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Liturgy and Mission

Abstract: In this paper the author claims that the liturgy is the source from which the Church draws the strength and dynamism for her mission so as to bring to the world the good news of salvation. Investigating the relationship between the liturgy and mission, the author first focuses on the texts of the New Testament and concludes that in the first Christian communities the mission was intrinsically bound to the liturgical life. Though in the beginning liturgy and mission were two different realities, no antinomy existed between them, but their mutual shaping strengthened the ties between the lay faithful and the Church as an institution. Furthermore, the liturgical movement at the beginning of 20th century, which started with Beauduin, understood the liturgy as a common action of the people and the priests. The movement considered liturgy as an antipode to the secularization and dechristianization of the society. At the end of the paper the author shows that a deep relationship exists between the liturgy and the mission, which is also the case concerning the relationship between the liturgy and the pastoral or social activity of the Church. He supports his thesis by the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and by two encyclical letters of Pope John Paul II, namely *Redemptoris Missio* and *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*. He highlights that the Eucharist is “the font from which all the power of the Church flows” and “the summit toward which the activity of the church is directed” (SC 10), thus being also the core of the missionary activity of the Church.

Key words: liturgy, mission, Eucharist – source of Church’s mission, liturgical movement, preaching the Gospel, renewal of parish life, active participation in liturgy

Povzetek: **Liturgija in misijonsko poslanstvo**

V razpravi postavi avtor tezo o tem, da je liturgija vir, iz katerega črpa Cerkev moč za svoje misijonsko poslanstvo širjenja vesele blagovesti o odrešenju. V raziskovanju razmerja med liturgijo in misijonskim poslanstvom se avtor najprej osredini na novozavezne spise in pri tem pride do sklepa, da je bilo poslanstvo tesno povezano z liturgičnim življenjem prvih krščanskih skupnosti. Kljub temu da sta bila liturgija in misijonsko poslanstvo sprva dve različni stvarnosti, med njima ni obstajala antinomija, ampak vzajemno sooblikovanje, ki je krepilo vezi med laiki in institucijo Cerkve. Še več, liturgično gibanje – in še posebno pastoralno liturgično gibanje – v začetku 20. stoletja z Beauduinom na čelu je razumelo liturgijo kot antipod sekularizaciji in laizaciji družbe ter marginalizaciji

krščanstva v družbi. V članku nato avtor pokaže, da obstaja globok odnos med liturgijo in misijonskim poslanstvom, pa tudi med liturgijo ter pastoralnim in socialnim delovanjem Cerkve. Prav ta drugi odnos osvetli s konstitucijo o bogoslužju in z dvema okrožnicama papeža Janeza Pavla II.: z okrožnico *Odrešeni-kovo poslanstvo* in z okrožnico *Cerkev iz evharistije*, s poudarkom, da je evharistija »vir in vrhunec vsega krščanskega življenja in delovanja« (B 10) in tako tudi srce misijonskega poslanstva Cerkve.

Ključne besede: liturgija, misijon, evharistija – vir poslanstva Cerkve, liturgično gibanje, oznanjevanje evangelija, obnova župnijskega življenja, dejavno sodelovanje pri bogoslužju

Cult and rite are fundamental to human and social life. Everything that is happening in social life is more or less organized in an order that helps individuals to keep the sense or meaning of life. Liturgy is the same. Liturgy seems to be reality, that is stable, something that happens according to fixed rules, by which it maintains its form. It is enclosed in sacred space, in a church or chapel as a place of celebration of the faith.

Mission breaks out of this space, as is shown in the Acts of the Apostles, in the event of Pentecost (Acts 2,1-13). Mission is reaching out.¹ This is why there is a certain tension between these two dimensions; on the one side the intimate space of God's presence, the communal life, which is necessary for the life of faith; on the other side reaching out. There is no mission without »exodus«, which means reaching out into the spaces of everyday life. Mission is something bound to movement. It is external and means activity, while liturgy is something linked to a place and to the circle of community. Nevertheless liturgy has its own dynamic dimensions, the reality of God's love that has to be lived and expressed.

