)<sup>129</sup>. According to Prétot (2006), the kneeling posture is consistent with an attitude of humility, as it inclines one toward the earth (*humus*). He adds that it implies a position of submission or obedience, adoration or even the confession of one’s sins<sup>130</sup>.

Biblical references suggest that standing is a symbol of respect, honour, and service with an eschatological significance. This position was employed by the early Christians as their chief posture, while they prayed with their arms outstretched and eyes raised toward the east, as has been depicted in early Christian artwork (Levesque, 1993, p. 32-33). Tertullian refers to this prayerful attitude as a spontaneous gesture, affirming that the Christians, unlike the pagans, have no need of a monitor to guide their prayers. He refers to the raised eyes, and points out that the outstretched hands are a signal of their purity. Early Church tradition, evident in the pronouncements of the Fathers of the Church, have emphasized the importance of standing instead of kneeling on Sundays, solemnities and during the Easter season (*Apologeticus*. PL 1, 257-536)<sup>131</sup>.

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<sup>129</sup> “Sicut genu flectimus nostrum infirmitatem significantes in compratione ad Deum; prosternimus autem nos quasi profitentes nos nihil esse ex nobis”. (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province) The attitude of kneeling as a gesture of supplication and emotion is present in the Gospel, with Our Lord Jesus Christ himself in the Mount of Olives, “Then he withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, knelt down, and prayed” (Luke 22:40). In the New Testament the kneeling gesture is considered an attitude of adoration proskynesis in Matt 4:10, John 4:21, 23; Rev 3:9, 4:10, 5:17, 7:11; etc. Again we see the gesture in the Acts of the Apostles, at the farewell of St. Paul “When he had finished speaking, he knelt down with them all and prayed. There was much weeping among them all; they embraced Paul and kissed him” (Acts 21:36-3).

<sup>130</sup> “La station à genoux, qui met en relation les jambes avec les bras et les mains, est une position fermée; elle penche plutôt du côté de l’intériorité, proche de la terre. Elle est par conséquent cohérente avec une attitude d’humilité (*humus*) et, peut-être en raison de la tension qu’implique son maintien, elle apparaît souvent comme l’expression de l’ascèse” (Prétot, 2006, p. 27).

<sup>131</sup> Vergote (1995) posits a unique perspective of the upright posture, claiming that “the upright position is offered as a possibility that they [human beings] must win for themselves” (p. 93). For this author, the standing posture, which involves a partial overcoming of the law of gravity is “consequently, the symbol of victory, self-affirmation, freedom and self-surpassing” (p. 93). He also observes that: “The polarity between the upright and the prone position introduces tension in the life of the body, and this tension is in accord with the symbolic structure of the vertical difference between earth and heaven. Thus, it is not surprising that ideological, political and national liberation movements take on the metaphorical language of the rising up of the oppressed, and that towers and pyramids give expression to humankind’s power as it rises, lifts up its head and seeks to assert itself” (p. 93).

The posture of standing is thus performed within the liturgical ceremony as an expression of joyful reverence and promptness to listen. Additionally, it is a gesture indicative of respect, attention, and supplication, with a militant connotation. It has also been affirmed that standing denotes an Easter attitude, as the liberation from sin and death has dispensed with more submissive positions. The attitude of standing is, moreover, the ideal for those who are waiting for the return of Christ, their erect attitude signifying that they have nothing to fear of His justice. (Richter, 1990, p. 129) The “Alleluia” is a verbal formula that demands a joyful rising of the congregation, while the readings are heard in a spirit of contemplative rest, using the sitting posture.

The sitting position is indicated for a contemplative state of spirit, as is a form of non-action, involving the stillness and repose of the body. In this posture, the individual is invited to transcend his corporality and, as a result, to give fuller attention to cognitive, visual and audible dimensions of the celebration, thus favouring meditative reflection. Necessarily, this posture corresponds to or inspires a certain attitude of fruitful silence, which can be as important, at certain points of the celebration, as more active forms of participation.

The attitudes, the motionless postures are also an important part of gestuality. In concrete terms, the way one is seated [...] can say much regarding one’s interior state [...] Each individual, and in particular, the priest, radiate a presence that is a transmission of the mystery and of the sacrament of openness, solidarity and communion. It is not because one does nothing that

one does not transmit. At times, it is precisely then that one transmits that which is essential (Boróbio, 1985 p. 235)<sup>132</sup>.

The aforementioned gestures most particularly reinforce and sustain the communitarian dimension of liturgical action.

### 2.2.2 Spatial and temporal dimension of liturgical gestures

The transcendent facet of liturgical gestures is heightened by the fact that they contain a complex religious historic-cultural significance as they gradually or directly derive from forms of ancient praise or early Christian worship. However, though drawn from an abundantly symbolic past, such gestures are transformed, through their performance, into living actions of the present. It was Von Balthasar (1982) who had pointed out that the very gestures of Christ come to us through liturgy (p. 372)<sup>133</sup>. Thus, the historic or symbolic significance of gesture not only comes to life with its evolvment within the liturgical scenario, it moreover takes on a new life and significance in the present moment, allowing the individual to not only merely relive the past, but to live the present in anticipation of the future, for certain liturgical

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<sup>132</sup>“As atitudes, as posturas imóveis [...] são parte importante da gestualidade. Em termos concretos, a maneira de se ficar sentado [...] pode dizer muito sobre o estado interior do presidente e dos ministros. [...] Porque, através desse conjunto convergente de detalhes e sinais menores, cada fiel e, em especial, o sacerdote, irradiam uma presença que é a transparência do mistério e do sacramento da abertura, da solidariedade da comunhão. Não é porque nada se faz que não se transmita nada. Às vezes é justamente aí que se transmite o essencial (Boróbio, 1985, p. 235) (Personal translation). Righetti (1945) mentions that the attitude of sitting is of one who teaches or listens, pointing out that the bishop formerly spoke to the faithful in a seated position, from his *cathedra*. (p. 311) As the pulpit was formerly called the *predigstuhl* in German, the sitting position appears to have been the attitude of the preacher as well, (Richter, 1990, p. 130) he who teaches with authority. (Sartore, Triacca, & Cibien, 2001, p. 868) In fact, the sitting posture was formerly not employed by the faithful assisting the celebrations (Garrido Bonaño, 1961, p. 15), a position reserved for the celebrant.

<sup>133</sup> “Within the space of the Mother-Church, the features and gestures of Christ reach all believing generations as the sensory gestures of the liturgy” (Von Balthasar, 1982, p. 422).

gestures most particularly serve as a strong affirmation of eternal truths, and, as such, constitute a living manifestation of faith<sup>134</sup>.

Within the temporal scope of gestural language, a single gesture often condenses relevant implications of a conjuncture of past, present and future events. Vagaggini (1965), for example, identified this synthesis of temporal dimensions within a simple genuflection — a gesture which he affirms “proclaims” the Incarnation, Death and Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ present within the Blessed Sacrament, while it is a reminder of the honour proffered to God in the Old Testament, and a prophetic action of the eternal adoration of the Celestial Jerusalem<sup>135</sup>. This is a clear image of the gestural capacity to preserve and express profound elements of belief, perhaps latent within the spirit but whose existence is strengthened and fostered through gestural action, often within the complex web of ritual sequence.

Moreover, the diversity of gestures integrates new meaning and significance as they transverse the ages, for they remain alive only within man himself, who animates their latency. Within liturgy, we observe that the individual serves as a living transmitter of the gestural content which he renews within each Celebration.

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<sup>134</sup> “La programmation est constitutive du rite religieux en tant que l’on y fait *comme les ancêtres on fait, comme le fondateur* (mythique, historialise ou historique) a fait. Plus encore parce qu’ils l’ont (censément) fait ainsi. Les rites religieux pointent donc, comme un index, vers l’origine, à travers la répétition identique, de génération en génération, du ‘même’ programme dans l’*in illo tempore* fondateur. Mettent entre parenthèse le temps qui sépare l’aujourd’hui de l’ancêtre éponyme ou du fondateur historique [...], ils fonctionnent selon le symbolisme de l’éliision *metonymique*. Ils constituent ainsi le réservoir premier de la mémoire collective du groupe. En replongeant anamnétiquement celui-ci dans le temps primordial ou il est né, le rituel fait barrage aux forces de mort que, sans relâche, menacent d’épuiser son identité et la signifiante du monde” (Chauvet, 1987, p. 348).

<sup>135</sup> “La genuflessione è pure um segno rimemorativo del passato: anzitutto, perché, fatta davanti al Santissimo, ipso facto proclama che il verbo s’incarnò, morì e resuscitò, salì al cielo alla destra del Padre ed è ora sacramentalmente presente nell’eucaristia; riconosce che quella disposizione d’animo, nella quale consiste il culto di venerazione e di adorazione espresso nel gesto esterno, non sarebbe possibile se Cristo non ce l’avesse meritata nella sua passione e che, quel culto, in quanto si indirizza a Dio, non è altro che la partecipazione al culto che Cristo rese a Dio nella sua vita terrena, massimamente sulla croce. La genuflessione è pure segno rimemorativo dei culti che furono resi a Dio prima di Cristo, almeno dopo il peccato di Adamo, perché quei culti non erano che un’adombramento e un abbozzo del culto futuro che la Chiesa in Cristo avrebbe reso a Dio. Finalmente, la genuflessione è ancora um segno profetico della futura venerazione e adorazione che noi renderemo a dio e a Cristo nella Gerusalemme celeste poiché la nostra adorazione di quaggiù è già realmente, sebbene imperfettamente e *sub signis*, la nostra futura adorazione di lassù” (Vagaggini, 1965, p. 96).

Valenziano (1998b) in turn, reflects on the enduring value of the past traditions brought to bear in the present reality. He insists that “To ‘hold to’ the symbols of the great ecclesial tradition is not to repeat what has been done before” (p. 31). For Valenziano, one must “make one’s own the fullness of ecclesial memory and recreate it in an original manner, not stamping it out of the same mould” (p. 31).

The continuous recurrence of postures and ritual movement within each liturgical Celebration spanning over centuries attests to their temporal significance, as their constant practice renews and solidifies their meaning over the course of time.

Thus, the *homo liturgicus* himself integrates within liturgical action as a part of continuous and ever renewed celebratory action. Underhill (1913) underlines the timeless evolution of the liturgy as expression of human needs and culture: “Each fresh addition made to this living work of art has but elaborated and enriched the one central idea that runs through the whole. In the Christian liturgy, the deepest intuitions, the rich personal experiences, not only of the primitive but of the patristic and mediaeval epochs, have found their perfect expression. Herein has been distilled, age by age, drop by drop, the very essence of the mystical consciousness” (p. 334-335).

Yet the dynamic of liturgical action has, in addition, a spatial connotation, as it evolves within a defined precinct which itself ends up moulding and channelling movement and posture. There thus exists a close relationship between gestures and space, as ritual movements are executed more effectively within distinct areas that heighten their significance and import<sup>136</sup>. The sacredness of liturgical gestures as opposed to mundane gesture is more clearly pronounced within the limits of sacred

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<sup>136</sup> It calls attention that Van Der Laan (2005) skilfully identifies “three form-types of liturgy” wherein the word, object and gesture are intertwined in a distinctive form of expression, within the context of space, particular to the liturgical celebration. “The words and singing must always be considered against the background of gestures and objects, just the three form-worlds as animals cannot be considered in isolation from the earth with its plants and trees. Every word, every song is therefore accompanied by gesture and posture, and is located by its spatial disposition within the great, fixed frame of the church building and its furniture. There is thus a direct relation between the three form-types of liturgy: word, gesture and object” (p. 38-39).

space, that of a church building for example. Moreover, the gestures lend meaning to the spaces in which they unfold, and often distinguish certain significant areas of the place of worship that hold a heightened importance or eschatological association. This is especially true, for example, of gestures pertaining to the altar or pulpit — their directional impulse help to place emphasis upon significant moments of celebration<sup>137</sup>.

#### 2.2.2.1 Processional Gesture

The processional gesture, which occurs at diverse moments of the Celebration, consists in a choreographed form of movement, synthesizing human action and symbolism, while delineating and emphasizing the significance of liturgical spaces. It is thus a liturgical gesture which holds a particularly spatial connotation. The common gesture of walking is transcended within the context of processional action, as the latter holds a distinctly sacred quality reflected in a noble and regulated cadence, a marked hierarchical arrangement and a symbolic characteristic intended to inspire sentiments of fervour<sup>138</sup>.

Walking is the outward mark of man's essential and peculiar nobility. It is the privilege of man alone to walk erect, his movement in his own power and choice. The upright carriage denotes the human being. [...] And when the occasion is religious, what a beautiful thing walking can be! It is a genuine act of divine worship. Merely to walk into a church in reverent awareness that we

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<sup>137</sup> The concept of space within the realm of the liturgical celebration receives a more extensive treatment in Chapter three.

<sup>138</sup> With respect to the profoundly symbolic aspect of processional activity, the commentaries of Sanmartín (1988) present anthropological, social and festive dimensions of such religious events which occur throughout the year on the island of the Albufera de Valencia — observations which are applicable to any type of procession: “Pero no puede resumirse la procesión a un conjunto simbólico de posiciones relativas. El conjunto como tal se pone en movimiento y desarrolla un recorrido concreto. El pueblo, que afirma en su ordenación el ideal de su unidad vital, se pone en marcha. A la primera utilización simbólica del espacio se suma una segunda recorriendo las calles del pueblo a entrar. En esa acción de puesta en marcha surgen el orden y el recorrido. Ambos dependen de la actuación conjunta de todos los actores según la tradición. Y en esa doble acción coordinada toman posesión de sí mismos, de su territorio y de su historia, haciendo indisolubles su identidad y su tradición” (p. 164).

are entering the house of the Most High, and in a special manner into his presence, may be ‘to walk before the Lord’ (Guardini, 1953, p. 16-17)<sup>139</sup>.

The procession generates a strong visual impact for the congregation; a non-verbal form of communication through symbolic movement. Through its directional course, it attracts gazes toward significant locations — whether the altar, pulpit, or baptismal font — as well as toward specific objects carried by the integrants of the procession<sup>140</sup>. The procession is thus a stimulus for union among worshippers, with an overtone of journeying as pilgrims together toward an eternal destiny. “In the earthly liturgy, we participate in a preamble of that celestial liturgy which is celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem which we journey toward as pilgrims” (SSC, 8)<sup>141</sup>.

In a particular way, the entrance procession, which originated in the VII-VIII centuries (Sartore, Triacca, & Cibien, 2001, p., 2001, p. 868), is symbolic of the cortege of the earthly church toward the celestial Jerusalem (Garrido Bonaño, 1961, p. 17)<sup>142</sup>. Composing the first act of the celebration, this procession creates an ambience

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<sup>139</sup> “Ist das Schreiten nicht ein Ausdruck menschlichen Wesensadels? Die aufrechte Gestalt, ihrer selbst Herrin, sich selber tragend, ruhig und sicher, die bleibt des Menschen alleiniges Vorecht. Aufrecht Schreiten heißt Mensch sein. (...) Und wie schön ist es, wo es fromm geschieht ! Zu lauterem Gottesdienst kann es werden. Schon als bloßes Dahinschreiten vor Gott, wissend und ehrfürchtig, etwas wenn jemand in der Kirche dahin geht, in des höchsten Herren Haus und in besonderer Weise unter seinen Augen”. (Translation by Grace Branham)

<sup>140</sup> For example, Brulin (2006) points out the visual dimension of the procession of the offerings: “À l’observation, on peut constater que cette ‘mise en évidence’ aux yeux des membres de l’assemblée de l’itinéraire des espèces qui seront consacrées est un moment de grande focalisation et concentration des regards. Tous se sentent pris dans ce déplacement” (p. 73).

<sup>141</sup> “In terrena Liturgia caelestem illam praegustando participamus, quae in sancta civitate Ierusalem, ad quam peregrini tendimus” (Personal translation).

<sup>142</sup> Interestingly, the medieval interpretation of the various parts of the liturgical ceremony, most especially of the entrance cortege, holds a dynamic imagery, the consideration of which is of interest even today. In a medieval liturgy the entrance procession carried intense symbolic dimensions: The chant of the introit, with its grave melody, opened the celebration representing the desire of the patriarchs and prophets, while the choir of the clerics symbolized the saints of the Old Law, who anxiously awaited the coming of the Messiah. The subsequent entrance of the bishop symbolized the arrival of the Saviour. In the great feasts, seven candles were carried before the bishop, as a remembrance that according to the word of the Prophet the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit reposed over the head of the Son of God. The bishop advanced under a canopy that is carried by four individuals symbolizing the four evangelists, while two acolytes, symbolizing Moses and Elias who appeared on Mount Tabor at Our Lord Jesus’ Christ side accompany him (Mâle, 1958, p. 52).

of preparatory awareness, as the assembly, beholding the movement of the celebrant ascending toward the altar, interiorly participate — perhaps more than physically — by turning their minds and hearts toward the focal point of the celebration.

The congregation becomes more attuned to the event to be celebrated, aided by the varied colours and forms of the vestments, indicating particular feasts or penitential times, and the inclusion of diverse symbols — lit candles, the processional cross carried in front, the book of readings which is often carried on high by the lector<sup>143</sup>, the incense, along with the celebrant, deacons and acolytes. When, during solemn Celebrations, the entrance procession concludes with the solemn circular incensing of the altar, the momentousness and sense of expectancy is increased.

Though on a smaller scale, the processional gesture also occurs at the moment of the readings, as the deacon or priest, accompanied by candle-bearing acolytes, processes solemnly to the pulpit — a gesture which draws special attention to the sacrality and importance of the reading of the Scripture<sup>144</sup>.

The offertory, one of the liturgical gestures that has undergone the greatest evolutions over time, gradually gaining new rituals and meaning (Garrido Boñano, p. 320), is another moment of the celebration in which a procession often takes place, where the simple gesture of carrying the bread and wine to the altar becomes a unique form of ceremony. Although this procession was formerly performed in silence, it was

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<sup>143</sup> “Even before the human voice is sounded, the public “reading” of the Scripture begins. It commences with the very appearance of the sacred books themselves as they enter the sanctuary (...) the Scriptures are placed, sometimes upon a special cushion, in a designated place, symbolically marking Christ’s triumphal entre and enthronement in the midst of the assembly” (Fodor, 2011, p. 157).

<sup>144</sup> “Dans la liturgie chrétienne, honneur est fait au livre lui-même, par la qualité de son support éditorial et la dignité du lieu de la proclamation: l’ambon. L’évangélaire, distingué des autres livres liturgiques, est porté en procession de l’autel, où il avait été déposé dès l’ouverture de la célébration, jusqu’à l’ambon pour la lecture. Comme l’observe Jean-Louis Souletie dans un article consacré à l’autorité du geste dans la liturgie, ce mouvement – précédé par la bénédiction du diacre par le prêtre qui préside, et parfois solennisé par l’apport d’encens et de lumières – ‘indique que la Parole appelle le déplacement, la non-coïncidence avec soi, un exode libérateur qui permette ici d’entendre...’ Cet apport du livre des évangiles provoque la levée de l’assemblée qui accueille son Seigneur et ‘ce mouvement est homogène à celui qui vient comme le ressuscité qui s’est levé d’entre les morts’” (Brouin, 2006, p. 78).



St. Augustine who introduced the custom of the singing of psalms during this act in the city of Hippo, a practice that steadily spread (Garrido Boñano, 1961, p. 325). Today, the procession is accompanied by varied genre of sacred music, chosen to emphasize and complement the act of offering performed. The processional movement of the offertory is also a contemplative and visual opportunity for the congregation, who are invited to associate the physical offering with a spiritual giving of self. It has been pointed out that the act of the offertory “is inseparable from its final end in the sacrifice and is seen as a preliminary to Communion. The sacrifice appears as a jewel set centrally between these two elements” (Clément, 1997, p. 91).

The climax of processional activity within the liturgy takes place at the moment of the reception of Communion, when a great part of the congregation processes toward the reception of the Sacrament. It is the summit of the celebration, when the assembly unites in the journey toward the altar to physically receive the Body and Blood of Christ; the individual is transformed into *homo viator* and the Eucharist is truly *viaticum* (Font, 2011, p. 375). This procession is marked by a more spontaneous approach, a more festive though reverential character of eagerness to participate and receive the nourishment of the Eucharist, an anticipation and joy embodied in communal advance<sup>145</sup>.

It is by reason of the procession that the liturgy reconstructs and organizes the space. It transforms the individual, making him change his “point of view”; in this way, for example, Communion is not just a utilitarian cortege, but also a “beneficial” one; for in order to approach to receive Communion, to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord, the individual is invited to leave his place to

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<sup>145</sup>“La procession de communion correspond bien à une démarche orientée vers un but concret, mais elle est en même temps expérience symbolique qui fait du fidèle un membre du peuple de Dieu en marche à la rencontre de son Seigneur” (Prétot, 2006, p. 28-29).

advance toward the font, to receive the gift of God and in this way pass to the first place, where God gives His very self (Prétot, 2006, p. 25-26)<sup>146</sup>.

The final procession terminates the liturgical celebration, but transcendently, it also signals the continuity of the celebration on another plane. It is the beginning of new life, a sending out on mission; the *Ite Missa est* does not isolate the liturgical experience, but rather prolongs it into the apostolic life of the Christian (Arboleda, 2008. p. 124). The final procession is, then, of a triumphant nature as the celebration performed brings all of the participants to a new level, a new perspective and focus to project into daily life. Though it marks the end of the liturgical festivity, it is a call to continue the same festivity wherever the participants disperse, so that they may carry with them the intensity of the celebration throughout their daily occupations, living liturgically in all aspects of their activities.

*Ite Missa est* means unequivocally that the assembly is sent. This mandate is continuously renewed in the assembly as often as the assembly attends the Eucharistic worship... The command makes a great shift of understanding of the Eucharist from purely individualistic, privatistic and one-sided approach... The command opens up a wider horizon of Eucharistic concept to include the salvation of the temporal order which is basic for the salvation of souls. It broadens the scope of the Eucharistic celebration to reach out to the salvation of the entire created order, the soul as well as the spirit and body, the social, the economic, the political, the environment, inter-personal and international relationships (Chibuku, 2005 p. 58).

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<sup>146</sup>Les déplacements peuvent être plus ou moins limités: cela va du simple pas comme dans les ordinations à la procession (à l'intérieur, à l'extérieur, en cortège ou communautaire, pour une action ou pour un pèlerinage) en passant par tous les déplacements liturgiques de type 'utilitaire', bien qu'ils échappent toujours à la seule utilité car ils accompagnent et manifestent ou moins un rôle dans l'action liturgique, comme par exemple le déplacement à l'ambon pour faire une lecture...De plus, c'est à travers les déplacements que la liturgie reconstruit et organise l'espace. Elle transforme l'individu en le faisant changer de 'point de vue': ainsi la communion est-elle un déplacement non seulement utilitaire mais, si j'ose dire, 'salutaire': car pour entrer en communion, pour recevoir le corps et le sang du Seigneur, le fidèle est invité à quitter sa place pour se rapprocher de la source, pour recevoir le don de Dieu et passer ainsi à la première place, celle où Dieu se donne lui-même" (Prétot, 2006, p. 25-26). Prétot (2006) also points out that within the liturgical scenario, the body enters into a "complex web of interactions with the organization of space, the vestments, the furniture and above all the liturgical action in itself" (p. 9).

### 2.2.3 Transcendence

Particularly within a ritual dimension, gestures which are in fact gleaned from quotidian experience gain a sacred or cultural connotation<sup>147</sup>. The gestures retain their simplicity and facility of expression, but acquire original symbolic significance due to the interior sentiments behind them. This movement may also attain special significance on account of spatial or temporal facets of existence related to them, such as the ceremonial sequence of certain rites prior to entering sacred places, which may include the removal of footwear or ablutions.

In liturgy, the gestural dimension involves a dual dynamism as a source of transcendent expressivity and inspiration, constituting a form of expression and communication unique to the celebration. Such gestures often possess profound eschatological or mystical overtones, opening toward transcendent realities. The liturgical gesture is thus conducive toward another sphere of experience, where the profane is exceeded by sacred modes of comportment, and it is the person who brings about this break from his own common life. “The liturgical gesture is ‘symbolic’, for having emerged from common experience, it receives through this context a significance that transcends this experience” (Prétot, 2006, p. 28-29)<sup>148</sup>.

#### 2.2.3.1 Gustate et videte quam suavis est Dominus

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<sup>147</sup> “Our celebration of liturgy is situated in and in relation to the daily life of human beings. And yet it is not part of that daily life. [...] It is a solemn and elevated moment in everyday life, in which people are bound to other than normal everyday rules” (Speelman, 2006, p. 198). Van der Laan (2005) illustrated a similar idea as he identified the transcendence of the commonplace within the liturgy: “In the liturgy the ordinary things of our daily lives, and even the signs that serve in communication between people, reappear as signs intended for our communion with God. Together they form a *résumé*, an autonomous image, of our whole human existence in relation to nature and our fellow humans” (p. 38-39).

<sup>148</sup> “Les gestes liturgiques intègrent mais surtout dépassent la perspective utilitaire que revêtent souvent les gestes quotidiens; ils s’inscrivent en effet dans un contexte rituel, et ils reçoivent une profondeur qui bien souvent nous échappe. Le geste liturgique est ‘symbolique’ au sens où, issu de l’expérience ordinaire, il reçoit par ce contexte une signification qui transcende cette expérience tout en l’assumant” (Personal translation).

The partaking of the Eucharist Banquet constitutes the climax of transcendent gestural action within the celebration<sup>149</sup>. The act of human alimentation itself — considered in its usual sense — has repercussions in the sphere of life and culture, for it constitutes an “extraordinarily complex phenomena” affected by geographical, economic, social, artistic, religious and political factors (Perez Samper, 2003, p. 173). Participation in a refectio has always implied a symbolic gesture far beyond its merely nourishing function, often being interwoven with ritual action and festive celebration, fulfilling a primary or secondary role within the evolvement of such events (Hayden, 2001, p. 45-46)<sup>150</sup>.

Von Balthasar points out that a sacred meal (1982) “has always realised the naturally mysterious character of eating and drinking (as essential communion with the cosmos and, through it, with divinity) and has consequently assigned a cultic form to this sign: as a meal of joy (or of victory) on solemn occasions in family, tribe or state; as a memorial meal of mourning in cases of death; as a meal that seals contracts and alliances; finally, as a sacrificial meal that concludes the offering of plants or animals” (p. 571).

The concept of banquet thus often transcends a merely socio-cultural implication, assuming a religious overtone. The very roots of Christian worship naturally evolved from within traditional Jewish festivities, including the Sabbath

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<sup>149</sup> This symbolic dimension of the liturgy, in light of its being centered upon the human activity of a meal, though it, by transcending the merely physical and human aspect, brings this activity to a new and unprecedented level “The Christian liturgy is a special kind of symbol precisely because it desires to express something with respect to the nature of human relationships. It is a meal; in fact, a meal that ratifies and strengthens intense and intimate human love. According to the model of the Jewish Passover, it is a family happening and gives emphases and to the intensity and intimacy of familial relationships” (Greeley, 1971, p. 189).

<sup>150</sup> The currently underrated value of the social cultural implications of the meal, with its ethical connotations, is a multifaceted experience with emphasis on sociability and interaction: “O alimento possui a indispensável função de sustentar a vida e a saúde, é verdade, mas é este seu papel mais elevado, uma vez que tem a utilidade social de favorecer o convívio dos que participam da mesma refeição. Ele torna possível um particular entendimento entre as pessoas (...) A mesa é um meio de facilitar o convívio e amenizar os ânimos, coisa que nem sempre se obtém com meras palavras” (Clá Dias, 2012, p. 414-415).

ritual meal and Passover<sup>151</sup>. Significantly, the setting of the latter, which constituted the chief Jewish festivity, was divinely chosen as the moment for the institution of the Eucharistic Celebration, transcending the human dimension of banquet, even in its ritual or ceremonial form, to an unprecedented level: “The form — the meal — is a social act intended to constitute the interior form itself of the Church. For this very reason this supper is the consummation of all sacral and cultic meals of mankind” (Von Balthasar, 1982, p. 571)<sup>152</sup>.

Thus, the merely physical act of alimentation is divinely employed in order to establish a “sacred action” which “provides a tangible foretaste and beginning of the life of beatitude which ultimately awaits us at God’s table, a true *inchoation vitae aeternae* (‘incipience of eternal life’)” (Pieper, 1989, p. 198)<sup>153</sup>.

The aesthetic impact of the reception of Communion within the context of community embraces the senses of both sight and taste. Maggiani (1998b) ties an interesting correlation between the “gustatory code” of the liturgical celebration and the visual capacity, for it is in visually beholding that one desires to taste that which is presented<sup>154</sup>. Again, the Sacred Species are made visible for all during other moments

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<sup>151</sup> For further insight into the ritual historical dimension of the rite of communion rite, see: TAYLOR, Justin. *The Breaking of the Bread*. In: *Ephemerides Liturgicae*. 113 (1999) 332-346. Rome; also: De Zan, 1998, p. 40.

<sup>152</sup> This familial setting for the Eucharistic Banquet served also as a basis for early Christian life, where great emphasis was placed on charity and the inclusion of all within an ambience of fraternal breaking of the bread. In other words, it was the Eucharistic banquet that set the tone for early Christian living and activity: “It was such an intrinsic union between the liturgical assembly and the Eucharist that enabled Christians to see a life in common, radically transformed because of their liturgical participation, even despite their differences and the challenges they faced. Liturgical participation demanded *caritas*” (Pecklers, 2000, p. 50).

<sup>153</sup> “For our sake Christ became bread and wine, food and drink. We make bold to eat him and to drink him. This bread gives us solid and substantial strength. This wine bestows courage, joy out of all earthly measure, sweetness, beauty, limitless enlargement and perception. It brings life in intoxicating excess, both to possess and to impart” (Guardini, 1953, p. 33, Translation by Grace Branham).

<sup>154</sup> “The gustatory perception arises in its optimal phase from the encounter of the visual and the gustatory channels, from seeing and tasting. The ‘beauty’ of creatureliness arouses such an attraction to communicate with it through taste so that the ‘beautiful’ might become ‘good’: for me, for us. From contemplated ‘life’ to assimilated ‘life’. Ritual foods, even in their basic form, stimulate the desire for ingestion in order to assimilate the vital energies: the pleasure of tasting life, of communicating with it” (Maggiani, 1998b, p. 254).

of the celebration, for example, when the celebrant elevates them during the Consecration, and before he communicates, with the words, “Behold, the Lamb of God...” For Maggiani, this “encounter with the visual and gustatory channels” is a central theme of the liturgical celebration, combining man’s sensorial perception with his need for nourishment. “Eucharistic worship itself, developed in great part around the visual code, has as its primary purpose the arousal of the desire to taste what is being shown. The desire to participate in the sacramental banquet, the “presence” of the glorious Body of Christ, contains in itself the desire for another banquet, definitive and eternal, of which his word is the pledge (John 6:53)” (Maggiani, 1998b, p. 254)<sup>155</sup>.

### **2.2.3.2 The human body symbolized in liturgy**

The body can be considered the very expression of the soul, the exterior representation of interior realities, for “the body is the natural emblem of the soul, and a spontaneous physical movement will typify a spiritual event”. (Guardini, 2014, p. 34) In a particular way, liturgical gestures, with their anthropological essence, make the liturgy “The place par excellence where the human person symbolizes” (Jongierius, 1992, p. 85). Among all liturgical gestures, those of the hand hold a special significance and import.

From an anthropological perspective, the hand clearly holds a prominent role, as the principle member of the human body through which man develops his activity, thus considered as synonymous with strength and power, a means of transmitting grace and energy, while Saint Augustine notes: “Certain movements of the hands signify a

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<sup>155</sup> “El gozo profundo que la comunidad experimenta por esta presencia se expresa, sobre todo, en el banquete. Esta es la forma ritual que da cuerpo y consistencia a la eucaristía. Por eso, el banquete, gesto humano que expresa acogida, amor, comunión y fraternidad, es el sacramento de la presencia del Señor. Ahí está, evidentemente, la dimensión festiva y gozosa de la eucaristía. Dimensión que queda ampliamente subrayada por otros elementos festivos adyacentes como el canto, las aclamaciones exultantes, los gestos, las luces, el incienso, el órgano, etc. Toda una gama de elementos simbólicos en los que cristaliza el carácter festivo de la eucaristía y – por que no decirlo – el carácter eucarístico de la fiesta” (Tamyó & Floristan, 1993, p. 532).

great deal” (*De Doctrina Christiani*, 2, 5)<sup>156</sup>. Within the performance of significant liturgical gestures, those of the hands are vital, whether on the part of the celebrant or the congregation, bespeaking a language of “greatness and beauty”, as Guardini (1953, p. 11) comments<sup>157</sup>.

Citing Aristotle, Aquinas declares the hand to be the *organum organorum*: “the washing of the hands is observed; for, since the hand is the organ of organs (*De Anima* III), all works are attributed to the hands: hence it is said in Ps. XXV.6: I will wash my hands among the innocent” (*S. Th.* III, q.83, a.8)<sup>158</sup>. Since they are a symbol of action, washing them denotes a purification of works. Considerations of the deeply symbolic connotation of the hand brings to mind the depictions, in early Christian art, of God the Father represented solely as a hand, as the “face” of God could not be depicted. The hand of God was thus seen as an authentic symbol of God’s total presence.

The spiritual connotations of the hand grows increasingly through the evolvment of the celebration, for “hands act as liturgical metaphors, not only in the core sacramental actions, but in other moments as well — hands raised in the ancient *orans* gesture of praise and thanksgiving, extended hands that channel peace, hands folded to hold sacred an inner silence” (Ostdiek, 2003. p. 125). Early Christians employed the custom of praying with risen hands, symbolizing the crucified position of Christ<sup>159</sup>.

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<sup>156</sup> “Et quidam motus manuum pleraque significant” (Translation by R. P. H. Green)

<sup>157</sup> “Schön und groß ist die Sprache der Hand”. Guardini further clarifies the expressive character of the hands: “Every part of the body is an expressive instrument of the soul. The soul does not inhabit the body as a man inhabits a house. It lives and works in each member, each fiber, and reveals itself in the body’s every line, contour and movement. But the soul’s chief instruments and clearest mirrors are the face and hands” (Guardini, 1953, p. 11, Translation by Grace Branham)

<sup>158</sup> “Cum enim manus sit *organum organorum*, ut dicitur in III *de Anima*, omnia opera attribuuntur manibus. Unde et in Os 25,6 dicitur: *Lavabo inter innocentes manus meas*” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

<sup>159</sup> Benedict XVI (2000) commented on the significance of praying gesture of arms outstretched — combining the arms and hands — pointing out its historic and widespread dimension as the “oldest gesture of prayer in Christendom... found in virtually every part of the religious world”. He affirms that this gesture is a “primal gestures of man calling upon God”. For him, the position signifies nonviolence

St. Thomas explains a similar significance in the specific actions of the celebrant, and the symbolism that unites these exterior acts to interior dispositions. Of interest is the fact that although the celebrant performs particular hand gestures, distinct from those the congregation, such as blessings and the prayer over the gifts, his gestures, nonetheless, benefit the congregation, who witness and receive them.

The priest in extending his arms signifies the outstretching of Christ's arms upon the cross. He also lifts up his hands as he prays, to point out that his prayer is directed to God for the people, according to Lament. iii. 41: *Let us lift up our hearts with our hands to the Lord in the heavens:* and Exod. xvii. 11: *And when Moses lifted up his hands, Israel overcame.* That at times he joins his hands, and bows down; praying earnestly and humbly, [he] denotes the obedience and humility of Christ<sup>160</sup> (*S. Th.* III, q.83 a.5).

The congregation performs communal hand gestures throughout the celebration, such as the sign of the cross, which constitutes an exterior affirmation and expression of faith. This deeply spiritual and Christological gesture evolves as a physical experience, taking on a deepened level of expression when performed in the communitarian venue of the liturgical celebration: "When we cross ourselves, let it be with a real sign of the cross. Instead of a small cramped gesture that gives no notion of its meaning, let us make a large unhurried sign, from forehead to breast, from shoulder to shoulder, consciously feeling how it includes the whole of us, our thoughts, our

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and a gesture of peace, as the individual reaches out toward God. "Arms extended have been compared to wings: man seeks the heights; he wants to be, as it were, carried upward by God on the wings of prayer. But for Christians, arms extended also have a Christological meaning. They remind us of the extended arms of Christ on the Cross. The crucified Lord has given this primal human gesture of prayer a new depth" (p. 203).

<sup>160</sup> "Quod enim sacerdos brachia extendit post consecrationem, significat extensionem brachiorum Christi in cruce. Levat etiam manus orando, ad designandum quod oratio eius pro populo dirigitur ad Deum: secundum illud Thren 3, 14; Levemos corda nostra cum manibus ad Deum in caelum. Et Ex 17,11 dicitur quod, cum levaret Moyses manus, vincebat Israel. Quod autem manus interdum iungit, et inclinat se, suppliciter et humiliter orans, designat humilitatem et obedientiam Christi, ex qua passus est" (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province)



attitudes, our body and soul, every part of us at once; how it consecrates and sanctifies us” (Guardini, 1956, p. 11)<sup>161</sup>.

In turn, it is noteworthy that today’s common practice of praying with the hands together emerged more recently, and is not mentioned until the XII century. (Garrido Bonano, 1961, p. 15) This hand gesture has been identified as vibrantly symbolic and transcendental in its influence over the individual or the congregation<sup>162</sup>.

Sometimes they are clasped tightly together, as though we were guarding our psychic or bodily integrity. At other times, they are placed palm to palm in serene self-meeting through self-touching, which allows for the beginning of our psychic reflexivity... this gesture expresses our microcosmic identity with the church and its attentive pointing toward God. Hands may also be raised in supplication or openly uplifted by the priest in a gesture of triumphant saturation by the divine. Finally, the priestly hand is often raised in blessing, an acknowledgement of what is there and

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<sup>161</sup> “Du machst das Zeichen des Kreuzes, machst es recht. Kein solch verkrüppeltes, hastiges, bei dem man nicht weiß, was es bedeuten soll. Nein, ein rechtes Kreuzzeichen, langsam, groß, von der Stirn zur Brust, von einer Schulter zur andern. Fühlst Du, wie es Dich ganz umfaßt? Sammle Dich einmal recht; alle Gedanken und dein ganzes Gemüt sammle in dies Zeichen, wie es geht von Stirn zur Brust, von Schulter zu Schulter. Dann fühlst Du es: Ganz umspannt es Dich, Leib und Seele, nimmt Dich zusammen, weihet Dich, heiligt Dich”. (Translation by Grace Branham) Brulin (2010) also recognizes the implications of this symbolic gesture: “La main est un instrument subtil et éloquent d’expression, dans la traduction des humeurs, mais aussi au service du langage symbolique. [...] La main comme outil de composition enchaîne les contacts. Ainsi, dans le signe de croix, elle opère, par dégagement puis retour sur soi, une reconstitution de soi. Mais l’important est aussi l’orientation de la main. Lorsqu’elle s’écarte du corps, c’est la paume que reste vers le visage, puis s’approche successivement de la poitrine et des épaules. On sait par expérience que la main a un pouvoir de violence tout autant que de douceur. Mais, par ce geste symbolique, elle ouvre le registre de la bénédiction par le bien-dire du statut d’alliance” (p. 95).