Liturgy is the fount of mission: this is the thesis that we want to follow in our analysis of the relationship between liturgy and mission. We analyze this relationship on the basis of some historical situations in the Church. We begin with the New Testament context and then continue through the first period of early Christianity. The second historical complex that we analyze is the Liturgical Movement until the Second World War. Finally we look for the confirmation of our thesis in the documents of the Church.

1. Liturgy and Mission in the Gospels

Jesus' public ministry is the accomplishment of his mission for which his Father sent him, the realization of the Kingdom of God and salvation of men. »Most of Jesus' words and actions pertain to the healing of human life; in him, God is restoring human life to its intended *shalom*.« (Goheen 2011, 78)

¹ We consider the term »mission« in the larger sense: as evangelisation of every society which includes »missio ad gentes« as well.

The Gospel in which the mission of Jesus is most evident is the Gospel of Luke. His mission is to proclaim and to realize the Kingdom of God. Jesus' Galilean mission was happening everywhere: outside, in houses, and in the synagogue (Lk 4,14), which is the place of Jewish worship. After choosing the Twelve in the context of his personal prayer (Lk 6,12-16), Jesus chose seventy disciples (Lk 10,1-12) and sent them to proclaim the good news. In the Gospel of Luke we find two meaningful narratives in which we can observe the question of mission related to the space of liturgy (for the moment linked to Christ himself).

The first one is in Lk 4,16-31: Jesus entered into the synagogue of Nazareth on Sabbath – place and time have the meaning of worship. He took the scroll and read the scripture text from the prophet Isaiah that describes Jesus' own mission (18-19). According to the order of worship (Keck 1996, 105) after reading followed the explanation of the text and Jesus interpreted the mission of Isaiah as being his own mission. Then followed the reaction of the people in the Synagogue; he was expelled and they decided to kill him. This is the inauguration text, which in a synthetic way presents the entire mission of Jesus.

We find the second episode, important for our research of the mission in the context of liturgy in the Gospel of Luke 24,13-35, where we read the account of Jesus' appearance to the disciples on the road to Emmaus. From the text clearly appears the liturgical structure of Eucharistic worship in the first apostolic Church. The first part of the narrative is consecrated to the story of Jesus and the Scriptures. The second part of the event consists of sharing of the bread with a stranger, who at the end appears to be Jesus (Lk 24,30; Keck 1996, 480). After their memorial of what had happened, the mission of the two disciples began: they immediately returned to Jerusalem to tell the Twelve about what had happened to them. The heart of every mission is to proclaim that the Lord, who had died on the cross and has risen from the dead. It is in the »breaking of the bread« (Lk 24,35) that the first community of the disciples recognized the risen Lord, and it is the memorial of his deeds, revived during these gatherings, that was going to be the subject of their preaching to the world. In every liturgy, partially or completely, we find synthetically presented the story of redemption which is the essential part of every mission and which has enormous meaning for the memory of the participants in the Liturgy.

After death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, the Church continued His mission, which became her own mission and which has its origin in the experience of the risen Lord and his Spirit. Between the events of the ascension and coming of the Spirit, which is the origin of the first preaching, stands the life of prayer of the first community (Acts 1,14). In the Acts of the Apostles Luke affirms, that the experience of Christ in the community is the origin of the mission.

We are going to consider briefly also the Gospel of John under the aspect of liturgy. In the Gospel of John Jesus often speaks of himself as sent by the Father. The prologue reveals the truth about the coming of the Son of God into the world to carry out a special mission on behalf of the Father. »The Word was made flesh and

dwelt among us.« (Jn 1,14)² At the same time, the Gospel of John is marked by symbolism, taken not only from Jewish worship, but also from the nascent Christian liturgy. The Jewish feasts of Passover, Tabernacles and Dedication play an important role in the presentation of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel. The greater part of its story is happening during various Jewish feasts, often in the Temple itself.³ John uses the symbolic and traditional backgrounds of these feasts, because they had an important role for Christ's ministry as the context of his mission. Jesus' death occurred on the eve of the Jewish Passover, when the sacrifice of the lambs was being accomplished in Jerusalem (31). Biblical scholars bring us evidence, that the redaction of John's Gospel was accomplished in the context of life of his ecclesial community and under the influence of liturgical, or sacramental practice, present in the time of the author of the Fourth Gospel (Smalley 1957, 168–70; Jaubert 1976, 150–2.).