<sup>162</sup> “Le contact des deux mains dont l’une soutient l’autre, opère un bouclage qui engage une focalisation sans altérer l’ouverture. Une telle position engage potentiellement pour le corps tout entier, et plus précisément pour le regard qui se portera sur l’objet déposé et pour la voix qui intégrera la scène, une sorte de pacification harmonique rétroactive: impossible, en effet, dans cette position, d’esquisser un mouvement d’agression gestuelle et encore moins verbale. Et la main se fait métaphore active (cette conversion logique et poétique est un de ses pouvoirs), elle dit l’attente, et non la prise, et la reconnaissance d’une donation précieuse, que le regard considère, et que la parole confesse, formant ainsi, dans l’immédiat amont de la face, entre les yeux, la bouche et les mains, une sorte de sanctuaire momentané, ouvert à l’admirable” (Hameline, 2001, p. 148-149).

what has to be done, which is a conferring of grace and allows what is there fully to be at all — echoing the divine benediction” (Pickstock, 2010, p. 729).

### **2.3 Liturgical Verbal Expression**

In beginning to turn the focus from gesture to word, it is helpful to reflect on the intimate link between these two liturgical elements, not only because they are both forms of expression, but also by reason of their being of often being employed simultaneously during the liturgy<sup>163</sup>.

Bouyer posits the spoken word as a preeminent form of action; “in a certain sense, for man, it is the primordial action” (Bouyer, 1962, p. 81)<sup>164</sup>. This inseparable association between word and action in human expression of meaning helps to explain their combined dynamic in the liturgy. “If words and rites differ, and are to a certain extent opposed, as two factors always associated, but always in tension, a natural relationship explains their association. This is so true that the decisive predominance of one at the expense of the other of the very one that seems to prevail and announces a disintegration of religion, and perhaps, quite simply, of religious humanity” (Bouyer, 1962, p. 79-80)<sup>165</sup>.

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<sup>163</sup> It is interesting to note the importance of non-verbal language, that is, gestures and symbols, as opposed to verbal expression in the liturgical scenario, has been clarified due to its powerful complementing capacity of expression which usually proves more effective than verbal communication alone. Attention has been placed on the non-verbal dimension of communication, and its effective supremacy over verbal communication - it has been affirmed that non-verbal language occupies 80% of our communication while only 20% is verbal (Font, 2011, p. 379). Font identified some significant characteristics of non-verbal communication: He affirms that non-verbal language more effectively implies the human experience within the world, as it implies the entire individual seeing, touching, moving. Moreover, he points out that the non-verbal communication is at times more efficacious as a means of expression as all individuals can share in the same universal gestures, whereas spoken language is limited only to a particular audience (p. 379).

<sup>164</sup> “La parole à l’origine n’est qu’une voie vers l’action. Elle tend à l’action. D’une certaine manière, pour l’homme, elle est l’action primordiale. Elle est l’action, d’autre part, par laquelle l’homme s’affirme comme tel. Celui qui parle, du coup, fait intervenir son existence, son existence personnelle, dans le cours naturel des choses” (Bouyer, 1962, p. 81).

<sup>165</sup> “Si paroles et rites se distinguent, et dans une certaine mesure s’opposent, comme deux facteurs toujours associés, mais toujours en tension, une parenté naturelle explique leur association. Cela est si vrai que la prédominance décisive de l’un aux dépens de l’autre trahit une altération de celui-là même

It is thus significant that liturgical manifestation draws to a great extent upon the juncture of corporal and verbal expression, involving man's expressive capacities to the fullest. The formulas expressed consistently incorporate complementary gestural actions — mostly on the part of the celebrant — which highlight their meaning and intention, prolonging their repercussion within the assembly gathered. Risen arms and hands, and the elevation of the gaze accompany phrases such as “May the Lord be with you,” “Let us lift up our hearts”. The blessing administered by the celebrant is responded to by the congregation through a collective sign of the cross, while the communal rising at the pronouncing of the “Alleluia” prior to the Gospel proclamation, underlines the spirit of the Resurrection. This “liturgical language” is at once personal and communitarian, for individual gestures are transformed into a collective ritual action, and gestures complementing verbal expression urge the participant to rise to the sacred sphere of Christological and eschatological realities.

Indeed, within ritual, action must be spiritualized by the word. If its meaning is not illuminated by an authentic divine word, ritual degenerates into magic or superstition. But action should not, for this, be reduced to a simple representation, an outer plating on things, on abstract words. In this case, there is no ritual at all, but, at most, a sort of pious charade. It is essentially the meaning of the ritual symbol that must first be recovered, so that the word itself once again become the word of the divine mystery, and not a simple form, which substituted for reality, can no longer more take part in it (Bouyer, 1962, p. 91)<sup>166</sup>.

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qui semble l'emporter et annonce une désintégration de la religion, et peut-être de l'humanité religieuse tout simplement” (Personal translation).

<sup>166</sup> “Dans le rituel, en effet, l'action doit être spiritualisée par la parole. Si son sens n'est pas éclairé par une parole divine authentique, le rituel dégénère en magie ou en simple superstition. Mais l'action ne doit pas, pour cela, être réduite à une simple figuration, plaquée sur les choses, de paroles abstraites. Sinon, il n'y a plus de rituel du tout, mais, au plus, une espèce de pieuse charade. C'est en somme le sens du symbole rituel qui doit d'abord être recouvré, pour que la parole elle-même redevienne la parole du mystère divin, et non pas une simple forme, qui, substituée à la réalité, ne saurait plus la rejoindre” (Translated by Patrick Madigan & Madeleine Beaumont)

Oral language expressed in liturgy thus holds a truly symbolic function, for the *homo loquens* communicates through a vast genre of speech such as narration, exclamation, petition, confession and praise, for the Celebration proportions “an ecclesial action that recalls (anamnesis) and intercedes (epiclesis)” (Chupungco, 1998, p. 90)<sup>167</sup>. The elevated forms of expression derived from sentiments of praise and thanksgiving, occasion an uplifting and supernatural ambience. It is not surprising, then, that Pickstock (1998) observes that the principal purpose and significance of language is brought to its full realization solely within divine praise, and that it is only within the liturgical setting that language holds true significance.

Just as in exterior forms of praise, where gestural expression reflects sentiments of the soul, Aquinas notes the spiritual/corporal dimension of the human being once again coming into play, in affirming that recourse to vocal prayer comes about as “a certain overflow from the soul to the body, through excess of feeling, according to Ps. Xv. 9, *My heart hath been glad, and my tongue hath rejoiced*” (*S. Th.* II-II, q.83, a.12)<sup>168</sup>.

### 2.3.1 Communitarian dimension of the Liturgical Word

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<sup>167</sup> Renaud-Chamska (1999) underlines the vast linguistic forms employed within the liturgical celebration enriching its expressive capacity: “Dans la liturgie, mieux qu’ailleurs, on retrouve les situations fondamentales du langage: nommer, confesser, promettre, bénir, rendre grâce, faire un serment, un vœu, une prière, etc. On y décline, sans toujours s’en rendre compte, les situations premières de langage, celles qui valent par leur nature propre d’acte: adresse, serment, nomination, adjuration, témoignage, confession de foi, tous actes de langage” (p. 193). Brulin (2006) in turn offers a commentary regarding the form and style of language in relation to addressing God: “On remarquera que le concept d’ostensivité permet d’intégrer des actes de langage en tant qu’ils constituent des ‘gestes parlants’ qui deviennent des éléments porteurs de l’acte religieux. Une forme de prolongement et de réponse à cet engagement signifié par les salutations, aux points nodaux de la ‘mise en présence’, se trouve, notamment, dans les termes d’adresse à Dieu. Ils en constituent les équivalents verbaux: “Seigneur, prends pitié”; “Seigneur Dieu, Roi du ciel”; ‘Fils unique, Jésus Christ’; ‘Agneau de Dieu’; ‘Dieu de l’univers’; ‘Père infiniment bon’, ‘Notre Père’ (p. 75).

<sup>168</sup> “...adiungitur vocalis oratio ex quadam redundantia ab anima in corpus ex vehementi affectione: secundum illud Ps 15, 9: *Laetatum est cor meum, et exculatavit lingua mea*”. (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

Speech of any kind naturally implies a form of socialization, as it logically redounds in forms of communication. Various thinkers have offered valuable reflections on this point. Stein (2003) had pointed out the inherently oral quality of the word, which must by its very nature result in vocalization; in other words, it is meant to be *heard*. Identifying diverse modes of expression that the word holds, she gave as an example the liturgical word<sup>169</sup>. Bouyer (1962) stressed that the spoken word is man's primary form of self-expression. However, he further noted the inherently social aspect of vocalization, as the role of the speaker goes hand-in-hand with that of the listener. In effect, language brings with it a two-fold necessity: "it requires that someone speaks, but it requires no less that there be someone to whom one speaks. [...] Speech is not only personal, it is innately inter-personal" (p. 82). With this observation he concluded that "Dialogue is inherent to the intentionality of all speech" (p. 82)<sup>170</sup>.

Thus, liturgical praise is all the more powerful due to its inherently communitarian dimension, characterized by the simultaneous vocal expression of many individuals, or the communal hearing of spiritual teachings. Consequently, according to Aquinas, liturgical formulas take on their full meaning within the realm of vocalization on the part of the congregation and the celebrant. He particularly highlights the importance of vocalization within the ambit of communitarian praise, insisting that "such like prayer should come to the knowledge of the whole people for whom it is offered: and this would not be possible unless it were vocal prayer. Therefore it is reasonably ordained that the ministers of the Church should say these prayers even in a loud voice, so that they may come to the knowledge of all" (*S. Th. II-II, q.83, a.12*)<sup>171</sup>. The spoken word in liturgy is, then, of a dialogic nature, whereby the

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<sup>169</sup> "La palabra, por su total naturaleza, no está para escribirse o imprimirse, y ni siquiera para pensarse en silencio, sino como palabra entonante y sonante. Y hay tonos y sonidos que le pertenecen y son conformes al sentido que expresan. También la palabra litúrgica tiene tonos que le pertenecen y son conformes al sentido que expresan" (Stein, 2003, p. 122-123).

<sup>170</sup> "Il faut quelqu'un pour parler, mais il ne faut pas moins quelqu'un à qui parler. [...] La parole n'est pas seulement personnelle, elle est nativement inter-personnelle. Le dialogue est inhérent à l'intentionnalité de toute parole" (Personal translation).

<sup>171</sup> "...dicendum quod duplex est oratio: ommunis, et singularis. Communis quidem oratio est quae per ministros Ecclesiae in persona totius fidelis populi Deo offertur. Et ideo oportet quod talis oratio

participants enter into a dynamic of contemplative communication with the divine<sup>172</sup>. In effect, the form of praise which develops in liturgy naturally lends itself to a “mystical dialogue” (Asti, 2009, p. 449).

The communitarian exclamations of words such as “Alleluia”, for example, are festive proclamations of joy and hope, while others hold a Christological or eschatological significance involving temporal dimensions<sup>173</sup>. The profound significance of the simple utterance “Amen”, with its tone of affirmation and faith, takes on a unique strength within communitarian expression<sup>174</sup>. Along the same line, Pieper considers the overtly affirmative tenor of the liturgical texts that is transposed into worship through expressions of “praise, glorification, thanksgiving for the whole of reality and existence” (Pieper, 1999, p. 37). For him, the foundation of Christian worship is affirmation—which is likewise, as has been seen in the previous chapter—a strong characteristic of any human festivity. Consequently, the liturgical word is an element of festivity as it is a clear and vibrant expression of this affirmation.

We need only examine the liturgical texts for their manifest and overt meaning to see at once, without need for further glosses, that affirmation is the fundamental form of Christian liturgy. Christian liturgy is in fact “an

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innoscat toti populo, por quo profertur. Quod non posset fieri nisi esset vocalis. Et ideo rationabiliter institutum est ut ministri Ecclesiae huiusmodi orationes etiam alta voce pronuntient, ut notitiam omnium possit pervenire” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

<sup>172</sup> “La dialogicità, caratteristica della rivelazione giudaico-cristiana, diventa la base portante della liturgia.[...] Interessante notare come i testi liturgici presentano questa base sotterranea, quasi impercettibile all’occhio, ma capace di far emergere nell’ascoltatore sentimenti ed emozioni tipici di un incontro importante” (Asti, 2009, p. 450).

<sup>173</sup> Along this line of thought, Renaud-Chamska (1999) highlights the significance of the temporal suggestion within the formulation of liturgical phrases, which contributes to the temporal awareness of the participant: “La parole n’est jamais séparée du lieu et du temps où elle tombe, c’est-à-dire de son *incidence*. D’où l’importance et la multiplicité dans la liturgie des embrayeurs comme ‘aujourd’hui, voici, *hodie*, *ecce*, le nôtre, le tien” (p. 196).

<sup>174</sup> The relevance of the word “Amen” was explored by the author Mateos (1981) who captured the profoundly Christological and affirmative significance of its meaning within the perspective of festive celebration: “La gran palabra hebrea y cristiana para expresar afirmación es el amén, que es un sí seguro del presente, ‘así es’, ya con intrépida esperanza del futuro, ‘así sea’. [...] La fiesta cristiana es el sí de respuesta del hombre a Dios. Dios afirmó al hombre sin reservas para salvarlo; el hombre, en la fiesta, afirma al mundo que Dios, no ignoró su mal, sino anunció su salud” (p. 255-256).

unbounded Yea and Amen-saying”. Every prayer closes with the word: Amen, thus it is good, thus shall it be, *ainsi soit-il*. What is the *Alleluia* but a cry of jubilation? The heavenly adoration in the Apocalyptic vision is also a single great acclamation, composed of reiterated exclamations of Hail, Praise, Glory, Thanks (Pieper, 1999. p. 37)<sup>175</sup>.

### 2.3.2 Transcendent form of expression

Such verbal formulas, unique to the liturgical celebration, transcend common linguistic phrases, for due to their spiritual significance, they inspire and redirect toward a higher mode of being and acting, which is lived to its fullest within ritual praise. The words in the liturgy that derive from Sacred Scripture, above all, entirely transcend human notions of the word<sup>176</sup>. This transcendent characteristic of liturgical language, taken as a whole, encourages a certain response rather than formally inducing it; the effect of the liturgical experience is an organic rather than an artificial one.

The Angelic Doctor speaks of this effect, observing the dual capacity of oral praise as both expression and source of inspiration, and explaining that “the outward praise of the lips avails to arouse the inward fervour of those who praise, and to incite others to praise God” ( *S. Th.*, II-II, q. 91, a. 2)<sup>177</sup>. The sentiments expressed in particular phrases are often invitations for the congregation to model their attitudes and states of spirit accordingly, in preparation for significant moments within the

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<sup>175</sup> In a similar vein, Gomá y Tomás (1945) identifies an “optimism” that penetrates liturgical expression, as well as the profound sentiments of sorrow and joy they produce. “Sano optimismo rebosan de sus oraciones, antifonas, salmos y exhortaciones; las palabras *gaudiens, laetitia, pax, tranquillitates*, nos confortan y endulzan nuestras penas como el santo temor de Dios y las paternales amenazas de que la Liturgia está llena nos contienen en el círculo de un miedo saludable” (p. 289-290).

<sup>176</sup> “La palabra de la Sagrada Escritura y de la Liturgia no tiene que ver nada con la palabra vacía del hombre, nacida del espíritu humano y que desaparece como un soplo de viento, sin dejar rastro de sí. La palabra de Dios está transida de una virtud divina” (Casel, 1953, p. 167).

<sup>177</sup> “Ad secundum dicendum quod laus oris inutilis est laudanti si sit sine laude cordis, quod loquitur Deo laudem dum *magnalia eius operum* recogitat cum affectu. Valet tamen exterior laus oris ad excitandum interiorem affectum laudantis, et ad provocandum alios ad Dei laudem, sicut dictum est” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

celebration. The subtle yearning of the *Kyrie Eleison! Christe Eleison! Kyrie Eleison!* composes a preparatory rite of purification and renewal, a triune repetition of our certainty of obtaining a merciful pardon through acknowledgement of sin and weakness. The vibrant strains of the *Gloria* which follow seem to unite with the heavenly chorus in an exaltation of God, setting a celebratory tone, while the Eucharistic rite opens inviting all to lift up their hearts in preparation for the momentous act of the Consecration... *Sursum Corda! Habemus ad Dominum.*

The invitation that the celebrant expresses before the Eucharistic Prayer: “*Sursum Corda*”, let us lift up our hearts above the confusion of our apprehensions, our desires, our narrowness, our distraction. Our hearts, our innermost selves, must open in docility to the word of God and must be recollected in the Church’s prayer, to receive her guidance to God from the very words that we hear and say. The eyes of the heart must be turned to the Lord, who is in our midst: this is a fundamental disposition<sup>178</sup>.

### **2.3.3 Liturgy of the Word**

Biblical readings during the liturgical ceremonies arose in the practices of the early Church, as a font for meditation and spiritual formation. It is precisely within the Liturgy of the Word that the celebration reaches a climax of linguistic expression, while, with the help of movement, attention is directed toward the ambo and the reader. The reading heard as an assembly and the responsorial passages intoned communally further heighten the union among members of the congregation. Pseudo-Dionysius identified this inherently unifying and divine source of the holy readings. “If one considers these texts with a reverent eye one will see something that both brings

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<sup>178</sup> General Audience of Pope Benedict XVI, 26 September 2012, [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/audiences/2012/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_aud\\_20120926\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/audiences/2012/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20120926_en.html) (consulted, Nov. 8, 2014).



about unity and manifests a single empathy, of which the source is the spirit of the Deity” (*Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 3, 5; PG 3, 432)<sup>179</sup>.

The Liturgy of the Word, though dialogic by nature<sup>180</sup> also constitutes a time of meditation whereby the assembly is transported to the past through the relation of Biblical events... *In illo tempore*. However, the events are proclaimed and hearkened to within the present context; thus, the episodes and facts recounted are renewed and assimilated by the congregation. “All the ritual symbolism unfolded over the course of the Liturgy of the Word manifests an intention of communication between the founding past and the present” (Chauvet, 1987, p. 217)<sup>181</sup>. The homily, heard with a contemplative spirit, allows the word to take root in the members of the congregation. The congregation is thus transformed into *Ecclesia audiens*, united in its role as a listening community, which then acts upon the word received.

This transforming power of the readings and psalms may be considered from the standpoint of its strong spiritual appeal, as St. Maximus the Confessor emphasized in his *Mystagogy*. He designated the readings as a personal experience whereby each listener assimilates truths in accordance with his own aptitude, which in turn serve as a basis for the spiritual efforts that the Christian life entails. For Maximus, then, the readings are of a strongly didactic nature:

The divine readings from the sacred books reveal the divine and blessed desires and intentions of God most holy. Through them each one of us receives in proportion to the capacity which is in him the counsels by which he should act,

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<sup>179</sup> Ἐν ταύταις ὁ βλέπων ἱερῶς ὄψεται τὴν ἐνοειδῆ καὶ μίαν ἔμπνευσιν ὡς ὑφ' ἑνὸς τοῦ θεαρχικοῦ πνεύματος κεινημένην. (Translation by C. Luibheid)

<sup>180</sup> “C’est précisément ce rapport dynamique que donne à voir la séquence rituelle de la liturgie de la Parole. Elle est de nature dialoguée: Le psaume constitue la réponse de l’assemblée à la première lecture, cependant que, outre l’alléluia et la parole performative “Louange à toi, Seigneur Jésus” adressée comme “acclamation à la parole de Dieu”. Entendue dans l’évangile, la prière des fidèles, elle-même anciennement scellée par le baiser de paix, vient conclure la liturgie de la Parole” (Chauvet, 1987, p. 217).

<sup>181</sup> “Toute la symbolique rituelle déployée au cours de celle-ci manifeste une idée de communication entre le passé fondateur et l’aujourd’hui” (Translated by Patrick Madigan & Madeleine Beaumont).

and we learn the laws of the divine and blessed struggles in which by consistent fighting we will be judged worthy of the victorious crowns of Christ's kingdom<sup>182</sup> (*Myst.*, 10; PG 91, 689).

Through their simple yet profound style of exposition, biblical readings themselves constitute a synthesis of continuous human struggle and Divine intervention, from the Old Testament to the New. Pseudo-Dionysius described the harmonic relationship between the readings, in which the New Testament completes the significance of the Old:

This is why it is right that in succession to the older tradition one proclaims to the world the New Testament. It seems to me that this sequence, coming as it does from God and prescribed as it is by hierarchical order, demonstrates how the one forecast the divine works of Jesus, while the other described how He actually achieved them. The one wrote truth by way of images, while the other described things as they happened<sup>183</sup> (*Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 3, 5; PG 3, 432).

The accounts often contain poetic or highly aesthetic forms of language which vividly transmit spiritual truths through vibrant narratives<sup>184</sup>. The incredibly expressive

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<sup>182</sup> Τάς δέ θείας τῶν πανιέρων βίβλων ἀναγνώσεις, τάς θείας καί μακαρίας τοῦ παναγίου Θεοῦ βουλήσεις τε καί βουλὰς ὑπεμφαίνειν, ἔλεγεν ὁ διδάσκαλος· δι' ὧν τὰς ὑποθήκας τῶν πρακτέων, ἀναλόγως ἕκαστος ἡμῶν, κατὰ τὴν ὑποῦσαν αὐτῶ δύναμιν, λαμβάνομεν· καί τοὺς τῶν θείων καί μακαρίων ἀγῶνων νόμους μαθηθάνομεν· καθ' οὓς νομίμως ἀθλοῦντες, τῶν ἀξιονίκων τῆς Χριστοῦ βασιλείας ἀξιούμεθα στεφάνων. (Translation by G.C. Berthold)

<sup>183</sup> Ὅθεν εἰ κότως ἐν κόσμῳ μετὰ τὴν ἀρχαιότεραν παράδοσιν ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη κηρύσσεται τῆς ἐνθέου καί ἱεραρχικῆς τάξεως ἐκεῖνο οἶμαι δηλούσης, ὡς ἡ μὲν ἔφη τὰς ἐσομένας Ἰησοῦ θεουργίας ἡ δὲ ἐτέλεσε, καί ὡς ἐκεῖνη μὲν ἐν εἰκόσι τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἔγραψεν, αὕτη δὲ παρούσαν ὑπέδειξεν. (Translation by C. Luiheid)

<sup>184</sup> Basing his observations on medieval thinkers, De Bruyne (1947) underlines the timeless aesthetic appeal of the Scriptures, which he affirms encompass the entire spectrum of human expression and sentiments, revealed through vast genre that it employs involving the past, present and future. De Bruyne points toward the musical and poetic dimensions of the Biblical accounts: "Les livres bibliques s'imposent par leur autorité, par la vérité, la dignité, la profondeur de leur pensée, par la beauté, la détectabilité de leur forme. On y trouve tous les genres littéraires: l'Écriture est une synthèse de tout, à la fois historique, didactique, juridique, poétique. Son langage tantôt est celui de la science et du

language of the Psalms, for example, encompasses a wide range of human expression regarding man's relationship with God, his own past, and his future. The human experiences illustrated within the Psalms evoke profound emotions as the listeners participate and relate to the dramas that they contain: "Through them, humanity speaks, cries, whispers, sighs or sings to God its thoughts and emotions. One is confronted in the *Psalms* with human amazement and admiration for nature- whether savage or affable, the commemoration of the grand history of the human race, and the indestructible hope for a redeemer" (Vergote, 1996, p. 289). An impressive description of the psalms come to us from St. Athanasius, who describes the effects of their recitation as either a personal inner-journeying or an observation of another's drama, as well as a model to be followed in guiding our own sentiments.

And it seems to me, that to the one singing these psalms, they become like a mirror, so that in them he might perceive both himself and the emotions of his soul, and thus affected, he might recite them. For in fact he who hears the reader receives the song that is said as being said about him, and either convicted by his conscience, being pierced, he will repent, or, hearing of hope in God, and of the succour available to believers—how this kind of grace exists for him—he exults and begins to give thanks to God. A man will sing the third Psalm, for instance, bearing his own afflictions in his mind; Psalms eleven and sixteen he will use as the expression of his own faith and prayer; and singing Psalm fifty-three, fifty-five, and one hundred and forty-one, it is not as though someone else were being persecuted but out of his own experience that he renders praise to God. And every other Psalm is spoken and composed by the Spirit in the selfsame way: just as in a mirror, the movements of our own souls are reflected in them and the words are indeed our very own, given us

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raisonnement, tantôt celui de l'émotion et de la passion. Elle rappelle le passé, interprète le présent, prédit l'avenir. Elle est à la fois musicale et poétique: musicale, puisqu'elle contient tant de chants métriques que supposent l'accompagnement instrumental; poétique, parce qu'elle aime les images et les métaphores, les paraboles et les fables. Le sentiment qu'elle provoque résume toute l'affectivité humaine elle donne l'impression à la fois de la profondeur et de la clairté, d'une extrême simplicité et d'une riche ornementation, des plaisirs les plus aimables et d'une terreur sacrée. Quelle œuvre humaine est capable de susciter des émotions pareilles?" (p. 257-258).

to serve both as a reminder of our changes of condition and as a pattern and model for the amendment of our lives<sup>185</sup>.

The Liturgy of the Word is, moreover, serves as a direct preparation for the Divine encounter of the Eucharistic Rite, for the Word of God is a preamble of his true Presence among the faithful.

*From the table of the Scriptures to the table of the Sacrament*, the dynamic is traditional and irreversible. Traditional in that, from the time of Emmaus, one sees the distinctively sacramental moment preceded by a scriptural moment;

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<sup>185</sup> “αἰ κνη δνθεῖ ηῶ ζάινληη γίλεζζαη ηνύηηπο ὄζπεξ εἴζνπηξνλ, εἰο ηὸ θαηαλνεῖλ θαὶ αὐηὸλ ἐλ αὐ ἡνῖο θαὶ ηὰ ηῆο ἔαπηνῦ ζπρῆο θηλήκαηα, θαὶ νῦησο αἰζζόκελνλ ἀπαγγέμεηλ αὐηνῦ. Καὶ γὰξ θαὶ ὁ ἀθνύοι ηνῦ ἀλαγηλώζθνιηνο ὡο πεξὶ αὐηνῦ ἰεγνκέ λελ ηῆλ ὠδῆλ θαηαδέξεηαη· θαὶ ἡ εἰεγρόκεινο ὑπὸ ηνῦ ζπλεηδόηηο θαηαλπεγῖο κεηαλνῆζεη, ἡ πεξὶ ηῆο εἰο Θεὸλ ἐπίδνο ἀθνύοι θαὶ ηῆο εἰο ηνῦ πηζηεῦνλ ηαο γηλνκέινο ἀιηηηῆζεο, ὡο εἰο αὐηὸλ γελνκέινο ηηηαῦηο ράξηηηο ἀγαηῆαη, θαὶ εὐραξηζῆεῖλ ἄξ ρεηαη ηῶ Θεῶ. Ὅηε γνῦλ ηὸλ ηξῖηνλ ζάμεη ηηο εἰο ηὰο ἰδῖαο ζῖζεηο ζπλνξῶλ, ὡο αὐηνῦ εἰιαη λνκῖδεη ηὰ ἐλ ηῶ ζαἰκῶ ρῆκαηα· θαὶ ἠόηε ηὸλ ηα’ θαὶ ηὸλ ηο’ ὡο εἰο ηῆλ ἰδῖαλ πεπνῖζεζῆλ θαὶ πζνζεπρῆλ ἐζῆηλ ἀπαγγέμελ· θαὶ ηὸλ κέι λ’ ζαἰκὸλ ὡο αὐηὸο ἐζῆη ηὰ ἰδῖα ηῆο κεηαλνῖαο ἔαπηνῦ ἰέγοι ρῆκαηα· ηὸλ δὲ λγ’, θαὶ ηὸλ λε’, θαὶ ηὸλ λο’, θαὶ ηὸλ ζκα’, ὅηε ζάμεη ηηο, νῦρ ὡο αἰνπ δεηθνκέινο, αἰ’ ὡο ὠλ ὁ πάζρσοι ζπλδηαηῖζεηαη, θαὶ ἄδεη ηῶ Κπξῖῶ ὡο ἰδῖπο ηνῦο ἰόγπο ηνύηηπο. Καὶ ὅσο νῦησο ἔθαζῆοο ζαὶ κὸο παξὰ ηνῦ Πιεύκαηηο εἴξεηαὶ ηε θαὶ ζπλῆ ηαθηαη, ὡο ἐλ αὐηνῖο, θαζὰ πζόηεξνλ εἴξεηαη, ηὰ θηλήκαηα ηῆο ζπρῆο ἡκῶλ θαηαλνεῖζαη, θαὶ πάλ ηαο αὐηνῦο ὡο πεξὶ ἡκῶλ εἰξῆζαη, θαὶ εἰιαη ἡκῶλ αὐηνῦο ὡο ἰδῖπο ἰόγπο, εἰο ἀλάκλεζῆλ ηῶλ ἐλ ἡκῖλ θηλεκάηοι θαὶ δεῶξζοζῆλ ηῆο ἡκῶλ πνιηεῖαο. Ἄ γὰξ νῖ ζάινληεο εἰξῆθαζῆ, ηαῦηα θαὶ ἡκῶλ δύλαι ηαη ηύπηη θαὶ ραζαθηῆξεο εἰιαη!” (St. Athanasius. *Epistola ad Marcellinum*, 12. PG 27, 24, translation by R. C. Gregg).

irreversible in that this pattern is not at all arbitrary: we never pass from the table of the sacrament to that of the Scriptures (Chauvet, 1995, p. 220)<sup>186</sup>.

### 2.3.4 Music

The word is enhanced in the liturgical celebration through the inclusion of sacred music, which heightens both its emphatic power of expression and its unifying capacity<sup>187</sup>. It is not surprising that music found a central role very early on in the liturgical celebrations, with its marked capacity for fomenting profound sentiments of devotion, as St. Augustine's well-known passage evinces: "I wept at the beauty of Thy hymns and canticles, and was powerfully moved at the sweet sound of Thy Church's singing. Those sounds flowed into my ears, and the truth streamed into my heart: so that my feeling of devotion overflowed, and the tears ran from my eyes, and I was happy in them" (*Conf.* 9, 6)<sup>188</sup>.

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<sup>186</sup> "De la table des Ecritures a la table du sacrement, la dynamique est traditionnelle et irréversible. Traditionnelle, en ce que, des Emmaüs, on voit le moment proprement sacramentel précéder d'un moment scripturaire; irréversible, en ce qu'une telle organisation n'a rien d'arbitraire: on ne va jamais de la table du sacrement a celle des Ecritures. Ce fait traditionnel est moins banal qu'il n'y paraît, comme vont le montrer les trois observations qui suivent" (Translated by Patrick Madigan & Madeleine Beaumont)

<sup>187</sup> As Guérenge (1878) reflects, the great impressions and sentiments of the soul are never merely expressed in spoken language, rather they find their true expression in melody, it is only natural that the Church employ music within its expression of praise, prayer and confession within the Liturgy. "Mais, comme toutes les grandes impressions de l'âme, la foi, l'amour, le sentiment de l'admiration, la joie du triomphe, ne se parlent pas seulement, mais se chantent, et d'autant plus que tout sentiment établi dans l'ordre se résout en harmonie, il s'ensuit que l'Église doit naturellement chanter louange, prière et confession, produisant, par une gradation quelque peu affaiblie sans doute, à mesure qu'elle s'éloigne du principe, un chant beau comme les paroles, des paroles élevées comme le sentiment, et le sentiment lui-même en rapport fini mais réel avec celui qui en est l'objet et la source" (p. 4). In another work "Melanges", Guérenge (1887) illustrates the power of religious chants to bring into the present past events while inciting profound sentiments: "Quel chrétien a jamais pu écouter le chant pascal de l'*Haec dies* sans éprouver un sentiment vague de l'infini, comme si Jehova lui-même faisait retentir sa voix majestueuse? Et qui jamais a entendu, aux solennités de l'Assomption & de la Toussaint, un peuple entier faire résonner les voûtes sacrées des accents inspirés du *Gaudeamus*, sans se trouver reporté, à travers les âges, à l'époque ou les échos de Rome souterraine retentissaient de ce chant triomphal, alors que l'empire achevant péniblement sa course, l'Église commençait ses destinées éternelles" (p. 11-12).

<sup>188</sup> "Quantum fleui in hymnis et canticistuis, suave sonantis ecclesiae tua evocibus commotusacriter! Voces ilea influebant auribus meis, et eliquabatur veritas in cor meum, et exastuabat inde affectus pietis, et currebant lacrimae, et bene mihi erat cum eis" (Translation by W. Watts). St. Ambrose, who played the role of a mentor for St. Augustine, expresses similar sentiments with respect to the impact and effects of religious musical expression: "Psalmus enim benediction populi est, Dei laus, plebis laudation, plausus omnium, sermo universorum, vox Ecclesiae, fidei canora confessio, auctoritatis plena devotio, libertatis laetitia, clamor iucunditatis, laetitiae resultatio" (St. Ambrose of Milan. In *Psalmum Primum enarratio*, n. 9. PL 14, col. 968).

The Angelic Doctor also underlines the aesthetic experience of music, showing the connection between religious music and devotion, while stressing the inherent capacity of music for affecting the human spirit. Aquinas points to the affirmations of Aristotle and Boethius regarding the capacity of melodies to move the sentiments of the soul, and thus concludes, along with St. Augustine, that the music used in religious praise is an ideal means of raising the “faint-hearted” participant to a more profound sentiment of devotion<sup>189</sup> (*S. Th.* II-II, q.91, a.2). In another passage, Aquinas, once again reinforced by the authority of St. Augustine, underlines the inherent capacity of the act of singing to incite increased devotion, both on the part of the singers and on those who merely listen<sup>190</sup> (*S. Th.* II-II, q.91, a. 2). Chrysostom, in an appraisal similar to that of Maximus the Confessor<sup>191</sup>, brings to light the transcendent role of sacred music — its ability to elevate the individual toward the spiritual, which explains its prominent use within the religious venue. “Nothing so arouses the soul, gives it wing, sets it free from the earth, releases it from the prison of the body, teaches it to love wisdom and to condemn all the things of this life, as concordant melody and sacred

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<sup>189</sup> “Laus vocalis ad hoc necessaria est ut affectus hominis provocetur in Deum. Et ideo quaecumque ad hoc utilia esse possunt, in divinas laudes congruenter assumuntur. Manifestum est autem quod secundum diversas melodias sonorum animi hominum diversimode disponuntur: ut patet per Philosophum, in VIII *Polit.*, et per Boetium, in prólogo *Musicae*. Et ideo salubriter fuit institutum ut in divinas laudes cantus assumerentur, ut animi infirmorum magis provocarentur ad devotionem. Unde Augustinus dicit, in X *Confess.*: *Adducor cantandi consuetudinem approbare in Ecclesia, ut per oblectamenta aurium infirmorum animus in affectum pietatis assurgat*”. (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province)

<sup>190</sup> “Sed si aliquis cantet propter devotionem, attentius considerat quae dicuntur: tum quia diutius moratur super eodem: tum quia, ut Austinus dicit, in X *Confess.*, *omnes affectus spiritus nostri pro sua diversitate habent proprios modos in voce atque cantu, quorum occulta familiarite excitantur*. Et eadem est ratio de audientibus: in quibus, etsi aliquando non intelligant quae cantantur, intelligunt tamen propter quid cantantur, scilicet ad laudem Dei; et hoc sufficit ad devotionem excitandam”. (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province)

<sup>191</sup> As St. Maximus the Confessor pointed out that “... the spiritual enjoyment of the divine hymns signified the vivid delights of the divine blessings by moving souls toward the clear and blessed love of God and by arousing them further to the hatred of sin: Τὴν δὲ πνευματικὴν τῶν θεῶν ἀσμάτων τερπνότητα, τὴν ἐμφαντικὴν δηλοῦν ἔφασκε, τῶν θεῶν ἡδονὴν ἀγαθῶν· τὴν τὰς ψυχὰς πρὸς μὲν τὸν ἀκήρατον τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ μακάριον ἀνακινουῦσαν ἔρωτα· πρὸς δὲ τὸ μῖσος τῆς ἀμαρτίας πλέον ἐγείρουσαν (*Myst.*, 11, PG 91, 699, Translation by G.C. Berthold).

song composed in rhythm”<sup>192</sup>. Pseudo-Dionysius identified the preparatory and unifying capacity of the “sacred hymns”, which model the human spirit in a harmonious relationship with God, oneself and others. The works of Pseudo-Dionysius emphasise the “hymnic” quality of communication used in the human/divine relationship, in contrast with the mere speaking tone employed for ordinary relationships.

When these sacred hymns, with their summaries of holy truth, have prepared our spirits to be at one with what we shall shortly celebrate, when they have attuned us to the divine harmony and have brought us into accord not only with divine realities but with our individual selves and with others in such a way that we make up one homogeneous choir of sacred men, then whatever resume and whatever opaque outline is offered by the sacred chanting of the psalmody is expanded by the more numerous, more understandable images and proclamations in the sacred reading of the holy texts” (*Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 3, 5, PG 3, 432)<sup>193</sup>.

The components of liturgy presented in this chapter have outlined relevant facets of human actuation within the celebration, which special emphasis on verbal and non-verbal forms of expression and communication. A first observation explicitly indicates that these forms of exteriorization require the integration of the entire human being, in corporal, spiritual, and even cognitive dimensions. Within the context of this part of the investigation, the perception of this form of human integration in celebration is an echo of similar characteristics already explored of the universal impulse toward festivity. Notable traits are communitarian action with a common goal,

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<sup>192</sup> Οὐδέλ γὰξ, νὺδέλ νῦησο ἀλίξηεζη ζπρήλ, θαὶ πηεξνῖ, θαὶ ηῆο γῆο ἀπαιάηηεη, θαὶ ηῶλ ηνῦ ζῶκαηνο ἀπνῦεη δεζκῶλ, θαὶ θηηνῖνθεῖλ πνηεῖ, θαὶ πάλησλ θαηαγεῖαλ ηῶλ βῆσηηθῶλ, ὡο κέηηο ζπκθωλίαο, θαὶ ῥπζκῶ ζπθθεῖκελνλ ζεῖνλ ἄζκαξ (St. John Chrysostom. *Expositio in Psalmos*. In Psalmum 41, 1. PG 55, 156). (Translation by Oliver Strunk)

<sup>193</sup> Ὅταν οὖν ἡ περὶεκτικὴ τῶν πανιέρων ὑμολογία τὰς ψυχικὰς ἡμῶν ἔξεις ἐναρμονίως διαθῆ πρὸς τὰ μικρὸν ὕστερον ἱερουργηθῶμενα καὶ τῆ τῶν θεῶν ὠδῶν ὁμοφωνία τὴν πρὸς τὰ θεῖα καὶ ἑαυτοὺς καὶ ἀλλήλους ὁμοφροσύνην ὡς μιᾶ καὶ ὁμολόγῳ τῶν ἱερῶν χορεῖα νομοθετήσῃ, τὰ συντεταγμένα καὶ συνεσκιασμένα μᾶλλον ἐν τῇ νοερᾷ τῶν ψαλμῶν ἱερολογίᾳ διὰ πλειόνων καὶ σαφεστέρων εἰκόνων καὶ ἀναρρήσεων εὐρύνεται ταῖς ἱερωτάταις τῶν ἀγιογράφων συντάξεων ἀναγνώσεσιν. (Translation by C. Luibheid)

ritual and aesthetic elements; yet within the ambit of liturgy these merely exterior elements of symbolism, creativity, and aesthetic expression are anchored to Christological and eschatological principles, and charged with a more profound significance, redounding in fervent forms of praise and religious sentiments. Through channelling the very festive impulse that impels celebrative action, liturgical ritual expounds upon this basic human capacity within the realm of Divine praise. Religious sentiments are externalized in ritualized gesture and word which endeavour to convey spiritual tenets.

The “liturgical language” that develops — involving both verbal and non-verbal communication — gradually reveals intense forms of symbolism throughout the course of the celebration. The characteristic simplicity and nobility of liturgical gesture and word, holding basic elements extracted from human life experience, consistently point toward higher realities which at times attain extemporal reverberation; it is at once a reliving of past events and an impulse toward eternal life, a confirmation of living their value within the present moment.

In this perspective, though gestures and formulas are subject to repetition in recurring celebrations, it is specifically their repetition that testifies to their timeless significance: a form of human actuation which condenses a story of the past, present and future. The human being is thus key to the interior preservation and exterior manifestation of eternal truths through gesture and word. The abstract spiritual meaning of liturgy is captured through the human capacity and latent need for festive externalization, evinced in ritualized action.

The assembly itself serves as a symbolic scenario for this ritual actuation, for the strength of communitarian postures and chanting instils added strength to its already forceful unitive influence. The resonance of gestures and word in unison thus also holds a spatial dimension within the context of a congregation as the ritual action reverberates in the place of worship, echoing Old Testament forms of communitarian



praise. Unified sentiments expressed in ritual action give rise to joyful affirmation and praise reflected in the vocalized liturgical formulas which are further accentuated by complementing corporal gesture and posture; the combining power of the verbal and non-verbal within communitarian action is key to the impact of the celebration.

It has also become increasingly clear that in liturgical actuation, man is both participant and observer; experiencing gestures and word through personal movement and enunciation, but at the same time assimilating the array of symbolic forms of expression through observation and silent audition, which denotes a form of contemplation. The individual is therefore strongly influenced by the entire ambience, which stimulates a state of recollection and transcendental openness, while it strengthens interpersonal union; in effect, all of these impressions are collective. This human integration takes on outward form in liturgy through dialogic type of communication, both verbally and through gestures between the members of the congregation, together with the celebrant and ultimately, in communication with God himself.

Thus, “*λειτουργία*” is manifestly disclosed as a mode of human actuation which finds its roots in the festive and ceremonial capacity of the human being, who constantly tends toward such forms of exteriorization. Having laid bases for an appreciation of this human integration in liturgy, we are now capacitated to explore how this action evolves within the temporal and spatial dimensions of the liturgical celebration.

### 3. RELEVANCE OF TEMPORAL AND SPATIAL NOTIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF LITURGY

An insight into human experience within liturgy has until this point developed predominantly within the sequence of the liturgical ritual, through a consideration of symbolic gestures and expressive linguistic forms. As we have seen, such factors determine the mode and range of human integration within the celebration. However, it is significant that their evolvment unfolds within the convergence of temporal and spatial elements, which are also inherent to the liturgical celebration. These components, in turn, constitute authentic aspects of liturgy, offering significant elements within the realm of human experience. Therefore, a philosophical inquiry into temporal and spatial notions, within the flow of human existence and within the process of philosophical thought itself, opens up the possibility of productively identifying their role in the liturgical experience. As the concepts of time and space hold a fundamental place within human life and culture, it is important that they be explored with the intent of recognizing their fundamental elements.

It is noteworthy that within the designation of temporal and spatial delimitations, the notions of “sacred” and “profane”<sup>194</sup> are widely employed. For

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<sup>194</sup> Terrin (2004a) delineates a general notion of sacred and profane: “O sagrado significa separado, como *sacer*, *kadosh*, *haram*, *ágio* [...] O profane é o que é “normal”, “cotidiano”, que não causa sobressaltos, não provoca situações inexplicáveis” (p. 225.229).

example, in the works of authors such as Durkheim, Eliade, and Caillois<sup>195</sup>, the term “sacred” implies something set apart due to its inherently transcendent value, while “profane” indicates something ordinary, common, and practical. It is also significant that St. Thomas Aquinas speaks in general terms of the idea of the sacred — not only, but especially in reference to religious manifestation — as “special times, a special abode, special vessels and special ministers to be appointed for the divine worship”, set aside from the common and revered due to “some point of excellence”<sup>196</sup> (*S. Th.* I-II, q.102, a.4). The Angelic Doctor affirms that this superiority and setting apart implicitly leads to a greater sense of veneration, for man naturally has little regard for the common and ordinary, and this is particularly necessary within the context of religious worship, as a means of achieving increased reverential sentiments of praise<sup>197</sup> (*S. Th.* I-II, q.102, a.4). He also links the term “sacrifice” with “sacred” as he describes the characteristics of sacrifice, which is thus called because “a man does something

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<sup>195</sup> While identifying the dual concept as inherently integrated within the warp and weft of human existence, Eliade (1965) identifies two distinct existential ways of being and acting “*Le sacré et le profane* constituent deux modalités d’être dans le monde, deux situations existentielles assumées par l’homme au long de son histoire” (p. 20). Though in a more subtle manner, Durkheim (1995) particularly underlined the distinction between sacred and the profane within the concept of experience: “We feel as though we are in touch with two distinct sorts of reality with a clear line of demarcation between them: the world of profane things on one side, the world of sacred things on the other” (p. 214). It is of further interest that Caillois (1970) identifies the idea of sacred and profane within a religious conception of the world in general, but further defends a specification of the transitory or stable quality of the sacred, and just how this concept would be applied to elements such as space, time and people: “*Le sacré* appartient comme une propriété stable ou éphémère à certaines choses (les instruments du culte), à (le roi, le prêtre), à certains espaces (le temple, l’église, le haut lieu), à certains temps (le dimanche, le jour de Pâques, de Noël, etc.” (p. 18-19).

<sup>196</sup> “*Ea vero quae habent aliquam excellentiae discretionem ab aliis, magis admiretur et revereatur [...] Et propter hoc oportuit ut aliqua specialia tempora, et speciale habitaculum, et specialia vasa, et speciales ministri ad cultum*” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province)

<sup>197</sup> “*Habet autem hoc humanus affectus, ut ea quae communia sunt, et non distincta ab aliis, minus revereatur; ea vero quae habent aliquam excellentiae discretionem ab aliis, magis admiretur et revereatur. Et inde etiam hominum consuetudine inolevit ut reges et principes, quos oportet in reverentia haberi a subditis, et pretiosioribus vestibus ornentur, et etiam ampliores et pulchriores habitations possideant. Et propter hoc oportuit ut aliqua specialia tempora, et speciale habitaculum, et specialia vasa, et speciales ministri ad cultum Dei ordinarentur, ut per hoc animi hominum ad maiorem Dei reverentiam adducerentur*” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

sacred”<sup>198</sup> (*S. Th.* II-II, q.85, a.3). The notion of sacred, then, creates a basis upon which to develop the ideas of *sacred* time and space within the context of liturgy<sup>199</sup>.

Accordingly, “sacred reality transcends the limitations of human existence and natural things and of everything that is other than itself and is, in virtue of this very fact, deeply accessible, or capable of becoming or making itself deeply accessible, to human beings, deeply immanent in the world” (De Nys, 2009, p. 18). The notion of a sacred time, a “non-time” which transcends the ordinary course of time comes into view within the concepts of ritual, festivity, and the contrasting elements of *kairos* and *chronos*. Liturgical time, in turn, involves an inherently more profound significance due to its eschatological, extemporal dimension, as emphasized by diverse authors, such as Jean Yves Lacoste.

In a similar vein, the organic utilization of liturgical space, with its close relationship to the ritual action and assembly gathered, lends itself readily to the concept of “sacred” space. The place of worship thus fosters particular forms of art and architecture which contribute to the sense of a timeless space of transition and transcendence in the human experience.

Among others, St. Maximus the Confessor outlined some of the mystical and transcendent dimensions of the place of worship in his renowned work, *The Church’s Mystagogy*. As an example of the intense symbolism of sacred space, the gothic cathedral comes to the fore as a singular condensation of human art and experience.

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<sup>198</sup> “Et hoc ipsum nomen sonat: nam sacrificium dicitur ex hoc quod homo *facit* aliquid *sacrum*” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

<sup>199</sup> Of further interest are the considerations of Corrêa de Oliveira (2014b) regarding the notion of *sacrality*, which refers to a close relation with the Divine. The special attributes of a given person, attitude or object, which reflect something more intimately related to God, may be categorized as sacral. Thus, *sacrality* implies a symbolic element which surpasses the merely pragmatic or utilitarian, transcending toward a higher form of reasoning which ultimately leads one to a perception of the Divinity. “A sacralidade é, pois, aquilo por onde se nota mais facilmente, em determinada atitude, pessoa ou coisa, seu relacionamento com Deus, através de sua inserção no plano divino e de sua semelhança com o Altíssimo. Portanto, sacral é tudo aquilo que tem especiais qualidades para lembrar os supremos atributos de Deus” (Corrêa de Oliveira, 2014b, p. 20).

The profound transitional experience of entering sacred liturgical space, with transcendent emphasis on the boundaries and entries of the edifice, are followed by an interpretation of the inter-relation between space and liturgical action, highlighting specific places of the liturgical space in their relation with liturgical posture and movement.

Ultimately, it becomes apparent that liturgical time and space are intrinsically interrelated in the liturgical reality, and the transition into liturgical space not only involves another mode of actuation, but also of living the temporal dimension. Hence the two concepts complement the overall experience of transcendence within the celebration.

### **3.1 The concept of time from a philosophical perspective**

It is not surprising that the history of philosophy has been profoundly marked by considerations regarding the concept of time itself, as it is inseparable from questions such as being, man's origin, destiny, and the universe. In a first moment, it is worthwhile to acknowledge that the concept of time in contemporary culture has been strongly influenced by factors such as technology and globalization. Consequently, man has been significantly distanced from the cosmic patterns of nature that were formerly the basic measure of time in human life, while factors such as work, travel, economy have marked new rhythms that man must follow. The primacy of living strictly for the present moment, along with rampant consumerism and pragmatism, have produced the idea that "time is money". Accordingly, time has been reduced to a

mere opportunity for financial gain, which, in turn, has led to a mentality with a limited grasp of any deeper significance or relevance of this question<sup>200</sup>.

Within the historical process of philosophical thought, the notion of time has been studied in light of topics relevant to distinct epochs, while always touching on vital and perennial — although often disputed — philosophical themes. Nevertheless, many facets of the study of time also contain scientific elements, thus allowing for a certain concurrence in this area of study on some key questions. The pre-Socratic world already pondered time in relation to change, movement, being and eternity. While this ancient humanity was, to some extent, influenced by an ethereal, mythological notion of time, it was also clearly marked by an organic and cosmic awareness of yearly meteorological transitions and astronomic movements. This coincided with a recurring pattern of cultural and religious events, in the Greek world, which required a detailed calendar.

Gradually, in philosophical schools, the notion of time emerged within a more metaphysical or cognitive framework<sup>201</sup>. Plato's study of time, linked with a cyclic idea, is considered the most dominant before that of Aristotle, the latter being significantly influenced by the platonic ideal. Plato considers the systematic cosmic

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<sup>200</sup> Among others, Roll (1995) points out the danger in this break concerning cosmic time patterns within the human experience, underling the need for a smooth co-relation between the human mode of time structuring and that found in nature, for example, that of "cosmic movement", the lack of which would result in disastrous consequences for the individual and consequently society. Consequently, "time as measured by cosmic movement serves as the matrix within which humans construct and organize systems of meaning, both personal and social" (Roll, 1995, p. 15-16). In addition, it is noteworthy that Roll (1995) contends with the experiential element within the concept of time, implying the modes by which time may be experienced and valued: "The subjective experience of time does not derive directly from sensory perception alone; instead a period of time may be experienced as short or long due to the relative importance or unimportance, the joy, the pain, or the expectation attached to the events which take place within a particular time frame" (p. 16).

<sup>201</sup> Underlining the broad-ranging and diverse elements that encompass temporal concepts, further revealed in the works of even the earliest philosophers, Rappaport (1999) identified such elements as "duration, change, motion, frequency, rhythm, velocity, passage, simultaneity conception of a present, extension, succession and perhaps others as well" (p. 174).

movements and processes which unfold as marking a natural time<sup>202</sup>. As such, the “concept of periodicity” has been identified as a chief characteristic of Plato’s concept of time. Though Aristotle occasionally presents opposing views to those of Plato with respect to the same question, a recent author has conjectured that, “Aristotle inherits far more of his views about time from Plato than has been acknowledged to date. Both philosophers regard time as the result of a certain form (namely, number) being imposed onto motion, which is an instance of the notion that figures as the conceptual core of hylomorphism” (Roark, 2011, p. 33).

Aristotle marked the history of the concept of time with his commentaries in *Physics*, presenting a highly complex and original (at that time) view of temporality. To an extent, he opposed Plato’s view of time as linked with movement, pointing out that, in some ways, time transcends characteristics of location and the rhythm of movement. However, Aristotle does establish that there is a connection between time and change, for time is only perceived when we identify movement or change. He maintains that time, like motion, has no beginning, thus defending a circular idea of time<sup>203</sup>. Basically, the Aristotelian era created the groundwork for two manners of considering time — one which emphasized the physical dimension as measuring movement, and the other highlighting a psychological aspect of time as linked to the reality of soul and consciousness without which there would not be time.

The post-Aristotelian era was marked by a shifting concentration toward the psychological dimension of time, thus relegating the physical analysis of time — so

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<sup>202</sup> Within this framework, Cullmann (1962) delineates the basic platonic conception of time in relation to eternity, which occupied the heart of Greek thought. Basically, the Platonic ideal draws a contrast between the two elements, but this difference is not just the difference between “limited and unlimited” time durations. Rather, Plato viewed the concept of eternity as “timelessness”, not just limitless time. Therefore according to Plato time is merely seen as a “copy of eternity thus understood” (p. 61).

<sup>203</sup> Cullmann (1962) underlines the circular movement of temporal notions — which explains recurring happenings — in Greek thought, rather than the continuous linear concept, which further promulgated the perception of man being enslaved through his link with time; a form of chastisement for which reason in Greek culture, the individual seeks liberation from time at all cost ( p. 52). For a further recent profound and original view of Aristotle’s concept of time, see Roark (2011) “*Aristotle on Time, a Study of the Physics*”. Roark challenges contemporary thinkers to a thorough re-examination of Aristotle’s fundamental philosophical principles, which serve as a basis for his concept of time.

common among the early Greeks — to the background. In reality, with the dawning of Christianity, the idea of time was radically influenced by a Christological ideology, as well as by Christ’s teachings regarding a second coming and future life. This introduced a linear concept of time, in contrast with the Hellenic circular theory, which profoundly influenced the awareness of time in general among Christians<sup>204</sup>. As Cullman underscored, “It is precisely upon the basis of this rectilinear conception of time that time in Primitive Christianity can yield the framework for the divine process of revelation and redemption, for those *kairoi* which God in his omnipotence fixes, for those ages into which he divides the whole process” (Cullman, 1962, p. 53). It is also noteworthy that the considerations of time before and during the Middle Ages were very much linked to ponderings regarding the origins of the universe, eternity, and creation.

Not surprisingly, time-related questions among certain Church Fathers such as St. Augustine, evolved around the principles of creation and memory — obviously this creationist idea breaking brusquely with the current Hellenic concept of time. Principally in his masterpiece *Confessions*, St. Augustine<sup>205</sup> marked a new and distinctly creationist manner of considering time; for the Bishop of Hippo, creation signified the beginning of time. His writings, particularly books X and XI of his *Confessions* — still widely quoted and investigated — are an example of this shift. His simplicity in admitting his own difficulty with the concept of time has attracted

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<sup>204</sup> The break with the Greek conception of time occurring at the dawning of Christianity and the belief in a Divine Creator, significantly changed man’s conception of history altogether, as Alby (2009) affirmed, further underling that “Para los griegos caricia de valor la singularidad de los hechos, puesto que les faltó la noción de un comienzo absoluto, por un lado, y de la noción de libertad moral, por otro” (p. 38). The mode of Greek philosophy treating of the elusive concept of time “without ever coming to a solution of the question” lost its fascination within early Christianity, as Cullman (1962) had pointed out, for latter defined its position in an opposing ideal to that of the Greek circular conception, confirming the linear position of time (p. 51).

<sup>205</sup> Outlining the bases for the Augustinian conception of time, Alby (2009) points out that though it clearly gained a deep Christian significance — through the integration of ideas of Creation and Incarnation, integrating psychological and human aspects as well — he contends that Augustine achieved this ideal “sin necesidad de sacrificar lo específicamente cosmológico del pensamiento griego”, for in linking the concept of time to the primordial of creation, he allows for the cosmological aspect while “introduciéndolo en el ámbito de la libertad, consecuente con la voluntad creadora de Dios” (p. 31).



attention, as did his attempt at a solution. Like his predecessors, the Bishop of Hippo also contended with the notions of motion and change. As seen in the following citation, Augustine clearly struggled with finding common ground between the contrasting concepts of past and future time in relation to the present. The idea of eternity is very much present here.

What is time then? If nobody asks me, I know: but if I were desirous to explain it to one that should ask me, plainly I know not. Boldly for all this dare I affirm myself to know thus much; that if nothing were passing, there would be no past time: and if nothing were coming, there should be no time to come: and if nothing were, there should now be no present time. Those two times therefore, past and to come, in what sort are they, seeing the past is now no longer, and that to come is not yet? As for the present, should it always be present and never pass into times past, verily it should not be time but eternity. If then time present, to be time, only comes into existence because it passeth into time past; how can we say that also to be, whose cause of being is, that it shall not be: that we cannot, forsooth, affirm that time is, but only because it is tending not to be? (*Conf.* 11, 14)<sup>206</sup>.

Finally, St. Augustine found a solution for the question of time as a psychological dimension, linking the dimensions of past, present and future with the soul itself: “Tis in thee, o my mind, that I measure my times” (*Conf.*, 11, 27)<sup>207</sup>. For though past has ceased and the future has not yet come about, and seemingly time only

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<sup>206</sup> “Quid est ergo tempus? Se nemo ex me quaerat, scio; se quaerenti explicare velim, nescio: fidenter tamen dico seire me, quod, si nihil praeteriret, non esset praeteritum tempus, et si nihil adveniret, non esset futurum tempus., et si nihil esset, non esset praesens tempus. Duo ergo illa tempora, praeteritum et futurum, quomodo sunt, quando et praeteritum iam non est et futurum nondum est? Praesens autem si semper esset praesens Nec in praeteritum transiret, non iam esset tempus, sed aeternitas. Si ergo praesens, ut tempus sit, ideo fit, quia in praeteritum transit, quomodo et hos esse dicimus, cui causa, ut sit, illa est, quia non erit, ut scilicet non vere dicamus tempus esse, nisi quia tendit non esse?” (Translation by W. Watts)

<sup>207</sup> “In te, anime meus, tempora mea metior” (Translation by W. Watts).

exists in the present, the past does still exist in memory, and the future is somehow alive through a present anticipation<sup>208</sup>.

Consequently, in Augustinian thought, a true time occurs through the *distentio* —*intentio animi*. Time is *distentio animi* in the past, present and future, while it is an *intentio* toward eternity, and the past is somehow brought to the present through the memory (*memoria*), while the anticipation (*expectatio*) of the future is also experienced within the present moment. “But how comes that future, which as yet is not, to be diminished or wasted away? Or how comes that past, which now is no longer, to be increased? Unless in the mind which acteth all this, there be three things done. For it expects, it marks attentively, it remembers” (*Conf.* 11, 27)<sup>209</sup>. The present is present in the mind through the dimension of sight (*contuitus*).

Later, Saint Thomas Aquinas, basing his considerations chiefly on Boethius’s works *De Consolatione Philosophiae* and *De Trinitate*, focussed on the of the eternity of God, which was a pertinent debate of the epoch. Within the framework of the notion of eternity, the question of time naturally emerged as a collateral reality. Boethius, gleaned from earlier Greek philosophy, had identified eternity as a manner of existence entirely separate though not irreconcilable with the notion time<sup>210</sup>. Stump (2007) identified Boethius’ “definition of eternity” which, she pointed out was entirely absorbed by the Angelic Doctor: “Eternity is the complete possession all at once of illimitable life” (p. 132). St. Thomas Aquinas owned that it was necessary to arrive at a

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<sup>208</sup> Grasping the essence of Augustine’s conception of time as inherently related to man, McGinnis points out that the Augustinian notion (2013) “requires a mind that does not experience reality all at once in an eternal present,” but rather has the capacity to experience time through remembrance, present comprehension and anticipation, so the Augustinian concept is related to creation (p. 78).

<sup>209</sup> “Sed quomodo minuitur aut consumitur futurum, quod nondum est, aut quomodo crescit praeteritum, quod iam non est, nisi quia in animo, qui illud agit, tria sunt? Nam et expectat et attendit et meminit, ut id quod expectat per id quod attendit transeat in id quod meminerit” (Translation by W. Watts).

<sup>210</sup> Within an historical perspective, Stump (2007) clarifies the wide reaching notion of eternity as opposed to the notion of time, contending that most thinkers of the ancient and medieval philosophy, though promulgating a notion of eternity, had never intended to insinuate time as unreal or illusory. Rather, “In introducing the concept of eternity, such philosophers, and Boethius in particular, were proposing two separate modes of real existence”. This concept of Eternity was seen as a manner of existence “neither reducible to time nor incompatible with the reality of time” (p. 134).

notion of eternity through the concept of time, which he claims, is “nothing but the numbering of movement by before and after” (*S. Th.* I, q.10, a.1)<sup>211</sup>. Consequently, in identifying before and after in movement, one automatically identifies time, while in a similar fashion, the notion of eternity evolves from the idea of that which transcends movement, maintaining a fixed state, and therefore without the characteristics of time<sup>212</sup>. Aquinas differentiates clearly between the two modes of being of eternity and time.

It is manifest that time and eternity are not the same. Some have founded this difference on the fact that eternity has neither a beginning nor an end; whereas time has a beginning and an end. This however, makes a merely accidental, and not an absolute difference; because, granted that time always was and always will be, according to the idea of those who think the movement of the heavens goes on forever, there would yet remain a difference between eternity and time, as Boethius says (*De Consul.* v), arising from the fact that eternity is simultaneously whole; which cannot be applied to time: for eternity is the measure of a permanent being; while time is the measure of movement (*S. Th.* I, q.10, a.4, resp.)<sup>213</sup>.

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<sup>211</sup> “...quod nihil aliud est quam numerus motus secundum prius et posterius” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province)

<sup>212</sup> Here Aquinas affirms that it is necessary to attain awareness of eternity, through the concept of time which he states “is nothing but the numbering of movement by *before* and *after*”. For Aquinas, the result is very simple: it is movement which contains this before and after, which subsequently allows time to be comprehended, whereas that which is “outside of movement”, therefore bereft of the qualities of time, in which “consists the idea of eternity” (*S. Th.* I, q.10, a.1). In this vein, Stump (2007) emphasizes that Aquinas viewed both the concepts of time and eternity as real but that “there is no other mode of existence to which those two can be reduced” (p. 138). Therefore the temporal and eternal both exist, but in diverse manners (p. 139).

<sup>213</sup> “Dicendum quod manifestum est tempus et aeternitatem non esse idem. Sed huius diversitatis rationem quidam assignaverunt ex hoc quod aeternitas caret principio et fine, tempus autem habet principio et fine, tempus autem habet principium et finem. Sed haec est differentia per accidens, et non per se. Quia dato quod tempus semper fuerit et semper futurum sit, secundum positionem eorum qui motum caeli ponunt sempiternum, adhuc remanebit differentia inter aeternitatem et tempus, ut dicit Boetius in libro *de Consolat.* Ex hoc quod aeternitas est tota simul, quod tempori non convenit: quia aeternitas est mensura esse permanentis, tempus vero est mensura motus”. (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province)

Among the numerous modern thinkers who have dealt with the topic of time, Heidegger, as the name of his central work — *Sein und Zeit* — suggests, seeks to consolidate time in its relation with being, dedicating much attention to the experience of temporality. For Heidegger, in defiance of traditional premises, the concept of temporality must be dealt with in light of its ontological dimension; in other words, time is intrinsically linked to the very sense of existence, or *Dasein*, and the understanding of *being* is consequently only becomes possible in its relation to time.

In effect, the question “what is time”? always has to give way to another type of question: *how is it with time?* Heidegger’s entire phenomenology is an exemplary case of a continuing struggle to trace out a methodology that has been motivated by this awareness. The form of his discourse is none other than a de-construction of the classical or vulgar concept of time in order to unearth the authentic *living* resonance of *timeliness* (Sandowsky, 2004, p. 10).

The idea of being, then, is only to be considered in terms of present, past and future — who we are, where we came from, and where we are going. The idea of *temporality*, according to Heidegger, echoes in the fact that the present takes on meaning in proportion to one’s conviction of the present state. The past, in turn, takes on life in the present state, which it has directly influenced. In addition, the conception of one’s past is interpreted in light of the estimation one has of one’s self regarding the future, while the future is also alive in the present, in a sense, as it is being determined by one’s current condition and circumstances. Thus, these three dimensions of time in some way mould one’s living reality as they are present at each moment of one’s existence, for “the threefold temporality always underlies the primordial openness that *Dasein* is itself. [...] The ecstatic character of time leads Heidegger to now term the

three ‘directions’ in which temporality stretches itself the temporal *ecstases*” (De Boer, 2000, p. 48)<sup>214</sup>.

In 1924, prior to writing *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger lectured on *The Concept of Time*, wherein he challenged the traditional idea of time, attempting to demonstrate that it really only finds its meaning in our mortality; time only truly exists for a being conscious of coming death. This lecture ended up being a basis for his further writing, as it defined his drastically new temporal concepts. In effect, Heidegger insisted that the idea of eternity does not resolve the problem of time; rather, time is understood only in relation to that which is distinctly human and undeniable, man’s final end<sup>215</sup>.

The concept of time is additionally considered to be closely related to that of space. However, unlike the scientifically calculated measurement of space, Heidegger is concerned with space in terms of experience — spatial experience which is directly influenced by our notion of an object’s meaning to us, as well as by how one feels at a determined time. For him, the notion of nearness and distance may not be determined by numeral measurement, but in accordance with one’s needs and the significance that an object holds. Spatial concepts are really measured through mental conditions, through which the delineations of space are determined.

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<sup>214</sup> Dostal (1990) points out that the hermeneutical notions of Gadamer shares something of the conception of time with that of the phenomenology of Heidegger since “Gadamer embraces and develops the phenomenological insight of the extended ‘now’, whereby the past and the future are constitutive of the present” (p. 70-71).

<sup>215</sup> Interestingly, Alweiss (2002) questions Heidegger’s non-traditional view of the concept of time in relation to death specifically within his disputed lecture, in her article “Heidegger and ‘the concept of time’”. She contends that: “initially Heidegger implores us to reconsider the meaning of time by questioning whether eternity, as a point of departure, is ever at our disposal. We have now come to see that this approach itself renders suspect the aspiration to understand the meaning of time through death. For death, like eternity, is never at our disposal. In questioning the traditional conception of time, Heidegger unwittingly exposes a fragility in his account of temporality as finite. For as long as Heidegger searches for a point of departure that lies at our disposal, he deprives us of the significance of the fact that death remains elusive” (p. 127-128).

### 3.2 Temporal dimensions within human experience – festivity and celebration

From what we have already seen, the philosophical concept of time has significantly evolved within the history of human thought, and always sustained as a crucial problematic within the human experience as a whole. Regardless of the epoch, human life and questions of a temporal nature have always merged together, though diverse notions have come into play. However, particularly within our investigation, it is important that the alternating temporal conditions within existence have been widely identified, normally consisting in a contrast drawn between mundane, ordinary time, and sacred or extraordinary time<sup>216</sup>. It is precisely within the ambit of the concepts of ritual and festivity, already examined in chapter one, that an observation of temporal dimensions that have a tendency to break the sequence of normal chronological time, may be observed, for they include “the experience of sacred time, of timelessness inside time” (Hitchcock, 2008, p. 174)<sup>217</sup>.

Significantly, Pieper (1999) attributed a definition of festivity as *hierós chrónos* to Plato, and adds that this definition of festive time was broadly acknowledged by the population of ancient Rome (p. 36). So from early times, the temporal dimension of celebration was identified as a chief characteristic, or at least one that was widely recognized.

Along this vein, Eliade’s typical conception of a “sacred” and “profane” time is closely related to that of the experience of the “*homo religious*”, for the periods of

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<sup>216</sup> It is noteworthy that Huizinga (1955) will even identify a distinctive temporal dimension within ludic activity — which he links with ritual and festivity — since it occurs within defined allocations of time, emerging from within daily life: “It interpolates itself as a temporary activity satisfying in itself and ending there. Such at least is the way in which play presents itself to us in the first instance: as an intermezzo, an interlude in our daily lives” (p. 9). In addition, Huizinga put emphasis on the repetitive aspect of play, a concept clearly linked with time, counting this among the most significant and essential facets of ludic activity: “All is movement, change, alternation, succession, association, separation... once played, it endures as a new-found creation of the mind, a treasure to be retained by the memory. It is transmitted, it becomes tradition” (p. 9-10).

<sup>217</sup> According to the vision of Holman (2001), all three temporal dimensions are made present in festivity, for: “From the present, a feast looks commemoratively to the past, and at the same time it is oriented towards the immediate future as a delimitation of the festivity” (p. 169).

sacred time which are reserved for ritual and festive activity are interspersed with a profane, ordinary time. Eliade (1965) will allude particularly to a sacred time, outside of chronological time, which he insinuates as a stable, immutable time which is repeatedly revisited through ritual and festivity, “a sort of eternal mythical present that is periodically reintegrated by means of rites”. (p. 64) Thus, the religious man, through sacred activity, lives within sacred time, “a primordial mythical time made present” (p. 64)<sup>218</sup>. In effect, the time experienced by the religious man stands in sharp contrast with that of the non-religious, for he experiences only slight differences in the time that makes up human experience, never sharing the transcendent experience of the festive ritual (p. 61)<sup>219</sup>. The religious man, on the contrary, experiences a “sacred time” through ritual practice: “Every religious festival, any liturgical time, represents the re-actualization of a sacred event that took place in a mythical past, ‘in the beginning.’” (p. 61) It is not surprising then, that Eliade considered the repeatable function of festive experience as fundamental<sup>220</sup>.

Within the same line of thought, Gadamer (1986) identifies the marked contrast between time within the scope of daily human life and that of festivity, where chronological and calculated measurements of time cease and give way to a new form of living time (p. 42). It is significant that he further points out that festivity possesses the organic potentiality for repetition, thus influencing and structuring chronological time.

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<sup>218</sup> “L’homme religieux vit ainsi dans deux espèces de Temps, dont la plus importante, le Temps sacré, se présente sous l’aspect paradoxal d’un Temps circulaire, réversible et récupérable, sorte d’éternel présent mythique que l’on réintègre périodiquement par le truchement des rites” (Eliade, 1965, p. 64). In a similar vein, López Martín (1994) also comments on the significance of sacred time within human experience, but pointing specifically toward the liberating dimension of the former: “El tiempo sagrado significa el esfuerzo del hombre por romper la espiral inexorable que lo envuelve y amenaza con devorarla” (p. 257).

<sup>219</sup> “Toute fête religieuse, tout Temps liturgique, consiste dans la réactualisation d’un événement sacré qui a eu lieu dans un passé mythique, ‘au commencement’” (Translation Williard R. Trask).

<sup>220</sup> “Le Temps sacré est par suite indéfiniment récupérable, indéfiniment répétable. D’un certain point de vue, on pourrait dire de lui qu’il ne ‘coule’ pas, qu’il ne constitue pas une ‘durée’ irréversible. C’est un Temps ontologique par excellence, ‘parménéidien’: toujours égal à lui-même, il ne change ni ne s’épuise. A chaque fête périodique on retrouve le même Temps sacré, le même qui s’était manifesté dans la fête de l’année précédente ou dans la fête d’il y a un siècle” (Eliade, 1965, p. 63-64).

A certain kind of recurrence belongs to the festival – not in every single case perhaps, although I am inclined to wonder whether in a deeper sense this may not be true. Of course, we distinguish recurrent festivals from unique ones. But the question is whether in fact even the unique festival does not always require repetition as well. We do not describe a festival as a recurring one because we can assign a specific place in time to it, but rather the reverse: the time in which it occurs only arises through the recurrence of the festival itself. The ecclesiastical year is a good example, as are all those cases like Christmas, Easter, or whatever, where we do not calculate time abstractly in terms of weeks and months. Such moments represent the primacy of something that happens in its own time and at the proper time, something that is not subject to the abstract calculation of temporal duration (Gadamer, 1986, p. 41).

### 3.2.1 Kairos and Chronos

The multifaceted notions of *kairos* and *chronos* hold significant nuances for a deeper penetration into temporal experience within the liturgy, and have held a noteworthy place within philosophical thought throughout the centuries<sup>221</sup>. The terms originated among the early Greeks, widely employed in philosophical and literary works, with a broad range of connotations even within the field of rhetorical tradition<sup>222</sup>. In their basic definition, the terms express contrasting modes of time —

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<sup>221</sup> Sipiora (2002) demonstrates the far-ranging scope of the notion, among early Greek philosophers: “The history of *kairos* in the development of philosophy is equally important, particularly in the works of such pre-Socratics as Empedocles and Pythagoras as well as in the later philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, where it becomes a foundational term in the determination of ethics and aesthetics” (Sipiora, 2002, Intro 3).

<sup>222</sup> It is interesting to note that the ancient Greeks placed a broader connotation to the term *kairos* than merely a temporal insinuation, for within their major literary works — particularly the writings of Isocrates — it also holds the meaning of such terms as symmetry, decorum, proportion, occasion, among others. “Kairos was the cornerstone of rhetoric in the Golden Age of Greece” (Sipiora, 2002, Intro 3). Studies regarding the rhetorical aspect of the term has been the object of increased interest, within works such as “Rhetoric and kairos: essays in history, theory and praxis” (Philip Sipiora, James S. Baumlin).



*chronos* evolves within a more limited idea of a linear conception of time, as a measure, in its quantitative aspect, of the chronological series of events.

Therefore, *chronos* would be the chronological sequence that makes up the backbone of human existence; accordingly, it fits in more appropriately within the designation of profane or ordinary time. Diversely, the concept of *kairos* flees from the parameters of the common flow of sequential time periods, holding a more qualitative denotation of time. However, it is significant that though diverse, these two concepts are interconnected, for *chronos* serves as a fundamental backdrop for the kairotic valuation of time. While on its own, the chronological dimension fails to fully account for the crucial moments of human experience, the qualitative faculty of time emerges as *kairos* (Smith, 2002, p. 48).

*Kairos* thus represents an exceptional time, an opportune moment, an exclusive juncture for a particular event to occur in the here and now. Within Judaism, the concept *kairos* was used to describe a timely occasion of divine intervention within the course of chronological events. In a Christian application, the hour of divine intervention in human history reaches a culmination with the coming of Christ *en kairo* — “in the fullness of time”. Consequently, the term *kairos* is used with considerable frequency in biblical recounts, in both Old and New Testaments. For example, in the famous citation from Ecclesiastes “For everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted...” (Eccl 3:1-2), the word “time” is a translation from the word *kairos*, where it’s connotation as a distinct, significant hour, an exclusive moment, comes to light in a particular way<sup>223</sup>.

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<sup>223</sup> Through an assimilation of the concept of *kairos* as encountered in the New Testament, Paul Tillich expounded his thought and writings in an original attempt to demonstrate, in his day and age, the value of this concept which he believed to be a key notion in the “foundation of historical consciousness aware of itself” (Smith, 2002, p. 55). For Tillich, a renewed consciousness of the times of crisis and opportunity is of paramount necessity in recuperating history as a significant evolvement of the most important element of human life. See: Tillich, Paul. (1964). *Theology of Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.

The concept of *kairos* certainly emerges within the realm of liturgy, for within liturgical time, the kairotic implication of intervention is what gives the liturgical year its form and definition: “Thus the cosmic time, which is regulated by nature’s cycles and seasons, and the historical time, wherein recorded events take place, become the locus of God’s saving interventions. The succession of days and nights, of weeks and months, and of the various seasons of the year, which the ancient Greeks called κρόνος, became the Christian καιρός” (Chupungco, 2000, p. xxiii).

### **3.2.2 Liturgical Time**

With this overview of temporal ramifications in philosophical thought and human experience itself, it is no wonder that notion of a temporal sphere which transcends the quotidian is key to the consideration of liturgical time. Indeed, due to its eschatological significance, liturgy has always marked man’s existence with its capacity to transcend the ordinary time process in a way that efficaciously unites man with the great happenings of the past, lived in the present, in light of future and final happenings. From within the perspective of human experience, the liturgical celebration clearly constitutes a sacred time *par excellence*, far beyond the “sacred” times of profane ritual and festive action, due to its inherently spiritual, transcendent and eschatological character, for “the liturgy is also a special time that symbolically suspends the flow of time. Liturgical time, in fact, preaches/celebrates the mystery of Christ in a festive situation, namely, in a situation of absolute and undeducible otherness and newness” (Catella, 1998, p. 25). The liturgy thus constitutes a “time”

which is entirely linked with the very life, death, and resurrection of Christ, a time that participates in all of its aspects<sup>224</sup>.

From this standpoint, it is of key importance that St. Thomas Aquinas identified a natural liaison of signs between past, present, and future within sacramental activity itself. As simultaneously “*signum rememorativum*”, “*demonstrativum*” and “*prognosticum*”, the sacraments condense this triad of temporal dimensions. Aquinas affirms that: “Consequently, a Sacrament is a sign that is both a reminder of the past, i.e. the passion of Christ; and an indication of that which is effected in us by Christ’s passion, i.e. grace; and a prognostic, that is, a foretelling of future glory”<sup>225</sup> (*S. Th.* III, q. 60, a.3).

Of all the Sacraments, then, the Eucharistic celebration most emphatically contains this condensation of the past, present and future, while the liturgical celebration holds a “mystical newness”<sup>226</sup> (Clá Dias, 2014, p. 397), whereby it is much more than a mere remembrance of the past, for the faithful truly participate in the same graces distributed at the original event, due to the fact that they are gathered around the

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<sup>224</sup> Basing his idea on the example of the emergence of a physical church structure within the profane surroundings of a modern city, Eliade (1965) explains the concept of how the religious services unfold similarly, marking a dramatic break within the duration of profane time: “Ce n’est plus le temps historique actuel qui est présent, le temps qui est vé, par exemple, dans les rues et maisons voisines, mais le Temps dans lequel s’est déroulée l’existence historique de Jésus-Christ, le Temps sanctifié par sa prédication, par sa passion, sa mort et sa résurrection” (p. 66). In like manner, Pieper (2009a) affirmed that just as a certain space is set aside strictly for the use of the temple, separated from all other spaces, so also, “in divine worship a certain definite space of *time* is set aside from working hours and days, a limited time, specially marked off — and like space allotted to the temple, is not *used*, is withdrawn from all merely utilitarian ends” (p. 67).

<sup>225</sup> “Unde sacramentum est et signum rememorativum eius quod praecessit, scilicet passionis Christi; et demonstrativum eius quod in nobis efficitur per Christi passionem, scilicet gratiae; et prognosticum, idest praenuntivum, futurae gloriae” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province)

<sup>226</sup> Clá Dias (2014) points out this predominantly *current* dimension of the liturgical feats, which are not to be merely moments of remembrance of past events, though memory certainly has its role, but rather a real participation that transcends the barriers of time: “Há uma atualidade mística que se verifica no momento da Santa Missa, trazendo uma participação real, autêntica e direta nas graças distribuídas naquele dia [...] porque nos congrega em torno de Cristo vivo, e não constitui apenas uma reminiscência do período em que Ele estava na Terra” (p. 397). In a similar vein, Von Hildebrand (1963) noted that the liturgical experience integrates the reality of eternity into the present, for: “El fulgor (que nunca envejece) de la eterna hermosura y santidad de Dios [...] es eternamente actual” (p. 158).

same, true presence of Christ. The past is thus made present, so to speak, by virtue of the all-embracing eternity of God<sup>227</sup>.