These considerations about the connectedness of liturgy and mission in the New Testament lead us to the conclusion, that mission was intimately linked to the liturgical life of the first Christian communities.

2. Worship and mission in the Apostolic Church

First of all we should situate the mission of Jesus in the context of the Jewish cult. Hamman (1966, 74–8) affirms that already before the Exile, there existed a certain irradiation of the Jewish cult to the foreigners or members of other nations. Considering the first Christian mission, we need to observe it in the situation of Judaism not only in Palestine but also in Diaspora. Geoffrey Harris (2004, 7) places the birth of Judaism in the period that follows after the destruction of the Temple when Pharisees became the main spiritual power. The synagogue had become the place of Judaic mission among pagans. Common funds and almsgiving, general instruction, good education and schools, sciences, communal meals, network of communication for people who were traveling; all made Judaism attractive to Pagans (12–4). Jesus' mission was not bound to the establishment of the Temple: but it was partially linked to the Synagogue, as part of everyday religious life. In the same way the first Christian mission among pagans (St. Paul) was, at least in the first period, connected to the synagogue as a place of worship. Afterwards Christian converts established their own places of gathering and prayer. »Faced with communities converted from paganism, Paul affirmed the continuity as well as the break of the Christian cult with the Jewish past. Christ is the center of the Christian cult. This statement opposes Christ to the Temple. Christ is the *cornerstone* of the new cult, founded on his resurrection (1 Cor 3,12).« (83)

For St. Paul liturgy and apostolic mission are united, for both of them are building the community of the Church. We may conclude, that the first announcement

² Cf. Jn 4,34; 5,36; 7,28-29; 8,16; 18,18.

³ Examples: Chapters 5 to 10 are all set at Jewish festivals: Sabbath, Passover, Tabernacles and Dedication (Hanukkah); we can observe in John 7,1-53 (Jesus in Jerusalem at the Feast of the Tabernacles) the importance of the Temple, the center of Jewish worship (Krajnc 1998, 1–15).

of the Gospel was linked to the place of worship, and to the liturgy itself. The question remains open as to whether liturgy was an absolutely necessary element of mission. In the same way one may ask, what is the connection between the two sides of the life of the Church? Is there something like missionary liturgy?

3. Early Christian centuries

The evidence of the first Christian centuries reveals that liturgy and the proclamation of the Gospel were different realities. There was even a tendency to hide liturgical life from pagan eyes; neophytes were not allowed to be present at the strictly Eucharistic part of the liturgy. This is why Hamman (1966, 85) affirms, that there is no such thing as a missionary liturgy: »In itself, therefore, liturgy does not exercise a missionary action.« It is meant to be a place of living encounter with God, forming the community of believers. Deeper study reveals, however, that no antinomy exists between the liturgy and mission; liturgy can and should promote evangelization and any kind of social or missionary action.

It is impossible to trace the question of relationship between the liturgy and mission through the entire history of the Church, but we should mention the impact of modern social changes and secularization on the liturgy at the end of 19th and in the first part of the 20th century as well as the reaction to atheistic ideologies on behalf of the Church and movements of renewal within it.

4. Liturgical Movement

The Liturgical Movement was a long effort to renew the liturgy in the period between 1830 and 1969. The scope of this endeavor was to enrich the experience of worship promoting the active participation of the faithful in the liturgy. The movement sought to make the liturgy more attuned to early Christian traditions, and more relevant to the situation of Christians in modern times (Funk 1990). The movement began in the Roman Catholic Church in the mid-19th century and spread to other Christian Churches in Europe and the U.S. to conclude with the II Vatican Council.