It is thus that the concept of liturgical time as *καιρός*, a privileged, favourable time which transcends the merely quotidian experience of chronological time comes into play. However, as Chupungco (2000) affirmed, “Liturgical time does not alienate the Church from historical time; rather it urges her, in imitation of the incarnate Word, to be profoundly involved in what goes on in history and to transform the *κρόνος* of human misery into the *καιρός* of divine grace”. The feasts of the Liturgical calendar, as Von Balthasar (2008) pointed out, hold a unique perspective of time, on account of the immediate connection that each feast bears with eternity<sup>228</sup>.

The liturgical celebration itself also gradually unfolds in a sequence of “events” which reach a climax in the Eucharistic banquet itself. In effect, the succession of gestures, vocal praise and choreographic movement, strengthened through community expression, circumscribe particular portions of time within the celebration. These distinct liturgical moments, in turn, denote true kairoitic phases through which the individual personally passes, by virtue of his participation in the mystery. For example, the moment of the Penitential Rite, followed the Liturgy of the Word, and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, have been likened to the mystical process of

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<sup>227</sup> By the same token, the future is simultaneously made present. Vagaggini (1965) attests to the inherently eschatological connotation of the Liturgy: “Ed è per questo che alla messa è insito un significato profondamente escatológico: essa annunzia, proclama e chiama, per così dire, con tutte le fibre della sua struttura, il ritorno glorioso del Signore e il banchetto *in regno Patris* nella gloria... (p. 169).

<sup>228</sup> “Si bien el año litúrgico repite en cierto modo la sucesión de los acontecimientos de la vida natural de Cristo, que se convierte así cada vez más en la sucesión de los estadios de la redención, no lo hace para encarcelar esa vida en un tiempo cíclico o en un eterno retorno; al contrario, cada fiesta, cada nuevo estadio representa siempre una apertura inmediata a la eternidad; la piedra puede y debe salir disparada de la honda hacia el infinito en cada instante” (p. 306).

the human soul as it passes through the stages of purgation, illumination and union (Arboleda Mora, 2008, p. 124)<sup>229</sup>.

The contemporary French philosopher and phenomenologist Jean-Yves Lacoste attempts to unite philosophical and theological questions, defying the stringent separation that has arisen between the two disciplines. This intent is perceptible in several of his publications, notably his paper “From Theology to Theological Thinking”. Working primarily in Paris, Cambridge and the United States, Lacoste is perhaps best known for his principle work “*Expérience et Absolu*” (1994) which develops a challenging phenomenology of liturgy. In it, the author examines and confronts ideas pertinent to the human experience in the religious context. Thus, Lacoste (2004) unveils an innovative vision of the liturgical experience as “inoperative”<sup>230</sup>, in contrast with the widely accepted Heideggerian paradigm of Dasein, of production and doing. Man experiences the liturgy as something entirely beyond normal existence and efficiency.

For Lacoste, the liturgy transcends the limited dimension of the world, without entirely escaping from it. Lacoste employs the term “being-at-the-limit”, admitting the impossibility of a complete separation from the world, while evincing how the liturgical experience, in effect, surpasses mundane reality, creating a “nontime”, which unfolds within a “nonplace”<sup>231</sup>. Accordingly, it can be said that the liturgical

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<sup>229</sup> “La Eucaristía como lugar místico es el momento en que se puede dar la experiencia del encuentro agápico y por lo tanto, la exigencia de salir a testimoniar. La Eucaristía tiene en sí una estructura mística que no se puede desconocer: allí se da la etapa purificativa (la parte penitencial), la etapa iluminativa (la escucha de la palabra que anuncia el misterio) y la etapa unitiva (la presencia real comulgada íntimamente por los creyentes). Se da una experiencia unitiva mística que desemboca en un salir, un *ite missa est* que no clausura la experiencia, sino que la prolonga en la acción apostólica del cristiano” (Arboleda Mora, 2008, p. 124).

<sup>230</sup> “Liturgy is not a work [oeuvre]; it produces nothing that could possibly be handled, admired, sold, or given. It is utterly foreign to the logic of action” (Lacoste, 2004, p. 78).

<sup>231</sup> “But even though it implies a play between man and place, liturgy actually institutes what we have been calling ‘nonplaces’: not the spaces from which the local and historical determinations of our humanity are absent, but rather the spaces where determinations enter into a new order of signification and a new order of finalities. It is precisely at this point that we can understand that the antagonism between earth and world has no bearing on the liturgical” (Lacoste, 2004, p. 33).

experience projects beyond worldly existence, in a distinctly eschatological orientation, pointing toward the end time and eternal time<sup>232</sup>.

Liturgy is nonplace. If care reigns over the time of being-in-the-world, it must also be said that liturgy is symbolically constituted as a “non-time”: a time we no longer wish to be governed only by the eschatological vigil, and in which we wish to nullify the self’s preoccupation with itself in favour of an expectation and an attentiveness [*d’une attente et d’une attention*] that divests us of our concern with ourselves and in the future we have made our *own* possibility. But it is a question here of liturgy’s ambitions, of the meaning it gives itself and not of its empirical reality — the man who prays never ceases to be all alone and to see the worldly logic of temporalization exert its power over the time he would wish to extricate from the play of the world. Even the nontime of liturgy is perhaps as fearful of care investing itself in it as it is of its own project [*project*] appearing to lie beyond all worldly measure” (Lacoste, 2004, p. 83).

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<sup>232</sup> Commenting on Lacoste’s vision of the liturgy, Poulet (2013) reiterates the inherent capacity of liturgy to transcend the limits of time and space: “En effet, dans l’acte de prière, et particulièrement dans l’acte de prière liturgique, le corps n’est pas d’abord perçu dans ses besoins fondamentaux car la liturgie constitue, selon les termes mêmes de Jean-Yves Lacoste, une absence symbolique du monde. La liturgie se situe en effet à distance par rapport aux activités, aux rythmes, aux préoccupations habituelles et communes du monde. Cette distance ne constitue pas un désintéret encore moins une indifférence, mais une mise en perspective que l’on peut qualifier d’eschatologique et par conséquent un apprentissage, une mise en œuvre de la liberté des enfants de Dieu à laquelle sont appelés les croyants. (...) la liturgie repose sur un paradoxe: elle est de l’ordre d’une mise à l’écart par rapport à la vie terrestre et concomitamment celui qui prie liturgiquement, avec son corps, habite bien une limite, un monde terrestre et non un au-delà. La prière liturgique rappelle que, dans son corps orant, la vocation de l’homme dépasse les frontières du monde terrestre et de l’histoire” (p. 184).

In effect, Lacoste intends to introduce a phenomenology of the liturgical experience highlighting dimensions of the relationship between God and man. He challenges the Heideggerian notion of being-in-the-world<sup>233</sup>, questioning the viability of this idea as an adequate account of what is undergone in liturgical experience. In the liturgy, he explains, “the *chronos* that is the measure of our presence in the world” gives way to “the *kairos* of the encounter with God” (p. 36). Yet this higher measure of time, like the transcendent sense of place which it accompanies, far from estranging human nature, is where man most feels himself, in his rightful situation. And truly, it could not be otherwise, if man is made for union with God. This is what Lacoste seems to conclude: “Liturgy, understood in its broadest sense, is the most human mode in which we can exist in the world or on the earth. And it is in the world or in the earth that it responds, once and for all, to the question of the place proper to man: beyond the historical play between world and earth, man has for his true *dwelling place* the *relation* he seals with God or that God seals with him” (Lacoste, 1994, p. 98).

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<sup>233</sup> Pickstock, (1998) a British scholar of the Radical Orthodoxy movement, is internationally known for her innovative and scholarly expositions. As a theologian, her research includes philosophical theology, platonic philosophy and medieval theology. Expounding on the response to Heidegger’s topological restrictions offered by Lacoste’s liturgical phenomenology, she comments, in her most famous work, “After Writing” (1998): “Lacoste argues against Heidegger’s acceptance of this pagan limitation of space as a fundamental given, showing that liturgy transgresses the distinction between the local and familiar “earth” and the end of purely human history. By invoking the vision of Saint Benedict, a dream in which the saint finds himself looking down upon the world as a global totality, Lacoste shows how liturgy enables the worshipper to exceed the distinction between the familiarity of one’s proximal home and the anxiety of being in the world. The apparently impossible non-place in which the worshipper is thus situated reveals his true, exalted nature which, as always already located in God, is that which exceeds even the world — or the totality of all possible spaces — itself” (p. 232). Schrijvers (2005) also comments that Lacoste “asks whether *Dasein* and the hermeneutic of its facticity is not merely a hermeneutics of secularization. Can and must we assume that this ‘being-in-the-world’ and its corresponding anxiety is the most original and fundamental characteristic of human existence?” (p. 314).

Pickstock (1998) envisions the liturgical experience as a transcendent journey; and a journey involves both place and time<sup>234</sup>, “a journey which is continuous with time,” (p. 231) in her own words. Like time, space is an earthly concomitant of corporality, and just as the liturgical experience opens a new dimension of time by entering into God’s presence, by the same reason, it must also unfold within a new dimension of space. Indeed, space and time clearly converge in the progression of the liturgical celebration, as Pickstock observed:

Liturgical space, therefore, instead of obliterating time in the manner of secular space, becomes coterminous with a sacred time by bringing its own situation along with it, and yet continuously transforming that very situation in its quest to situate its situation as not its own at all. In a sense, like the elusive “present moment,” this space is nowhere, since it is perpetually suspended between a bounded but never autonomous, never finitely definable space, and an infinite “space” which is a strange, situating metaspace, without any bounds or even areas (Pickstock, 1998, p. 232)<sup>235</sup>.

### 3.3. Evolvement and characteristics of liturgical space

Lacoste explores the fact that since the “I” in its entirety is body and soul, the experience of self cannot be separated from corporality, and the experience of self is

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<sup>234</sup> Pickstock examines the liturgical concept of time specifically in its relationship with space by reflecting on the spatial-temporal designation *semper et ubique* as suggesting the all-pervasiveness of the right place and time to offer praise: “All places and all times, a location which shatters the priority of any particular place or time, so as to suggest that the liturgical act itself is that which confers the specificity of both time and space upon themselves, since they are here measured by the act of giving praise. [...] The “*semper et ubique*” tells us that wherever or whenever the worshipper is situated, he is in a position where grace is received” (p. 235).

<sup>235</sup> Further, Pickstock (1998) applies a transcendent notion of space within a notion of the Divine relationship: “What is specific to liturgical space, therefore, is that within it a journey does not proceed from one situation (or circum-stance) to another, but instead travels always further into its own real situation within God — for this reason it is a journey both without and within, and at once backwards (in memory) and forwards (in desire). Such a journey is not therefore *through* space, but is rather the journey *of* space, of a space which can only abide (ontologically) in its return to its real situation” (p. 232).



necessarily an experience of place. To have a body is to have a place, and not even the activity of the interior or mental life may be considered to escape from the corporeal and hence topological realm of existence (p. 8).

Within the spectrum of human experience, just as with time, space invested with profound meaning is a natural and universal reality. The organization of space is a human activity observable from all time, not only as an expression of the *homo religiosos* who necessarily appoints particular sacred spaces, but also as an instinctive and spontaneous way of thinking and acting that pervades much of man's behaviour<sup>236</sup>. For example, Huizinga (1955) reached original conclusions regarding the formation of sacred space, pointing out that inherent to ludic activity is its "spatial separation" from everyday existence, where it is performed with specific rules and comportment (p. 19-20). This separated space retains its meaning, while spreading its "radiance" on the common surroundings of the outside world with a beneficent effect, in anticipation of the next "sacred play-season" (p. 14). Huizinga observes that, along with this phenomenon of ludic activity, the definition of a particular place is also a chief characteristic of all sacred acts, affirming that "Sacrament and mystery presuppose a hallowed spot" (p. 20)<sup>237</sup>.

For his part, just as he dealt with time, Eliade (1965) identified the human propensity for the delineation of space, noting a distinctly hierarchical division of areas. Sacred spaces emerge as spaces charged with significance — such as the place where Moses was divinely ordered to remove his shoes before the burning bush — in

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<sup>236</sup> The emergence of particular places with a sacred connotation is widely recognized as a "primal urge" perceptible throughout human history (Gerstel, 2006. p. 2). Natale (2004a) also outlines the significance of space, but strongly affirms that one of the precarious phenomena today is the tendency to want to put everything on the same level, that people no longer knows how to recognize "different spaces" due to the fact that everything has an egalitarian dimension and spaces no longer characterize the ambience and reality that they should. He recognizes that the symbol of the door and "rites of passage" are reminders of the necessity of creating limits within space in order to give order to the world and also to identify the limits of the human in order to localize center and the periphery (p. 389-390).

<sup>237</sup> Thus, for Huizinga (1955) the designation of particular places, either for sacred or ludic purposes, share the same basis anchored within the human mind. In other words, this separation of spaces has to do with an essential anthropological or human phenomenon (p. 20).

contrast with the “amorphous” places that lack meaning or symbolism, even despite the fact that they may be geometrically enclosed and partitioned. “The profane experience... maintains the homogeneity and hence the relativity of space. No *true* orientation is now possible, for the fixed point no longer enjoys a unique ontological status” (p. 26). Citing as an example the biblical episode of Jacob’s dream, which results in the establishment of a sacred place, Eliade demonstrates how, consequently, such sacred precincts implicate a hierophany, which would be an upsurge of the sacred consequently separating it from other terrain “making it qualitatively different” (p. 27)<sup>238</sup>. Man’s religious or non-religious experiences are thus marked by the omnipresence of sites assigned as profane or sacred, with the latter constituting the scenario for sacred experience.

In this vein, it is significant that Aquinas identifies an anthropological necessity for the erection of places of worship as a natural result of the requirements imposed by human corporality, for he points toward the reverence aroused in the faithful through the uniting for worship in a distinct place, for “certain things relating to the excellence of Christ’s divine or human nature might be signified by the arrangement of various details in such a temple or tabernacle”<sup>239</sup>. Moreover, he posits reasons for the choosing

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<sup>238</sup> Consequently, the religious man conceives spaces as contrasting, varied and diverse, which naturally signifies the emergence of sacred spaces: “Il y a des portions d’espace qualitativement différentes des autres. Il y a donc un espace sacré”. Therefore, Eliade posits this distinction of spaces as an opposing experience between the sacred and the profane: “l’expérience d’une opposition entre l’espace sacré, le seul qui soit *réel*, qui *existe réellement*, et tout le reste, l’étendue informe qui l’entoure” (p. 26). “L’expérience profane maintient l’homogénéité et donc la relativité de l’espace. Toute *vraie* orientation disparaît, car le ‘point fixe’ ne jouit plus d’un statut ontologique unique” (Translation by Williard R. Trask).

<sup>239</sup> “Ad primum ergo dicendum quod cultus Dei duo respicit: scilicet Deum, qui colitur; et homines colentes. Ipse igitur Deus, qui colitur, nullo corporali loco clauditur: unde propter ipsum non oportuit tabernaculum fieri, aut templum. Sed homines ipsum colentes corporales sunt: et propter eos oportuit speciale tabernaculum, vel templum, institui ad cultum Dei, propter duo. Primo quidem, ut ad huiusmodi locum convenientes cum hac cogitatione quod deputaretur ad colendum Deum, cum maiori reverentia accederent. Secundo, ut per dispositionem talis templi, vel tabernaculi, significarentur aliqua pertinentia ad excellentiam divinitatis vel humanitatis Christi” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province) St. Thomas will further point out that the necessity for physical places of exterior worship as directly linked to the manifestation of “bodily signs” which have the inherent necessity of evolving within a determined place. “Sed corporalia signa necesse est quod in determinate loco et situ sint. Et ideo determinatio loci non requiritur ad adorationem principaliter, quasi sit de necessitate ipsius: sed secundum quandam decentiam, sicut et alia corporalia signa” (*S. Th.* II-II, q.85, a.3).

of a definite setting for worship, firstly because, it being a consecrated place, it inspires increased devotion and a greater efficacy of prayers. Secondly, due to the necessities of the sacred mysteries performed, which logically require a particular space, and thirdly, the Angelic Doctor cites the passage of St. Matthew which speaks of the efficacy of the community prayer that ensues in such a designated place<sup>240</sup>.

Aquinas further expounds upon a figurative symbolism in the contrast between the two places of worship of the Old Testament: The tabernacle, which was portable and unfixed, represented earthly existence which is temporary and changeable, whereas the Temple, as a permanent and established place, symbolized everlasting life which is an unchanging state. In addition, the portable tabernacle, having been built strictly by the Jewish people, more directly symbolized the Old Law, whereas the Temple prophetically announced the New Law, as its construction was completed with the participation of other peoples, the Gentiles<sup>241</sup>.

The recurrent theme of construction and reconstruction, profanation and consecration of temples and altars within the Old Testament is strongly linked with profound religious identity and experience within the spiritual journey of the Jewish people, constituting momentous and emotional historic moments, that marked their lives forever. For example, the purification of the Temple during the reconquest of the Maccabees was commemorated “for eight days with rejoicing [...] bearing ivy-

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<sup>240</sup> “Ad secundum dicendum quod determinatus locus eligitur ad adorandum, non propter Deum, qui adoratur, quasi loco concludatur, sed propter ipsos adorantes. Et hoc triplici ratione. Primo quidem, propter loci consecrationem, ex qua spiritualem devotionem concipiunt orantes, ut magis exaudiantur: sicut patet ex adoratione Salominis, 3Reg 8. – Secundo, propter sacra mysteria et alia sanctitatis signa quae ibi continentur. – Tertio, propter concursum multorum adorantium, ex quo fit oratio magis exaudibilis: secundum illud Mt 18, 20: *Ubi sunt duo vel tres congregati in nomine meo, ibi sum ego in medio eorum*” (S. Th. II-II, q.85, a.3).

<sup>241</sup> “Ratio autem figuralis esse potest quia per haec duo significatur duplex status. Per tabernaculum enim, quod est mutabile, significatur status praesentis vitae mutabilis. Per templum vero, quod erat firmum et stans, significatur status futurae vitae, quae omnino invariabilis est. Et propter hoc in aedificatione templi dicitur quod non est auditus sonitus mallei vel securis, ad significandum quod omnis perturbationis tumultus longe erit a statu futuro. – Vel per tabernaculum significatur status veteris legis: per templum autem a Salomone constructum, status novae legis. Unde ad constructionem tabernaculi soli Iudaei sunt operati: ad aedificationem vero temple cooperate sunt etiam gentiles, scilicet Tyrii et Sidonii” (S. Th. I-II, q.102, a.4).

wreathed wands and beautiful branches and also fronds of palm, they offered hymns of thanksgiving to him who had given success to the purifying of his own holy place” (2 Mac, 10: 6-7). Thus, the demarcation of places, separated and defined according to a particular mode of worship, assume meaning and a broad connotation far beyond their merely practical usage, as they evolve from deep-rooted anthropological and spiritual needs, stongly linked with the human aspiration for celebratory manifestation. The union of the concrete place with the transcendent ideal, is a symbol also of how the human being, in his corporal and spiritual constitution, actuates and evolves the profound attributes of his spirit through tangible manifestation. Thus, the necessary balance between the physical and spiritual is strongly felt in the erection of sacred spaces, as an outward form of interior disposition. “If places can be made and used in such a way as to mediate a particular sense of the sacred, this means that the sacred is partly defined and created by material making, which also makes for a particular sense of religious identity and power. It is no accident that religious zealots often destroy the worship places of their opponents” (Burch Brown, 2003, p. 211)<sup>242</sup>.

The evolution of the Christian place of worship within the New Testament is noteworthy, as the Apostles first continued to frequent the Temple for the official prayers, but soon began to gather together in common houses (κατ’ οἴκῳ) to celebrate the Eucharist. The liturgy was often celebrated in the most important room of the house — the one designated for family feasts, which the Greeks call ἀνώγειον οὐπερώον. Consequently, the first liturgies of the Church were held within a familial ambience, which must have favoured the intimacy and brotherhood existing among the first Christians. Examples of such churches, dating from the third and fourth centuries, have been excavated at Dura-Europas in Syria (Yates, 2008, p. 3).

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<sup>242</sup> In addition, Chiffley (1997) observed the fundamental import of the separation of special spaces even among ancient peoples, where mythic narratives had an important role in designating them as such, while the performance of rites increased their significance as a manner of inhabiting the world meaningfully (p. 25).

The *domus ecclesiae* or *ecclesiae domesticate*, as these first sacred circumstances for liturgical worship were called, are given abundant mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles and the letters of St. Paul. Later on, as the communities grew, entire houses were used for the liturgical services. In this way, the design of Greek-roman residences of the time exercised a certain influence over the structure of the liturgical rituals and ceremony of that epoch. “The Christian temple is, in effect, the successor of the *domus ecclesiae* of antiquity which was at one and the same time a church, of course, but also a diocese, a refectory with its reserves of food, a dispensary, and a hospice” (Courau, 1997, p. 138). Interestingly, the Latin languages allude to the ecclesiastical building using the word *ecclesia* from the Greek *εκαλέω*, convoke, which gives idea of an assembly: *ecclesia*, *iglesia*, *église*, while the Germanic languages have developed the term from the Greek word that refers to the building: *κυριακόν*, *kirche*, *church*, etc. The latter also encompasses the idea of assembly, clearly demonstrating that the physical space of the church is a mere concretization of the living reality of the communitarian ideal.

The Christian temple gradually emerged as a highly figurative and symbolic edifice primarily as a symbol of the body of Christ, based on His own words, for “...He spoke of the Temple of His body” (Jn 2: 21)<sup>243</sup>. It thus materialized as a divine manifestation of Christ’s continual presence on earth with a categorically eschatological significance as an image of the Celestial Jerusalem, together with an anthropological connotation, being considered as symbolic of man himself — his corporal and spiritual attributes reflected in the various parts of the structure, evoking the Petrine theme: “...like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house” (1 Pet 2:4).

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<sup>243</sup> “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (Jn, 2:19).

As an image of the universe, a micro-cosmos<sup>244</sup>, the edifice assimilated cosmic elements in its architectonic design, perfected and idealized by human art, as well as its symbolic directional situation, identifying it as a “sacralized” cosmos (Hani, 1981, p. 46). There existed a rigorous symbolism for both the architectural plan of the place of worship as well as the material and tools used in its completion. Thus, the vertical and horizontal structural arrangement was often derived from the proportionate division of a sphere, which allegorically brought a cosmic connotation to the structure<sup>245</sup>. The construction was therefore seen as a figurative representation of the creation of the world, for “like the cosmos, the temple is produced out of chaos” (Burckhardt, 2006, p. 50). The tools employed in the construction were likened to divine instruments, which work the “prime material” of the construction just as the prime material of the universe was transformed by the Creator. Thus, within the medieval concept, the architect was an image of God, the Divine architect of the universe, who in turn built the spiritual Church upon the foundations of apostolic teaching (De Bruyne, 1947, p. 228).

St. Maximus the Confessor enlightened the concept of liturgical space through exploration of its mystical, cosmic, and eschatological implications, offering a transcendent vision of the physical structure of a church. His work *The Church's Mystagogy*, condensing his own spiritual, anthropological, and cosmic vision of the liturgy, reveals an original insight into the significance of the church structure, closely

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<sup>244</sup> Within the perspective of liturgical space, Bouyer (1962) comments on the synthesis of elements found within sacred space, which combines elements of the cosmos, both human and angelic, material and spiritual, which emerge centred on the lordship of Christ resurrected. “l’homme a l’impression de s’y être donné comme un abrégé du monde, où toute la sacralité de celui-ci, en vertu d’une mystérieuse sympathie, va se trouver concentrée” (p. 253). This is what may be identified, he continues, within the ornamentation of the gothic cathedral and the symbolism of the byzantine temple, which reflect the consecration of a miniature universe (p. 214). The cosmic symbolism of the place of worship was vividly conceived by Thibault (1999) who found in the architectural characteristics of the structure the very echo of cosmic realities, which were transformed through human art: “l’univers se reconnaît dans l’élan des piliers, la courbe de la voûte, la lumière des verrières et l’ombre de la crypte. Son cœur bat au rythme des travées, son souffle circule dans les nefs” (Thibault, 1999, p. 63).

<sup>245</sup> De Bruyne explained the significance and application of the architectural structure to the idea of “L’église de pierre est avant tout une forme architecturale que les auteurs apprécient dans sa matérialité mais elle est aussi le symbole du monde invisible, soit que par sa forme ronde elle rappelle la société fermée et achevée du ciel, soit que par la croix elle apparaisse comme la projection architecturale du crucifié” (p. 242).

related to his ideal of the liturgical celebration. He conceives of the liturgy in its cosmic dimension as the elevation of the entire creation toward its Creator, affording man a unitive dynamic, both with the Divine and with his fellow creatures<sup>246</sup>. In sequence, St. Maximus observes an eschatological representation of the earthly liturgy as a preamble of the heavenly experience. Von Balthasar stands out for having explored the essence of the Greek Father's idea of liturgy as "Cosmic":

The liturgy is, for Maximus, more than a mere symbol; it is, in modern terms, an *opus operatum*, an effective transformation of the world into transfigured, divinized existence. For that reason, in Maximus' view — again unlike that of both Evagrius and Pseudo-Dionysius — the liturgy is ultimately always "cosmic liturgy": a way of drawing the entire world into the hypostatic union, because both world and liturgy share a Christological foundation (Von Balthasar, 2003, p. 322).

Although St. Maximus mentions and praises Pseudo-Dionysius' writings on the liturgy, he makes it clear that he has no intention of repeating the latter and embarks in a new direction, basing his ideas, to a great extent, on the physical structure of the church<sup>247</sup>. Thus, St. Maximus presents a markedly cosmic vision of the church as "a figure and image of the entire world composed of visible and invisible essences

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<sup>246</sup> Commenting on St. Maximus' work, Von Balthasar (2003) demonstrates the significance of the physical place of worship in the development of his conception of liturgy: "The symbolism of the *Mystagogy* begins with a building: with a visible church made of stone... and that is why Maximus insists, in a very simple way, on real participation in the liturgy within this building" (p. 218). The profoundly cosmic idea comes to light also in Von Balthasar's commentary: "So the Church, as a visible community, is already "the image and likeness of God", Who holds the whole world in its variety, together, who draws it up to himself, melts it into unity, and still leaves to each being its own being and its own place. The Church is an image of God" (p. 322).

<sup>247</sup> Von Balthasar (2003) points out the original characteristic of the *Mystagogy* which he observes goes beyond being a merely "narrow imitation of Pseudo-Dionysius' work: "Von Balthasar points out that in contrast, St. Maximus holds the visible structure as an important starting point for his own thought, for, "within it, he sees the crucial articulation between clergy and people, the space where the liturgy is performed and the space where the faithful attend it" (p. 316-317).

because like it, it contains both unity and diversity”<sup>248</sup> (*Myst.*, 2; PG 91, 668). He saw the ideas and principles of the spiritual world take actualization and form through the figures of the sensible world; consequently such attributes of the spirit may be considered in light of their materialization. Pointing to the Church building as an image of the sensible world, St. Maximus compares the architectural components, sanctuary and nave, to heaven and earth respectively, while afterwards inverting the comparison to assert that “the world is a church since it possesses heaven corresponding to a sanctuary, and for a nave it has the adornment of the earth”<sup>249</sup> (*Myst.*, 3; PG 91, 672).

St. Maximus draws an even more detailed correlation between the church building and anthropological elements, associating man’s spiritual and physical attributes to corresponding parts of the building: the soul to the sanctuary, as in meditation, his mind to the altar through a manifestation of divine Theology, and body to the nave, indicating moral wisdom. Having produced this rich analogy between the church and man, he then goes on to demonstrate how man, in turn, is a mystical church: “Conversely, man is a mystical church, because through the nave which is his body he brightens by virtue the ascetic force of the soul by the observance of the commandments in moral wisdom. Through the sanctuary of his soul he conveys to God in natural contemplation through reason the principles of sense purely in spirit cut off from matter. Finally, through the altar of the mind he summons the silence abounding in song in the innermost recesses of the unseen and unknown utterance of

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<sup>248</sup> Κατά δευτέραν δέ θεωρίας ἐπιβολήν, τοῦ σύμπαντος κόσμου τοῦ ἐξ ὁρατῶν καί ἀοράτων οὐσιῶν ὑφεστῶτος, εἶναι τύπον καί εἰκόνα, τήν ἁγίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐκκλησίαν, ἔφασκεν· ὡς τήν αὐτήν αὐτῷ καί ἔνωσιν, καί διάκρισιν ἐπιδεχομένην. Ὡσπερ γάρ αὕτη κατά την οἰκοδομήν εἰς οἶκος ὑπάρχουσα, τήν κατά τήν θέσιν τοῦ σχήματος ποιᾷ ἰδιότητι, δέξεται διαφοράν, διαφρουμένη εἰς τε τόν μόνον ἱερεῦσιν τε καί λειτουργοῖς ἀπόκληρον τόπον, ὃν καλοῦμεν ἱερατεῖον· καί τόν πᾶσι τοῖς πιστοῖς λαοῖς πρός ἐπίβασιν ἄνετον, ὃν καλοῦμεν ναόν (Translation by G.C. Berthold).

<sup>249</sup> Ὡσαύτως δέ καί τόν κόσμον ὑπάρχειν Ἐκκλησίαν· ἱερατεῖῳ μὲν εὐκότα τόν οὐρανόν ἔχοντα· ναῶν δέ, τήν κατά γῆν διακόσμησιν. (Translation by G.C. Berthold) “Maximus presents the Church, and the sign that she imprints on the world, in the largest and most open terms possible. The Church lies in the midst of the natural and supernatural cosmos like a source of light that sets all things revolving around itself; in that she represents everything symbolically, she also is an effective guarantee of the transformation of the whole universe” (Von Balthasar, 2003, p. 322).



divinity by another silence, rich in speech and tone”<sup>250</sup> (*Myst.*, 4; PG 91, 672). In a similar vein, St. Maximus classifies the comparison of the church with God himself as a primary stage of contemplation, “since it has the same activity as he does by imitation and in figure”<sup>251</sup> (*Myst.*, 1; PG 91,664), due to the fact that it actuates a comparative union of the devout with Him.

In a later period, the medieval liturgist William Durand of Mende would offer a highly allegoric vision of the place of worship, emphasizing once again the corporal format of the structure<sup>252</sup>, while also placing importance on the cruciform structure of the place of worship as a reminder of man’s crucifixion in relation to the world and his obligation to follow the example of the Crucified<sup>253</sup>. He additionally outlines a detailed interpretation for each part of the church in particular. The windows, for example, are representative of the human exterior senses, receptive to the illumination of divine light and spiritual goods, though closed to the evil influences of the world, such as

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<sup>250</sup> Καί πάλιν κατ’ ἄλλον τρόπον θεωρίας, ἄνθρωπον εἶναι τὴν ἁγίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ Ἐκκλησίαν ἔλεγε· ψυχὴν μὲν ἔχουσαν τό ἱερατεῖον· καί νοῦν, τό θεῖον θυσιαστήριον· καί σῶμα, τόν ναόν· ὡς εἰκόνα καί ὁμοίωσιν ὑπάρχουσαν τοῦ κατ’ εἰκόνα Θεοῦ καί ὁμοίωσιν γενομένου ἀνθρώπου· καί διά μὲν τοῦ ναοῦ, ὡς διά σώματος, τὴν ἠθικὴν φιλοσοφίαν προβαλλομένην· διά δέ τοῦ ἱερατείου, ὡς διά ψυχῆς, τὴν φυσικὴν θεωρίαν πνευματικῶς ἐξηγουμένην· καί ὡς διά νοός τοῦ θεοῦ θυσιαστηρίου, τὴν μυστικὴν θεολογίαν ἐμβαίνουσαν. Καί ἔμπαλιν, Ἐκκλησίαν μυστικὴν τόν ἄνθρωπον, ὡς διά ναοῦ μὲν τοῦ σώματος, τό πρακτικόν τῆς ψυχῆς ταῖς τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐνεργείαις κατὰ τὴν ἠθικὴν φιλοσοφίαν ἐναρέτως φαιδρύνοντα· ὡς δι’ ἱερατείου δέ τῆς ψυχῆς τούς κατ’ αἴθησιν λόγους, καθαρῶς ἐν πνεύματι τῆς ὕλης περιτμηθέντας, κατὰ τὴν φυσικὴν θεωρίαν διά λόγου τῷ Θεῷ προσκομίζοντα· καί ὡς διά θυσιαστηρίου τοῦ νοός, τὴν ἐν ἀδύτοις πλυμνητον τῆς ἀφανοῦς καί ἀγνώστου μεγαλοφωνίας σιγὴν τῆς θεότητος, δι’ ἄλλης λάλου τε καί πολυφθόγγου σιγῆς προσκαλούμενον· καί ὡς ἐφικτόν ἀνθρώπῳ, κατὰ μυστικὴν θεολογίαν αὐτῆ συγγινόμενον (Translation by G.C. Berthold).

<sup>251</sup> Τὴν τοίνυν ἁγίαν Ἐκκλησίαν κατὰ πρώτην θεωρίας ἐπιβολήν, τύπον καί εἰκόνα Θεοῦ φέρειν, ἔλεγεν ὁ μακάριος γέρον ἐκεῖνος· ὡς τὴν αὐτὴν αὐτῷ κατὰ μίμησιν καί τύπον ἐνέργειαν ἔχουσαν (Translation by G.C. Berthold).

<sup>252</sup> “Dispositio autem Ecclesiae materialis, modum humani corporis tenet. Cancellus namque sive locus ubi altare est, caput repraesentat et Crux ex utraque parte brachia et manus; reliqua pars ab Occidente, quicquid corpori superesse videtur. Sacrificium altaris, votum significant cordis” (*Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*. Lib. I, Cap. 1, 14. p. 11).

<sup>253</sup> “Quaedam tamen Ecclesiae in modum Crucis formantur, ad notandum nos mundo crucifigi, seu cricifixum sequi debere iuxta illud” (*Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, Lib. I, Cap. 1, 17, p. 12).

vanity<sup>254</sup>. Other structural components did not escape a symbolic interpretation, such as the roof which corresponds to charity, or the door which denotes obedience<sup>255</sup>.

### 3.4. The symbolic gothic cathedral

The gothic Cathedral, an embodiment of mystical symbolism perfected through the gradual development of Christian construction, was richly influenced by diverse ideologies and imagery, constituting a breakthrough of architectural genius in the Western world. The philosophical and theological aspirations of the epoch materialized into carved stone and stained glass, soaring vaults and pointed arches, which all bespoke a transcendent ideal. This “sculpted encyclopaedia”, as Righetti<sup>256</sup> named it, in which all natural and supernatural knowledge of nature, science, morality and history could be contemplated by a myriad of the most diverse public, was a true *Biblia Pauperum* which silently spoke, through colour, light and form, of the truths of Religion and their application to the human condition.

In addition, medieval iconography, was subjected to follow the rules and order of a kind of “sacred mathematics”, in which concepts such as measurement, number, and symmetry were of highly symbolic importance. Contemporary studies have

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<sup>254</sup> “Fenestrae Ecclesiae vitreae, sunt scripturae divinae, quae ventum et pluviam repellunt; id est nociva prohibent; et dum claritatem veris solis, id est, Dei in Ecclesiam, id est, in corda fidelium transmittunt, inhabitants illuminant [...] Item per fenestras quinque sensus corporis significantur, qui extra stricti esse debent, ne vanitates hauriant, et intus patere ad bona spiritualia liberius capienda” (*Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, Lib. I, Cap. 1, 24, p. 13).

<sup>255</sup> “In templo Dei seu gratiae est fundamentum, fides, quae est de re non visa. Tectum, charitas, quae operit multitudinem peccatorum. Ostium, obedientia, de qua dominus, inquit. Si vis ad vitam ingredi, serva mandata. Pavimentum, humilitas, de qua Psal. 118. adhaesit pavimento anima mea” (*Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, Lib I, Cap. 1, 16, p. 11).

<sup>256</sup> The Italian liturgist, Righetti (1945) richly describes the array of natural and supernatural human experiences that find their materialization in the sculptured expression of the Gothic Cathedral: “Calendario e corredata dei segni astronomici, le arti liberali, la grammatica, la dialettica, la musica, episodi e scherzi della vita sociale e familiare. In una parola, tutto lo scibile naturale e sovrannaturale (la natura, la scienza, la morale, la storia) [...] e un'enciclopedia scolpita, un catechismo in esempi, parlante ogni momento agli occhi e all'animo del popolo” (p. 353). Correa de Oliveira (2004) identifies the gothic cathedral as masterpieces of symbolism which holds supernatural realities that lead to an idea of heaven (p. 32).

demonstrated that some of the architectonic details of the Gothic style churches and cathedrals, apparently merely structural and decorative, were in fact constructed in harmonic musical measurements. Thus, “general proportions based upon the intervals in Gregorian chant and, more profoundly, upon discussions of Pythagorean numbers and relations among them” (Rappaport, 1999, p. 257-258).

The universe, in all of its mineral, vegetable, animal, human, angelic, and divine dimensions found its expression in intricate artwork of the gothic structure. “The cathedral, like the plane or the forest has atmosphere and perfume, splendour, and twilight, and gloom. The great rose window behind which sinks the western sun, seems in the evening hours to be the sun itself about to vanish at the edge of a marvellous forest. Already he feels himself in the heart of the heavenly Jerusalem, and tastes the profound peace of the city of the future” (Mâle, 1958, p. 457)<sup>257</sup>.

Based on the ideology of Pseudo-Dionysius<sup>258</sup>, the medieval speculation surrounding light raised the merely cosmic dimension of solar activity toward a Divine portrayal<sup>259</sup>. Thus, the gothic cathedral was devised to allow the entrance of abundant and colourful light, with the positioning of the structures and stained glass calculated to synergize with solar activity so that “sacred space could be marked by a richness of coloured light, in which reds and blues mingled and the proportions shifted as the

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<sup>257</sup> This cosmic interpretation of the place of worship, underlined by Mâle, is portrayed as surpassing the merely natural, through a transformation within the context of architectonic dimensions: “La cathédrale, comme la plaine, comme la forêt, a son atmosphère, son parfum, sa lumière, son clair-obscur, ses ombres. Sa grande rose, derrière laquelle le soleil se couche, semble être, aux heures du soir, le soleil lui-même, prêt à disparaître a la lisière d’une forêt merveilleuse. Mais c’est un monde transfigure où la lumière est plus éclatante que celle de la réalité, ou les ombres sont plus mystérieuses. Déjà nous nous sentons au sein de la Jérusalem céleste, de la cite future” (Translation by D. Nussey) Mâle (1958), continues by describing the profound sentiments of peace and protection the cathedral offers (p. 457).

<sup>258</sup> See particularly, Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Divine Names*, 4; PG 3, 697.

<sup>259</sup> Duby (1984) captures the new perspective of the cosmic-mystical idea of light that penetrated twelfth-century France and was gradually integrated into the architectural designs of gothic cathedrals in diverse places — a breakthrough in contrast with the darker and more austere style of former times, also due to the prevalent ideology of Pseudo-Dionysius. “Dieu est lumière, les nouveaux théologiens le répètent. Ils voient la création comme une incandescence procédant d’une source unique, la lumière appelant à l’existence, de degré, les créatures et, rebondissant par reflets, de maillon en maillon de cette même chaîne hiérarchisée, la lumière depuis les confins ténébreux du cosmos revenant à son origine qui est Dieu” (p. 89).

direction of sunlight altered through the day, so that the worshiper might seem to be praising God from within a kaleidoscope” (Kieckhefer, 2004, p. 109).

As is common in earlier church edifices, the cathedral is constructed with the worshippers facing the east, in the direction of the rising sun, for the sacred space of the gothic cathedral is a place where “light is more striking than in reality, and shadows, more mysterious”<sup>260</sup> (Mâle, 1958. p. 457). Accordingly, the altarpiece took its place at the point of the rising of the sun; the morning chanting of Lauds was thereby illuminated within a profusion of colours beaming through the rose window above the altar. The North side, symbolizing the cold region of darkness, was mostly dedicated to representations of the Old Testament, which had not received the rays from the “Sun of Justice”, whereas the South side, which is bathed in the light of the sun for large portions of the day, was naturally dedicated to the New. As the sun sets in the West, this part of the cathedral, particularly the rose window of the facade, normally depicted the Last Judgement, symbol of the last evening of the world (Mâle, 1958, p. 36).

Far from separating man entirely from the reality and prosaic dimensions of everyday life, the gothic art within the cathedral included not only dramatic art forms related to strictly moral or catechetical teachings, but also “episodes of social and family life” (Righetti, 1945, p. 353). This lent a cultural and social dimension to the cathedral, allowing it to reflect the daily life of the society amidst which it arose. In the great cathedrals of France, all of the months of the year are illustrated through images of typical human activity, such as planting and harvesting, related to particular seasons. “Every walk of life in medieval society can be seen portrayed in the art and decoration of a medieval cathedral. At Notre-Dame in Paris, a peasant gathers winter fuel: another, with boots laid aside, toasts his feet before a fire to represent February in the calendar at Amiens; others again are seen with plough and horse and cart at the

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<sup>260</sup> “Mais c’est un monde transfiguré où la lumière est plus éclatante que celle de la réalité, où les sombres sont plus mystérieuses” (Personal translation).

entry to ‘Giotto’s Tower’ at Florence” (Swaan, 1981, p. 13). Therefore, the individual was led to see the symbolism and the hidden, yet true beauty of his ordinary daily life reflected in that incredible form of art, thereby feeling comprehended and supported in his endeavours, while simultaneously instructed and admonished to seek eternal life through the practice of virtues to avoid eternal punishment. These renditions are a silent, but vivid and detailed testimony of both the common and the sublime aspirations of a people.

Symbol of faith, the cathedral was also a symbol of love. All men laboured there. The peasants offered their all, the work of their strong arms. They pulled carts, and carried stones on their shoulders with the good will of the giant-saint Christopher. The burgess gave his silver, the baron his land, and the artist his genius. The vitality which radiates from these immortal works is the outcome of the collaboration of all the living forces of France for more than two hundred years. The dead too were associated with the living, for the church was paved with tombstones, and past generations with joined hands continued to pray in the old church where past and present are united in one and the same feeling of love. The cathedral was the city’s consciousness (Mâle, 1958, p. 458)<sup>261</sup>.

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<sup>261</sup> “Symbole de foi, la cathédrale fut aussi un symbole d’amour. Tous y travaillèrent. Le peuple offrit ce qu’il avait: ses bras robustes. Il s’attela aux chars, porta les pierres sur ses épaules. Il eut la bonne volonté du géant saint Christophe. Le bourgeois donna son argent, le baron sa terre, l’artiste son génie. Pendant plus de deux siècles toutes les forces vives de la France collaborèrent: de la vie puissante qui rayonne de ces œuvres éternelles. Les morts même s’associaient aux vivants; la cathédrale était pavée de pierres tombales; les générations anciennes, les mains jointes sur leurs dalles funèbres, continuaient à prier dans la vieille église. En elle le passé et le présent s’unissaient en un même sentiment d’amour. Elle était la conscience de la cité” (Translation by D. Nussey) It is noteworthy that within a more recent perspective, Doré (2005) points toward the highly significant impact of the gothic cathedral in our days: “La cathédrale apparaît comme le monument révélateur, symbolique, paradigmatique, exemplificateur, emblématique, de toute une société unifiée et intégrée” (p. 89).

### 3.5. The transcendence of liturgical space in human experience

Space or place is a limiting determination considered in and of itself. But the liturgy challenges a re-examination of space for Lacoste, who envisions the liturgical experience as a unique subversion of the laws of topology, an “over determination” the opening of a “non-place”, allowing the human being to step beyond strictly “being-in-the-world” in the Heideggerian sense to also “being-before-God”:

The experiential practice of liturgy can open up a space where neither world nor earth is interposed between man and God. [...] By throwing into turmoil the topology it subordinates, liturgy implies that the dialectic of world and earth is perhaps not the whole truth of place. It does not, of course, lead us to believe that we can conceive of man divested of place. But it does suggest the concept of a being-there or of a corporeal existence that simultaneously and essentially is tantamount to being a being-before-God (Lacoste, 2004, p. 28-29).

Lacoste seems to be suggesting, then, that in the heightened relationship with God achieved in liturgy, a certain participation occurs — albeit within the parameters of human nature — in the divine freedom from all limitation<sup>262</sup>. That God by His very nature transcends all boundaries of space becomes evident if we recall, with Pickstock (1998) that “because of the divine nature, the place where God is located is not a place in addition to His being, nor could it be said, in contrast to the spatial identifications of the worshipper, that God is defined by His situation. To the contrary, place itself is

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<sup>262</sup> Schrijvers (2005), whose post-doctoral research is dedicated to phenomenological, theological, and philosophical issues, comments on Lacoste’s thinking with emphasis on the non-place and the non-time of his liturgical experience. “According to Lacoste, prayer interrupts the dialectics that governs history; liturgy is capable of a rupture with the violence that makes up (our) history. Thus, along with the non-place, the liturgical experience installs a non-time (EA 83), and this non-time is a *kairos* that takes over the *chronos* of history. To make this phenomenologically more concrete, Lacoste points to the possibility that the (Hegelian) master and the slave pray together. Indeed, my foes are not refused entrance to the and the world makes room for a fragile *realization* of the eschatological good. [...] Thus the liturgical experience breaks with the ‘world and ‘earth’ to lose itself in the enthusiastic vision of God’s kingdom. However, the liturgical project, as every project, aims at more than is in its power. The believer tries to appropriate the absolute future” (Schrijvers, 2005, p. 319).

defined by God: “*Domine, dilexi decorum domus tuae et locum habitationis gloriae tuae*”. The place where God is, which is the place of glory, is a place defined in relation to God” (p. 229).

Liturgical space thus emerges in its capacity to create conditions for a transcendent experience, as it elevates the individual beyond his quotidian existence. The very etymology of the term *temple*, derived from the Latin *templum* and the Greek “τέμενος”, attests to an idea of separation and difference<sup>263</sup>. The entrance into liturgical space thus marks a distinct transition between the sacred and the profane<sup>264</sup>, for the threshold constitutes the boundary between two distinct worlds, but is also the place of their confrontation, where they communicate and where the transition between the sacred and profane comes about. The transitional places are thus dynamic and impact the experience of space. Eliade (1964) affirms: “The threshold, the door shows the solution of continuity in space immediately and concretely” (p. 24-25)<sup>265</sup>.

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<sup>263</sup> Derived from the Latin “templum” and the Greek word temenos, τέμενος, (Hani, 1981, p. 79). (the Greek verb τέμνω ‘temnō’, means “to cut”) Interestingly, the term “contemplation” is linked with the idea of the temple as it has its root in the Latin “cum” and “templum” (Saraiva, 1993, p. 298. 1187). Significantly, the term is recognized by Di Simone (2001) in conjunction with the concept of art revealed within a sacred space: “L’art come il rito è perciò un *temenos*, un luogo sacro: terreno determinato, tagliato, ben spazzato, il circolo di terra battuta che costituì anche il primo spazio teatrale. Tutto ciò che è immerso in questo spazio si trasfigura” (p. 500-501).

<sup>264</sup> Within his interpretation of ritual, Van Gennep (2004) emphasizes the door within a transcendent connotation of a transitional connotation, for as he expressed, “the door is the boundary between the foreign and domestic worlds in the case of an ordinary dwelling between the profane and sacred worlds in the case of a temple. Therefore to cross the threshold is to unite oneself with a new world” (p. 20). Interpreting Van Gennep’s ritual interpretation, Terrin (2004a) observes how his conception of rites of passage is very much influenced by the conception of this passing through the door: “Van Gennep intuí e vê a possibilidade de interpretar a maior parte dos ritos exatamente com base no “passar a porta”, revelando como em todo o mundo ritual está implícita a ideia de uma soleira, de uma porta, e como todos os ritos incluem portanto um momento de ‘passagem”” (p. 381).

<sup>265</sup> “La frontière qui distingue et oppose deux mondes, et le lieu paradoxal ou ces mondes communiquent, ou peut s’effectuer le passage du monde profane au monde sacré. [...] Le seuil, la porte montrent d’une façon immédiate et concrète la solution de l’espace” (Translation by Williard R.Trask).

In general, the natural development of preparatory ritual purifications<sup>266</sup> and prescribed gestures such as the removal of footwear or the kissing of the threshold before entering a revered place in some cultures, attest to the awareness of this symbolic transition, involving not only a physical, but also an ideational ingress, which calls for a special sacredness of deportment. The anthropologist Catedra (1991) recognizes the threshold as “the place where limits open” and “the subject of a great number of physical and symbolic rituals” (p. 56). For Catedra, notions of vulnerability are present in consciousness of uncleanness, which in turn explains the ceremonial ablutions commonly performed at entrances.

Rites of purity and incorporation or preparation for union (for instance by an offering) are frequently performed in front of a door. For the same reason people display an image of a divinity... to protect the entrance, to which people sometimes offer a coin, a prayer or a sacrifice. So the inscription “Ave Maria” which is written at many doors is not a superfluous gesture. A spatial rite of passage is followed by a spiritual passage. The guardians of the threshold – archers, dragons, lions, sphinx or simple crosses in chapels, houses and cathedrals – still remind us of the step we are taking and that we are about to leave something behind (p. 57).

Therefore, the concept of transition to a sacred space holds a heightened impact within the interchange of symbolic ritual or architectural features. Within this perspective, the corporeal attitudes and ritual gesture accentuate the impact of the ingress, heightening the awareness and impact. Grimes (2007) identified the division of ritual space as not necessarily merely a physical barrier; the division of spaces also occurs along an immaterial line. He points to human ritual as a natural and spontaneous way for divisions to occur, divisions that although non-physical, hold

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<sup>266</sup> Purifications were performed in former epochs before entering the church building through the washing of one’s face and hands in the fountains close to the church entrance, while inscriptions engraved above the fountains attest to the profound meaning of these external purifications. “Wash here your sins, and not just your face”. According to Hani (1981) these fountains were subsequently replaced by the holy water fonts that we know of today. The latter were first placed outside the building, then under the doorway, and after this within the interior close to the door (p. 80-81).



much of the reality and effect of physical divisions: “Ritual partitions, then, may be architectural, but they may be sartorial or gestural as well. In fact, screens may be completely immaterial; they may be purely conceptual” (p. 159).

Consequently, the integration into liturgical space itself constitutes an important dimension of the contrasting and experience of distinct spaces. Within the concept of liturgy, this also influences the individual toward an increased awareness of the sacred, thus inspiring spiritual sentiments, in preparation of the celebration to occur. The passing from the quotidian, the profane, the normal, toward the sacred, the infinite and the heavenly, impacts the participant of liturgy, increasing awareness and awe. This experience is distinctly personal, touching each individual in a particular way. Within the ideological perspective of this transition, it is noteworthy that St. Maximus the Confessor emphasised the timeless significance of the entrance of the faithful into the place of worship, indicating the striking contrast between the disorder and malevolence of the outside world and the atmosphere inside the church, which serves as a refuge of peace and contemplation (*Myst.*, 23; PG 91, 698-702). Thus, passage into a church was reminiscent of a dramatic conversion from vice to virtue, and from ignorance to knowledge. In a general sense, it constituted a symbol of the conversion of the unbelievers in general, but on a more personal level, a sign of the progression of each member of the faithful in his struggles with his own weaknesses in fulfilling the commandments (*Myst.*, 9, PG 91, 688-689).

Consequently, St. Maximus emphasised a spiritual and intellectual transformation signified in this transition, which he pointed out to be highly beneficial for the individual: “Thus we see effected in the first entrance the rejection of unbelief, the increase of faith, the lessening of vice, the bestowal of virtue, the disappearance of ignorance, and the development of knowledge”<sup>267</sup>. (*Myst.*, 24; PG 91, 704). The ritual significance of the “closing of the doors” after the Gospel — a gesture which

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<sup>267</sup> Κατά μὲν πρώτην εἴσοδον ἀπιστίας ἀποβολήν, πίστεως αὔξησιν, κακίας μείωσιν, ἀρετῆς ἐπίδοσιν, ἀγνοίας ἀφανισμόν, γνώσεως προσθήκην (Translation by G.C. Berthold).

inclusively dismissed the Catechumens from the rest of the celebration — was considered by St. Maximus to hold an eschatological meaning, for it signified man’s passage from his material surroundings after the judgement to the “spiritual world”<sup>268</sup>.

In his commentaries of “Les Rites Eucharistiques” Daniélou (1958) also emphasised the symbolic impact of the entrance into the church of newly baptized, basing his commentaries on the principle catecheses of the early church, wherein the concept of the Eucharistic as a heavenly banquet, gave way to the notion that the entrance into the earthly church was a mere prefigure of the entrance into heaven. He presents the ideas of St. Gregory of Nazianzen, who was inspired by the parable of the wise virgins, regarding the procession and entrance of the newly baptized into the church on the Paschal night (p. 176-177). Therefore, this father of the Church saw a reflection of heavenly symbols in all its aspects, from the sacred music to the candles held by the neo-Christians. He considered that “The boundaries between the earthly world and the heavenly have been done away with. The baptized already mingle with the angels. They are about to take part in the liturgy of heaven” (p. 177)<sup>269</sup>.

Thus, the physical partition, the door of the church stands as a mystical symbol, for it represents Christ who said: “I am the door; if any one enters by me, he will be

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<sup>268</sup> Ἡ δὲ μετὰ τὴν ἱεράν ἀνάγνωσιν τοῦ ἁγίου Εὐαγγελίου, καὶ τὴν ἐκβολὴν τῶν κατηχομένων γινομένη κλεισίς τῶν θυρῶν τῆς ἁγίας τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐκκλησίας, τὴν τε τῶν ὑλικῶν δηλοῖ πάροδον, καὶ τὴν γενησομένην μετὰ τὸ φοβερόν ἐκεῖνον ἀφορισμὸν καὶ τὴν φοβερωτέραν ψῆφον, εἰς τὸν νοητὸν κόσμον, ἥτοι τὴν νυμφῶνα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, τῶν ἀξίων εἰσοδόν· καὶ τὴν ἐν ταῖς αἰσθήσεσι τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἀπάτην ἐνεργείας, τελείαν ἀποβολὴν (*Myst.*, 15; PG 91, 694. Translation by G.C. Berthold). In turn, he commented that the actual entrance of the congregation into the “holy mysteries”, constituted a commencement of a new instruction, a prelude of that which will occur in heaven in relation to the desires of God concerning our Salvation: Ἡ δὲ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ σεπτῶν μυστηρίων εἰσοδος, ἀρχὴ καὶ προοίμιόν ἐστιν (ὡς ὁ μέγας ἐκεῖνος ἔφασκε γέρων) τῆς γενησομένης ἐν οὐρανοῖς καινῆς διδασκαλίας περὶ τῆς οἰκονομίας τοῦ Θεοῦ τῆς εἰς ἡμᾶς, καὶ ἀποκάλυψις τοῦ ἐν ἀδύτοις τῆς θείας κρυφίτητος ὄντος μυστηρίου τῆς ἡμῶν σωτηρίας. Οὐ γὰρ μὴ πῶ φησί, πρὸς τοὺς ἑαυτοῦ μαθητάς ὁ Θεὸς καὶ Λόγος, ἀπ’ ἄρτι ἐκ τοῦ γεννήματος τῆς ἀμπέλου, ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης, ὅταν αὐτὸ πίνω μεθ’ ὑμῶν καινὸν ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐμοῦ (*Myst.*, 16, PG 91, 694).

<sup>269</sup> “Les frontières du monde terrestre et du monde céleste s’effacent. Ils sont déjà mêlés aux anges. Ils vont participer à la liturgie du ciel”.

saved” (Jn 10: 9)<sup>270</sup>. This sacred characteristic of the threshold is most evident through the sculptured porticos of numerous cathedrals, where images, designs, and phrases with eschatological messages create a preparatory place of meditation<sup>271</sup>. The medieval population well understood the underlying symbolic reference of the cathedral door as a symbol of the entrance to eternity, a preamble of the final entrance from this life to the life beyond. The rose window, placed above the central door of the church or cathedral, had its origins in the cosmic circle, for this contained twelve rays and the signs of the zodiac of the twelve apostles, while the centre was occupied by a depiction of Christ in Glory. The central door of the church building was thus transformed into a Triumphal Arc, which, as a door in its “pure state”, opening onto emptiness, became a symbolic opening of the world itself into heavenly space. The combination of the rose window above the central door created an even more significant image of the *Janua Coeli* through which the divine sun shines (Hani, 1981, p. 91). The symbolism of the entrance portal as the Gateway to Heaven, and the Church as a vision of the Heavenly Jerusalem is reinforced by verses inscribed on the doors of the cathedral, by which the faithful were encouraged to “illuminate the mind so that it might travel through the true door” (Swaan, 1981, p. 55). In this momentous passage, Guardini (1953) points to the crossing of the threshold of a place of worship as a meditative and transcendent experience, and an invitation to a change of mentality and outlook before entering the Church.

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<sup>270</sup> “L'accès à l'église par le narthex, et plus précisément à travers la mer ou le Jourdain symbolique du baptistère, achève de préciser ce dynamisme inhérent à la célébration chrétienne: il implique le passage de ce monde à un autre monde, ou plutôt le passage du monde, avec l'homme et autour de lui, de l'éon du siècle présent au siècle futur, à l'éon du jugement et du Règne éternel” (Bouyer, 1956, p. 253-254).

<sup>271</sup> Righetti (1945) highlighted the didactic and eschatological symbolism contained in the decoration of the doors of the Gothic Cathedral, which picture a synthesis of Church teachings, including elements of “la creazione, la caduta, la redenzione di Cristo, la sua nascita da Maria Vergine, la sua passione e morte, la sua risurrezione, la sua glorificazione alla destra del Padre, il suo finale giudizio sui vivi e sui morti” (p. 351-352). For Corrêa de Oliveira (2011b), the transition into the sacred edifice, influenced by the varied artistic and architectonic aspects, is a personal experience of hopeful joy, in the perspective of one day entering through the doors of Paradise: “Ao penetrar no edifício sagrado deveríamos ter a seguinte convicção: ‘Agora transponho este pórtico: um dia penetrarei pelas portas do Céu, onde poderei ver os Profetas e os Doutores, tais como aqui os vejo representados nessas imagens de pedra” (Corrêa de Oliveira, 2011, p. 35).

The door warns the man who opens it to enter, that he must now leave behind the thoughts, wishes and cares which here are out of place, his curiosity, his vanity, his worldly interests, his secular self. ‘Make yourself clean. The ground you tread is holy’. Do not rush through the doors. Let us take time to open our hearts to their meaning and pause a moment beforehand so as to make our entering-in a fully intended and recollected act. The doors have yet something else to say. Notice how as you cross the threshold you unconsciously lift your head and your eyes, and how as you survey the great interior space of the church there also takes place in you an inward expansion and enlargement. Its great width and height have an analogy to infinity and eternity (Guardini, 1953, p. 23)<sup>272</sup>.

### 3.6 Liturgical space and celebration

If it has been said that ritual naturally demands a temple (Gomá y Tomás, 1945, p. 376), it can also be affirmed that the very presence of a place of worship inspires ritual activity by channelling action and providing physical limits<sup>273</sup>. Significantly, the renowned French author Marcel Proust, in his still-celebrated article “La mort des cathédrales”, published in *Le Figaro* in 1904, emphasised the place of worship as intimately linked with the ceremonies performed within its precincts, pointing out that

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<sup>272</sup> “Und wenn einer durch si schreitet, dann spricht sie zu ihm: ‚Laß draußen, was nicht herein gehört, Gedanken, Wünsche, Sorgen, Neugierde und Eitelkeit. Alles, was nicht geweiht ist, laß draußen. Mach Dich rien, Du trittst ins Heilgtum‘ O, wir sollten nicht eilfertig durch die Pforte laufen! Ganz langsam sollten wir hindurch schreiten und unser Herz auf tun, damit es vernehme, was sie spricht. Wir sollten sogar vorher ein wenig innehalten, damit unser Durchgang ein Schreiten der Läuterung und Sammlung sie. Aber die Pforte sagt noch mehr. Gib einmal acht, wenn Du hindurchgehst, unwillkürlich hebst Du Kopf und Augen. Der Blick stegt empor und weitet sich in den Raum; die Brust tut sich auf, es wird groß in der Seele. Der hohe Kirchenraum ist das Gleichnis der unendlichen Ewigkeit”. (Translation by Grace Branham).

<sup>273</sup> The dynamic of liturgical space in relation to the worshipping assembly was captured by López Quintas (1998) who identified the uniting strength of architectonic dimensions and human factor in the celebration. “No son lo decisivo las dimensiones físicas de un templo, sino la proporción entre estas y la vitalidad espiritual de la comunidad orante”. He consequently points toward the necessity that the place of worship holds to promote dialogue, and warns of the consequences if this does not succeed: “El templo está llamado a ser el lugar de un diálogo vibrante, enérgico, capaz de colmar amplios horizontes físicos. Si la tensión del diálogo cede, el espacio se despuebla, cae sobre sí y oprime inevitablemente el espíritu de quienes lo habitan. El templo es un ámbito físico creado para dar cuerpo a los ámbitos espirituales” (López Quintas, 1998, p. 231).

their living value is most fully realized in their use for liturgical Celebrations. Clearly, it is particularly within this conjuncture of structural elements and ritual action that the place of worship comes to its full realization<sup>274</sup> disclosing an eschatological dimension: the building itself, as well as the liturgical celebration come to be a symbol of the Celestial Jerusalem. The foretelling of future heavenly bliss, through the concrete reality of the physical structure, creates a place of experience to condition the individual toward sentiments of hope and desire for his future abode. Through its artistic dimension, as a manifestation of sacred art, it forms an ambience charged with a transcendent impetus that speaks at one and the same time of the past, present, and future realities, condensing sacred truths that demonstrate their timeless permanence in stone, wood and glass.

A church is a similitude of the heavenly dwelling place of God. Mountains indeed are higher, the wide blue sky outside stretches immeasurably further. But whereas outside space is unconfined and formless, the portion of space set aside for the church has been formed, fashioned, and designed at every point with God in view. The long pillared aisles, the width and solidity of the walls, the high arched and vaulted roof, bring home to us that this is God's house and the seat of his hidden presence (Guardini, 1953, p. 23)<sup>275</sup>.

Through the combination of diverse and unequal spaces, height, shadow, light, and colour within a manifestation of the sacred, the church structure takes on life in the

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<sup>274</sup> Besides providing for the material necessities of the assembly for the celebration, the liturgical spaces shape human comportment. Within this perspective, Cassingena-Trévedy (2004) develops the correlation existing between the dynamic of gesture movement and space, which heightens the experience the sacred and transcendence: "Le geste suppose un mouvement, et le mouvement, à son tour, postule et décrit en se déployant un espace que lui est propre, l'espace de ses aises. Le geste, avec le mouvement qui lui est corrélatif, donne corps au lieu pour en faire un espace. Au principié de l'espace liturgique, il y a toujours une 'cinétique' historiquement caractérisée, une certaine manière de se déplacer et de concevoir les déplacements" (p. 134-135).

<sup>275</sup> Der hohe Kirchenraum ist das Gleichnis der unendlichen Ewigkeit, des Himmels, darinnen Gott wohnt. Wohl sind die Berge noch höher, unmeßbar die blaue Weite draßen. Doch alles offen, keine Grenze darin und keine Gestalt. Hier aber ist der Raum für Gott ausgesondert. Für ihn geformt, heilig durchbildet. Wir fühlen in die ragenden Pfeiler hinauf, in die breiten, starken Wände, in die hohe Wölbung: Ja, das ist Gottes Haus, Gottes Wohnung in einer besonderen innerlichen Weise. (Translation by Grace Branham).

liturgical celebration<sup>276</sup>. In effect, the liturgical space is capable of conditioning the mentality for the celebration, and communicating transcendence. “The holy is rarely experienced directly; it too is mediated by sacred forms. Within a church, darkness and light are perceived not simply as conditions of nature but as natural phenomena mediated by human constructs and constructions, not merely symbolizing but concretely exemplifying the capacity of culture to give specific form and manifestation to nature, the capacity of particular sacred forms to manifest the holy” (Kieckhefer, 2004, p. 109).

The interior of the church structure, which was formed by and forms the choreographic and gestural dimension of the celebration, will accommodate processional movements, movements from the altar to the pulpit, incensing around the altar, the file for the reception of communion, thereby clearly demonstrating a close relationship between ambience and the direction of bodily movement; a relationship which can be opened up to include “body, ambience, symbolic speech and the harmonious and symbolic organization of space” (Terrin, 2004b, p. 217)<sup>277</sup>. In this manner, the linguistic component of the celebration, with its spiritually uplifting verbal expression, is reflected in spaces that are designed to adequately correspond to these messages, permitting an inter-relation between that which is vocally expressed and the setting; an affinity between the architecture and the religious ideas, desires and affirmations articulated through preaching, acclamations, and chanting.

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<sup>276</sup> The concept of the exterior impact and capacity of forms, colours, sounds and perfumes to influence certain states of the spirit was emphasized by Corrêa de Oliveira (2002b) “Deus estabeleceu misteriosas e admiráveis relações entre certas formas, cores, sons, perfumes e sabores de um lado, e de outro lado certos estados de alma” (p. 85). Within the context of aesthetics, De Bruyne (1947) offers a similar opinion: “C’est que les sons comme les couleurs agissent sur la physiologie de l’homme et, par conséquent, sur ses passions” (p. 238). Consequently, the close relationship between the individual and the experience of space may encompass a broad range, as Lawrence-Zuñiga (2003) observes, concerning the apprehension of human dimensions: “The space occupied by the body, and the perception and experience of that space, contracts and expands in relationship to a person’s emotions and state of mind, sense of self, social relations, and cultural predispositions” (p. 2).

<sup>277</sup> “Se há uma relação estreita entre ambiente e expressão do corpo, essa relação é ainda maior entre corpo, ambiente, discurso simbólico e organização harmoniosa e simbólica dos espaços”.

The height of the church structure is suggestive of rising human praise that meets with and descending divine grace. The progress of the liturgical celebration becomes a confluence between descent and ascent, for which the vast spaces of interior of the church serve as an eloquent expression rather than an empty void. The atmosphere collaborates with the soaring aspirations of the assembly gathered, announced through the spoken word and the actions performed. Consequently, liturgical space becomes the scene where “the ascending curve of human self-transcendence and the descending curve of divine immanence intersect” (Kieckhefer, 2004, p. 102)<sup>278</sup>. Corrêa de Oliveira (2007a) identified the special capacity of the gothic style to exert an influence which naturally fosters a certain peace and equilibrium in the human disposition, a happiness and wellbeing that serves to ease the agitations and difficulties of daily existence (p. 34).

At times, when entering a church during the week in order to pray, [...] I felt surrounded by a certain atmosphere and had the impression that the church shone with significance. The light of the stained glass windows, the colours of the paintings, the expression of the statues, the silence of the temple, the contrast between this silence and the noise of the street even in those days; everything seemed to introduce me into a different atmosphere whereby my

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<sup>278</sup> The dynamic of structural height holds transcendent implications for the participant in liturgy, facilitating a spiritual uplifting already expressed verbally in prayer, and taking shape through the soaring vaults and arches. Hani (1981) demonstrates the interrelation between architectural height, gaze and sentiment signifying an elevation toward the Divine: “O olhar do fiel, ao deslocar-se nessa direção, encontra aí o símbolo da sua ascensão espiritual (...) A linha vertical é a direção do céu. É segundo esta dimensão que Deus desce até ao homem e o homem sobe até Deus” (Hani, 1981, p. 35). In turn, by comparing linguistic qualities with that of architecture, McNamara (2005) observes how the forms are connected with ritual: “In a similar way, ritual architecture depends upon a stable architectural lexicon and the careful choice of forms that express its ritual quality and place within the architectural hierarchy. In the Spirit, it reveals eschatological reality” (p. 144).

soul somehow saw the spirit of the Catholic Church<sup>279</sup> (Corrêa de Oliveira, 2002a, p. 17-18).

The concord between ritual movement and structural elements of the church's interior is accentuated through particular places and objects which hold a transcendent and sacred connotation, specifically within the ambit of the liturgical celebration. Thus, within liturgical space, the concrete objects point beyond their individuality, toward a higher significance, heightened through their role within the sacred ritual. Spaces gain symbolic worth and come to life fully through liturgical action. Consequently, besides serving the material necessities of the assembly gathered, liturgical spaces determine human comportment

The material world is far from neutral; indeed, as we have seen, it is through physical spaces and material objects that many of the power relations we have witnessed are articulated and maintained. A rood screen or iconostasis reifies clergy-laity power relations at the same time that it articulates the theology of the incarnation and offers hope of salvation to the faithful. This material object, this piece of furniture, thus actively participates in articulating and maintaining an element of Christian creed, code and cultus (Kilde, 2008, p. 199).

The altar and pulpit<sup>280</sup> constitute dynamic places, both from the standpoint of their physical position in the place of worship and of their role in the rubrics of the liturgy, making them pre-eminent within its evolvment. Accordingly, they are,

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<sup>279</sup> “De vez em quando, eu entrava durante a semana numa igreja para rezar, (...) eu me sentia como que envolto por toda uma atmosfera que me fazia ter a impressão do que a igreja toda reluzia de significação. As luzes dos vitrais, as cores dos quadros, a expressão das imagens, o silêncio do templo, o contraste entre esse silêncio e o ruído que vinha da rua, tudo isso parecia introduzir-me numa atmosfera completamente diferente do habitual, em que minha alma como que via o espírito da Igreja Católica” (Personal translation).

<sup>280</sup> From the Greek *anabainein* – ἀναβαίνω – to arise. Valenziano (2000) relates the ambo with the concept of Easter joy, “By its structure the ambo symbolizes the empty tomb on Easter morning, for it is the place at which the proclamation that founds the faith is repeated. Moreover, in Christian eyes the liturgical proclamation of the Scripture, of both the Old and New Testaments, is by its very nature a proclamation of Easter; otherwise, it would bring neither message nor salvation through Christ in the Spirit” (p. 384).



respectively, focal points in the context of architectural structure as well as natural centres of ritual actions<sup>281</sup>. These distinctive objects are poles of choreographic destination, drawing the gaze and attention of the entire assembly at determined moments of the Celebration, as nuclei for the most essential parts of the liturgy. The Christian altar, above all, holds superlative value in the place of worship. For St. Thomas, along with many others, the altar bears a profound Christological significance for, “the altar is Christ” (*S. Th.* III, q.83, a.3)<sup>282</sup>. Hence the profoundly honorific treatment rendered to it during liturgical celebration, and its comparison to the life-giving heart or soul of the edifice<sup>283</sup>.

It is significant that the altar has been considered as a converging point of time and space, transcending its individual concrete reality in its union with all other altars from all time, and particularly the heavenly altar. “Every altar stone in reality occupies the same point of space and time” (Betram, 1997, p. 77)<sup>284</sup>. Along this viewpoint, Pickstock (1998) relates the altar to the idea of journey and destination; a “place towards which we must travel in order to be able to offer our sacrifice of praise” (p. 183). However, for Pickstock, the altar is not a geographically fixed place, rather, it is

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<sup>281</sup> With its central role, the altar is also viewed in function of its relation with the other objects and spaces of the sacred place, for it may be seen at once as a convergence and starting point of all other spaces and objects. “O Altar (...) deveria ser visto como o organizador simbólico de uma distribuição dos lugares e posições, garantindo pelo próprio lugar concedido ao Ausente comemorado o lugar marcado de todo fiel” (Hameline, 1995, p. 61).

<sup>282</sup> “Per altare autem significatur ipse Christus, de quo dicit Apostolus, Hb 13,15: *Per ipsum offeramus hostiam laudis Deo*”. The Angelic Doctor also mentions the significance of the consecration of the altar, as the sanctity of Christ: “Unde et consecration altaris significant sanctitatem Christi, de qua dicitur Lc 1, 35. *Quod ex te nascetur sanctum, vocabitur Filius Dei*” (*S. Th.* III, q.83, a.3).

<sup>283</sup> The vitally essential role of the altar within the sacred space has often been attributed a life-giving connotation. Consistent with the common opinion, Gomá y Tomás (1945) affirms that without an altar, the temple cannot truly exist, for the building and assembly gather specifically in reason of the altar, therefore, a temple without an altar can be compared to a body without a soul. (p. 419) In turn Hani (1981) affirms that the altar is not just compared to the human heart, rather, he holds the belief in the altar is in fact the Heart of God, which is the reason that the altar is truly the centre of the edifice, from which irradiates its “architectural components” (p. 117).

<sup>284</sup> “The altar calls to mind the heavenly Jerusalem. There is something beyond the altar, whether above or behind. The altar draws our attention precisely in order to suggest what is invisible. Ancient Church buildings placed mosaics or frescoes behind the altar in order to represent those ‘realities beyond’” (Rouet, 1997, p. 117).

“an infinitely receding place, always vertically beyond” (p. 183)<sup>285</sup>. This journeying of the individual toward the altar is also envisaged as the divine journey of God toward the worshipper; therefore, the journeying is twofold and diverse. “If the identity of the worshipper is radically affected by the ever-receding altar which requires perpetual recommencement of the journey, it is equally affected by the fact that the journey towards the altar instantiates, and is made possible by, a movement of God towards the worshipper” (Pickstock, 1998. p. 184). In a certain sense, the altar and the ambo enjoy a union that becomes fully perceptible only within the context of the complete Celebration, as they sequentially become the spaces for the realization the Liturgy of the Word and the Eucharistic Rite, which complement each other<sup>286</sup>.

Besides these interior dynamics, it is noteworthy that place of liturgical activity also exerts a significant exterior influence over the surrounding area, which often deems it the centre of attraction in a village, town or city, linking its image to the very configuration of the panorama of the city<sup>287</sup>. The act of beholding the exterior of the

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<sup>285</sup> “I described the way in which the worshipper is identified by his location “in nomine Patris”, and by the journeying character of location, “Introibo ad altare Dei”. It was seen that the geographical destination of this journey was unlike that of mundane journeys, for it perpetually recedes and becomes other from itself. The journey towards the “sublime altare” is towards that which is definitively neither here nor there, but is “almost” (sublime: the just-below which implies the beyond) that which is itself a matter of “not quite” betokening a rising and an alteration (altare: the place of sacrificial burning). Thus, it can be seen that the worshipping “I”, identified by its journey, will perforce never attain its identity in the sense of a stable totality, but must, like the nature of its journey and destination, be always only prefatory. Moreover, before it becomes anything at all, it must first become that which it is not: an impersonation and dispossession” (Pickstock, 1998 p. 228).

<sup>286</sup> McNamara (2005) captured the interrelation between the architectural aspect as symbolic of transcendent realities that “represents theological and heavenly realities rather than merely the latest trend or most economical method”. He mentions the visual impact of the sacred building as indicating the celebratory action within their precincts. “It reveals the mind of God in its imitation of nature in mathematics, proportion, and the human form as revealed in history. [...] The worshipper is drawn in by its beauty, inspired therefore to participate in the liturgy, and once formed by the liturgy, to go out in mission of service to the world” (p. 151).

<sup>287</sup> Doré (2005) describes the cathedral of Strasbourg in this perspective, as from a distance it entirely dwarfs the surroundings to such an extent that only the cathedral is present on the horizon. However, as one approaches, the cathedral surges in the midst of and with the inhabitants of the city as a uniting factor among them all. (p. 83) It arises within the urban scenario with a deep significance for all of the inhabitants which it carries through its silent presence, that of a particular blessing and Grace, which clearly includes an aetic experience of the beautiful and the universal (p. 84). “Une...chose me frappe quand je regarde notre cathédrale: l’invitation à s’ouvrir à quelque chose comme un mystère. Cette cathédrale est belle; elle est même multiples fois belle: architecturalement et sculpturalement (...). Et sa beauté est accessible à quiconque lève les yeux vers elle. Elle est posée là parmi nous comme un mystère” (p. 85).

place of worship is already, in fact, an act of contemplation and admiration; one already participates in some way with the dimensions that the cathedral has to offer within. Consequently, it is not necessary to have physically entered within its internal precincts in order to experience the sacred, for its external presence already transmits an experience of transcendence, and an invitation to celebration, to symbolic ritual worship. The silent communication of the place of worship evolves as an interchange with the inhabitants surrounding it, promoting beauty and awareness of the sacred. Valenziano likened this to a dialogue “in a way that corresponds to the proper relationship between Church and the world” (Valenziano, 2000, p. 394)<sup>288</sup>. The place of worship thus emerges as a sacred place of refuge and peace within the turbulent waters of profane existence, a sign of transcendence and sacrality that attracts all toward the liturgical celebrations performed within, inspiring sentiments of hope and joy.

Seen from afar, the church with her transepts, spires, and towers seems like a mighty ship about to sail on a long voyage. The whole city might embark with confidence on her massive decks. [...] On entering the cathedral it is the sublimity of the vertical lines which first affects his soul. The nave at Amiens gives an inevitable sense of purification, for by its very beauty the great church acts as a sacrament. [...] The storm of life breaks on the walls of the sanctuary, and is heard merely as a distant rumbling. Here indeed is the indestructible ark

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<sup>288</sup> “The outside of a church is all the more authentic the more it translates the inside” (Valenziano, 2000, p. 393). [It is] “not only ritual which helped to mark out places as holy. Both a church’s external appearance, and its place in the landscape, often helped distinguish it from the surrounding buildings and pointed to its status as a sacred site” (Spice, 2005, p. 6).

against which the winds shall not prevail. No place in the world fills men with a deeper felling of security (Mâle, 1958, p. 456-457)<sup>289</sup>.

In conclusion, the implication of space and time within the context of the liturgy are of utmost relevance to the human experience of the celebration. The philosophical perspective of temporal notions within man's quotidian existence are transcended in liturgy and experienced as an eschatological and ex-temporal moment. The experience of sacred time within the liturgical venue thus links the individual with the past, present and future through the sequence of the ritual, bringing a unique actuality to the celebration of liturgical feasts.

In like manner, profane spatial concepts of human existence are enriched by the organic delineation of sacred spaces containing intense symbolism. The place of worship thus stands out as a space charged with Christological and mystical connotation, strongly influencing the ritual action and participation of the congregation. Passage into liturgical space from the outside world provides a transcendent experience for the individual as a transition from profane existence to sacred experience. The connection between architectural space and congregation evolves through the ritual activity, which highlights particular places within the structure over the course of the celebration. The interior and exterior of the church building exerts a strong influence of sacrality and transcendence.