The process involved simplifying rites, developing new texts, translating the Latin texts into the vernacular languages and reeducating both laity and clergy for their role in liturgical celebrations. The Liturgical Movement made use of patristic and biblical studies. There were four major phases or segments to the movement: the Benedictine or monastic movement, research and scholarship,⁴ the pastoral

⁴ The Benedictine or monastic liturgical movement began with the reestablishment of St. Peter's Monastery at Solesmes, France, by Dom Prosper Guéranger in 1833. Then followed in the foundations like German community at Beuron and Maria Laach. It was alive in Maredsous and Mont César (a foundation from Beuron), and in USA St. John's Monastery in Collegeville, Minnesota. The research began quietly, first in the study of chant manuscripts at Solesmes and Regensburg for chant book projects

element and legislation (i.e. liturgical reform) (Funk 1990). The protagonists of this movement were different personalities and centers where the cause of liturgy was promoted as essential element of Christian life and testimony. The movement was involved in a larger process of pastoral, spiritual, moral and social renewal of the Church, carried out by different movements and groups.

»This broad effort on behalf of worship qualifies as ‘movement’ in purely social terms, for a movement is a gathering of people focused around a cause, often oriented toward change in the existing pattern of behavior in an organization, an institution or society at large.« (Funk 1990) The Liturgical Movement did not have a unique structure, or formal status with clearly marked strategies. Different people and different communities carried it on. As with other movements, Liturgical Movement followed a cycle beginning with issues, widening into a cause, coming to a climax or confrontation, and being absorbed into a new or existing organization, which happened in the liturgical reform. The Liturgical Movement brought about the liturgical reform.⁵

4.1 Pastoral Liturgical Movement (1909–1917)

We are interested mostly in the pastoral liturgical movement, because it concerns the subject of our inquiry: the relationship between liturgy and mission. The pastoral liturgical movement began in Belgium (1909) with Lambert Beauduin (Beauduin 2002). His principal idea was the renewal of parish life through the liturgy.⁶ He was one of the most important leaders of the early Liturgical Movement. The European Popular Movement began at the National Congress of Catholic Action held at Malines, Belgium, in 1909, where Dom Lambert Beauduin presented an address, *The Full Prayer of the Church* in which he called for the active participation of the people in the life and work of the Church, especially in the liturgy (Funk 1990). »The unique characteristics of Beauduin’s activity were that 1) it called for the active participation of the people; 2) it was popular, based in parochial ministry; 3) it took theoretical ideas and translated them into popular language; 4) it issued mass media elements, publications and conferences to gather people and disseminate ideas.« (Funk 1990). From the synthesis of his ideas we are able to conclude that Beauduin’s liturgical endeavor was in fact missio-

(1870). In the context of biblical and patristic research several discoveries of early liturgical manuscripts spurred specific writings on the liturgical matters. Research centers grew up in France, Germany, and England (Funk 1990, 2–3).

⁵ The legislative elements connected with the Liturgical Movement were sometimes supporting the development of liturgical renewal, but often they resisted it. The documents that brought about the liturgical reform on the legislation level, are: *Tra le solecitudini* (1903), the revision of the Holy Week ceremonies in 1956, *Maxima Redemptionis*, and the reform of the Mass in 1970 (Funk 1990). Pope Pius XII represents a turning point since he both supported and set limits on the Liturgical Movement. His encyclical *Mystici corporis* (1943) legitimized Liturgical Movement considering the Church as the mystical body of Christ. His encyclical *Mediator Dei* (1947) generally affirmed the Liturgical Movement, but included strictures on subjectivity and *lex orandi lex credendi*.

⁶ He was influential in publishing the magazine that he himself founded (1909) *La Vie Liturgique* and *Semaines liturgiques*. In 1914 Beauduin published what came to be considered the ‘manifest’ of the popular liturgical movement, *La piété de l’Église* (Funk 1990, 6).

nary as he saw the importance of liturgy for the life of the Church and the survival of Christianity in Europe, which was facing secularization and progress of atheistic ideologies.

4.2 Historical overview of the ideas about missionary and pastoral effectiveness of liturgy

The main goal of the movement was the promotion of the liturgy in parishes, so as to restore the faith of the people and to react to the secularization and retain the faithful in the Church.

The first idea that appears is that liturgy should gather the faithful in the community of the Church and attract unbelievers. The liturgy has a pedagogical capacity through the stimulation of emotions and convictions of the faithful; this is why it should be the fundamental element in the strategy against the marginalization of Christianity in the society (Paiano 2000, 34–8). Historian Godefroid Kurth, the important theoretical leader of the Liturgical Movement in Belgium, maintained that there is an intrinsic link between the civilization and Christianity (38); this is why the liturgy has a civilizing role in society. Abbé Schyrgens sustained the thesis that liturgy represents the theological truths in a most simple way and is capable to attract human minds by its symbolism and ceremonies (39–43). Against the individualism that entered the life of the Church, he insisted on the prayer of the Church as a form of apostolate.

In the circles of social catholic movements, the liturgy was seen as opposition to the laicization of the society and as needing to have more influence in the Christian restoration of society. According to Joseph Mariétan, the liturgy has the capacity to penetrate the minds and hearts of the people; this is why it can dispose them for catholic faith and attract them to the Church. Emphasis is placed on regular and willing participation in liturgical celebrations; liturgy is seen as a social fact, exercising its influence and by itself proposing the values of charity, fraternity and the equality of all human beings before God. The liturgy was considered as an efficient means of resisting the propaganda of wrong doctrines. Liturgy by itself is opposed to the individualism and egoism, which characterizes the society of rich people; it can penetrate the world of those who own the riches of the world so as to construct a modern and just society. French priest H. Tissier, sees the liturgy as antipode to the laicization of society that had started with the French Revolution. The Catholic Church was put into the situation in which the faith and conviction of her members became private affairs. Tissier thinks that the solution to this problem is the revival of the parish as a social corpus whose basic element is liturgy. By the means of liturgy the parish may become once again a strong public and social fact, capable of converting society (Paiano 2000, 44–54). For Lambert Beauquin, liturgy is the means for restoring the Church and for opposing the laicization of society. He considered important the participation of the people at the liturgy, but at the same time he saw as indispensable the role of the hierarchy in the life of the Church. Liturgy is held to be the means that strengthens the ties between the hierarchy and laity, as social organism, which is strong enough to

contrast with the paganism of modern society (55–63). The Liturgical Movement was not a question of elitism, but had as its scope to create a society of faithful, that upholds the values of human dignity, fraternity and the spirit of self sacrifice, so as to form Christianity, and not only individual Christians.

Along the same lines, Maurice Festugière, a Benedictine monk from the monastery of Maredsous, Maurice Festugière promoted the large project of Belgic Benedictines aimed at privileging the liturgy as the principal form of prayer for Catholics. He attributed to the liturgy apologetic value considering it capable of forming the unique catholic awareness (Paiano 2000, 63–4). The influence of the Liturgical Movement as the principal force for the renewal of the Church was maintained in the larger project of pope Pius X »Instaurare omnia in Christo« (68;72).

4.3 The period between the two wars

Catholic youth movements in the period between the two world wars adopted the liturgy as the means for a new conquest of society; liturgy became their principal instrument of spirituality.⁷ This central role attributed to the liturgy, can be understood easier by the fact that the period between the wars was dominated by the ideologies of communism, socialism and nationalism. They created their own »politic liturgies« founded on the manipulation of the subconscious religiosity of the human being. Political manifestations organized as liturgies were the strongest means of manipulation. As a reaction to this situation the Liturgical Movement and other evangelizing and social activities in the Church underwent a certain political influence (75–147).⁸

The best known in the context of the Liturgical Movement was liturgical animation of Romano Guardini named *Katholische Jugendbewegung* (Paiano 2000, 101). This is why, before we move on, we will shortly present the main ideas of Romano Guardini. He saw the great danger in the Nazis' neopagan ideology exac-

⁷ In present analysis we cannot present all the movements and their consideration of liturgy as instrument for social reintegration of Catholicism in the contemporary society. Namely all of them attributed to the liturgy the social and political signification; at least to a certain point. Great liturgical manifestations were external sign of opposition to the atheist ideologies that provoked the Second World War. After the war these considerations were brought into discussion and partly abandoned.