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<sup>289</sup> “De loin, avec ses transepts, ses flèches et ses tours, elle nous apparaît comme une puissante nef en partance pour un long voyage. Toute la cité peut s'embarquer sans crainte dans ses robustes flânes (...) Pénétrons dans la cathédrale. La sublimité des grandes lignes verticales agit d'abord sur l'âme. Il est impossible d'entrer dans la grande nef d'Amiens sans se sentir purifié. L'église, par sa seule beauté, agit comme un sacrement. (...) Nous goûtons la paix profonde; le bruit de la vie se brise aux murs du sanctuaire et devient une rumeur lointaine: voilà bien l'arche indestructible, contre laquelle les vents ne prévaudront pas. Nul lieu au monde n'a rempli les hommes d'un sentiment de sécurité plus profond”. (Translation by D. Nussey) In a homily during the celebration of Vespers in Notre Dame Cathedral, Benedict XVI, pronounced the following words: “La foi du Moyen Âge a bâti les cathédrales, et vos ancêtres sont venus ici pour louer Dieu, lui confier leurs espérances et lui dire leur amour. De grands événements religieux et civils se sont déroulés dans ce sanctuaire où les architectes, les peintres, les sculpteurs et les musiciens ont donné le meilleur d'eux-mêmes” (Homily of his Holiness Benedict XVI, Celebration of Vespers, Notre Dame Cathedral, France, September 12-15). [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/homilies/2008/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_hom\\_20080912\\_parigi-vespri\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/homilies/2008/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20080912_parigi-vespri_en.html), consulted October 4, 2014)

Temporal and spatial dimensions thus clearly emerge as powerful vehicles for symbolism within the liturgical experience, making the passage into sacred space and time through liturgy an inherently transcendent and transforming experience<sup>290</sup>.

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<sup>290</sup> There exists equivalence between both sacred time and sacred space, for within cosmic time a re-creation of the feasts and rites unfold. Every sacred calendar would be a reactualization of the feasts and rites within original time, as sacred space would be the reproduction of a transcendent model, a synthesis of this time. Through an example, Cassingena-Trévedy (2004) offers a unique interpretation of the profound transcendent relationship between space and time within the perspective of the Liturgical Celebration: “Témoin du Cosmos, du Temple et du Corps, tous trois gratuitement donnés à l’homme, l’espace sacré apparaît dès lors comme la synthèse du temps sacré, c’est-à-dire du temps total de l’Alliance, depuis la création jusqu’à l’Église en sa plénitude organique, temps dont la Fraction du pain est le transformateur autant que le milieu: l’espace est ‘sacrement’ du temps et, d’une certaine manière, le récapitule. Qu’il s’agisse des ‘Lieux Saints’ proprement dits, des lieux de pèlerinage, de tout lieu d’église, le Lieu est toujours lieu de *mémoire*: c’est en général un événement, et un événement de salut, qui donne lieu. Le temps n’est pas une dimension parallèle à l’espace: il est l’assise de l’espace, si bien que, pour user d’une image, on dirait volontiers que l’espace est perpendiculaire au temps” (p. 129).

#### **4. THE LITURGY: A PAIDEIA OF SACRED BEAUTY**

An examination of various facets of the liturgical celebration has clearly reinforced a perception of the fundamental role of the human being within its evolvment, as we have seen until this point. The experiential aspect of liturgy emerges through the consideration of modes of human actuation, and the conjugation of ambience and ritual developing within periods of sacred time. However, we have observed that an entire range of elements in liturgy create a synthesis which constitutes the essence of human integration, coming to light as a form of existential profusion. Accordingly, the experience and impact transcend the merely exterior, calculable measure of an ordinary, passing episode. In referring to the deeply rooted liturgical tendency of the human spirit, then, it may be observed that human involvement in liturgy goes far beyond a superficially aesthetic mode of actuation, reaching the profound roots of existence itself. In this vein, the words of Pieper (1989) seem to transmit a clear understanding of what could be considered the essence of liturgical expression within a human perspective, as he comments on the authentic festive occurrence: “The manifestation of splendour is not necessarily the same thing as material display [...] in no sense does the extravagance we are speaking of here imply the display of money and possessions. It is the spontaneous manifestation of personal, interior riches, of that wealth which consists in the experience of the actual presence of God among men” (Pieper, 1989, p. 202).

In turn, it may be said that the interior assets and “wealth” of the human being are used to best advantage in liturgical actuation, imparting an elevated sense of the spiritual and transcendent meaning of existence. The manifestation of splendour which Pieper mentions transcends the physical sphere and points toward the full reality. “The

splendour and beauty shining from the liturgical rite” (SC, 97) <sup>291</sup> is fruit of the profound Mystery it celebrates, through the conjugation of profound human expression and elements of the universe.

That is why, in liturgy, simple elements from human existence are employed with such outstanding results, and why elementary aspects of human expression emerge as momentous and transcendent.<sup>292</sup> Here we observe that the symbolic use of basic cosmic elements, such as water and fire, which combine to enrich the ritual sequence, enhancing the gestures and word. These elements receive special emphasis during the celebration of certain liturgical festivities, but are also present in any liturgical celebration. Thus, there is an extraordinary synthesis between symbols and human action during the ritual.

The liturgy is also where silence becomes eloquent, and a simple movement, word or lifting of the eyes — fruit of the *ars celebrandi* — may hold a profound correlation with temporal and spatial dimensions, with mystagogic connotations, that are only gradually revealed. The “*noble simplicity*” and the “*noble beauty*” (SSC, 34, 124) mentioned in the Sacrosanctum Concilium underscore the unaffected yet sublime transcendence of authentic liturgical symbolism. There, the human social dimension is sacralized through orderly and unified ritual action. The meaning of the celebration

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<sup>291</sup> “Splendorem ac pulchritudinem in ritu liturgico quae coruscant” (Personal translation). Cassingena-Trévedy (2008) identifies the scope of beauty within liturgical experience, highlighting its impact: “Conforme a una intención divina, la liturgia armoniza las sensibilidades específicas de cada uno de nuestros sentidos y se alimenta de toda la belleza que encuentra en el mundo; en resumen, hay en ella algo de sinestesia y al mismo tiempo de fotosíntesis” (p. 69).

<sup>292</sup>The synthesis of human elements and forms of communication found within liturgy, assume a clearly transcendent connotation in their sacred use. Nonetheless, they are still clearly dimensions linking with human existence as Van der Laan (2005) underlines, insinuating the omnipresence of human genius within liturgy: “In the liturgy the ordinary things of our daily lives, and even the signs that serve in communication between people, reappear as signs intended for our communion with God. Together they form a résumé, an autonomous image, of our whole human existence in relation to nature and our fellow humans. We rediscover in liturgy the entirety of words, gestures, and objects that govern our daily life” (p. 31). The liturgy thus continually offers continuity between the human existence and the sacred ambience of the celebration.

renders it divergent from ordinary life, and yet still fundamentally related to and connected with it.

Man brings to liturgy all of his propensities, whether physical or spiritual, social or cultural, and reaps from it valuable forms of cultivation that emanate to his daily existence in the world. Here it becomes clear that liturgy also has the potentiality to profoundly affect the human mentality. Within this final chapter, then, the investigation intends to turn toward a notion of beauty specific to liturgy, present within the perspectives considered in the previous chapters. The evolvment of the celebration educates man in his entirety for an openness toward the *verum, bonum* and *pulchrum*, toward a modelling of his mentality and interior attitudes in accordance with the splendour of the ritual action and symbolism and art.<sup>293</sup> The language of the liturgy, with its peaceful, affirmative overtone, unfolding in a spiritual dialogue, along with the readings and the sermon, replenishes spiritual vacancy and feelings of meaninglessness and futility. The participative dimension of rejoicing among an assembly of believers within sacred space attends to human sociability and permits a glimpse into a future participation in the heavenly Jerusalem, rekindling a fading faith. The spiritual banquet which constitutes the highest form of divine union on this earth is a font of abiding happiness and peace, and a promise of future glory.

The liturgy is, then, today more than ever, an essential element of human formation. liturgical beauty itself poses a challenge within the contemporary scenario and demands special care in order not to be overlooked or dismissed altogether, for the concept of beauty itself is frequently distorted or undervalued in today's world. With

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<sup>293</sup> The concept of sacred art as transcendent and its capacity for communicating the divine message was emphasised by Lang (2008) further points toward the implication of the experience of sacred art: "Hence art, as the expression of the beautiful, has the capacity of revealing reality to us; and sacred art, in particular, manifests divine beauty" (p. 225). For Perez Camacho (2012) art is integrated within the very essence of liturgy, developing an array of expressive venues: "El arte penetra la liturgia en todas sus manifestaciones (...) La liturgia necesita de estas artes para resplandecer; ella es como un hermoso árbol que va engendrando todas las artes y las hace florecer alimentándolas internamente de la savia del Misterio de Dios" (p. 358). Hence, the liturgy is also seen as a means for developing and conservation of multiple art forms.



this in mind, the concept of beauty itself is first briefly considered within the perspective of philosophical thought, providing a basis for considering its role in liturgy. The significance of beauty in human life is also approached, followed by a reflection on the beauty revealed through liturgy in specific festivities. The didactic and transforming element of the celebration is illustrated through examples of renewal in human life. The results attest to an exclusive form of beauty disclosed in liturgy and its impact on the human being. “It expresses the beauty of the communion with Him and with our brothers, the beauty of a harmony which translates into gestures, symbols, words, images and melodies that touch the heart and the spirit and raise marvel and the desire to meet the resurrected Lord, He who is the Door of Beauty” (VP, p. 139).

#### **4.1 The concept of beauty**

The concept of beauty, whether considered in its ontological dimension as a transcendental of being, or as a merely exterior aesthetic quality, has been the subject of the most diverse speculation and investigation since primordial philosophical thought, for it was Plato himself who formed some of the initial considerations concerning beauty which have lost nothing of their relevance in our days.

In his *Banquet*, for example, he proposed the idea of a hierarchical scale of beauty. Impelled by the sentiment of love, one passes from merely physical beauty to the admiration of moral and intellectual beauty, and within the ambit of spiritual beauty, one contemplates the beauty of souls, aspirations, and customs, considered sequentially until finally attaining the contemplation of Absolute Beauty, which exists in and of itself, and is the source of all other beauty. In addition, Plato established a relationship between the beautiful, the true and the good, which is reflected in the moral, ethical overtone of his philosophy of art: “is not the good also the beautiful?”<sup>294</sup>.

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<sup>294</sup> ἡἀγαζὰ νὸ θαὶ θατὰ δνθεῖ ζνη εἶλαη (Plato, Symposium, 201c., Translation by A. Nehamas; P. Woodruff).

Aristotle considered beauty under various prisms, mostly in its aesthetic, ethical, and ontological dimension. He differentiates between the good and the beautiful, identifying the former as related to action, and the latter as also present in unmoving objects, while pointing toward goodness and beauty as the cause of knowledge and movement (*Metaphysica* L. XIII, c III; L. V, c. I).

Later, persuaded by the neo-platonic ideas of Plotinus, Pseudo-Dionysius elaborated an aesthetic-mystical exposition which strongly influenced medieval aesthetics and architecture, particularly through his emphasis on the aesthetics of light and solar symbolism<sup>295</sup>. Pseudo-Dionysius views the hierarchical order of the universe as a Divine work of art, and a means of arriving gradually at the Creator Himself. He presents the notion of a continuous flow of beauty and goodness between the superior and inferior beings of the universe. He links the idea of God with that of wisdom, goodness, and beauty<sup>296</sup>. Indeed, He is the very cause of all beauty: “the uniquely and the eternally beautiful. It is the superabundant source in itself of the beauty of every beautiful thing” (*On the Divine Names*, 4, 7; PG 3, 704)<sup>297</sup>. He insists on the perception of the visible as a means of reaching the invisible — from visible beauty to the invisible Beauty. Here, the Dionysian understanding of mystic union emerges, for creatures, in a growing detachment from their surroundings, are impelled, through

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<sup>295</sup> Highlighting the aesthetics of light within the process of philosophical thought, De Bruyne (1947) mentions its role as the source of beauty: “La lumière est considérée universellement comme une source de beauté, puisqu’elle constitue la substance même de la couleur, en même temps que la condition extérieure de sa visibilité. Cette idée apparaît chez Plotin, elle est reprise par Le Pseudo-Denys, elle réapparaît chez Jean Scot Erigène, elle devient un lieu commun chez Ulric de Strasbourg” (p. 71).

<sup>296</sup> Rorem (1993) identified the clearly platonic influence on Pseudo-Dionysian aesthetics, pointing out that Pseudo-Dionysius defined the notion of beauty in Chapter 4 of the Divine names: “In a standard Platonic wordplay, He there remarks that it is called ‘beauty’ because it bids or calls all things to itself (701D, 76). Beauty’s bidding or calling is an upward or anagogical movement, as part of the overall Dionysian motif of a spiritual return to God, within the Neoplatonic structure of procession and return. All beautiful things participate in divine Beauty as their cause and source” (p. 78). Rorem subsequently identified the strong interplay of visible and invisible was identified within the realm of Dionysian thought: “All the symbols for the angels and for God, interpreted throughout these texts, begin with sense perception. They are thus part of the aesthetic or perceptible symbols” (p. 28).

<sup>297</sup> ἀλλ’ ὡς αὐτὸ καθ’ ἑαυτὸ μεθ’ ἑαυτοῦ μονοειδὲς αἰεὶ ὄν καλὸν καὶ ὡς παντὸς καλοῦ τὴν πηγαιάν καλλονὴν ὑπεροχικῶς ἐν ἑαυτῷ προέχον. (Translation by C. Luibheid).

symbolic contemplation, toward to an increasing communication with Supreme Beauty, God Himself, until a true mystical union occurs.

Among the Fathers of the Church, perhaps St. Augustine's writings are the most prolific in reflections on beauty, with strong references to his personal struggles with deception and illusion in his search for the Divine Beauty. His fundamental idea of beauty is based on the concept of order, for that which is beautiful is naturally ordered<sup>298</sup>. Augustinian aesthetics discover within the universe itself consistent reflections of the beauty of the Creator; the bishop of Hippo's writings on the beauty of creation and creatures are marked by exclamatory praise and contemplative transcendence toward Divine Beauty itself.

Ask the beauty of the earth, ask the beauty of the sea, question the beauty of the air expanding and spreading itself, question the beauty of the sky...question all these realities. They all answer: 'Behold, we are beautiful'. Their beauty is an expression. These beauties are subject to transformation. Who made them if not the Beautiful One who is not subject to change? (St. Augustine, *Sermon 241*, 2; PL 38, 1134)<sup>299</sup>.

Augustine clearly saw and comprehended, through his own personal experiences with darkness and error, the constant — although, at times, latent — desire for the divine Beauty, which is often mistakenly sought in creatures. However, in poignant and sensible terms, he describes how the human soul is only satisfied with the discovery of this Absolute beauty which exists within his innermost being.

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<sup>298</sup> "Nonne ordine conteximus voluptatem, et nisi priora mediis, et media postremis concorditer nexa sint, abhorremus?" (St. Augustine, *De Musica*, 6, 14, 47; PL 32, 1188). "If Augustine all along admitted that a disinterested aesthetic contemplation even of material beauty, its form and color, was possible, and certainly distinct from concupiscence, if even now during our contemplation of the divine things, bodily rhythms often vibrate harmlessly, even more so after the resurrection" (Von Balthasar, 1986, p. 138).

<sup>299</sup> "Interroga pulchritudinem terræ, interroga pulchritudinem maris, interroga pulchritudinem dilatati et diffusi aeris, interroga pulchritudinem cœli, interroga ordinem siderum...interroga ista, respondent tibi omnia: Ecce vide, pulchra summus. Pulchritudo eorum, confessio eorum. Ista pulchra mutabilia quis fecit, nisi incommutabilis pulcher?" (Personal translation).

In the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, the theme of beauty is often interspersed amongst other philosophical or theological questions, and frequently influenced by the authority of former thinkers, such as Pseudo-Dionysius. The Angelic Doctor highlights both a physical, corporal beauty and moral beauty, while also — according to some Thomists — indirectly insinuating beauty as a transcendent property of being, along with the other transcendentals, *verum*, *bonum*, and *unum*. At one point, Aquinas identifies beauty as directly related to visual and aural sense perception, for beautiful are things, “which please when seen”<sup>300</sup>, or heard, he would later add. Consequently, Aquinas identified essential characteristics such as clarity, integrity and proportion<sup>301</sup> as attributes of beauty, involving admiration as an element strongly linked with the concept of aesthetic beauty<sup>302</sup>.

In its relation with the other transcendentals, St. Thomas identified an outstanding quality of the beautiful, which, in the matter of knowledge, surpasses *bonum*: “Thus it is evident that beauty adds to goodness a relation to the cognitive faculty: so that *good* means that which simply pleases the appetite; while *beautiful* is something pleasant to apprehend” (*S. Th.* I-II, q.27, a.1, ad. 3)<sup>303</sup>. Though a somewhat controversial theme in Thomistic thought, *pulchrum* has been identified as the last, though not least, of the three other transcendentals, *verum*, *bonum* and *unum*, holding a unique place for its link with *verum* and *bonum*. For certain authors, *pulchrum* exercises a significant role as the splendour of all the transcendentals of being together

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<sup>300</sup> “Pulchra enim dicuntur quæ visa placent” (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

<sup>301</sup> “Nam ad pulchritudinem tria requiruntur. Primo quidem, integritas sive perfectio: quae enim diminuta sunt, hoc ipso turpia sunt. Et debita proportio sive consonantia. Et iterum claritas: unde quae habent colorem nitidum, pulchra esse dicuntur” (*S. Th.* I, q.39, a.8).

<sup>302</sup> Thomistic aesthetics was explained by De Bruyne (1947) as a sentiment with profound implications, in which “l’homme s’arrête d’une manière désintéressée à l’appréhension intuitive et en éprouve le contrecoup délectable [...] la définition essentielle du sentiment esthétique: c’est par l’opération de la contemplation que l’homme entre en possession du Beau, puisqu’il le ‘met dans son propre esprit; dans l’ensemble complexe de l’activité globale, c’est la vision qui constitue non seulement l’élément formel mais encore l’acte le plus noble [...] En résumé, pour saint Thomas d’Aquin, la vie esthétique est essentiellement une vision délectable suivie d’amour” (p. 15).

<sup>303</sup> “Et sic patet quod pulchrum addit supra bonum, quondam ordinem ad vim cognoscitivam: ita quod bonum dicatur id quod simpliciter complacet appetitui; pulchrum autem dicatur id cuius ipsa apprehension placet”(Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

(Forte, 2006, p. 34-35)<sup>304</sup>. Thus, as a transcendental, beauty may be considered as the outward, aesthetic expression of the other transcendentals, which may be purely metaphysical. Beauty is, in some way, a bridge which connects the metaphysical reality of the transcendentals to the sensorial dimension of human existence, allowing the former to be comprehended and assimilated.

The theme of beauty and its importance within the human experience has come to the fore in more recent studies. Notably, the Swiss theologian Hans Urs Von Balthasar endeavoured to establish bases regarding the role and significance of *pulchrum* as a transcendental of being in the contemporary philosophical and theological scenario, through his renowned theological aesthetics. Von Balthasar highlights an inherent correlation between the transcendentals *verum* and *bonum*, which requires the support of *pulchrum* in order to be appreciated sensibly, for the light of the transcendentals must necessarily shine together. In effect, the lack of one would be disastrous for the others: “Beauty is the last thing which the thinking intellect dares to approach, since only it dances as an uncontained splendour the double constellation of the true and the good and their inseparable relation to one another’s proofs of the truth have lost their cogency” (Von Balthasar, 1982, p. 18). Above all, this author demonstrates the beautiful as a manifestation of the beauty of God, revealed through the mystery of Christ — the *glory* of the Lord —which he identifies in this internal luminous splendour which glows toward exterior manifestation. This splendour is the source of inspiration for the search for Beauty itself, and this search is reflected throughout the history of Christian theology and philosophy, which, from within the diverse theories and approaches of their respective disciplines, consistently aspire to this encounter.

#### **4.2 Beauty and human life**

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<sup>304</sup> “A beleza, portanto, se mostra como ulterior explicitação dos transcendentais da unidade, da bondade e da verdade. Mas o seu ‘proprium ulterior’ consiste no estar todos os três juntos e unitariamente, isto é, na sua harmonia, na sua convertibilidade da unidade como integridade, da bondade como proporção e da verdade como claridade; e que o ente é belo enquanto é uno e íntegro, bom e proporcionado, verdadeiro e claro” (Molinari, 2002, p. 92).

As the outward expression of the transcendental *verum* and *bonum*<sup>305</sup>, in the disputable role as the fourth transcendental of being, beauty holds a unique and exclusive role. Within the perspective of human experience, beauty constitutes a powerful element, due to its capacity to effectively influence man in his entirety. Through his intellectual attributes, man possesses the ability to rationalize and comprehend abstract theories and truths. However, it is the element of beauty that profoundly moves his emotive faculties through sensorial perception, thus opening the possibility of assimilating arid or complex truths with great facility, and motivating him to act. The early Greek philosophers identified this power of attraction wielded by the beautiful, utilizing the term *kalos*, derived from two Greek terms: *kalein* which means “to call” or “to invite” and *kelein* which means “to charm”. Incidentally, the Greeks clearly associated the beautiful and the good, as the same word, *kalos*, also denotes that which is good or noble. So what is beautiful is also what is good and true and thus it profoundly attracts the individual toward a higher sphere. It is significant that the Latin term *pulchrum* has its root in the Greek *polikroon* which was employed to designate the multiform harmony of the body or anything magnificent (Retegui, 1999, p. 10). The celebrated document *The Via Pulchritudinis* illustrates the rich effects of the beautiful upon the human person, particularly emphasizing the diverse reactions and sentiments it provokes:

Beauty speaks directly to the heart, turning astonishment to marvel, admiration to gratitude, happiness to contemplation. Thereby it creates a fertile terrain to listen and dialogue with men, engaging the whole man — spirit and heart, intelligence and reason, creative and imagination. It is unlikely to result in indifference; it provokes

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<sup>305</sup> Edith Stein (1994) strongly affirmed the deep relationship between beauty, good and truth: “La bellezza tiene un rasgo común con la verdad y la bondad. [...] De la misma manera en que la verdad confiere al entendimiento su perfección existencial (es decir, el conocimiento) y por esta razón puede ser considerada como su bien propio, la belleza constituye también el bien propio de una facultad espiritual particular” (p. 336-337). In addition, the strong link between beauty truth and good was recently pointed out in two important documents: “Beauty is only authentic in its link to the truth” (*VP*, 2.1). “La bellezza è in un certo senso l'espressione visibile del bene, come il bene è la condizione metafisica della bellezza”. (*LA*, 3).

emotions, it puts in movement a dynamism of deep interior transformation that engenders joy, feeling of fullness, desire to participate freely in this same beauty, making it one's own in interiorising it and integrating it into one's own concrete existence (VP, 3.3.C).

Beauty thus emerges as a strong dynamic within the human experience, often a decisive factor over the course of human existence, due to its decisive influence over the spirit. Beauty convinces, attracts and mesmerizes, inspires and calls. Faced with the charm of beauty, no one is indifferent. Numerous authors such as Palma Ramirez (2013)<sup>306</sup> capture beauty's capacity to wrench man from himself, awakening him and leading him to generous disposition in relation to life. The concept of beauty in relation to the human being is consistently portrayed as renovating, renewing and transcendent, offering possibilities of transformation. "It lightens the human condition" (VP, 2.3). In effect, beauty is empowered to break down barriers, reaching and moving man in his innermost being, for it affects the person in his entirety. In short, people aspire for the beautiful and cannot live without it. However, this aspiration must be carefully nurtured and often heroically defended, and should point beyond the merely aesthetic, the merely sensual.

The "*pulchra enim dicuntur quæ visa placent*" of Aquinas (*S. Th.* I, q.5, a.4), insinuates a perceptible form of beauty, but in reality, the source of beauty may go beyond the exterior, shining from within. In this vein, it is significant that the platonic conception of beauty, echoed by others such as St. Augustine, (*Conf.*, 14, 3), it was emphasized that beauty may be considered the element that makes something the object of love. "*Non possumus amare nisi pulchra?*" (*De Musica*, 6, 13, 38, PL 32, 1183). The concept of a moral beauty comes to light within the concept of the corporal

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<sup>306</sup> "Una función primordial de la auténtica belleza, expuesta ya por Platón, consiste en provocar en el hombre una 'sacudida'. Tal conmoción lo hace salir de sí mismo, arrancándolo de la resignación, de la comodidad de lo cotidiano, y lo despierta, elevándolo hacia lo alto, hacia el horizonte del sentido. La belleza, golpeándolo, mueve el hombre hacia su destino último, le entrega generosamente la valentía de vivir hasta el final el don único de la existencia" (Palma Ramirez, 2013, p. 21).

spiritual constitution of the human person. The human soul, possessing a moral beauty through the practice of virtue, may transmit to his corporal actions, gaze, and gestures this “invisible” beauty he holds within. Aquinas likens this “spiritual beauty” along the same line as physical beauty, which he identifies as a proportionate corporal composition with “clarity of colour”. Spiritual beauty — clearly not apprehended, in a first moment, aesthetically — would in turn shine through human comportment and acts, in congruence with the “spiritual clarity of reason” (*S. Th.* II-II, q.145, a.2)<sup>307</sup>. The interplay between the spiritual and physical, the intense union of soul and body, comes to the fore in this consideration. Spiritual beauty is thus “disclosed” in exterior manifestation. A profound form of spiritual beauty, that of suffering, is also revealed through heroic acts such as martyrdom or the giving of one’s life for a cause.

#### **4.2.1. Beauty as a road to contemplation and mystical experience**

Thus, beauty naturally inspires a spirit of admiration and *émerveillement*, creating conditions for mystical experience through contemplation<sup>308</sup>. But as Aquinas observed, “Man alone takes pleasure in the beauty of sensible objects for its own sake”

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<sup>307</sup> Along this vein, Ruiz Retegui (1999) comments on this ‘internal’ beauty that radiates toward the exterior within the corporal expression of the human being. For Retegui, the relational dimensions of the body, principally, aspects such as the gaze, gesture and facial expression, demonstrate that a beauty beyond the strictly material is perceived. “Por eso el cuerpo presenta también otro tipo de hermosura, que ya no es solamente corporal biológica, sino que radica en la dimensión relacional que el alma espiritual inscribe en el cuerpo” Consequently, (p. 35). De Bruyne points out that St. Thomas spoke much of the beauty of the soul, and its relation to corporal expression. “Pero como no la vemos en si misma, no por los sentidos ni por la inteligencia, no podemos juzgar su belleza mas que por su actividad ligada al cuerpo. En si, la belleza del alma esta constituida por el esplendor de la razon en actos perfectamente proporcionados” (De Bruyne, 1959, p. 328).

<sup>308</sup> Edith Stein (1994) had affirmed that this aesthetic pleasure is in fact a spiritual act, for it elevates and tends toward the infinite: “La belleza es lo que hace al ente susceptible de despertar placer, pero el placer es un acto espiritual” (p. 336). The concept was also affirmed by Palma Ramírez (2013) who relates the concept of beauty with the religious sentiment of reverential fear “La belleza espléndida pertenece al orden religioso: fascina y atrae al tiempo que desconcierta y provoca un temor reverencial (p. 33-34).



(*S. Th.* I, q.91, a.3)<sup>309</sup>. Thereby, he distinguishes the merely utilitarian use of the senses demonstrated in animals, which are unable to discern beauty, to show that man has the capacity of transcending the senses toward a higher form of knowledge. The platonic tradition had consistently emphasized the contemplation of natural beauty as a stepping-stone toward spiritual beauty, which implicitly tended toward the One, who is simultaneously the Good and the Beautiful.

Basing their considerations on the corporal and spiritual dimensions of man, Hugh and Richard of St. Victor identified the religiously based aesthetic emotion, or mystical experience, which arises in virtue of the highest functioning of the intelligence, that is, the contemplation of God or of his creatures (De Bruyne, 1959, p. 242. 245). For, according to the “Victorians”, “*omnis visibilis pulchritudo invisibilis pulchritudinis imago est*” (De Bruyne, 1947, p. 90). Richard developed his theory regarding a contemplation based on three hierarchical levels of contemplation; the first two, *sensibilia*, and *intelligibilia* focus on the consideration of sensible objects, whether human or natural works, whereas the third and highest form of contemplation, *intellectibilia*, proceeds from admiration for the fruits of divine action or human genius, such as those reflected in moral institutions (De Bruyne, 1959, p. 246). Quoting St. Augustine, the Angelic Doctor, in turn, accentuates the implicitly religious dimension of the contemplative act, whereby one easily arrives at the contemplation of God himself<sup>310</sup>.

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<sup>309</sup> “Solus homo delectatur ipsa in ipsa pulchritudine sensibilibus secundum seipsam”. “The senses are given to man, not only for the purpose of procuring the necessities of life, for which they are bestowed on other animals, but also for the purpose of knowledge” (*S. Th.* I, q.91, a.3). It is significant that Aquinas observes even the physical structure of the human being as facilitating his sensual apprehension of all things: “Man has his face erect, in order that by the senses, and chiefly by sight, which is more subtle and penetrates further into the differences of things, he may freely survey the sensible objects around him, both heavenly and earthly, so as to gather intelligible truth from all things” (*S. Th.* I, q.91, a.3).

<sup>310</sup> Pieper (1998) continues his observation regarding this transcendent character of contemplation: “Contemplation, however, including earthly contemplation, is able to quench man’s thirst more than anything else because it affords a direct perception of the presence of God; contemplation is the form in which we partake of the uttermost degree of happiness which this physical, historical existence of ours is capable of holding” (p. 78).

Since, however, God's effects show us the way to the contemplation of God Himself according to Rom. i. 20, *The invisible things of God...are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made*, it follows that the contemplation of the divine effects also belongs to the contemplative life, in as much as man is guided thereby to the knowledge of God. Hence Augustine says (*De Vera Relig.* 39) that *in the study of creatures we must not exercise an empty and futile curiosity, but should make them the stepping-stone to things imperishable and everlasting*<sup>311</sup> (*S. Th.* II-II, q.180, a.4).

The apprehension of the beautiful thus results logically in a movement of contemplation; "a knowing accompanied by amazement. In contemplation, a *mirandum* is seen, that is to say, a reality which evokes amazement because it exceeds our comprehension even though we see it, and have a direct intuition of it" (Pieper, 1998, p. 72). Contemplation thus occurs spontaneously through a natural observation of truth, goodness and beauty in one's surroundings, "a loving attainment of awareness [...] intuition of the beloved object" (Pieper, 1998, p. 72).

This process is in keeping with man's complex constitution, for, as a convergence of diverse biological, moral and psychological factors, he possesses vegetative, sensitive and intellectual attributes. A corporal and spiritual being, man is bound to the necessities and appetites of his body, while his spiritual dimension and his participation in divine life tend consistently toward openness toward the Absolute, the transcendent. This is reflected in man's naturally mystical and contemplative character, a universal human trait from all time. In effect, mystical experience is as inherent to human life as philosophy or poetry (Uribe Carvajal, 2008, p. 112).

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<sup>311</sup> "Sed quia per divinos effectus in Dei contemplationem manuducimur, secundum illud Rm 1,20, Invisibilia Dei per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta, conspiciuntur: inde est quod etiam contemplatio divinatorum effectuum secundario ad vitam contemplativam pertinet, prout scilicet ex hoc manuducitur homo in Dei cognitionem. Unde Augustinus dicit, in libro de Vera Relig., quod in creaturarum consideratione non vana et peritura curiositas est exercenda, sed gradus ad immortalia et semper manentia faciendus". (Translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province).

Pieper (1998) attested to this distinctly human quality of contemplation, in which, “the multiple forces of human nature are always called upon, always at play” (p. 82)<sup>312</sup>. He points out that contemplation is a source of immense satisfaction and happiness within the human experience, as it facilitates a perception of the Divine. (p. 78) Therefore, one could say that the contemplation of the beautiful, revealed in any venue, is conducive to an aesthetic-mystical experience which opens to communication with the Divine<sup>313</sup>.

#### **4.2.2 Beauty within a contemporary perspective**

The concept of *pulchrum*, however, emerges as a complex and seemingly elusive dimension within the experience of contemporary man, as it undergoes diverse interpretations and appears to be subject to the merely subjective aesthetic likes or dislikes of a humanity in turmoil, for “people cannot dispense with the word and constantly have it on their tongues in order to abuse it” (Von Balthasar, 1982, p. 19). The tendency to see earthly beauty as an end in itself, an object of immediate fruition and pleasure, has replaced the ideal of beauty as an ennobling and transcending factor, an element that leads toward the Creator.

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<sup>312</sup> “O homem é, por natureza, um ser contemplativo” (Clá Dias, 2010, p. 16-17).

<sup>313</sup> It is noteworthy that Martínez Torres (1952) identifies the abundant fruits derived from the contemplation of beauty: “No es cosa fácil describir el estado de animo del que contempla la belleza; sin embargo, sabemos todos que se caracteriza por una cierta serenidad beatífica de nuestra alma, un gozo reposado de los sentidos y una fruición dulce y tranquil de todo nuestro ser. [...] Esta fruición es un poder innato que surge espontáneo de nuestra naturaleza y en distinta medida en cada individuo; un don maravilloso que Dios concede, bien para crear la belleza, bien para deleitarse con ella” (p. 333).

Likewise, the emergence of the macabre and morbid, the grotesque and hideous as an alternative option of taste, reflected in diverse forms of art and human presentation, is an exterior reflection of an often distorted interior disposition<sup>314</sup>. To a great extent then, and in many ways, the transcendental values of *verum* and *bonum* have lost their brilliance, their meaning, their cohesion, which Von Balthasar (1982) so aptly pointed out: “In such a world, the good also loses its attractiveness, the self-evidence of why it must be carried out. (...) In a world that no longer has enough confidence in itself to affirm the beautiful, the proofs of the truth have lost their cogency” (p. 19). The many times disfigured aesthetic taste of contemporary man coincides with a universal loss of perception for the truth and the good, an increased instability and uncertainty in the confrontation with profound societal changes and international crises. The inability to recognize and cherish the significance of beauty and its benefits has rendered the human experience dull and heavily charged with the pragmatic, practical and transient. As a result, beauty emerges as a vulnerable and transparent facet of human life, for, as one author expressed, it is as a thermometer of a society in crises, since it is an aspect that is primarily affected<sup>315</sup>.

Consequently, depriving beauty of its significance as a transcendent dimension of being, contemporary man has come to accept a falsified beauty that in no way transmits the true and the good. Rather, it measures up as superficial and unsatisfactory, without fulfilling man’s inherent need for transcendence and admiration. The aesthetic or sensuous experience that such “beauty” promotes is never

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<sup>314</sup> It is not surprising that many, such as the artist and liturgical space designer Pastro (2008b) recognize an authentic “crisis of beauty” dominated by the increasingly distorted aesthetic taste, which brings on a detrimental impact to human existence itself: “O feio, o caos, a poluição, a desarmonia indicam-nos desequilíbrio, ausência de beleza, de felicidade. (...) A crise da beleza se revela na explosão de apelos estéticos de consumo; surgem as mascaras, as aparências. (...) Há crise de beleza quando a arte começa a explorar “o feio”, como categoria preferencial que excita e pode levar a loucura. Trata-se da cultura do kitsch” (p. 21). In addition, noting the exploration of ugliness within art, Faitanin (2007) observes the the generalized distortion this brings to the human aesthetic perception in general: “Os que procuram oficializar a popularização de uma produção com essa intenção acabam por gerar nas pessoas, que não desenvolveram um senso crítico de bem e mal, por encontrar-se adormecido, um mau gosto, um mau hábito, distorcendo a apreciação do que é o bem, a verdade e o belo” (p. 107).

<sup>315</sup> “A beleza é o reflexo e o termometro de uma sociedade em crise, pois de todas as crises a mais afetada é a da beleza” (Pastro, 2008b, p. 2).

*true*, lasting or transforming, bringing only a momentary and fleeting pleasure that frustrates the true aspirations of the human spirit. This contemporary form of beauty often solely emphasises man's carnal dimension, setting impossible standards for physical appearance, styles, and wealth, without giving importance to the more profound spiritual dimensions of the human person<sup>316</sup>. The rampant promotion of this false beauty is clearly exploitative and detrimental to the human condition as a whole, in its cultural, social, and religious facets.

Are we not confronted too often by phenomena of real decadence whereby art and culture are denaturalised and hurt man in his dignity? Beauty itself cannot be reduced to simple pleasure of the senses: this would be to deprive it of its universality, its supreme value, which is transcendent. Perception requires an education, for beauty is only authentic in its link to the truth – of what would brilliance be, if not truth? — and it is at the same time ‘the visible expression of the good, just as the good is the metaphysical expression of beauty’ (*VP*, 2.1).

Technological advances have doubtless been among the chief channels of false forms of beauty in contemporary society. In reality, the technological gadgets themselves tend to offer the individual transitory, superficial — indeed, virtual — “experiences” which do not necessarily prepare the human spirit for openness toward the metaphysically beautiful, the sacred. Subtle echoes of Marxist ideology, emphasizing *praxis* in human life, place an exclusive, materialist emphasis on work, production, and efficiency. An increasing rupture results, distancing man from the true and the good, from the beautiful for which he subconsciously searches. Counter-current to the inclination for superficial, immediate gratification, true beauty —

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<sup>316</sup> The superficial and pragmatic attitude that influences current concepts of beauty, fails to behold the profound essence, and value of true beauty, and there true experiences of beauty. Authors such as Lang (2009) have attempted to alert the tendential danger existing in this perception: “Nella condizione della modernità, ciò che è contestato è proprio la dimensione trascendente della bellezza, commutabile con la verità e la bontà. La bellezza è stata privata del suo valore ontologico ed è stata ridotta a un'esperienza estetica, addirittura a un mero ‘sentiment’” (p. 5).

whether natural or artistic — incites a spirit of admiring contemplation, which requires time and acuity of spirit to be fully appreciated.

In other words, one must be educated through beauty, for beauty. Otherwise, a false perception of beauty, the result of a distorted sense perception, may constitute an evasive trap leading man along the dark paths of deception and illusion. The shallow offerings of a superficial and transient taste that change according to the styles of a particular epoch do not hold the substance and benefits of an aesthetic beauty upheld by the elements of the truth and the good. False beauty also never transmits and forms the human spirit, for it has nothing to offer, nothing to fulfil the insatiable human desire for the infinite and the absolute that latently urges man to search for the truth and the good. “The human person risks falling into the trap of beauty taken for itself — the icon become idol, the means that swallow the end, truth that imprisons, trap into which people fall, due to an inadequate formation in the senses and the lack of a proper education regarding beauty” (VP 2.2)<sup>317</sup>. Education toward a true appreciation of beauty is therefore crucial, within the ambit of artistic representation and cultural manifestation.

### 4.3 Liturgy: Veritatis Splendor

Considering the aspects of liturgy brought up within the present investigation, the question arises; what connection may the liturgical experience have with beauty? In a simple though profound phrase, *Sacramentum Caritatis* responds decisively: “The liturgy is intrinsically related to beauty, it is *veritatis splendor*” (35)<sup>318</sup>. It is, then the

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<sup>317</sup> With his foundation in thomistic thought, Faitanin (2007) observes the necessity of a particular virtue in the discernment of the beautiful, which would clearly involve a careful development and formation: “Sem dúvida, a virtude do bom gosto deve ser adquirida e desenvolvida por qualquer pessoa [...] por meio desta virtude, não se aprecia estritamente o que agrada ou desagrada no que é visto, mas seu aspecto de bem e de verdade que encanta o espírito e o coração” (p. 101). Such a virtue, nurtured and protected, would no doubt eradicate the profound absence of true beauty promoted by rampant “addiction to the ugliness, bad taste and uncouthness, promoted by publicity, as much as by those *artistes fous* who profit from the squalid and the ugly provoking scandal” (VP 2, 2).