⁸ Liturgy was maintained to be the functional context of missionary activity, as for example in the movement at the monastery Saint-André, near Bruges. The influential missionary activity of this monastery was in greater part realized by dom Gaspar Lefebvre, author of numerous publications, particularly *Miselle quotidien et vespéral*, translated in many languages. The same idea was carried out in Maria Laach in Germany. Personality that characterized the movement there, was monk Odo Casel (Paiano 2000, 84). In his book *The Mystery of Christian Worship [Das Christliche Kultmysterium]* he affirms that the pretention of modern man to resolve everything by the means of his reason is wrong. He invites his readers to recognize the mystery of the world and human existence, at the same time to enter into the mystery of Christ (84–7). Casel presents the sacraments as mysteries, internal actions of Christ (Funk 1990). He sustained the thesis that the religion cannot be uprooted from the individual and social life. By the means of the liturgy he was indicating the road to his contemporaneous the superiority of the answer to the meaning of life given by the Catholicism. In Italy the monasteries engaged in the Liturgical Movement were: Praglia, Finalpia and Parma (87-100). Already in 1914 the magazine *Rivista Liturgica* was founded by Emmanuele Caronti. At the same time liturgy was used as instrument of renewal in the movements like: *L'action catholique de la jeneuse Belge*, *la Jeunesse ouvrière Belge*, and in the movement founded by Jesuit father Paul Donceur – *Scouts* in France (101).

tly on the level where it used the same religious elements as Catholicism does (137). Guardini was convinced that the liturgy was the principal instrument of differentiation and contraposition regarding the neopagan ideology of Nazism (138).⁹ The II Vatican Council reconsidered the relation between liturgy and the world, pointing to the diversity of cultures and human situations, especially towards the poor.

Considering the social and political situation between the two world wars we conclude that the Liturgical Movement was an enormous effort to re-evangelize the society and liturgy was considered as the essential element of this effort. Even though we do not present the future stages of the Liturgical Movement before the II Vatican council, we have found enough reasons to conclude, that there is a profound relation between liturgy and mission or pastoral and social action.

5. Liturgy and Mission in the Documents of the Church

After having seen the continual relationship between liturgy and mission, in the first centuries and then in the 19th and 20th centuries, we now approach the affirmations made about mission and liturgy in some documents that have been issued to give fundamental orientations to the development of the Church after the II Vatican council.

5.1 Missionary Nature of the Church

Searching for the link between the liturgy and the mission of the Church, we need to understand the nature of the Church. We find in the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church - Lumen gentium* definitions that help us to perceive the mystery of the Church. The Church has the nature of sacrament or sign (LG 1). Christ established her as »universal sacrament of salvation« (48). Church is »visible sacrament of God's saving unity« of human kind (9). The mission of the Church is to bring humanity to Christ, and so to be an instrument of salvation. All sacraments are included in this universal sacramentality of the Church. *Lumen gentium* compares the Church to the body: »In that Body the life of the Church is poured into the believers who through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ who suffered and was glorified.« (7) In this context appears the importance of the liturgy and especially of the Eucharistic celebration. As long as the sacrifice of the Cross is celebrated, the work of our redemption is carried on (3). *Lumen gentium* makes it clear: The Church receives from her Founder the »mission to proclaim and to spread among all peoples the kingdom of Christ and of God and to be, on earth, the initial budding forth of that kingdom« (5). On the basis of these ideas we may conclude that the unity between the liturgy and the

⁹ The written works of Romano Guardini are: *The Spirit of Liturgy [Vom Geist der Liturgie, 1918]* and *Liturgical Education [Liturgische Bildung, 1923]*. The first contains some letters of Guardini to a friend in which he writes about liturgy, and the second one is destined to young belonging to the catholic movements.

mission is natural link, which we will try to understand continuing our examination of the document *Ad gentes*.

The Second Vatican Council declared that the Church is missionary by her very nature, because she was born from the mission of the – Son, sent by the Father and the Mission of the Holy Spirit; this is why she must spread the kingdom of God throughout the earth (AG 2). The Church is sent by God to reveal and communicate the love of God to all men and nations (10). The proper purpose of this missionary activity is evangelization, and the planting of the Church among those peoples and groups where it has not yet taken root (6). Evangelization is the fundamental task of the people of God and every Christian (11). The primary contribution that all Christians can give to the mission of the Church is to live according to the Gospel, following the example of Christ.

5.2 Liturgy its role and the question of mission

Through the liturgy is accomplished the work of our redemption: »It is outstanding means whereby the faithful may express in their lives and manifest to others, the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church.« (SC 2) It means that the liturgy gives the possibility to the faithful to express and make known to others the good news of salvation, which is conferred by Church. The fact, that the concern for the liturgy occurs among four Constitutions of the Council, points to the »missionary« role of the liturgy, made explicit by the II Vatican Council. At the same time the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* expresses the need to renew the liturgy so as to reach to all the Christians, especially those who do not practice the obligation of Sunday mass or do not participate at the celebrations of other sacraments.

The liturgy is the source of every activity of the Church; the natural result of the liturgy is preaching the good news of salvation (9), so that many may know the grace of Christ. »Nevertheless the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows.« (10) Active participation of laypersons in the liturgy gives them first possibility of testimony and mission. *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* underlines the unity of the Church, expressed through liturgical celebrations: »Liturgical services are not private functions, but are celebrations of the Church, which is the sacrament of unity... therefore liturgical services pertain to the whole body of the Church.« (26) The unity of the Church, communion among its members is the missionary sign, expressed in a special way through the liturgical celebration: for example the unity of the bishop with his presbyters, the union of the people with their priests....

The revision of the liturgy by the II Vatican Council was carried out taking in account the fact, that the liturgy has also a didactic and pastoral nature; the Council underlined the place of the Scriptures in the liturgy, preaching in the liturgical celebrations and importance of the translations of liturgical texts in vernacular languages (33–46). »The Church, therefore, earnestly desires that Christ's faithful,

when present at this mystery of faith, should not be there as strangers or silent spectators; on the contrary, through a good understanding of the rites and prayers they should take part in the sacred action conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full collaboration.« (48) Liturgy itself is the call to the participants to do something for God, and to respond in this way to his Love. The conclusion to which we arrive is, that the liturgy is missionary in its deepest reality. »Thus, for well-disposed members of the faithful, the liturgy of the sacraments and sacramental sanctifies almost every event in their lives; they are given access to the stream of divine grace which flows from the Pascal mystery of the passion, death, the resurrection of Christ, the font from which all sacraments and sacramental draw their power.« (61)

Through this short consideration of liturgy according to *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, we may be allowed to claim, that liturgy in itself is the font of mission and its goal. A century long endeavors of the Liturgical Movement are spiritualized in this document of II Vatican council, made in the light of the vast horizons of humanity, which is called to redemption. It is in liturgy, especially in the Eucharist, that universal redemption is being accomplished.

5.3 Eucharist as source of mission

First goal of the liturgy is not the mission activity as such, but it is intrinsically connected to it. Every established community can exist and live their sacramental life only in the context of the liturgy. This is why the Church or a sacred space becomes one of the goals of proclamation of the Gospel in the territories of the 'missio ad gentes' – a newly established community needs a space – chapel, church and a place for gatherings. It is the Eucharist that makes possible the divine life in the hearts of faithful and increases their strength to bear witness and to proclaim the Gospel. The communities should be »a sign of the presence of God in the world« (John Paul II. 1990, 49), but they can be alive only on the bases of living the sacramental union, which binds all his members in one family; the heart of every community is Eucharist. This is the central point where the liturgy becomes part of the mission of the Church. The greatest sign of Church's communities should be the union and communion. True missionary spirituality of individuals and communities comes only from the intensive prayer and union with Christ; it is born from life, flowing out of rightly understood Eucharist. In this sense the role of the liturgy, especially the celebration of the Eucharist is essential, because in it we experience the »consoling presence of Christ« (88). Missionary spirituality is nourished from a complete docility to the Spirit who teaches his disciples the imitation of Christ and the choices to be made (87). »It is nothing more beautiful than to be surprised by the Gospel, by the encounter with Christ. There is nothing more beautiful than to know him and to speak to others of our friendship with him. These words are all the more significant if we think of the mystery of the Eucharist. The love that we celebrate in the sacrament is not something we can keep to ourselves. By its very nature it demands to be shared with all. What the world needs is God's love; it needs to encounter Christ and to believe in him.