<sup>318</sup> Liturgia quidem, [...] intrinsecum habet nexum cum pulchritudine: est *veritatis splendor* (SC, 35).

splendour of truth, radiating the divine truth through human intervention and interpretation. It is the expression of truth in the highest sense of the word as the *culmen et fons* of spiritual life. When celebrated in all of its symbolic aspects, the liturgy extends a timeless radiance of beauty, for it holds *verum* and *bonum* within its very essence, in their supreme form. It is a true oasis of all that is “true” and “good” within human existence.

But within the context of this investigation, it may be observed that the beauty of liturgy goes beyond a merely aesthetic experience, like that obtained through the visual stimuli of the contemplation of works of art. Liturgical beauty, though it holds this visual aesthetic aspect, is experiential and revealing. This is due to the fact that the essence of liturgical beauty may be found, moreover, in its moral beauty, reflecting spiritual sentiments and aspirations. This moral beauty is reflected through interior attitudes such as petitions for forgiveness, praise, adoration, thanksgiving, and offering, in concurrence with the prescribed postures and movements. These moral aspects only take on their full meaning and splendour when expressed through gestures and words, and experienced within a sacred space and time — the liturgical celebration completes and reveals the latent beauty of the truths and ideals held within its meaning.

So, in reality, the aesthetic beauty is enriched with the profound interior beauty of the mystagogic and eschatological meaning, presaging heavenly beauty — a transcendent value which elevates the human condition to communication with the Divine. The sentiments are “lived” and experienced, while at the same time visualized in the context of the Assembly. In other words, the expression of the *veritatis splendor* of the liturgy is also due to the actuation of the human being within the celebration, under its vast and varied forms. The uninterrupted flow of communication by means, not only of words, but also of gestures and attitudes with eschatological and spiritual scope thus transform the person into a living symbol, thus elevating the human condition in an unprecedented way. The experience of liturgical space adorned with

sacred art and unique architectural form, such as the gothic style, is a transcendent experience for the individual as he “is physically encompassed by an extraordinarily compelling representation of the Christian cosmos” (Rappaport, 1999, p. 257-258).

The liturgical endeavour, therefore, like the artistic, has the potential to create and *pre-form* a narrative of beauty and paradoxically, an expression of the invisible through social means. [...] The condensed and formalized world of liturgy allows something mysterious to be revealed through the symbolic materiality of the rite. By means of the intensity of its aesthetic and ritualized representation it brings about a mysterious disclosure of divine beauty (Torevell, 2007, p. 101).

This expression of spiritual sentiments and desires through physical and verbal expression, music or the simple word is the unique manifestation of beauty in the liturgy — a transmission of the *verum* and *bonum* through human action. Within the context of the liturgical celebration, the ensemble of varied forms of human expressions — cosmic elements, human language, gesture and music, silence and contemplation — emerge in harmonious and synchronized praise<sup>319</sup>. This liturgical beauty is revealed continuously throughout the sequence of the ritual, requiring time and space for its full disclosure, and a contemplative spirit for its assimilation. The beauty of God Himself is revealed within the ceremonial progression of earthly liturgy, for it is an image of the eternal liturgy of heaven.

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<sup>319</sup> In relation to this facet of liturgical beauty, is noteworthy that Gilson (1998) identified the aesthetic experience emerging from the convergence of diverse factors of natural beauty with artistic genius, promoting a distinctly mode of expression and experience: “A linguagem tem sua beleza, a natureza mineral, vegetal, animal e humana tem a sua. Se o artista tiver habilidade para combinar na mesma obra as forças emotivas exercidas por todas as formas de beleza natural, a experiência estética inevitavelmente ganhara em profundidade e intensidade devido à ação convergente dessas causas diversas” (p. 54). Specifically, Chauvet (1987) mentions the integration of diverse elements of the universe within liturgical celebration, proportioning a mode of celebrating the cosmos: “À travers les matériaux et objets, à travers le corps, à travers l’aménagement architectural et la décoration plastique de l’espace sacré, à travers la pierre de l’autel, le bois de la croix ou des sièges, la flamme du cierge pascal ou l’odeur d’encens, c’est, en ce cas même de nos intentions explicites, l’univers entier qui dans la liturgie est célébré comme création” (p. 366).



Clearly, liturgical beauty demands a certain attitude and openness on the part all involved, a state of being, as opposed to the pragmatic mentality of merely doing and producing<sup>320</sup>. Thus, within the context of liturgy, the human person must, to a great extent, leave profane attitudes and customs behind in order to enter into the celebration, and allow the sacred beauty of the ritual to assume him. The initial ascetic effort will be fully compensated, for in reality, the liturgical festivity is marvellously equipped to appeal to the spirit of contemporary man accustomed to visual stimulation and strong aesthetic emotions. This liturgical beauty, in its multifaceted aspects, entirely involves the human being in his corporal and spiritual dimensions, calling upon his festive and symbolic propensity, and his experience within the world. The liturgy thus constitutes a perennial event in human existence, a *splendor veritatis* which never fades or diminishes in its *nobili simplicitate*; a celebration accessible to all who are desirous of the beauty and sublimity of the celebration.

#### **4.3.1 Liturgical beauty as paideia**

This study had initiated within the perspective of the human being as *homo festivus*, as innately capacitated to express and symbolically manifest aspects of culture and religion. However, as noted, many of these celebrative dimensions within the human experience have diminished significantly; they are values that have lost their esteem in the utilitarian heart of contemporary man, or have been distorted in their essence and purpose and therefore do not constitute lasting experiences. But fruitful

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<sup>320</sup> Liturgical beauty is a disciplining factor, demanding concentration and elevation in order to be fruitful. The concepts of sacred time, space and silence allow such an experience to properly develop. Marini (2005) makes the crucial observation that this form of beauty requires certain attitudes and renunciations on the part of the individual, namely, the rejection of banality and caprice, which would stifle the benefits of the celebration: “La bellezza della liturgia esige sempre qualche renuncia da parte nostra: renuncia alla banalità, alla fantasia, al capriccio. Alla liturgia, inoltre, bisogna dare il tempo e lo spazio di cui ha bisogno. Non bisogna avere fretta. Più che alla nostra iniziativa bisogna lasciare a Dio la libertà di parlarci e di raggiungerci attraverso la Parola, la preghiera, i gesti, la musica, il canto, la luce, l’incenso, i profumi. La liturgia, come una composizione musicale, ha bisogno di spazio, di tempo e di silenzio, del distacco da noi stessi, perché le parole, i gesti e i segni possano parlarci di Dio” (p. 131).

modes of celebration, such as the liturgy, hold profound opportunities for the human person to recover and renew the fundamental elements of his very self.

The concept of the liturgy and its revelation of beauty as a form of *paideia* within human life captures our interest at this point. Early Greek culture had evolved a manner of formation for its citizens, known as *paideia*, (παιδεία) involving a holistic and all-inclusive education of the human being. It emerged as a mode *par excellence* of formation that went beyond a strictly academic connotation, as it tended toward a broader sense of instruction, with sights on the perfection of human faculties. Therefore, true *paideia* would not only form the intellectual attributes of the individual, through the exposure of liberal arts, but also reach a level of moral and physical enhancement, redounding in social and ethical development<sup>321</sup>. Within the Hellenistic vision, then, *paideia* attempted to produce an ideal citizen of the polis, attaining the full development of his personal potential within the perspective of sociability, politics and culture. Therefore, *paideia* was intertwined with the philosophical ideal of the Greeks, and its preoccupation with the wide-ranging and persistent quests for the enhancement of the human being, in his search for life's purpose and meaning. According to Jaeger (1986), with the progression of this type of formation, the term *paideia* took on broader proportions, for it “described all the artistic forms and the intellectual and aesthetic achievements of their race, in fact the whole content of their tradition” (p. 303)<sup>322</sup>.

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<sup>321</sup> “For the Greeks, beauty meant nobility also. To lay claim to the beautiful, to take possession of it, means to overlook no opportunity of winning the prize of the highest aretē” (Jaeger, 1986, p. 12).

<sup>322</sup> Jaeger (1986) further outlines the profound vision of *paideia* evolved within Greek thought: “Originally the concept of *paideia* had applied only to the process of education. Now its significance grew to include the objective side, the content of *paideia* – just as our word culture or the Latin *cultura*, having once meant the process of education, came to mean the state of being educated; and then the content of education, and finally the whole intellectual and spiritual world revealed by education, into which any individual, according to his nationality or social position, is born. Accordingly it was perfectly natural for the Greeks in and after the fourth century, when the concept finally crystallized, to use the word *paideia* – in English, *culture* – to describe all the artistic forms and the intellectual and aesthetic achievements of their race, in fact the whole content of their tradition” (p. 303).

Within this scope, the concept of the liturgy as *paideia* recognizes the inherently formative experience that unfolds from the liturgical celebration, which constitutes at one and the same time a sacred, transcendent experience as well a highly aesthetic occurrence, thus affecting the individual within the ambit of his corporal and spiritual dimensions<sup>323</sup>. The liturgy holds a vast representation of human achievement, in the line of linguistic and musical genre. The sacred spaces are often masterpieces of art and architecture, focal points of cultural and religious attraction, while the highest forms of festivity are prominently manifested within their precincts. The liturgy is thus a concentration of human excellence, gleaned from former times and enhanced in the present. “Although the sacred liturgy is more than anything else the worship of the divine Majesty, it also holds a pedagogical function for the faithful” (SSC 33)<sup>324</sup>.

The liturgy thus exerts an influence over the entire person, affecting both the emotive and cognitive faculties<sup>325</sup>. In his corporal dimension, man assumes the vivid experience of symbolic action, wherein he is not a mere spectator, but rather an active participant. The beauty particular to the liturgical celebration is to a great extent expressed through this element of human participation, of this living out of the liturgical act, involving an uplifted, transcendent form of existence. It is not surprising that Lukken (1994) identifies the liturgy, like any festive celebration, as “poetry in the prose of daily life”, discerning its unique faculty as a source of “relief” and “new creation” within human existence (p. 64).

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<sup>323</sup> Mondin (2007) underlines the formative characteristics of culture, emphasizing its social dimensions: “La cultura, nel senso di *paideia*, è condizione essenziale per la salvaguardia della pace interna; fornendo ai membri di un gruppo sociale un linguaggio, dei costumi, delle tecniche, delle istituzioni e dei valori comuni, essa costituisce lo strumento più potente della loro unificazione e socializzazione” (p. 32).

<sup>324</sup> “Etsi sacra Liturgia est praecipue cultus divinae maiestatis, magnum etiam continet populi Fidelis eruditionem” (Personal translation).

<sup>325</sup> It is highly suggestive that Kennedy (1971) clarifies the role of religious ritual as integrating the individual in his entirety, in such a way that his very psychological equilibrium is influenced within an holistic expression of his relation with others as well as with his own identity: “O rito religioso promove o equilíbrio psicológico quando se harmoniza com os esforços do homem para realizar suas mais profundas aspirações ao crescimento, a redenção, e ao relacionamento mais pleno com os outros. (...) Um rito que contribua com êxito para o equilíbrio psicológico das pessoas deve afundar suas raízes numa sábia visão do homem. O rito que compreende a unidade do homem contribui para sua dignidade e para a feliz realização de sua identidade pessoal” (p. 182).

The integrity and nobility of ritual action, simultaneously performed within the ambit of intense spirituality and moral instruction, inculcates a mode of existence, a highly ethical formation involving social and religious aspects of human life. The experience of the sacredness of time, and hallowed resonance of liturgical space, replete with art forms, lends a heightened appreciation for these dimensions also in all aspects of existence<sup>326</sup>. The *homo liturgicus* enters a new phase of existence in each liturgy, consistently repeating and renewing the experience within each celebration. Thus, through a frequent and fruitful participation and observation of the gestures, liturgical language and ritual sequence, spatial and temporal elements, the faithful are in reality receiving an effective “liturgical formation” which can, in turn, strongly influence attitudes, outlooks, and the social and moral comportment of quotidian existence. In effect, as *homo liturgicus*, the person may subconsciously transfer much of his liturgical knowledge and activity to certain aspects of his daily life experiences. We could say then that the liturgy may serve as a model of human comportment and actuation within society, and for its betterment<sup>327</sup>. The renovating dimension of liturgy thus exerts a transforming influence upon the participants. Torevell (2007) observed that “The structured intensity of liturgy allows worshippers to be transported to the world represented, encouraging them to live according to its values” (p. 101). In other

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<sup>326</sup> The timeless observations of Von Hildebrand (1963) with respect to the formation of the human personality in liturgy, which he observes would be the basis for the individual’s actuation with respect to values: “Significa la formación del hombre integral. Aunque se trate de zonas del ser que no están mencionadas expresamente en la liturgia, sin embargo no cabe duda de que la postura recta ante Dios se convertirá conscientemente para nosotros en *causa exemplaris*, en prototipo y modelo de la postura que adoptemos con respecto a todos los valores” (p. 68).

<sup>327</sup> In the consideration of the liturgical act as key to a significant basis of comportment for familial life in general, Clá Dias (2011) delineated the inherently didactic capacity of liturgical ritual, which influences behavioural patterns beyond the liturgical ceremony itself. He expounds upon the fact that since human nature tends to imitate that which he admires, this is, in turn, a most effective manner of learning. Hence, the liturgical act represents a pattern of comportment for familial life in general: “Essa transposição do cerimonial não se cifra numa repetição de gestos, mas projeta para a vida temporal o ambiente de sacralidade dos atos litúrgicos. O pai ou a mãe que assiste a uma celebração esplendorosa desdobrará instintivamente no dia a dia, no ‘ritual’ da igreja doméstica, o cerimonial presenciado na Igreja. Dar a bênção aos filhos, ou rezar antes das refeições, por exemplo, são maneiras de praticar o espírito católico na vida da família” (p. 52).

words, the participants of liturgy are induced toward a continuation of liturgical action, in another mode, within their daily lives.

Festive forms of ritual actuation, which have often lost their significance within the contemporary existence, are replete with symbolic spiritual meaning and lasting significance within liturgy; moreover, they are consistently available at all times. The liturgy forms then, through the personal experience of each participant, a living out of the ritual action proposed, the collective experience of verbal proclamation, the personal and profound experience of silence, and contemplative thanksgiving. Integration into liturgical festivity furnishes a didactic experience of reliving and not merely re-enacting, the mysteries of the liturgical calendar, therefore a highly symbolic and aesthetic action. The experience of the sacred is intensified through spatial and temporal delineations. In other words, liturgical beauty is experienced and assimilated, not in abstract but rather *in acto*<sup>328</sup>.

#### **4.3.2 The mystagogy of silence as paideia**

The concepts of silence and contemplation as complementary to verbal and gestural language is natural to liturgy, as the *homo loquens* must at times give way to *homo adorans* in order for the mystical language of silence to be expressed (Sanz Montes, 2001, p. 214). The liturgical sequence thus incorporates significant pauses, often preceding or subsequent to symbolic gestures or verbal expression, as a mode of emphasizing their impact and promoting mindfulness among the faithful. Silence thus provides an opening for significance and symbolism to develop, allowing ideas and convictions to take root. Although it may seem plausible that the word inspires a productive silence, Von Balthasar (2008) expressed the idea that it is language itself

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<sup>328</sup> Interestingly, Danneels (2006) pointed toward a “sensorial pedagogy” of the liturgical act which uniquely gives preference to experience, before “analysis, explanation and systematization”. He affirmed that, for a full integration of the person within the liturgical act, it is important to first “live the liturgy, then reflect and explain it” (p. 18-19).

that is born of and takes root in silence, and that it consequently reaches its full plenitude within silence<sup>329</sup>.

However, silence in liturgy holds a particular significance, whereby the individual is elevated from the merely visible and audible, to eternal and spiritual truths, the contemplation of the *mysterium tremendum*. Such moments are often charged with intense concentration and visual significance, requiring time and concentration for their full revelation. Clearly, the aspects of liturgical time, in its kairotic connotation, and the sacredness of defined moments within the ritual are relevant here. Silence thus develops together with the concept of liturgical time.

Within the Christian liturgy, some aspects of the concept of sacred silence was developed by Odo Casel. He had envisioned the most solemn part of the sacrifice as fulfilled within silence, implicating a silencing of the word, naturally redounding in an interior stillness; the exterior silence thus represents interior contemplation. Thus, liturgical silence would stem primarily from a spiritual attitude elevating the human faculties, toward a fruitful form of worship. Within liturgical action, silence becomes the precious quintessence in which union with God is founded, producing sentiments of confidence and vital experience: peace, gratitude, happiness and wisdom. This fruitful silence generates communication and communion, permitting the faithful to penetrate into the mystery of God. “Mystical silence is firmly anchored over all in mysticism and in religion. (...) Silence and the full union with God are one and the same thing<sup>330</sup>” (Casel, 2002, p. 142). Consequently, the sacred silence shrouding the celebration, and the hallowed ecstasy before the Lord, would manifest profound spiritual sentiments, revealing the inexpressible. It is within Christian Liturgy, viewed

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<sup>329</sup> “El lenguaje nace siempre del silencio, echa sus raíces en el: en consecuencia, para ser correcto, debe referirse a el, interpretarlo, volver a el, no porque las palabras sean insignificantes y vanas, sino porque la plenitud de su significado las trasciende constantemente y solo en esta superación son realmente posibles; del mismo modo que la plenitud del lenguaje no es quitar vigor a la plenitud del silencio” (Von Balthasar, 2008, p. 240).

<sup>330</sup> “In questo modo, il silenzio mistico ha trovato il suo più profondo ancoraggio soprattutto nella mistica e nella religione. (...) Il silenzio e la pienezza dell’unione con Dio sono una cosa sola” (Personal translation).

as a celebration of the mystery, that this most fruitfully unfolds. (p. 144). Thus, silence in liturgy is not merely the silence of a non-happening, rather, it is closely related to the mystical experience, and is therefore intensely prolific. It is within liturgy that silence is takes on its most profound connotation and generates transforming impact for the participant – a mystical experience.

Within the perspective of festivity, it is noteworthy that Pieper (1999) pointed toward a contemplative dimension as essential to any celebration in order to give it equilibrium and true significance, for a silent meditation would clearly facilitate a consideration of the essence of existence (p. 17). In turn, he affirmed that an accurate understanding of silence and leisure encompasses profound philosophical dimensions concerning the relationship of man with himself and the world at large. “Silence, as it is used in this context, does not mean ‘dumbness’ or ‘noiselessness’; it means more nearly that the soul’s power to ‘answer’ to the reality of the world is left undisturbed, for leisure is a receptive attitude of mind, a contemplative attitude, and it is not only the occasion but also the capacity for steeping oneself in the whole of creation” (Pieper, 2009a, p. 46). Hence, the capacity for silence is inherently linked with the capacity for a keen perception and observation<sup>331</sup> which evolves naturally into a rich form of contemplation, for the increased development of the diverse attributes of the human mentality. Within liturgy, this contemplative state, fruit of silence, is induced also through the multifaceted visual impact and aesthetic experience of the ambience

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<sup>331</sup> Within the perspective of liturgical silence, it is also worthy of note that Mattheeuws (2002) mentions the conclusions of E. Schillebeeckx, who points out that verbal facets of recent liturgies, the “legomenon” have gradually detrimentally taken over the festive sensorial aspects of the celebration, the “dromenon”. “With this last aspect, Schillebeeckx means gestures, attitudes, rhythmic movements, the use of elements such as water, anointing oils, incense, the attention to music, silence, light and space” (p. 134). Lukken (2004) also contends an overriding verbal dimension of liturgy which may “one constantly hears the complaint that the liturgy is too verbal. It appears from this that these efforts are still gong in too strongly an abstract, intellectual direction. This transforms the celebration of the liturgy into a lesson, a lecture in theology, instruction and pedantry” (p. 61). Clearly, dimensions which stimulate a fruitful contemplative silence also include visual aspects, symbology and beauty, but Mattheeuws (2002) continues to ponder whether or not current liturgical celebrations are sufficiently equipped in this regard: “In a predominantly visual culture, liturgy too has to be a visual experience. The question is whether this goes with our contemporary celebrations. Is there enough to see? We can think for example of the setting and the interior of the liturgical space. Do we make enough use of symbols? Does the symbolic dimension of our celebrations really come out well? (p. 137).

that emerges throughout the course of the celebration. Sentiments of wonder and transcendence blossom into contemplative, mystagogic silence, transforming verbal expression into profound spiritual fruits.

The beauty of the liturgical action is thus fully evolved and assimilated within the contemplative spirit of moments of silence, at significant intervals of the Celebration. Noteworthy, in this vein is the affirmation of Maritain (1962) on “active participation” within the liturgical celebration, observing that it is at times interpreted as a solely exterior participation of the individual, when in reality, from a philosophical perspective, the listening with the heart and ears is also a valid mode of participation<sup>332</sup>. This proves as a challenge for contemporary man, for who silence and contemplation are not always fully appreciated or easily achieved. The contemplative stillness and silence appropriate to determined moments of the liturgical celebration thus imply an opportunity for growth, a formation in transcendence within the human experience. Sacred music is adapted and moments of silence are abbreviated in a bid to make the liturgy more accessible; more ordinary. In reality, it is the liturgical experience itself which begins to lose its appeal, as it no longer fulfils the necessities of the soul. Indeed, it is precisely the experience of transcendence through beauty that can lift man — rescue him — not only from the ordinary, but within the contemporary perspective, from the conflicts, the horror, the isolation and depression in which he is so often immersed, offering him hope for the future and strength and impetus to continue his earthly journey.

Thus, the human is made with a marvellous *capax Dei* capable of experiencing divine Mystery not simply, as Rahner would have it, as a transcendental horizon but,

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<sup>332</sup> “À l’égard de la participation à la vie liturgique de l’Eglise, et bien que l’expression “participation active” ait pratiquement pris le sens de participation extérieurement manifestée, il importe plus de remarquer ici qu’écouter, soit de pareille, soit du cœur, est du point de vue philosophique aussi ‘actif que parler’ (Maritain J. & Maritain R., 1962, p. 146). In turn, Daneels (2006) points out the care that must be taken to encourage a contemplative dimension within the liturgy during this age when “the contemplative dimension of the human person” has become so foreign to the predominant *homo faber*, and that active participation must be guided within this contemplative attitude” (p. 10).



rather, in a self-transcending sensibility. The human is capable of experiencing divine Mystery not simply, as Marion would have it as an acknowledgement of divine transcendent origins but also a felt intimacy with such transcendence. The key to the role of the senses in divine Mystery is how the Mystery forms faith toward a self-transcending sensibility to divine Beauty (Garcia-Rivera, 2007, p. 56).

#### **4.3.3 The liturgy as a festive paideia: “nobili simplicitate”**

The festive impulse consistently expressed within the human experience, particularly employs the dynamic of symbols which increase its experiential aesthetic aspect. Among others, Von Balthasar (1989) underlined the importance of “concrete experience” in the perception of the beautiful, whereby sensorial experience is an inherent component to an awareness of beauty.

No metaphysics of being *qua* being and of its transcendental determinations is separable from concrete experience, which is always sensuous. The truth and the openness of being as a whole will be seen only where a judgement is made about some precise thing that is true; the goodness of being will be experienced only where something that is good meets one, something that simultaneously brings near *the* good and (through its finitude, fragility, lack of goodness) takes it away again. It is from the experience of the senses that we know that the beautiful exists (p. 28).

A highly aesthetic form of liturgical beauty evolves through the fusion of human gesture and symbols, particularly during the celebration of liturgical feasts that occur regularly during the Liturgical Year. Within the ambit of such festivities, the incorporation of organic elements such as water and fire, not only bring the beauty and simplicity of creation within the realm of liturgy, but also goes beyond their common worth to encounter a transcendent value in them. Here, human ingenuity and artistic capacity, integrates with organic symbolism to create a unique form of experience. The spiritual/mystical association of such elements is manifested in the carrying of candles,

the offering of gifts, incensing, the *Asperges* performed by the celebrant, processions which incorporate carrying of palms, or the emblematic floral carpets of the *Corpus Christi* procession<sup>333</sup>. “If nature and the cosmos are the expression of the beauty of the Creator and bring us to the threshold of a contemplative silence, artistic creation possesses its own capacity to evoke the ineffable aspects of the mystery of God” (*VP*, 3.2). Therefore, the liturgy evokes an association between the universe and human actuation, creating the basis for liturgical beauty: “*nobili simplicitate*”<sup>334</sup>.

Although it seems impossible, the liturgy puts the sensible and material world in order, assumes it in an extensive manner, with matchless generosity and enthusiasm. It requires water, wine, bread, salt, ashes, wax, light, fire and some other things. All is convoked. All is useful. [...] The liturgy inaugurates a ‘a new heaven and a new earth’ (Ap21,1). It demands the collaboration of all of our senses: it is visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile. It has recourse to musical aids, those of fragrance and illumination, employing choreography and floral art (Cassingena-Trévedy, 2008. p. 68-69)<sup>335</sup>.

The strong aesthetic impulse redoubles the experiential effects of the liturgical occasion, especially in its festive dimension, for “underlying all festive joy kindled by a specific circumstance, there has to be an absolutely universal affirmation extending to the world as a whole, to the reality of things and the existence of man himself” (Pieper, 1999, p. 26). The dramatic beauty which evolves during the celebration of

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<sup>333</sup> The markedly celebratory dimension of the procession of palms holds a celebrative appeal as it is a lively commemoration of a past event which marks Christian life even to this day. Righetti (1945) underscores its historic connotation: “La Processione delle Palme, la quale, como vedremo a suo tempo, volle riprodurre a Gerusalemme la scena evangelica dell’ingresso di Gesù nella città santa. La suggestiva cerimonia piacque e fu imitata dapprima in Francia e poi sia dovunque; e dio origine alla processione più pittoresca della liturgia medioevale” (p. 315).

<sup>334</sup> “*Ritus nobili simplicitate fulgeant*” (*SSC* 34)

<sup>335</sup> “Aunque parezca imposible, la liturgia pone orden en el mundo sensible y material, lo asume de modo exhaustivo, con generosidad y entusiasmo inigualables. Necesita agua, vino, pan, sal, cenizas, cera, luz, fuego y aun más cosas. Todo es convocado. Todo sirve. (...) La liturgia inaugura “un cielo nuevo y una tierra nueva” (Ap 21, 1). Reclama la colaboración de todos nuestros sentidos: es visual, auditiva, olfativa, táctil. Recurre a la ayuda de la música, de los perfumes, de la iluminación, se sirve de la coreografía y del arte floral” (Personal translation).

certain liturgical feasts is illustrative of the impact of this prolific combination of cosmic elements, word, and human gesture.

The vigil mass of Holy Saturday, which St. Augustine named, “The mother of all vigils” (Saint Augustine, *Sermon* 219: PL 38, 1088) vividly demonstrates the connection between the liturgy and the cosmos: “*O vere beata nox, in qua terrenis caelestia, humanis divina iunguntur!*” During this commemoration, contrasting elements of darkness and fire, with the gradual and communal lighting of candles by the congregation, dramatise the procession of the *Lumen Christi* which penetrates the gloomy precincts of place of worship — symbol of the obscurity and long wait that humanity underwent in its expectation of the coming of Our Lord<sup>336</sup>. The subsequent acclamation of the *Exultet*, or *Praeconium Paschale*, is a powerful moment as the congregations hearkens to the celebrative canticle of jubilation, in the candle-lit ambience, an account of the biblical, historical journey of the chosen people from captivity to freedom, as well as of the glorious Resurrection of Christ. In it, there are repetitive references to elements of the universe linked with the celebration: light and fire; night, day, sea, stars and even a reference to the animal world — the generous bees whose labour yielded the wax for the Paschal candle, “*per ministrorum manus de operibus apum*”, and the queen bee who produced the material used in the composition

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<sup>336</sup> Corrêa de Oliveira (2014a) illustrates the vivid link with the past and present experienced during the ceremony, in connection with the organic symbols and words employed: “Sente-se, por exemplo, quando o texto fala do fogo, que há uma certa grandeza patriarcal dos tempos primitivos do Antigo Testamento; e tem-se a impressão de ver a Igreja sair das névoas mais profundas da História, cantando o fogo, quando ela nem era nascida, mas havia a pré-Igreja, que eram os justos do Antigo Testamento e o culto verdadeiro de Yaveh. E um padre...de repente faz emergir misteriosamente esse passado [...] O padre faz uma invocação de algo tirado do Evangelho, e posteriormente se refere a Críandade atual...ele desliza pelos séculos como um pássaro” ( p. 17).

of the same: “*pretiosae huius lampadis apis mater eduxit*”, an allusion to the chastity and fecundity of the Virgin who brought Christ into the world<sup>337</sup>.

Exultet iam angelica turba caelorum:  
Exultent divina mysteria:  
et pro tanti Regis victoria tuba insonet salutaris  
Gaudeat e tellus, tantis irradiata fulgoribus:  
Et aeterni Regis splendore illustrata,  
Totius orbis se sentiat amisisse Caliginem !  
[...]  
Haec nox est, quae peccatorum tenebras  
columnae illuminatione purgavit.  
[...]  
Haec nox est, de qua scriptum est:  
Et nox sicut dies illuminabitur:  
et nox illuminatio mea in deliciis meis.

All of the other candles lit during the liturgy derive an eloquent symbolism from the Paschal Candle, which is the source of their light, with its own origin in the new fire. According to medieval tradition, which still holds value and significance today, the Paschal Candle holds a triple symbolism: Unlit, it represents the column of cloud that guided the Hebrew people through the desert by day. Once lit, it symbolizes the column of fire that accompanied them by night, the New Law, and most

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<sup>337</sup> The involvement of cosmic dimensions in the celebration, underscored particularly by Von Hildebrand (1963) goes beyond the aesthetic level, rather, their symbolic use would stimulate an increased attitude of respect toward the cosmos. Especially in our days, this dimension of respect has a wide reverberation: “¡Qué perspectiva tan singular del cosmos resplandece ante nosotros, cuando en la liturgia se trata expresamente de alguna criatura, v. gr., cuando en el ‘Exultet’ del Sábado Santo se habla de la diligente abeja, cuando se menciona el fuego en la ceremonia de su bendición! ¡Con qué dimensiones nuevas y profundas contemplamos entonces a esas criaturas, en contraste con la visión roma que de las mismas tenemos en nuestra vida cotidiana! ¡Resplandece en ellas el misterio augusto que está inherente en todo ser, como algo que ha salido de la mano de Dios y que ha sido tocado por sus dedos! Esta manera de ver las cosas es el terreno fecundo para que crezca en nosotros una profunda actitud de respeto ante todas las cosas y ante el cosmos en general” (p. 71).

importantly, the resurrected Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ (Mâle, 1958 p. 50). The Candle remains alight during the liturgical celebrations of the Easter Season, as a sign of the Resurrected Christ. After the *Lucenarium* (Celebration of Light), and the Liturgy of the Word, the rubrics include the Baptismal Rite, whose material element is water. Expressively, in a simple ceremony on the feast of Pentecost, the Paschal Candle is extinguished, for, as it accompanied the faithful as a figure of Christ during the Paschal Season, with the coming of the Holy Spirit, the faithful themselves are transformed into the light of Christ to illuminate the entire world.

The dedication or consecration of a church is another liturgical celebration which makes abundant symbolic use of cosmic elements along with human gesture, constituting an “extension of the liturgy over the entire social life, the influence of the Church on the entire city, and, over and above that, on the whole of creation” (Courau, 1997, p. 138). The Ceremony begins with a copious aspersion of holy water — over the altar, the congregation and over the very walls of the church — which replaces the penitential act. “Thou shalt sprinkle me, O Lord, with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed, Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow” (Ps. 51:7). In fact, water is a highly meaningful cosmic element within liturgy for its cleansing properties, which are brought into play in both a literal and figurative manner<sup>338</sup> as well as its

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<sup>338</sup> Aquinas comments that the washing of the hands is performed for two reasons, practical and symbolic. In the first place, he insists, no one should handle sacred object with hands that are literally unclean, and secondly, due to its inherent symbolism regarding the purging from sin - he quotes Pseudo-Dionysius who affirms that the washing of the extremities indicates a cleaning from the least sin. However, St. Thomas points out that this cleansing is no longer performed as in the Old Law, as images of the Old Testament evoke cleansings of the entire body, when the cleansing was much more elaborate, rather, the simple washing of the hands symbolises a perfect cleansing. “Primo quidem, quia aliqua pretiosa tractare non consuevimus nisi manibus ablutis. Unde indecens videtur quod ad tantum sacramentum aliquis accedat minibus, etiam corporaliter, inquinatis. Secundo, propter significationem. Quia, ut Dionysius dicit, 3 cap. Eccles. Hier., extremitatum ablutio significat emundationem etiam a minimis peccatis: secundum illud Io 13, 10: Qui lotus est, non indiget nisi ut pedes lavet. Et hoc idem significabat ablutio sacerdotum in veteri lege: ut ibidem Dionysius dicit” ( *S. Th.* III, q. 83, a. 5).

representational function in its mixing with the wine before the Consecration<sup>339</sup>.

t awaits you at the entrance of the Church, the water of your baptism, the water of your purity, the water of your Divine infancy. Nor is this enough. The priest scatters it in the air with a moist wand, that it may fall upon your brow, a dew of gladness” (Zundel, 1939, p. 16)<sup>340</sup>.

The altar is then anointed profusely with oil, signifying its sacred purpose as a representation of Christ; and subsequently, oil is again used to anoint the twelve crosses affixed to the walls of the church, evoking the image of the church as the Celestial Jerusalem, which according to the book of Revelation, has twelve foundations with the names of the twelve apostles. Then, within a recipient on the bare altar, a quantity of incense is burned, symbolizing the sacrifice of Christ which arises as a sweet aroma along with the prayers of the faithful. The entire congregation is finally incensed.

The aesthetic impact produced by the use of incense is noteworthy, as it affects the olfactory faculties, which Valenziano (1998a) asserts may, at times, generate a

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<sup>339</sup> A small amount of water is mixed into the wine before the consecration, tradition that has its origins in the first centuries, representing the human part of the sacrifice “Videmus in aqua populum intelligi, in vini vero ostendi sanguine Christi” (St. Cyprian, Epist. 63,13: Pl 4,383). The water mixed with the wine also has other symbolisms such as a reference to the blood and the water that streamed from the side of Christ, and the union of Christ and the Church (Garrido Bonaño, p. 326-327).

<sup>340</sup> Daniélou (1961) asserts that the ritual use of “living water” is derived from a vast context, found in Greek-roman religions, though it is more intensely present within the Jewish religion. He points out that within the Old Testament, specifically within the book of Leviticus, there is mention of ritual purifications employing living water (p. 50).

stronger impression than visual or auditory stimuli<sup>341</sup>. The burning coals that receive the incense are reminiscent of spiritual fervour, while the perfumed clouds that arise from the incensing gesture betoken the prayers and offerings of the assembly, creating an ambience of mystery and the supernatural. St. Thomas Aquinas points out that incense is no longer used as it was in the Old Law, but, as ordained by the Church, it performs a dual mission — once again, both practical and symbolic. First, as an expression of reverence for the sacrament, it removes any unpleasant smell in the area, and secondly, in a transcendental dimension, it serves as a sensible manifestation of the effect of grace<sup>342</sup>. Today, incense is used most especially during solemn Eucharistic celebrations, its aesthetic expression embellishing the entrance procession beginning the celebration, the proclamation of the Gospel, and in the offertory, where it portrays prayer rising heavenward, as described in the words of the psalmist: *Dirigatur, Domine, oratio mea sicut incensum in conspectus tuo*. Thus, this sacred smoke denotes, both inwardly and outwardly, through the senses of sight and smell, the initiation of the great act which is about to occur.

Returning to the rite of dedication, the festive illumination of the church follows, in which the candles pertaining to each of the twelve anointed crosses are lit as a token of joy, bespeaking the zealous instruction of the twelve apostles which illuminated the world. Nothing could be more fitting than that the dedication of the church should involve a rite so rich in sacramental value, for it thereby deeply

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<sup>341</sup> “L’odorato, anzi, è il più sconosciuto dei sensi e i profumi sono enigma incogniti, anche se l’uomo, pur arrivando a non reagire per sensazioni visive o uditive, reagisce senza eccezioni alle sensazioni olfattive. Nessuna tipologia classificatrice degli effluvi e nessuna fisiologia degli odori, nessuna psicologia o sociologia dei profumi, riesce sinora a catalogarli, a raggiungerli, a dominarli scientificamente” (Valenziano, 1998a, p. 253). Maggiani (1998b) further illustrates the impact of the sensorial experience of the sense of “the olfactory code” within the prism of religious experience, for “it always produces ‘reactions’ in anyone to whom it is directed. In religious ritual, but not only, it bears the recall in the truest sense of historical memory and covers with newness the one experiencing it, just as prayer has the ability to evoke, call, and provoke” (p. 253-254).

<sup>342</sup> “Primo quidem, ad reverentiam huius sacramenti: ut scilicet per bonum odorem depellatur si quid corporaliter pravi odoris in loco fuerit, quod posset provocare horrorem. Secundo, pertinent ad repraesentandum effectum gratiae, qua, sicut bono odore, Christus plenus fuit, secundum illud Gn 27, 27, Ecce, odor filii mei sicut odor agri pleni; et a Christo derivatur ad fideles officio ministrorum, secundum illud 2Cor 2, 14, Odorem notitiae suae spargit per nos in omni loco. Et ideo, undique thurificato altari, per quod Christus designatur thurificatur omnes per ordinem” (*S. Th.* III, q.83, a.5).

impresses upon all those who witness it the far-reaching scope of the liturgies that will be realized therein:

All of creation, humans included, are set in right relationship by the celebration of liturgical rites themselves which by their nature combine the goods of earth with human articulation of praise, thanks and supplication. Christian liturgy holds up the earth, especially its primal elements, and combines them with human speech to proclaim God's revelation. The God we address, revere and invoke in liturgy is the God of creation (Irwin, 2000, p. 177).

Interestingly, St. Thomas Aquinas emphasizes the importance of the dedication of the church due to the spiritual significance that it gains thereby, and the increased devotion that such a place inspires<sup>343</sup>. He observes that the consecration of the altar symbolizes the sanctity of Christ, while that of the building, testifies to the sanctity of the entire Church. He therefore points out the fittingness of the celebration of the solemnity of a church or altar, which should be commemorated throughout eight days in memory of the joyous "resurrection of Christ and of the Church's members"<sup>344</sup>.

The visual and festive dimension of the liturgical vestments integrate colour and form within the liturgical celebration, emphasising the sacral beauty of the movement of the celebrants. Especially in the liturgical setting, clothing transcends its

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<sup>343</sup> "...dicendum quod ecclesia et altare et alia huius inanimata consecrantur, non quia sint gratiae susceptiva, sed quia ex consecratione adipiscuntur quandam spiritualem virtutem per quam apta redduntur divino cultui: ut scilicet homines devotionem quandam exinde percipiant, ut sint paratiores ad divina, nisi hoc propter irreverentiam impediatur. Unde et in 2Mac 3,38-39 dicitur: Ver Dei virtus quaedam est in loco: nam ipse qui habet in caelis habitationem, visitator et adiutor est loci illius" (*S. Th.* III, q.83, a.3).