The Eucharist is thus the source and summit not only of the Church's life, but also of her mission: an authentically eucharistic Church is a missionary Church.« (Benedict XVI 2007, 84) »The more ardent the love for the Eucharist in the hearts of the Christian people, the more clearly will they recognize the goal of all mission: *to bring Christ to others.*« (86)

5.4 Eucharist, life for the Church and mission

The sacraments constitute the identity of the Church. Pope John Paul II affirms, that »the Church was born of the paschal mystery« (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia* 3) and »a causal influence of the Eucharist is present at the Church's very origins.« (EE 21) For this reason the Eucharist belongs to the very nature of the Church. »By the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost the Church was born and set out upon the pathways of the world, yet a decisive moment in her taking shape was certainly the institution of the Eucharist in the Upper Room.« (5) It is evident that the awareness of being Church became possible only after the resurrection of Christ, but the institution of the sacraments was realized during the last supper. »The Church draws her life from the Eucharist. This truth does not simply express a daily experience of faith, but recapitulates the heart of the mystery of the Church.« (1) Christ's redemptive death on the cross is the source of life for humanity; the event of his death and resurrection is renewed in sacramental way in every Eucharistic celebration; Eucharist is »the perennial making present of the paschal mystery« (5), this is why we affirm, that Eucharist is the heart of the mission in the same way as paschal mystery was the reason and the beginning of the first mission for the apostles.

In his paper, delivered on the occasion of Eucharistic congress in Como and Bologna (Italy), held in 1997, cardinal Ratzinger, Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI, affirmed, that the Eucharist is the source of mission (1997). Not »as if the Eucharist were some kind of publicity project /.../ it must spring from a more profound source than that /.../« (1997) The source that must spring from is the grace of Christ's passion, at which Eucharist is the sacramental participation. »The Eucharist is the fulfillment of the promise made on the first day of Jesus' great week of climax: ›I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.« (Jn 12,32).« (1997) Ratzinger helps us to see the connectedness between Eucharist and mission precisely in this affirmation of Jesus in the Gospel of John. Let us bring to the term our inquiry on the relationship between liturgy and mission affirming that both of them make part of Church's inner and external life.

6. Conclusion

At the end of our reflection on mission in the light of liturgy, we may confirm our thesis, that they are two different realities, but in fact, they are intrinsically linked, because both of them form the body of Church. If liturgy is more internal reality, mission is external and dynamic; nevertheless both of them express

the love of the disciples for their Master. On the basis of our analysis we come to the following conclusions.

a) Pastoral workers and priests should faithfully promote active participation at the liturgies, so as to form and deepen the faith of all believers. Participation in the liturgy is already testimony of faith.

b) Baptism and all other sacraments, especially the Eucharist are to be celebrated in communion with the whole Church; the Eucharistic celebration cannot be a private celebration, it means that the celebrant should always recall to the faithful the fact to be in communion with the universal Church, with all brothers and sisters of our faith.

c) The liturgy is the privileged place where the Word of God is proclaimed. In all celebrations great importance should be given to the proclamation of the Word of God.

d) Preaching is obligatory part of all sacramental celebrations, depending on the situations and occasions. The greatest importance should be given to the preparation of the sermons and to the preaching. (Francis 2013, 135–44)

e) The preparation for the sacraments is today missionary task, through which is given the possibility of evangelization. We should put a lot of efforts in the formation of adult people.

f) Some sacraments, especially the Eucharist should be celebrated with the greatest concern for the suffering and poor; we should increase our awareness of the suffering humanity in the world, to which we can be united in Christ ad through him.

g) We should often recall our faithful that the final greeting of the priest in the Eucharist »Ite missa est,« means being sent to the world, to proclaim the great news of salvation to all.

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