<sup>344</sup> "...dicendum quod, quia consecratio altaris repraesentat sanctitatem Christi, consecratio vero domus sanctitatem totius Ecclesiae, ideo convenientius recolitur cum solemnitate consecratio ecclesiae vel altaris. Propter quod etiam octo diebus solemnitas dedicationis agitur, ad significandam beatam resurrectionem Christi et membrorum Ecclesiae. Nec est opus solius hominis consecratio ecclesiae et altaris: cum habeat spiritualem virtutem. Unde de Consecr., distinctione eadem, dicitur: Solemnitates ecclesiarum dedicationum per singulos annos solemniter sunt celebrandae. Quod autem octo diebus encaenia sint celebranda, III libro Regum, perlecta dedicatione Templi, reperies, scilicet 8, 66" (*S. Th.* III, q.83, a.3).



practical function through its symbolism. Imparting sentiments of penance or celebration, according to the diverse feasts and epochs of the liturgical year<sup>345</sup>, the vestments additionally establish a hierarchy and grandeur, defining roles and functions within the celebration, indicating the role or position of the individual<sup>346</sup>. St. Thomas underlines this point in his treatise on the ceremonial precepts in the Summa: “it is said of a man in Ecclus. xix. 27 that the attire of the body... shows what he is. Hence the Lord wished His people to be distinguished from other nations, not only by the sign of circumcision, which was in the flesh, but also by a certain difference of attire” (*S. Th. I-II, q.102, a.6*)<sup>347</sup>. Aquinas, furthermore, distinguishes the role of “finer” garments which reflect sentiment of “festivity and joy” as opposed to coarser garb that would reflect grief or sadness<sup>348</sup> (*S. Th. II-II, q.187, a.6*). Corrêa de Oliveira (2007) pointed out the expressive capacity of liturgical vestments in their dramatic presentation of form and colour, products of an organic development, illustrating their impact in the liturgical celebration:

While accompanying the celebration of a solemn mass, admiring the brilliance of the sacred objects, the coruscation of the cloths embroidered with gold, the ecclesiastical vestments, etc., who does not perceive that the Church expresses something beyond her defined dogmas? The form and colours of the vestments —

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<sup>345</sup> Aquinas distinguishes the role of “finer” garments which reflect sentiment of “festivity and joy” as opposed to coarser garb that would reflect grief or sadness. “Uno modo, prout est signum quoddam dispositionis vel status humani: quia, ut dicitur Eccli 19, 27, amictus hominis annuntiat de eo. Et secundum hoc, vilitas habitus est quandoque signum tristitiae. Unde et homines in tristitia existents solent vilioribus vestibus vestibu uti: sicut e contrario i tempore solemnitis et gaudii utuntur cultioribus vestimentis” (*S. Th. II-II, q.187, a.6*).

<sup>346</sup> In a psycho-sociological perspective, Pinkus (1998) points out that ritual involves a code of social communication which can stimulate a transformative power on all who are involved within the celebration. The emphasis on the distinction of functions of those within the ritual action clearly expresses the social configuration of the group, as well as building its “protective capacity” in maintaining emotional stability within the ritual. (p. 178).

<sup>347</sup> “dicendum quod, sicut dicitur Eccli 19, 27, amictus corporis enuntiat de homine. Et ideo voluit Dominus ut populus eius distingueretur ab aliis, populus eius distingueretur ab aliis populis non solum signo circumcisionis, quod erat in carne, sed etiam certa habitus distinction”

<sup>348</sup> “Uno modo, prout est signum quoddam dispositionis vel status humani: quia, ut dicitur Eccli 19, 27, amictus hominis annuntiat de eo. Et secundum hoc, vilitas habitus est quandoque signum tristitiae. Unde et homines in tristitia existents solent vilioribus vestibus vestibu uti: sicut e contrario i tempore solemnitis et gaudii utuntur cultioribus vestimentis”.

chasubles and dalmatics — were developed progressively, slowly introduced into the costumes of the Church, without having caused the slightest preoccupation of combinations and articulations in their development. They emerged randomly; people, who did not have an understanding of drama, planned a magnificent “dramaturgy”, with extraordinary vesture; they were guided by the sense of the Church, by the Holy Spirit, and as such, they chose, arranged, and realized marvels of grandeur (p. 32-34)<sup>349</sup>.

The celebration of the particular festivities of the liturgical calendar, and their special involvement of elements from the universe, heighten the didactic appreciation and respect for the cosmos, while heightening the symbolic experience of the feast.

#### **4.3.4 Liturgy transforms**

The aesthetic attraction of the beauty of any celebration, perceived in a sensorial manner, is able to touch and overcome the human person, passing from the physical to the psychological, affective and emotive faculties<sup>350</sup>. Regarding the emotive and psychological dimension of the liturgical ceremony, Pinkus (1998) emphasized the sentiment of joy naturally experienced within the liturgical celebration. “None of the fundamental emotions are passed over by the liturgy: for example, joy,

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<sup>349</sup> “Quem não percebe, ao acompanhar a celebração de uma Missa solene, admirando os reluzimentos dos objetos sagrados, a coruscação dos tecidos bordados a ouro, os paramentos eclesiásticos, etc., quem não percebe ali que a Igreja exprime algo além dos seus dogmas já definidos? O formato e as cores desses paramentos, dessas casulas e dalmáticas, foram engendrados aos poucos, introduzidos lentamente nos costumes da Igreja, sem que houvesse nenhuma preocupação de combinações e articulações para que viessem a lume. Foram surgindo a esmo: pessoas que não entendiam de teatro, arquetaram uma como que dramaturgia magnífica, com roupagens extraordinárias; guiadas pelo senso da Igreja, pelo Espírito Santo, escolheram, destilaram, arranjaram, realizaram maravilhas de primeira grandeza”. (Personal translation).

<sup>350</sup> For example, the televised funeral of Pope John Paul II mesmerized viewers around the world with the simplicity and beauty of the ceremonial dimension, as was noted in an interview with Msgr. Melchor Sanches de Toca: “Os funerais de João Paulo II conquistaram muita gente porque viu-se a liturgia latina em seu esplendor e em sua sobriedade. O diretor Franco Zefirelli disse: ‘Confesso que senti inveja, pois eu, como diretor de cinema, não teria sabido fazer uma cenografia melhor.’ Embora tenha havido uma preparação muito grande, aquilo saiu naturalmente, pela beleza da liturgia, que precisa de pouca explicação, com seus gestos, cantos, e movimentos em torno do altar” (Caballero, 2006, p. 23).

with its spatial-temporal correlative which is feast, is taken up to a level that, by avoiding reducing it to entertainment — namely an artificial and passing evasion — drives it to the roots of desire to generate a constant attitude of joyous pacification” (p. 183). This capacity of the liturgy to unify multiform modes of artistic and aesthetic expression as elements of transcendent experience is continually demonstrated. Cassingena-Trévedy (2008) points out exactly this transcendent dimension of the liturgical celebration, by which man is freed from the obligations of his everyday life in order to enter another sphere of existence and comportment:

Freed from the *biotiká*, from the things of daily life, the liturgy — and with it the entire assembly — reaches that condition of interior calm that the Greek Fathers — making use of nautical metaphor — call *galéne*, “calm and serene time”, often associated with *hesychía*. If the liturgy definitely represents such a factor of equilibrium and harmony in the psychological plane, it is because it puts man before God, and amongst his brothers, ensuring the two indispensable components of the essential relational basis in the constitution of a true human personality. In the most profound essence, in the most intimate of the *homo ecclesiasticus*, the liturgy establishes a climate, an atmosphere called *euritmia* (Cassingena-Trévedy, 2008, p. 78)<sup>351</sup>.

The liturgy is thus perceived as holding a transforming capacity within human experience<sup>352</sup>. The impact of the liturgical celebration at times arises in a spontaneous manner, without planning or an immediate awareness of the full force of its

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<sup>351</sup> “Exonerado de la *biotiká*, de las cosas de la vida cotidiana, la liturgia – y con él toda la asamblea – alcanza aquella condición de calma interior que los Padres griegos, haciendo uso de una metáfora marítima, llaman *galéne*, “tiempo en calma y sereno”, a menudo asociado a la *hesychía*. Si la liturgia representa, en definitiva, tal factor de equilibrio y de armonía en el plano psicológico, es porque pone al hombre delante de Dios, y lo coloca entre sus hermanos, asegurando así las dos vertientes esenciales de la base relacional indispensable en la constitución de una verdadera personalidad humana. En lo más profundo, en lo íntimo del *homo ecclesiasticus*, la liturgia instaura un clima, una atmósfera que tiene por nombre *euritmia*” (Personal translation).

<sup>352</sup> “Em muitos fiéis que assistem a cerimônias litúrgicas particularmente esplendorosas [...] comprovados por suas reações de maravilhamento e pela súbita mudança de vida, após terem passado até mesmo décadas afastados da vida religiosa. Não será isso um sinal de que muitos começam a enveredar pela via da ‘procura do absoluto’, pela via do ‘flash’?” (Clá Dias, 2010, p. 24).

transforming effect, as a channel for divine actuation. And for some, such as the perplexed young Paul Claudel, the experience induced profound convictions and deep-rooted faith resulting in a permanent change of mentality. The Parisian's casual assistance at a Christmas Vespers Celebration in the Cathedral of Notre Dame became the basis of a new life and a new outlook, as he himself recounts of his experience of hearing the *Magnificat* intoned:

The event that dominated my whole life occurred. In an instant my heart was touched and I believed. I believed with such a strength of adhesion, with such an uplifting of my whole being, with a conviction so powerful, of such a certainty that left it no room for any sort of doubt, that ever since, all the books, all the arguments, all the hazards of a turbulent life could not shake my faith, nor, truth to tell, even touch it. I suddenly experienced a penetrating sense of the innocence, of the eternal childhood of God; an ineffable revelation (Claudel, 1913, p. 1009-1010)<sup>353</sup>.

The similar experience of Huysmans who began his dramatic process of conversion through his participation in religious ceremonies is recounted in his masterful work *En route*, wherein he is portrayed under the figure of Durtal. It was particularly the emotive chants of the *De profundis*, *Miserere* and *Magnificat* that began breaking down the barriers of his incredibility, lifting him from the mire of his dreadful past while pointing toward a way of renewal and peace, for “art had been the irresistible magnet which drew him to God. [...] The evenings when he had listened at St. Sulpice to the admirable chanting during the Octave of All Souls, he had felt himself caught once for all” (Huysmans, 1895, p. 35-36)<sup>354</sup>.

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<sup>353</sup> “Et c’est alors que se produisit l’événement qui domine toute ma vie. En un instant mon cœur fut touché et je crus. Je crus, d’une telle force d’adhésion, d’un tel soulèvement de tout mon être, d’une conviction si puissante, d’une telle certitude ne laissant place à aucune espèce de doute, que, depuis, tous les livres, tous les raisonnements, tous les hasards d’une vie agitée, n’ont pu ébranler ma foi, ni, à vrai dire, la toucher. J’avais eu tout à coup le sentiment déchirant de l’innocence, l’éternelle enfance de Dieu, une révélation ineffable” (Personal translation).

<sup>354</sup> “L’art avait été l’irrésistible aimant qui l’avait attiré vers Dieu. [...] Les soirs où il avait entendu les admirables chants de l’octave des trépassés, à Saint-Sulpice, il s’était senti pour jamais capté” (Translation by Kegan Paul).

A striking example of the liturgy as *paideia* was experienced in the leper colony in Molokai, Hawaii. St. Damian de Veuster, the ardent solitary missionary priest of the island, utilised vibrant liturgical festivities, not only to enrich the faith and promote conversions among those abandoned people, but also as an effective means of alleviating their sorrowful and depressive existence. Through the celebration of splendidly performed liturgies, he was able to reach the heart and soul of that desperate population, in a more effective and lasting manner than with mere words. Noting the salutary effects of such occasions, he constantly sought after opportunities for celebration, promoting associations among the lepers themselves in order to enrich and organize such festivities, while he himself constructed and reformed various places of worship, painting them with lively colours appealing to the native spirit, and procuring splendid vestments and liturgical implements. “To a visitor, the music and fluttering of banners, among those pitifully disfigured and crippled people, might probably have seemed tragically incongruous; but to the lepers, already marked by death, such symbols of happiness served not only to inspire hope of the future life, but to give them a blessed forgetfulness of their present miseries” (Farrow, 1999, p. 159-160).

In a letter, Fr. Damian himself described the animated Corpus Christi procession, “attended by everybody in the colony who could walk” (Farrow, 1999, p. 159). The result of weeks of enthusiastic preparation, the celebration included a choir and brass band composed solely of lepers, colourful flags, flowers, wreaths, a numerous retinue of participants adorned with sashes and rosettes, as well as young leper acolytes proudly clothed in specially prepared apparel. “By such means, and by every ingenuity he could devise, Damien sought to obliterate the depressing stigma that the name of the disease had accumulated through the centuries. In every way, he tried to make his people forget that they had ever been considered ‘unclean’ or outcasts” (Farrow, 1999, p. 159-160).

In this circumstance, the liturgy served as a primary means of restoring human dignity and alleviating atrocious suffering, through the cultivation of festive manifestation. The impressions and influence gained through the celebration awakened the desire for deep spiritual renovation and a renewed desire for living the sacred and the beautiful even under precarious conditions<sup>355</sup>. Through this and other such examples it becomes clear that the liturgy holds an incredible capacity for authentic human formation and transformation. Within the objective of observing the capacity of this liturgical beauty, we will proceed to consider what impact the liturgy has within human life.

The talented Jewish musician Hermann Cohen, underwent a similar transformation. Within the confusion of his errant life, he instinctively sought for the truth, which he suddenly found during his participation in a liturgical Ceremony of Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The event brought about such a profound transformation that he embraced the Catholic faith and subsequently became a zealous Franciscan (Sylvain, 1998, p. 24).

Such examples clearly illustrate the capacity of liturgy to awaken or touch the human being, primarily through a multifaceted aesthetic factor, but then transcending merely exterior impact toward the elevating spiritual worth of the liturgical message; opening new horizons, pointing toward other realities, proclaiming - through colors and forms, gestures and words, and the silent eloquence of sacred art - spiritual

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<sup>355</sup> To emphasize the facility with which liturgical rites and rubrics are assimilated, it is highly illustrative to consider the experience of the first liturgical Celebration celebrated on the shores of the Brazilian coast, with the curious presence of indigenous onlookers. “Embora os indígenas pouco ou nada entendessem de quanto atonitamente contemplaram, foi, contudo, algo que lhes poderia abrir os corações para a fé cristã. Cerca de 50 ou 60 deles assistiram materialmente ao primeiro sacrifício eucarístico em terra firme ‘sentados ou de joelhos como nós e, quando chegou o Evangelho, que nos erguemos todos, com as mãos levantadas, eles se levantaram conosco e alçaram as mãos’ Continua o cronista a nos dizer que, à hora da elevação, quando todos se ajoelharam, ‘eles se puseram todos assim como nós estávamos, com as mãos levantadas e de tal maneira sossegados, que certifico a V. A. que nos fez muita devoção”. The natives did not resist in participating together with the Portuguese, imitating their performance of the simple gestures of the liturgy, with keen interest. The innate attraction of the celebration in this case is a living example of how liturgy and human life interrelate (Evangelista Martins Terra, 2000, p. 26 -27).

messages and eschatological, Christological teachings. Here we observe abundant festive forms already present within human existence, employed within sacred ritual celebration and therefore multiplying in intensity and worth, for the organic modes of human actuation enters a superior level, facilitating an opening of the human spirit toward the Divine<sup>356</sup>. Just as in profane celebrations, where the intention and attitude of the participants is of paramount importance, the festive happening of liturgy is inherently imbued with sacred meaning and intentions, holding a supreme, Divine content. Thus it may be said that liturgy is the height of human experience, the most significant and momentous occasion of existence, a synthesis and elevation of all of human genius and capacity; ritual, festivity, art, word and music. Furthermore, the earthly liturgy is a preamble, a foretaste of the future celestial glory of paradise, evident for those who have the faith to believe, and highly convincing for all through a shining revelation of Divine beauty, radiating through the most natural actions and word, or through the symbolic simplicity of a lit candle or the clouds of aromatic incense rising as in prayer.

However, it is only reasonable to surmise that many aspects of the present societal situation, which were touched upon within the course of this work, may attempt to extrapolate into the Celebration of liturgy, for man may tend to transfer impressions and experience of the contemporary scenario, into the practice of his celebration of liturgy. Consequently, through a pragmatic mentality, participants may fail to recognize and cherish the “set apartness” of the sacred, without which the gestures, words, and symbolism employed within the celebration are stripped of their

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<sup>356</sup> In a similar way, for George Harne, a PhD in music, liturgical beauty played a central role in his discovery of the faith. While he and his wife, both non-Catholics, assisted a traditional procession of Corpus Christi, they were overwhelmed by the magnificence of the procession and splendour of the accompanying music, which opened their belief in the true presence of the Body of Christ. With their “intellectual reserves” overcome by beauty of the celebration, they took a definitive step toward their enthusiastic adhesion to the Church. Realizing the transforming role of beauty in its transmission of the truth and the good, Harne, now president of the Saint Mary Magdalene University in Warner, United States, insists that the liturgies celebrated at the University be distinctly beautiful in all their aspects in order that the students may keep living remembrances of their liturgical experiences (<http://ittanoticias.arautos.org/?p=1324>, consulted April 13th 2011).

deepest significance<sup>357</sup>. In effect, there may be a tendency toward the diminishment of such dimensions, with the hope that this will somehow make the liturgy more practical, useful, and feasible, just as human existence has supposedly become, and therefore more relevant today. In this case, the distinct, hallowed beauty of sacred space may be overlooked as superfluous, and the symbolic meaning of its forms, ignored, resulting in the diminution of interest in the role of sacred art and architecture. As Lang (2008) observed, the problematic involves a more profound element – the loss of an appreciation for the beautiful: “In fact, we are living through a cultural crisis that rejects the very concept of ‘fine arts’, which is invoked in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* as the foundation of sacred art. At the heart of this rejection, there is the loss, or rather the denial, of beauty itself” (p. 224). Concurrently, if an awareness of the significance of liturgical time is dulled, liturgical ceremonies tend to be hurried and frenetic, in an attempt to “save time”, thereby not infrequently robbing them of that noble, rational and disciplined beauty of ritualised human action, and the calm, silent moments<sup>358</sup> that bring meaning and emphasis to their evolvment<sup>359</sup>. The absence or relaxed use of

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<sup>357</sup> Regarding this point, Canals (2006) points to the diminishing of the sense of the sacred as directly related to the impoverishing of liturgical symbolism and a loss of celebrative beauty, with dramatic results for the evolvment of the celebration: “El resultado se ha dejado sentir en muchas celebraciones: se ha caído en la banalización de los signos, en la frialdad de las palabras, en el automatismo de los gestos y en la mecánica ejecución de unas rúbricas desprovistas de calor, vida y espíritu” (p. 68).

<sup>358</sup> The topic of liturgical silence has brought up some fundamental questions with respect to the receptivity and readiness for silence in the contemporary world. Mattheeuws (2002) underlines the important fact that, “Contemporary man has a great need for silence” though he accedes that he has “great difficulties with moments of silence” as it “makes us uncomfortable”. The author goes on to suggest a necessary appreciation for silence within daily life, which would improve its estimation within the liturgy”. We have to work on a ‘culture of silence’ (p. 134). Gagliardi (2009) points toward the challenges encountered in this realm, as due to widespread cultural phenomena: “Non c’è da stupirsi che oggi questo silenzio sia tanto disatteso, data l’attuale incapacità di restare, anche per pochi minuti, da soli con il Signore e con la propria anima. L’odierna mancanza di silenzio è dovuta innanzitutto a un fenomeno culturale: siamo costantemente bombardati di messaggi e informazioni di ogni genere e non siamo più abituati a leggere nel mondo interior, nel mondo della valenza simbolica del mondo visibile” (p. 198).

<sup>359</sup> With a realistic outlook, both Hameline (1997) and García Prado (2011) point toward some negative though current issues undermining the richness of liturgical experiences today. While Hameline affirms that “nous faisons donc l’hypothèse que nos célébrations liturgiques, et spécialement celles de nos messes dominicales, souffriraient actuellement d’un déficit cérémoniel trop grand” (p. 36), García Prado also offers a view of the current situation of attendance at Sunday liturgies, underlining their declining attraction for failing to offer worthwhile experiences to the participants. These “Liturgias pobres en experiencia” have occasioned a sharp decline in attendance as he notes: “La participación en ella ha ido descendiendo en caída libre desde más del 70% al 15-20% actual, no parece que sea un lugar favorable



such important aspects such as incense, attractive vestments, sacred music and appropriate architecture, as well as the noble and careful performance of gestures, can clearly jeopardize the opportunity for the transforming action of liturgy, its fullest significance and worth within the human experience as a whole.

Therefore, the importance of recognizing the symbolic within liturgy, as its most vulnerable dimension, is clearly of paramount importance in this day and age. Inculcating an awareness and formation toward an appreciation of the inherent worth of such elements, brings out an underlying and timeless beauty – that is not subject to the merely aesthetic tastes of a particular age – shining through a myriad of symbolic genre. The beauty revealed is what holds the unique transforming and transcendent capacity of liturgy, for it is a participative form of beauty that overcomes and subdues the human being. Thus, celebrated with an abundance of symbolic richness, the liturgy is naturally a high form of *paideia*, which subtly or overtly forms toward a higher form of living through modes of thinking and acting that transcend and transform human existence as a whole.

How often has the splendour of a liturgical Celebration given rise in the heart of contemporary man — suddenly lifted above his prosaic quotidian affairs and rapt in an aesthetic and profoundly spiritual experience, far from the turmoil of the postmodern world — an avowal something like that of St. Augustine, as he expressed his own transforming experience of the Divine:

Too late came I to love thee, O thou Beauty both so ancient and so fresh, yea too late came I to love thee. And behold, thou wert within me, and I out of myself, where I made search for thee: I ugly rushed headlong upon those beautiful things thou hast made. Thou indeed wert with me; but I was not with thee: even those, which unless they were in thee, should not be at all. Thou calledst and criedst unto me, yea thou

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ni apetecido para la experiencia religiosa. La inmensa mayoría – hasta un 80%, - no sienten ninguna necesidad de ir a la iglesia para tener experiencias en las celebraciones del culto” (p. 662).

even breakedst open my deafness: thou discoveredst thy beams and shinedst unto me, and didst chase away my blindness: thou didst most fragrantly blow upon me, and I drew in my breath and I pant after thee: I tasted thee, and now do hunger and thirst after thee; thou didst touch me, and I even burn again to enjoy thy peace (St. Augustine, *Conf.*, 10, 27)<sup>360</sup>.

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<sup>360</sup> “Sero te amavi, pulchritude tam anitqua et tam nova, sero te amavi! Et ecce intus eras et ego foris, et ibi te quaerebam, et in ista Formosa, quae fecisti, deformis inruebam, mecum eras, et tecum non eram. Ea me tenebant longe a te, quae si inte non essent, non essent. Vocasti et clamasti et rupisti surditatem meam: coruscasti, splenduisti et fugasti caecitatem meam: fragrasti, et duxi spiritum, et anhelio tibi, gustavi et esurio et sitio, tetigisti me, et exarsi in pacem tuam” (Translation by W. Watts).

## CONCLUSION

The complexity of existence, principally within the contemporary scenario, raises new and profound challenges that co-exist together with perennial aspects of the human person. The resultant confrontation between deeply rooted human needs and aspirations, and the impersonalizing and even dehumanizing ramifications of the escalating technological transformation of society gives rise to conflicting values that threaten to undermine the very meaning of human culture<sup>361</sup>. It is precisely against the backdrop of the contemporary *status quo* of clashing values and destabilization that the present exploration poses a simple preliminary question: Does the liturgy, as an institution both eminently human and eminently transcendent, hold any enduring relevance for humanity today?

The investigation this question opens up has far-ranging implications. It redounds in subsequent queries as to what facets of human integration within the liturgy occasion an experience of lasting and transforming impact. Is the human being able to materialize latent aspirations and fulfil profound needs for transcendence and symbolic expression within the liturgy? What does man assimilate from the liturgical experience?

Accordingly, through philosophical inquiry, this thesis has centred its objective in delineating both the scope of human experience in the liturgy and its impact in

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<sup>361</sup> The words of Maritain (2011) aptly transmit the disintegration of stabilizing factors wreaked by the multiform societal changes and conflicts man faces today: “The evils afflicting us have penetrated so deeply into the human substance, they have wrought such general havoc, that all the means of defence, all the extrinsic supports, due above all to the social structure, institutions, and the moral order of the family and the body politic — and truth as well as the highest acquisitions of culture have great need of them among men- are, if not actually destroyed, at least gravely shaken. Everything which was humanly solid is in jeopardy, ‘the mountains slide and leap’. Man stands alone before the ocean of being and the transcendentals” (p. 120).

human life, on an anthropological and cultural level. It was in the process of identifying symbolic forms of human comportment and actuation in the liturgical celebration, and the transcendent aesthetic value of its diverse elements, that a unique didactic and transforming capacity of liturgy came to the fore, announcing itself as true source of human formation.

As a point of departure, the investigation set out by analysing the essential human characteristics that may account for the inherent human necessity for celebratory and ceremonial activity, expressed in the illustrative epithet *homo festivus*. The physical/spiritual constitution of the human being, together with his innate sociability and cultural propensities received particular emphasis at this point, as key components of what might be termed a human celebratory instinct. With the contribution of diverse authors, essential factors of festivity were examined; namely, the festive impulse as a deep-rooted and universal propensity for exteriorizing and affirming profound ideologies, its aesthetic quality arising from symbolic and artistic manifestation; its marked ritual aspect and resulting transcendent impetus. The characteristics of authentic as opposed to false or superficial forms of festivity were brought to the fore, with the thought of Pieper standing out, as he stipulated attitudes of existential affirmation, gratitude, and openness to transcendence as indispensable ingredients for meaningful celebration. A retrospective survey of the festive practices of the Old Testament, with their strong figurative content, added further enlightenment as to modes and causes for festive activity, laying bases for an appreciation of Christian liturgy.

Importantly, it became increasingly clear that festive manifestation is a natural, organic human practice that enables man to both express beliefs and to assimilate abstract ideologies, thus representing a significant means of mental and spiritual human development — a *sine qua non* of culture. And of even greater relevance for this study, the benefits of festivity, far from being circumscribed to profane celebration, are seen to be even more vividly present in commemorations that are

focussed on the sacred. Consequently, they are projected into liturgy in an even more penetrating capacity.

Building upon these notions of festivity and ceremonial practice, the trajectory of this work progressed toward an appraisal of the human role in the evolvment and practice of the sacred festivity par excellence, the liturgy.

Clearly, the common denominator of any and all human contributions in liturgy is an essentially symbolic function — the embodiment of a transcendent reality beyond the sensible. The first object to be contemplated within this framework was the employment of non-verbal modes of expression, including gesture and posture. These physical attitudes are profoundly meaningful, evolving as a symbolic corporal expression of internal sentiments and desires, as elucidative observations of Aquinas underscored. Beyond this aspect, such modes of action hold an extemporal dimension as their eschatological and Christological elements effectively unite past, present, and future, in a manner readily assimilated by the assembly. Subsequently, the dynamic of verbal forms of expression in liturgy, in which *dialogic* activity holds an important place, also comes to light as a distinctly human part of liturgy.

The synergistic strength of this dual form of expression is identified as being all the more forceful within the perspective of liturgical ritual. Indeed, the harmonic conjuncture of gesture and word, inseparable in the unfolding of the celebration, may be identified as a true form of language, at once verbal and gestural, exclusive to liturgy. It is here that we may pinpoint the highest synthesis of human integration in the liturgy, one that represents a communally accessible channel of transcendent and transforming values.

A substantial inference to be drawn from these observations is that the ritual action and dialogue, the disciplined, orderly, and deeply meaningful collective participation occasioned by the liturgy stands in high relief as an entirely singular

experience within the spectrum of human activities. Taking this inference a step further, we may assert that in the absence of something *singular* in the order of things, the void created cannot be adequately filled by other elements. Accordingly, other social gatherings may bear a ceremonious or ritual aspect, but it would be difficult to find an occasion of such concord, and singleness of purpose and attention as plays out in the liturgy, amidst a group of otherwise entirely diverse persons.

After this search into the liturgy as an outlet of expression, the third chapter undertook to observe the dynamic of temporal-spatial significations particular to liturgy, with noted emphasis on the perception of sacred and profane time and space, as distinguished by authors such as Eliade and Caillois. Initially, the concept of time was viewed from within a philosophical/historic perspective, covering the ideas of selected authors from St. Augustine to Heidegger. Applied specifically to the realm of human experience, the perspective of a festive and sacred time, and the quantitative and qualitative determinations of *kairos* and *chronos* were then explored. The idea of liturgical time was finally taken up — a configuration so much richer than the secular organization of time that it superimposes its own calendar upon the existing one. On the temporal theme as applied to the liturgy, authors as diverse as Aquinas and LaCoste offered noteworthy valuations.

In continuation, the spatial notion of liturgy was approached through an initial overview of spatial awareness and its impact on human existence. Like time, space is also susceptible to differentiation into sacred or profane, which in turn gives rise to the notion of liturgical space. The mystical and eschatological connotation of such space was explored through Maximus the Confessor, and applied specifically to the symbolic value of the Gothic Cathedral. The transitional and separate aspects of liturgical space was further considered, in its impact upon those crossing its threshold, as well as upon the liturgical experience itself, through the inter-relationship existing between ritual action — gesture, choreography, word — and space.

It is worth remarking, in light of what was presented in this chapter in relation to the previous one, that while word and gesture can be categorized as forms of expression, as powers of expansion and communication; space and time, on the other hand, are two elements of reality that are more representative of limitations and parameters. In effect, to be in a specific place is to exclude the possibility of being simultaneously in any other place, and to exist in the present moment is not to be in possession of eternity. To treat of space and time, then, is to discuss some of the more restricting elements of human experience. Perhaps for this reason, there is a keener sense of triumph and liberation in the possibility of opening the confines of *chronos* to the broader horizons of *kairos*; the present-bound earthly time to the eternally-oriented sacred and liturgical times which allow the participant to simultaneously live something of the past, present, and future. Similarly powerful is the passage from worldly demarcations of place into the liturgical space which, by its sacredness and its multiform symbolism, and above all, on account of the liturgy that unfolds within it, allows the beholder to transcend its very dimensions. In sum, we may observe a confluence of time, space, and human actuation within liturgy shaping a particular mode of expression and of mystagogical experience conducive to the fullest partaking in the celebration.

The concluding chapter synthesizes different elements from the study, so as to arrive at a comprehensive vision of an exceptional didactic form of beauty resulting from the celebration, particularly capturing the concept of human involvement and impact. Pieper (1989) has referred to festive exteriorization as a “personal, interior riches, of that wealth which consists in the experience of the actual presence of God among men” (p. 232). The liturgical beauty we have discovered, through an integration of the factors examined, reveals exactly this “interior richness” which echoes within the manifestation of festive celebration, a beauty that is interchangeable with truth and

goodness<sup>362</sup>. Therefore, the broad scope of liturgical beauty was considered, not only delineating fundamental points regarding its manifestation, but also seeking an understanding how it reverberates in human experience, presenting a means of continuous formation and transformation.

In laying the groundwork for the development of this topic, fundamental theories concerning *pulchrum* itself within philosophical thought were considered, emphasizing relevant points from Plato and St. Augustine, to Aquinas and Balthasar on beauty within the kaleidoscope of human experience. As a path to the contemplative/mystical realm, beauty naturally stimulates admiration, while it is also identified as a factor capable of causing life-changing experiences, due especially to its compatibility with man's inherent constitution and needs. This topic takes on special relevance in light of the "crisis" of beauty occurring today.

In turn, the liturgy emerges as a key factor in favouring radical transformations in human existence, both on a continual basis, as a form of human formation — *paideia* — through consistent influence, as well as in culminating moments of intense renovation and change, as the living examples cited illustrate. The celebratory action fosters modes of comportment which incorporate such qualities as unity and collaboration, receptivity and gratitude, joyful hope, and openness to symbolism and transcendence. The penetrability of liturgical actuation derives to a great extent from the human propensity for festive manifestation; it is a natural assimilation of the characteristics of *homo festivus*. On a symbolic note, the human being employs way of acting that are common to his quotidian existence, but invests them with their highest use and transcendent worth. Within the *ars celebrandi* of liturgy, just as the disciplined

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<sup>362</sup> The concept of human corporal expression through gesture and movement as disclosing interior spiritual dispositions also may be considered as revealing a resplendent moral beauty, enhanced through communal action that enriches both the aesthetic and transcendent ambience of the celebration. Beauty is revealed through the *ars celebrandi*: As Pavel Flonenskij explains, 'Your good deeds do not really mean 'good acts' in the philanthropic and moral sense, "Ta kala erga" means "Beautiful acts", luminous and harmonious revelations of spiritual personality — above all a luminous face, beautiful of a beauty that lets the interior light of men shine forth to the outside" (*VP*, 3.3 B).



and noble gestures and movements flow from an interior spiritual belief, the words and hymns, the formulas and acclamations also vocalize deep-seated convictions and truths; it is an interior, moral beauty that is revealed and takes on external form. The communal and orderly execution of the liturgical gestures heightens the common human sense of sociability, allowing the eschatological significance of assembly to be glimpsed beyond the present reality. Elevated aspirations highlight the decorous dimension of human action in the observance of ritual, demanding self-governance and regulation. Here, attributes of self-control, dedication and perseverance prepare the way for the revelation of the particular form of beauty yielded by human liturgical action — a beauty that clearly bears an ethical correlation. The word vivifies the gestures and ritual action, both awakening and professing profound sentiments, while liturgical silence is a font of contemplation and calm, during which the truth announced by the word may resonate and enter the individual more deeply.

Through the consideration of the celebration of certain liturgical feasts, the involvement of wide-ranging cosmic elements, elevated beyond their practical connotations and harmonizing with human actuation to convey profound symbolism, are recognized as essential facets of the liturgical beauty. Moreover, the integration of natural elements from the cosmos with liturgical ritual serves as a means of affirming their worth as integral parts of a concordant whole and stimulating a salutary respect for the order of the cosmos<sup>363</sup>.

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<sup>363</sup> The liturgical celebrations holds this intense combination of aesthetic elements combined with the festive action. However, the tonus of the liturgical communication integrates an exceedingly broad range of insinuations and expression, from the austere to the joyous happiness. Llach (2007) observed exactly this multifaceted “language” of the liturgy where “La liturgia es una realidad compleja que pertenece al campo de la comunicación. Es servicio de Dios hecho por los hombres para decir cosas, para celebrar. Por eso tiene un contenido fuerte de gratuidad, incluso de juego, de fiesta. La liturgia es toda ella lenguaje, y un lenguaje en el que la belleza de las formas se hace elocuencia de la verdad de Dios y de su amor, así como transparencia de la mayor voluntad de los hombres y de su deseo de perdón y de bien. El lenguaje litúrgico tiene que ser expresivo y sobrio a la vez, tiene que hablar con las formas, los símbolos, los colores, la música, la palabra, los vestidos y los gestos, la luz y la oscuridad, las cosas elementales de la vida humana – agua, cirios, pan, vino, mesa y oleo/ cremas” (p. 74).

The interplay of ritual and liturgical space is an additional manner of experiencing festive and sacred beauty. The choreographed movement in liturgy emerges in congruence with the noble and hierarchical physical structure, interrelating assembly and evocative architectonic form. Within the designated locus of sacred space, the ritual progressively gives prominence to particular areas, notably those of ambo and altar. In this way, the visible dimensions and sacred art of the place of worship intensify the transition from profane to sacred, marking its contrast with mundane existence. The liturgy thus enables a new level of spatial awareness, defining an experience of sacred space that is capable of attracting the individual toward personal participation in the mystery. The didactic worth of sacred art, labelled historically as *Biblia Pauperum*, enriches the formative experience of sacred space<sup>364</sup>. The temporal experience of liturgy ensues as a break from purely chronological time — a time out of time. The kairotic overtone of liturgical time, as it unfolds beyond the rigid predictability of *chronos*, opens the human experience to a transcendent time, while it encourages a greater capacity for living out time even in the chronological sense. That is, it provides a sort of corrective training for the mentality addicted to rush and obsessed with fast, for it requires time periods in order to evolve, expanding the human capacity for attention and silence.

The beauty of the Liturgy, then, is continually revealed within an encounter between the spiritual and the physical, the past with the present and future, where Divine action shines forth through the human gestures of the celebrant and

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<sup>364</sup> The role of art as means of human formation and development has a timeless scope. Just as medieval man, contemporary artists such as Pasto (2008a) identify the renovating and communicative aspect of art as inherently linked to human development: “A função da arte, portanto, é nos purificar, nos educar, nos conduzir. É também criar uma comunhão entre as pessoas, que passam a falar a mesma linguagem. A arte passa a ser um referencial para a vida” (p. 39).

congregation<sup>365</sup>. Consequently, man brings human and cosmic dimensions to the liturgy, which are in turn “divinized”, apportioned with transcendent worth. Within liturgy, the quality of *sacred* permeates objects and symbols, pervades space and time — and even man himself. “Is not the *via pulchritudinis* also a *via veritatis* on which man engages to discover the *bonitas* of God’s love, source of all beauty, truth and good?” (*VP*, 2.2). But this sacred liturgical beauty yet reaches beyond the confines of the celebrations itself, extending its rays into all of human life, for it is a didactic form of beauty. It teaches man how to use his physical attributes, in his gestural and verbal faculties, how to experience the value of space and time and how to relate with the cosmos and to discern the symbolic character of its elements. It indicates how man should interact with others and with God. In a word, it is a form of *paideia*, enriching man not only at the moment of liturgy, but subsequently throughout his entire existence.

Our bottom line is an audacious suggestion: it becomes increasingly relevant to consider the anthropological reality of the celebration, given the urgent need for experiences of true beauty and festivity within human life, in an age where technology and pragmatism have taken over many key aspects of society and culture. We thus propose the liturgy as an authentic and accessible font of sacred festive beauty and transcendence within the human experience. In effect, the *paideia* of the liturgy promotes a manner of living, for its benefits penetrate the entire scope of human life, through the elements we have explored. It captures the highest facets of the human spirit, channels human creativity and sharpens the intellect, through an elevated use of personal faculties. It provides a *living* experience of beauty through festive and perennial modes of human actuation, where man is not only an observer but

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<sup>365</sup> “C’est la raison pour laquelle il est possible d’affirmer qu’entrer en célébration liturgique constitue, sans doute, l’acte le plus humain qui soit car il ouvre sur le plus divin. Il s’agit d’un acte éminemment humain et par conséquent éminemment libre parce qu’il porte intrinsèquement la marque de l’eschatologie. En effet, dans toute célébration liturgique, l’être humain choisit de vivre corporellement et spirituellement dans une ouverture à Dieu, de le louer et de lui rendre grâce, d’anticiper finalement la parousie. Il est donc possible de considérer le rite liturgique comme le lieu où le corps se joint à la parole pour se rendre présent à Dieu” (Poulet, 2013, p. 185).

participant; it is a beauty that the individual assimilates in an intense manner. Therefore, the world of liturgy transcends daily life, but is also a part of it, for it emanates throughout human existence. The *homo liturgicus* continues to be so after the celebration, his model and guide of living may be found within the liturgy, which opens up perspectives that can become inherent to his very existence. We therefore dare to affirm that the liturgy constitutes a fundamental element for the human experience, especially within contemporary life.

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